

Angle of Repose

1976

Saturday, November 6, 1976 8:00 PM (World Premiere)

Tuesday, November 9, 1976 8:00 PM

Sunday, November 14, 1976 2:00 PM

Thursday, November 18, 1976 8:00 PM

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Angle of Repose

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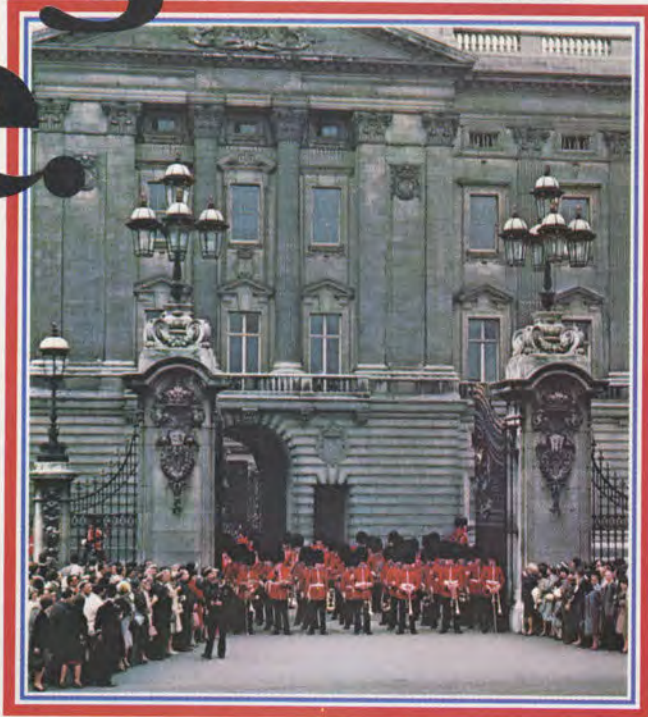


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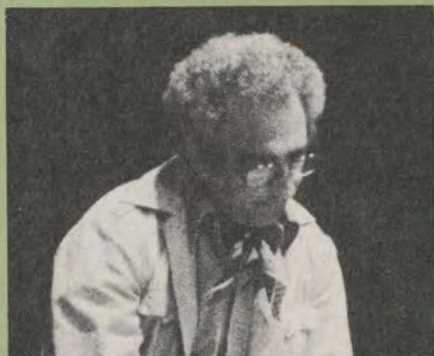
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Angle of Repose

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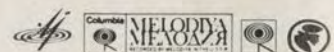


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Welcome to San Francisco Opera's 1976 season.

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For the first time, we are using the pit extension, an original feature of our building; you will now hear operas performed with their original orchestration.

Our 54th season will be remembered for many notable events; preeminent among them will be a meeting in early November of the International Association of Opera Directors. Many of my distinguished colleagues, representing the leading opera houses of the world, will meet in our city to attend the world premiere of *Angle of Repose*; they will be joined by representatives of OPERA America, our own country's association of opera managers, and by heads of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Opera Institute.

The hundreds who perform on stage, backstage, in the pit, in the offices, opera professionals from many nations are ready to give the best of their talent to our '76 season. Let me thank them warmly for their sincere dedication and may you, our audience, enjoy and support their efforts.

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Consisting of twelve different cards, the series shows over-all scenes from recent new productions here and also offers a number of favorite singers in costume portraits from some of their acclaimed roles. The cards meet all mailing standards of the United States Post Office and, in addition to personal use, are suggested as excellent "stocking stuffers" for Christmas giving. The cards are as follows:

1. A full-stage scene from Jean Pierre Ponnelle's production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, created originally for the San Francisco Opera.
2. A portrait of mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade in the title role of *La Cenerentola*.
3. A scene from Strauss' *Die Frau ohne Schatten* with Walter Berry, Ursula Schröder-Feinen, Ruth Hesse and Leonie Rysanek.
4. A portrait of tenor Placido Domingo in the title role of Giordano's *Andrea Chenier*.
5. A portrait of mezzo-soprano Tatiana Troyanos in the title role of *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.
6. A full-stage scene from Jean Pierre Ponnelle's production, created for the San Francisco Opera, of Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer*.
7. A portrait of tenor Luciano Pavarotti in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*.
8. A portrait of soprano Renata Scotto as Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, with tenor Giorgio Merighi as Lt. Pinkerton.
9. A portrait of tenor Giacomo Aragall as Cavaradossi in Puccini's *Tosca*.
10. An exterior view of the War Memorial Opera House, built for the San Francisco Opera Company and the Company's home since the opening of the theatre in 1932.
11. A portrait of baritone Geraint Evans as Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.
12. Soprano Beverly Sills in a scene from this year's season-opening production of Massenet's *Thais*.

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Staging a World Premiere: Conversations with Gerald Freedman

by Paul Chaplin

Sitting in the War Memorial Opera House Gerald Freedman is watching a gigantic piece of lace float from the flies onto the stage. One thinks of hiding under grandmother's dining room table as a youngster, spying on others from behind translucent lace. Suddenly a pool of green light covers the stage and the lace becomes a forest. The effect is magical as the entire stage is bathed in color, including an area downstage where Lyman Ward will sit in his wheelchair, stationary through most of the opera.

"Doug Schmidt (the scenic designer) and I were looking for a way to unify the opera," Gerald Freedman begins. "We wanted a visual metaphor for what we thought the composer was trying to say. *Angle of Repose* is the story of an Eastern genteel Victorian lady, who comes West and finds it a very wrenching experience, one that she makes a rather unsatisfactory adjustment to. It seemed to us that the lace represented Susan and the shreds of lace were what happened to her. You have to find a visual style that

will visually follow what the music does. Although Susan is the past, she is also the unifying link to the present, because through her life and her marriage problem, Lyman Ward comes to understand his problem and how to resolve it.

"There was also the problem of so many different locations. You're in Grass Valley, then New Almaden, then Boise, Idaho, and Leadville, you're down in a mine—and you can't have a different visual style for each one. So, you search for an abstraction that will serve for all of them. The set will suggest all these different things, but Susan is always present because of the lace."

Freedman's work in the Bay Area for Spring Opera Theater has included the acclaimed stagings of the *St. Matthew Passion* and *Death in Venice*, both of which utilized projections for an atmospheric quality. "I'm using projections again here, and except for *L'Orfeo*, that's what people in San Francisco know of my work. It's not that projections are my thing; I've simply

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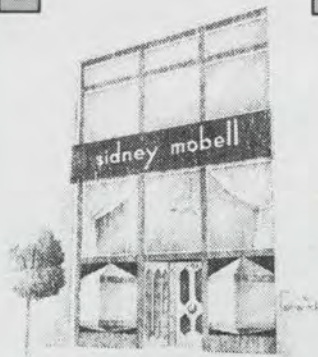
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Photo: Caroline Crawford

used them in works that I feel call for an entire media involvement. *Angle of Repose* is a very realistic piece, dealing with realistic problems and realistic situations, but there is a free flow of time from the present to the past, which makes the opera something less "real" than, say, a *verismo* opera. Projections help you move interestingly and quickly from locale to locale. Projections can also be quite effective in an unrealistic way, such as emphasizing the size of objects, giving them greater importance.

"For example, the Agnes Rose is a very important image in the opera. A normal size rose wouldn't register in a theater this size, and would not con-



Stage Director Gerald Freedman and General Director Kurt Herbert Adler make plans for *Angle of Repose*.

vey the importance Imbrie assigns it when he writes a theme for it. The Agnes Rose represents a minor character in the story, but it is a very important element of the opera. A projection can blow something up to the size the music demands of it. Basically, I'm saying the material you're directing will dictate its own needs. I suppose if I were in a house that did not have certain lights and projectors, I'd find another solution for the problem. I love challenges like that and I love the idea that I have to make the opera work, to make it theatrical and exciting."

One question that Freedman has been asked is 'how does one approach a work, an opera, that is new, and still subject to change?'

"Well the libretto can be read but it is merely the outline of what the opera is supposed to be. You can talk to the composer about his intentions. I read the Wallace Stegner novel, so I knew the source everybody was drawing from. Then you try to predict, anticipate, intuit the other artists' intentions, and that isn't easy. I don't know, for instance, if either Andrew Imbrie, the composer, or Oakley Hall, the librettist, visualized Lyman Ward's study as they did. But the last scene as

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World Premiere
continued from p. 13



Gerald Freedman (at left) Stage Director for *Angle of Repose* confers with Chorus Director Robert Jones during a rehearsal.

the libretto described it, didn't seem very practical for the theater. I did not feel it did what the authors intended. The last scene of the opera is one of reconciliation between generations, and there is no question in my mind that the past and present generations literally merge in the music; it's like a quartet, and so I'll try to do in stage terms what Imbrie did in the music, try to mingle the past and the present. "Imbrie does that mingling throughout the opera, and although there are grand panoramic scenes, the opera keeps coming back to two people in

a room, and this man's problem with his marriage. You have to think of a scheme that keeps all of that in focus. Imbrie and Hall had indicated that Lyman's study would be off-stage in a corner; it seemed to me to be non-theatrical and rather impractical to put the major action off in the corner. What I've done is bring the action to center stage, with the past happening in front of Lyman and around him. A lot of scenes have simultaneous action.

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"*Our Town*, for instance, is a play that uses that technique and I've done many shows with the past and present events occurring at the same time. Moreover, my own experience tells me that the past and present co-exist. Certain people have been in my life, and have left, or have died, but they are still very much with me, and the fact that they cannot be physically seen does not make their presence any the less real to me.

Have there been any surprises involved with the productions?

"Well, that happens every other day. Now I'm hearing the orchestration, which I had no way of hearing before, and I think my instinct and judgements were in the right direction. I have to say I've been pleasantly surprised and delighted by the orchestration. It is full of nuance and instrumental color. It's hard to make definitive sense out of a piano score before you've heard the orchestration. I think it would have been difficult even if Andrew and I had been in the same place for a period of time for him to communicate what the orchestration was; what made it extraordinarily difficult was that we were in two different parts of the country."

Freedman's background includes operatic productions, musicals and legitimate shows, yet he sees no basic difference in the various theatrical forms. "Opera is Theater with a capital 'T,'" he says. "On the other hand, when I'm doing Shakespeare, that's Opera. It has the same problems and the same magnitude and it has the music of the language.

"I don't think every director should stage opera, musicals and drama, but I think I am qualified by virtue of the fact that I had a varied and complete musical education before I went into the theater. I must say I enjoy music theater a lot, because it's so rich and I can use more of myself. I just opened a musical on Broadway, *The Robber Bridegroom*, that used only 14 people and one set. But when you

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utilize an orchestra, a chorus and perhaps a ballet and are working on this large a scale with elaborate scenery and costumes, it's pretty damn exciting. If you're doing a show like *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, as I did in January, with only six wonderful actors, it's exhilarating, but you're working on a miniature scale, chamber music, compared to this. Although I approach both theatrical forms in similar ways, what comes out is different.”

Would Freedman take the opportunity to change the staging of the new works he's directed, or present a different staging concept?

“No; there's only one time I changed a show. It was *Idomeneo* for New York City Opera. I first produced the opera for the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. What I thought was a good production received bad reviews, so I thought 'there's more than one way to stage an opera. Let's do it again.' We did, and received equally negative reviews. It's one of those operas that's most difficult to stage and was a terrific challenge, but I wished I had stayed with my original conception. The first production of *Idomeneo* was more original in concept and I thought truer to Mozart's intention. I do months of preparation for anything I direct; it's never something I've produced off the top of my head. The score and the libretto have been given careful, considerate thought.

People say to me, 'Well, you're finally working in the big house,' they mean the International Fall Season. I don't have the same feeling about it that everyone seems to invest it with. I know it's of international importance, with the very best and the greatest artists, but quite honestly, I thought the productions I did at the Curran for Spring Opera Theater were as exciting and as important as I hope *Angle of Repose* will be. I have no preference; I feel I'm lucky to float from directing straight theater to musical theater, from opera to popular theater.”



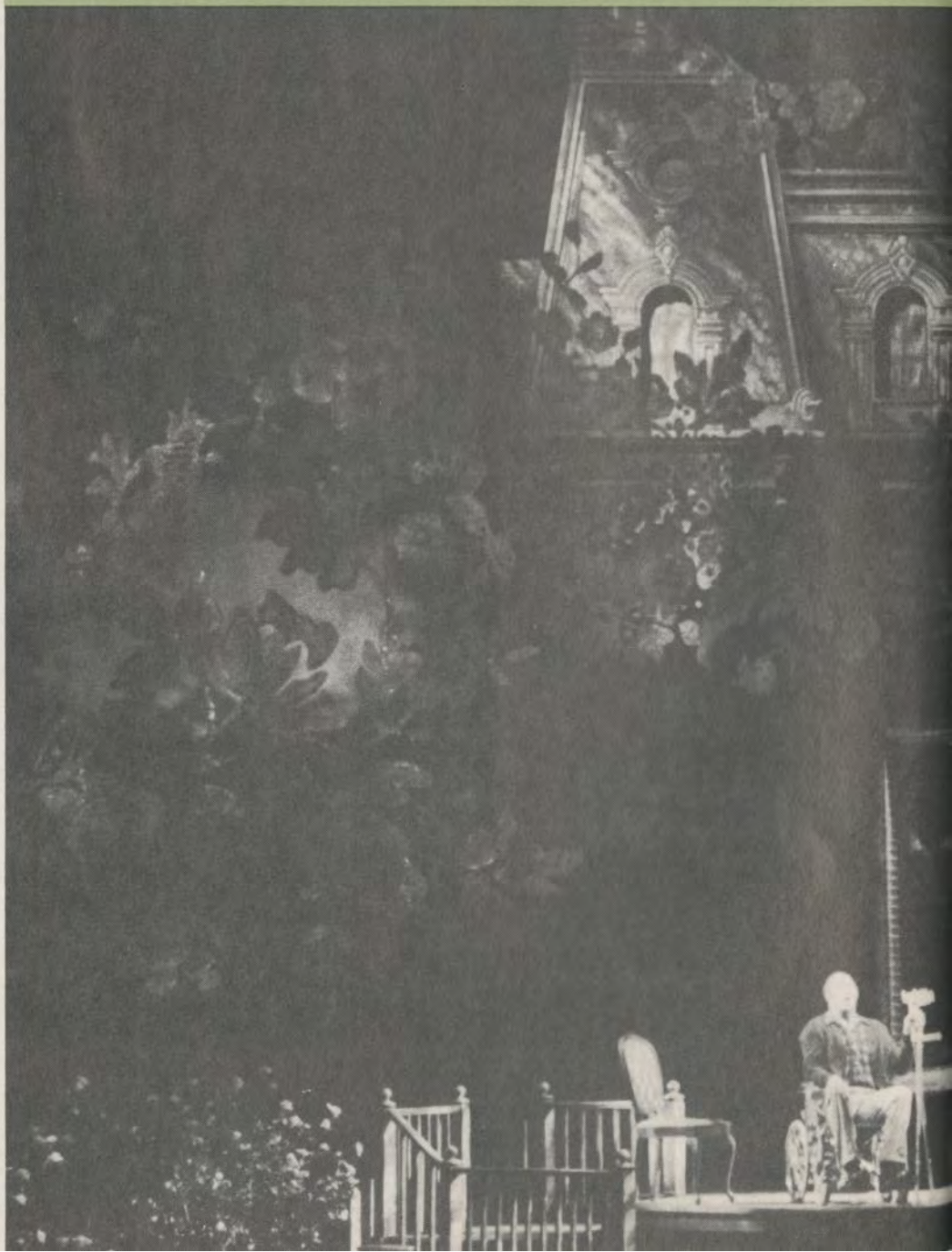
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Novel Into Opera

by David Littlejohn

Andrew Imbrie's new opera, *Angle of Repose*, bears the same title as a Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of five years ago. But the differences between the two works are immense. Wallace Stegner's 220,000 words have been trimmed down to a 6,000 word libretto. And many of the words in the opera, even a few of its characters and scenes will be found nowhere in the book. The final scene of Act One, for example—the Nob Hill ball—is entirely the creation of Andrew Imbrie and his librettist, Oakley Hall. Lyman Ward's daughter Shelly was in the original only his secretary. For the purpose

A scene from *Angle of Repose* with Chester Ludgin as Lyman Ward, taken in dress rehearsal.



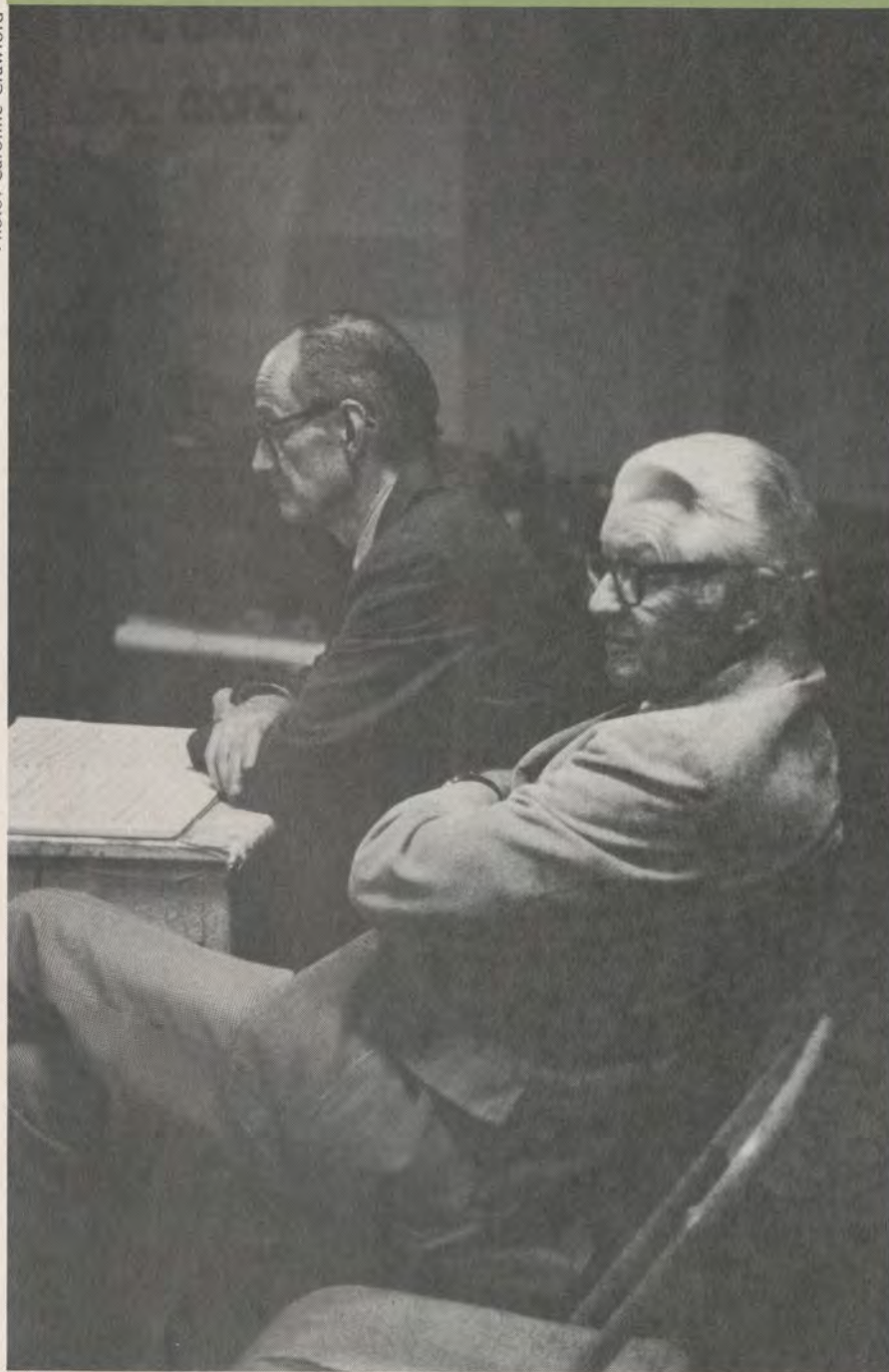
of opera, she has been fused with the character of his son. The beautiful Mexican sequence of the novel is gone, the New York literary world is gone. Most surprising to admirers of the novel will be the Imbrie-Hall conclusion, which replaces an erotic, ambiguous dream with a real-life happy ending.

But the operas are the creations of composers, writing music for singers and orchestras. If they choose (and, except for Wagner, they usually do) to borrow their plots and characters from playwrights and novelists, they then often feel free to shop and change them about. In the world of the opera house, as Professor Imbrie puts it, whatever manipulation of our emotions is going to occur must take place in two or three hours—and even that short time is divided abruptly by the sociable

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Photo: Ron Scherl





Wallace Stegner (right), author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Angle of Repose*, on which the opera is based, watches a rehearsal with composer Andrew Imbrie.

otherworld of intermissions. A single written line may take minutes to sing. Words of essential exposition or dialogue may well be "lost," even when sung in the language of the audience, simply because they are sung — and often over a full orchestra at that.

"Opera *must* be larger than life," Andrew Imbrie insists. "Once you start singing ordinary dialogue, you're al-

ready larger than life." He has little sympathy with the kind of modern opera score that is no more than a discreet, self-effacing underlining of its text. "People want a different, a *musical* experience in opera. Music is what opera's all about."

The size of stage and house, the needs and expectations of an audience, the

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Novel Into Opera
continued from p. 20



range of voices available, the possibilities of the orchestra are all limiting realities that help determine the drastic, sometimes outrageous things a musical artist will do to a literary artist's text. Above all, the composer is driven by one fundamental urge: not simply to "set to music" the other man's play or story, but to create a new work of his own, something unified and coherent,



Costume sketch by Lawrence Casey

an expression primarily of what he wants to say, composed in his style — and only secondarily a translation into music of the first author's intents and purposes.

"I must admit I was flabbergasted," Wallace Stegner told me, "when Andrew first telephoned me at Santa Fe and proposed the idea." Stegner, a
continued on p. 24



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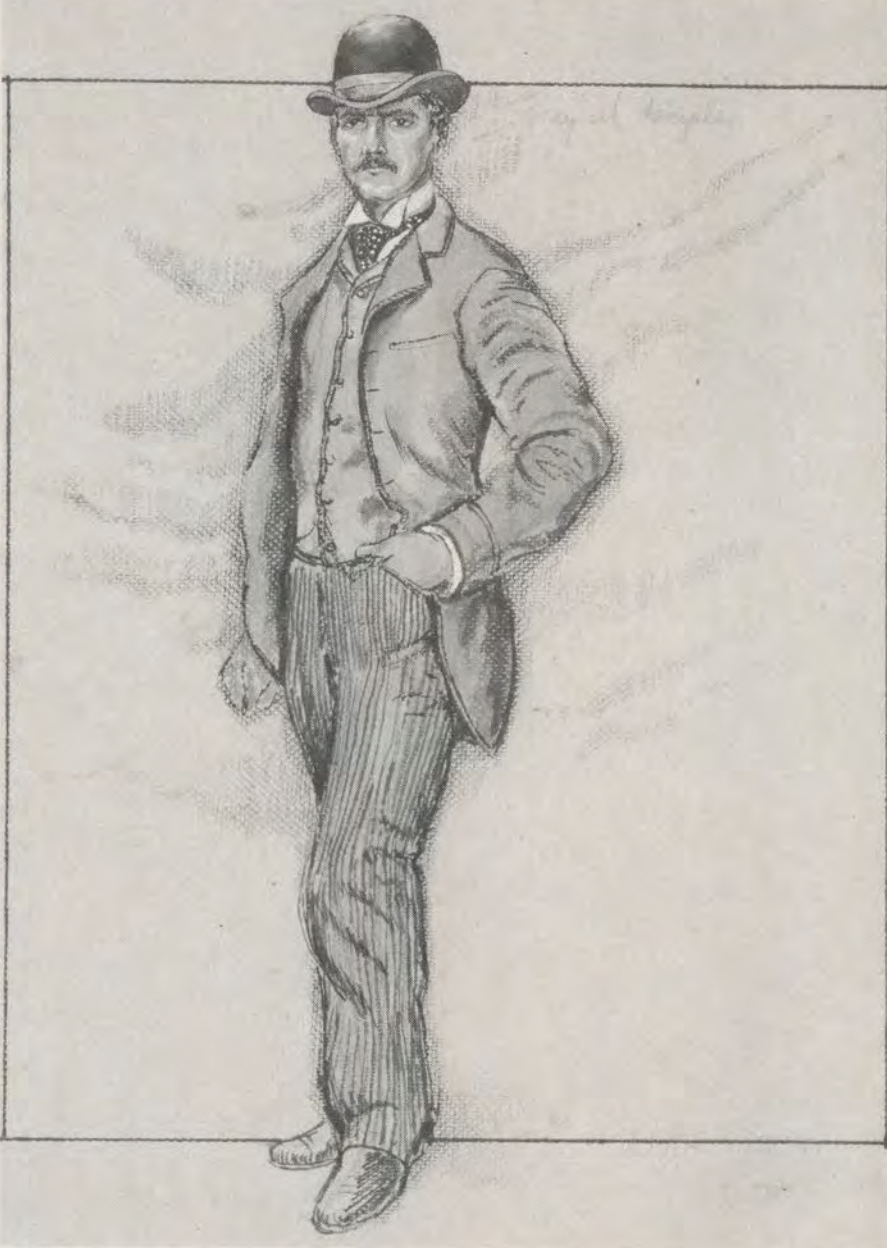
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Novel Into Opera

continued from p. 23



Costume sketch by Lawrence Casey

handsome man of 67, is a retired Stanford professor who travels extensively from his Los Altos hilltop home. *Angle* was his tenth novel, his 19th book, and his most notable critical success since *Big Rock Candy Mountain* (1943).

Andrew Imbrie still teaches a section of Music 10 (Harmony) three mornings a week at Berkeley, as well as the

graduate seminar in Composition. Twelve years younger than Stegner, he is a tall, scholarly-looking Princetonian.

He studied at Princeton with Roger Sessions, then followed him to Berkeley, where he wrote a *Ballad in D* for Full Orchestra as his Master's thesis project in 1947, and became a professor in 1960.

continued on p. 26

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Novel Into Opera
continued from p. 24



General director Kurt Herbert Adler, composer Andrew Imbrie and conductor John Mauceri with Nancy Shade and Susanne Marsee, discuss plans for *Angle of Repose*.

Mrs. Imbrie gave her husband a copy of *Angle of Repose* as a present in 1972. Part of the literary-critical world had found this rich, realistic, very American novel to be a salutary affirmation of continuity and process, of the need of the present for the past; and Andrew Imbrie agreed. It was a point he had been trying to convey to his own more radical Berkeley stu-

dents: "To cut yourself off from the past is madness. Continuity with tradition doesn't prevent you from doing something new, fresh, original, radical. You can't operate without a tradition, you can't get out of your past. That's what allows you to be a radical!"

Wallace Stegner has said the same thing over and over, never more elo-



Photo: Caroline Crawford



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quently than in an essay on "History, Myth, and the Western Writer":

Disgust for the shoddy present is not enough. And forgetting the past is a dehumanizing error. One of the lacks, through all the newly swarming regions of the West, is that millions of westerners, old and new, have no sense of a personal and
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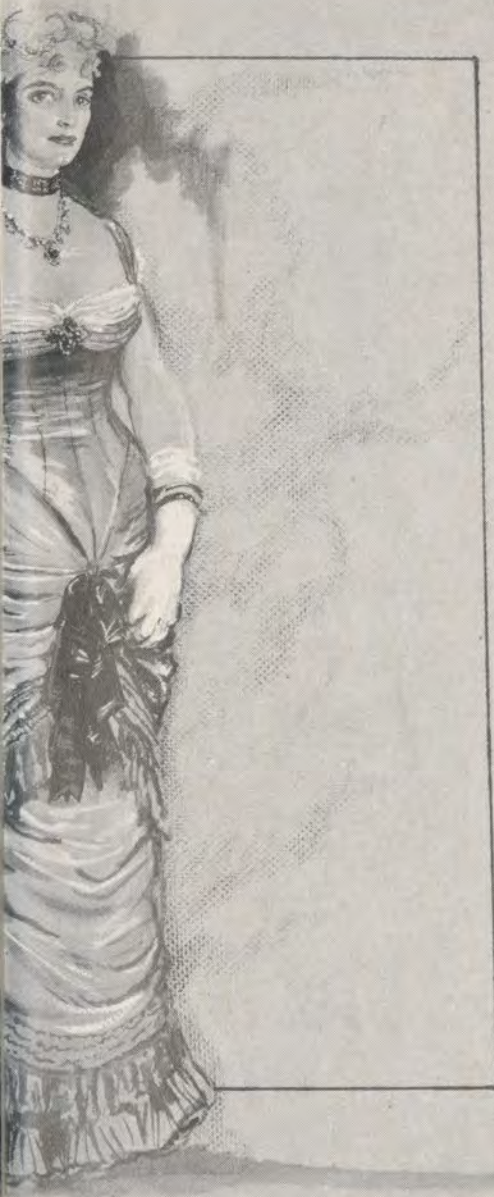
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Novel Into Opera
continued from p. 27



possessed past, no sense of any continuity between the real western past which has been mythicized almost out of recognizability and a real western present that seems as cut-off and pointless as a ride on a merry-go-round that can't be stopped . . . if you are any part of an artist, and a lot of people are some of one, if you have any desire to understand,



Costume sketch by Lawrence Casey

and thus to help steer, a civilization that seems to have got away from us, then I think you don't choose between the past and the present; you try to find the connections, you try to make the one serve the other . . .

In the old days, in blizzardy weather, we used to tie a string of lariats from house to barn so as to make it from

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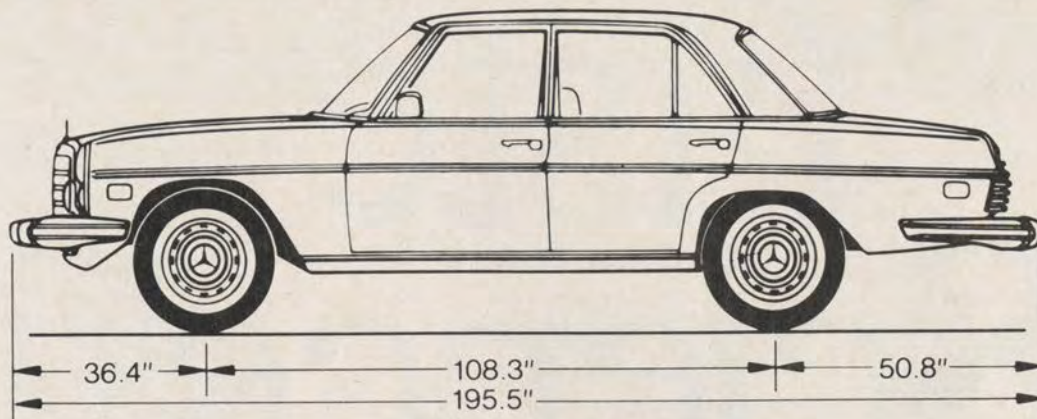


Costume sketch by Lawrence Casey

shelter to responsibility and back again . . . I think we had better rig up such a line between past and present.

When Imbrie heard a rumor that Kurt Adler was about to commission a "bi-centennial" opera (with an American theme, by preference, and a Western orientation) — and was considering asking *him* to write it — he thought at

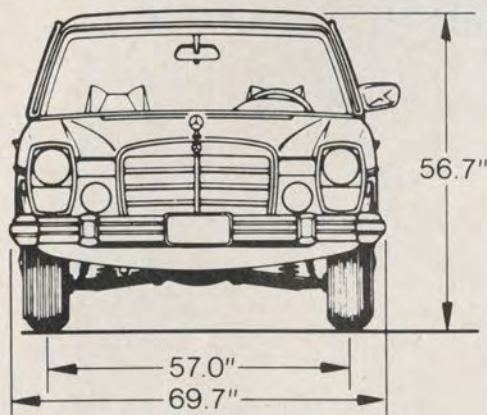
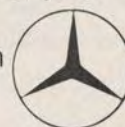
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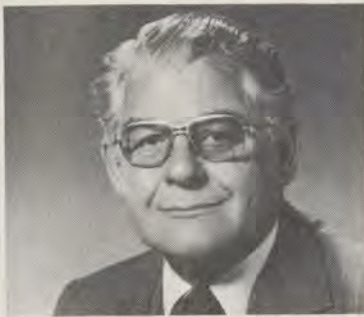
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As Kurt Herbert Adler wrote in his introduction to this year's brochure, "San Francisco Opera takes pride in celebrating the Twin Bicentennial of the City of San Francisco and the nation by presenting a wide-ranging repertoire which strongly emphasizes artistic accomplishments of the 20th century." Each year, our fall season seems to surpass in excellence those which have gone before and 1976, our 54th consecutive year, will, I am confident, reach new heights. We open with the San Francisco premiere of Massenet's "Thais"; the title role will be sung by the glamorous and exciting Beverly Sills.

Our contribution to the Bicentennial will be the world premiere of "Angle of Repose". This opera is based on Wallace Stegner's Pulitzer Prize winning novel and was commissioned by the San Francisco Opera Association. Composer Andrew Imbrie and librettist Oakley Hall have adapted the novel to grand opera which will be sung by an all-American cast. Nine other operas, some old favorites, some of modern vintage, complete this well-balanced season. Our brilliant general director, Maestro Adler, with his splendid staff and well organized company, will again demonstrate that San Francisco Opera continues to be included among the few great opera companies in the world. Advance ticket sales indicate that the community recognizes this and that we will continue the nearly 100% capacity attendance which we have enjoyed in recent years.

In addition to "Thais" and "Angle of Repose", we will have new productions of four operas. The wear and tear on sets and costumes is fantastic and it is also exciting to see old favorites in new clothes. However, new productions are terribly expensive and we must depend on substantial gifts by interested donors to make them possible. We are indebted to Cyril Magnin, a long-time friend of San Francisco Opera, for a generous gift making possible the new "Thais". "Angle of Repose" has been financed

by substantial gifts from San Francisco Foundation, City and County of San Francisco, National Endowment for the Arts, as well as contributions by a number of arts patrons. For part of the new production of "La Forza del Destino" we are grateful to a number of arts patrons and the William H. Noble Estate. "Die Frau ohne Schatten" was made possible by the generosity of arts patron Cynthia Wood. Our vice president and treasurer, James D. Robertson, for the sixth consecutive year, has financed part of a new production—this year "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "I Pagliacci."

To all of these patrons go our special thanks.

Opera in San Francisco is not just the International Fall season which we are now enjoying, but is a year around program, all under the general direction of Mr. Adler and his staff. These activities include Spring Opera Theater, Western Opera Theater, Merola Opera Program, Brown Bag Opera and San Francisco Opera Auditions. Our total program is unique; no other opera company in the country can boast of such scope.

Opera is probably the most expensive performing art form. This can be readily understood when one considers the hundreds of people necessary to stage a production of the quality for which we are renowned. Our costs for 1976 are estimated at \$5,700,000. Ticket revenues cover just over 60% of these costs, a ratio which is probably higher than any major opera company in the world. To put this in perspective, if we were to depend solely on ticket revenues to cover our costs, our prices would have to range from about \$11.00 to \$41.50 per seat instead of our actual range of \$6.00 to \$25.00. You may have read recently that the portion of annual costs of the Paris Opera which are subsidized by the French Government have reached 17 million dollars, a figure almost three times our total costs. And yet, on a visit there a few months ago, my ticket cost me the equivalent of \$30.00!

How have we raised the remaining 40% of our costs? From generous patrons who finance new productions, from guarantors, grants from local and federal governments, income from our endowment funds, donations from the Opera Guild, and from contributions by corporations, foundations and individuals to our annual Operating Fund campaign. But costs continue to rise because of inflation and we must in-

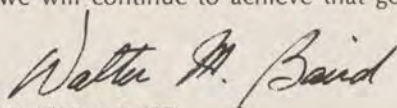
crease the number of contributors significantly if we are to avoid substantial deficits. Thousands of loyal opera lovers help each year, but thousands more are needed. If you are not presently a contributor to our annual fund drive, won't you please join now? Your tax deductible contributions should be sent to San Francisco Opera Association, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, 94102. Opera's future depends on you. Don't let us become a candidate for the list of endangered species.

We continue to be grateful for the financial support from various organizations, without whose help we would find it almost impossible to continue—National Endowment for the Arts, National Opera Institute, Mayor George Moscone, Chief Administrative Officer Thomas J. Mellon, the City and County of San Francisco, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees. We are also indebted to Opera ACTION which continues to render all kinds of help to San Francisco Opera, not only reducing our costs but spreading the word of opera throughout our community.

For many years, each opera has been broadcast once over KKHI AM/FM in San Francisco and KFAC AM/FM in Los Angeles. This year, broadcasts will be extended to audiences in Sacramento, Fresno, San Diego, Portland and Seattle. These broadcasts are made possible by grants from Standard Oil Company of California and the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California, for which we are most grateful. The quality of the broadcasts is exceptional and you owe it to yourself to listen.

San Francisco Opera Guild finances five student matinees of one of the operas in the series. This year, thousands of young people will enjoy "The Barber of Seville." For many this will be their first exposure to grand opera. From their enthusiastic response over the years, opera is assured of audiences in the future.

Each year, San Francisco Opera brings the joys of this wonderful performing art alive to tens of thousands of opera lovers and, through the magic of radio, to countless others. Our goal is always to bring to you performances of the highest quality and, with your help, we will continue to achieve that goal.


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<i>Rehearsal Department</i>	Judith O'Dell, Richard Johnson*, Susan Koscis**
<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>	Greg Peterson, Ron Scherl
	Technical Staff for the War Memorial Opera House
<i>Master Carpenter</i>	Michael Willcox
<i>Master Electrician</i>	Jack Philpot
<i>Master of Properties</i>	Perrie Dodson

*San Francisco Opera debut **American opera debut †National Opera Institute Apprentice

The Knabe is the official piano of San Francisco Opera

The 1976 San Francisco Opera season is supported by a much-appreciated grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D.C., a Federal Agency, and by a generous grant from the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.



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Artists

Regine Crespin
Claudia Cummings
Faith Esham*
Edna Garabedian
Susan Goreniuc*
Shirley Lee Harned*
Heather Harper
Ruth Hesse*
Nina Hinson
Gwendolyn Jones

Claes H. Ahnsjö**
Lorenzo Alvary
Giacomo Aragall
Walter Berry*
Garbis Boyagian**
John Brecknock*
Renato Bruson
Samuel Byrd*
Renato Capecchi
Paul Crook*
John Davies
Placido Domingo
Dale Duesing**
John Duykers
Brent Ellis*
Geraint Evans
Joseph Frank

Raina Kabaivanska
Roberta Knie*
Susanne Marsee*
Janis Martin
Linn Maxwell*
Sheila Nadler
Donna Petersen
Linda Roark
Noelle Rogers*
Leonie Rysanek

Paul Geiger*
Peter Glossop
Clifford Grant
Colin Harvey
Joshua Hecht
James Hoback*
Robert Ilosfalvy
Wassili Janulako
James Johnson*
Matti Kastu**
Kolos Kovats**
William Lewis
Juan Lloveras
Chester Ludgin
Alexander Malta**
Raymond Manton
Sherrill Milnes

Ursula Schroeder-Feinen*
Nancy Shade*
Sharon Sherrard*
Anja Silja
Beverly Sills
Pamela South
Anna Tomowa-Sintow
Tatiana Troyanos
Frederica Von Stade

Barry Morell
Timothy Nolen
Paul Plishka*
Bruno Prevedi*
Neil Rosenshein*
Hans Sotin*
Peter Strummer
Giorgio Tozzi
Domenico Trimarchi*
Wayne Turnage*
Jon Vickers
Ingvar Wixell

*San Francisco Opera debut
**American opera debut

CHORUS

Women

Janice Aaland
Peggy Ahrens
Kathy Anderson
Candida Arias-Duazo
Doris Baltzo
Roberta Bowman
Norma Bruzzone
Louise Corsale
Patricia Diggs
Beverly Finn
Lisa Louise Hill
Cecilia MacLaren
Tamaki McCracken
Sharon McKibbin
Elaine Messer
Irene Moreci
Penelope Rains
Anna Marie Riesgo
Ramona Spiropoulos
Rose Parker
Bonnie Jean Shapiro

Women

Claudia Siefer
Lola Lazzari Simi
Linda Millerd Smeage
Claudine Spindt
Alma Wells
Sally Winnington
Arlene Woodburn
Garifalia Zeissig

Men

Winther Andersen
Daniel Becker
Robert Bjoernfeldt
David M. Chervenky
Thomas Clark
Robert Clyde
Neil Cooper
Robert Delany
John Del Carlo
John L. Glenister
Ross Halper
Kenneth Hybloom

Men

Gerald Johnson
Robert Klang
Conrad Knipfel
Eugene Lawrence
Kenneth MacLaren
Kenneth Malucelli
Jim Meyer
Thomas Miller
Kent Nagano
Eugene Naham
Charles Pascoe
Kenneth Rafanan
Thomas Reed
Robert Romanovsky
John Segale
Francis Szymkun
James Tarantino
D. Livingstone Tigner
William Chastaine
Tredway
John K. Walters
R. Lee Woodriff

EXTRA CHORUS

Women

Elizabeth Anker
Anne Buelteman
Suzanne Compton
Cynthia Cook
Judith F. Hansen
Margaret Hamilton

Women

Judith Harris
Gloria Holmby
Jean Ostrander
Patricia Schuman

Men

Gennadi Badasov

Men

Michael Bloch
Dale Emde
Thomas Hart
Matthew Miksak
Karl Saarni
Lorenz Schultz
James Tipton

BALLET

Women

Margaret DeWitt
Jean Harriss
Jean Harriss
Wendy Holt
Sherri Parks
Angie Smit
Maria Angela Villa

Men

Ric "E" Abel
Isom Buenavista
Jeffrey Judson
Randall Krivonic
Jeffrey Smith
Sulpicio Wagner

Richard Browne
Ballet Captain

Orchestra

1ST VIOLIN

Jacob Krachmalnick
Concertmaster
William E. Pynchon
Ferdinand M. Claudio
Bruce Freifeld
Silvio Claudio
Ezequiel Amador
Mafalda Guaraldi
George Nagata
Ernest Michaelian
Jeanne Marvin
Michael Sand
Celia Rosenberger

2ND VIOLIN

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

VIOLA

Rolf Persinger *Principal*
Detlev Olshausen
Lucien Mitchell
Tom Elliott
Kenneth Harrison
Jonna Hergiv
Ellen Smith

CELLO

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

BASS

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

FLUTE

Walter Subke *Principal*
Lloyd Gowen
Gary Gray

PICCOLO

Lloyd Gowen
Gary Gray

OBOE

James Matheson *Principal*
Raymond Duste
Deborah Henry

ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Duste

CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*
Donald Carroll
David Breeden

BASS CLARINET

Donald Carroll

BASSOON

Walter Green *Principal*
Jerry Dagg
Robin Elliott

CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

FRENCH HORN

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

TRUMPET

Donald Reinberg *Principal*
Edward Haug
Chris Bogios

TROMBONE

Ned Meredith *Principal*
Mark Lawrence
John Bischof

TUBA

Floyd Cooley

TIMPANI

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Peggy C. Lucchesi

HARP

Anne Adams *Principal*
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Music Director
Donald E. Osborne
Assistant Music Director
Joellen Piskitel
Accompanist
James Baker
Eric Brudos
Jon Cockerline
Laramie Crocker
John Doxey
James Dreer

George Fernandez
Douglas Fields
Scott Flemming
Brian Gordon
Ben Harrison
Steven Heffelfinger
Ethan Kaplan
Martin Kovach
Martin LaPlaca
Mark Loudon
Stephen Myers
Christopher Nomura

Andrew Podell
Peter Reilly
Marco Remedios
Stephen Rumph
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Barbara Clifford
Joanne Dickson
Gina Farruggio
Janice Fillip
Nancy Kennally
Marilyn Mathers
Cynthia Milina
Edith Modie
Louise Russo
Ellen Sanchez
Shelley Seitz
Laurie Thompson

Men

Jesse Alexander
Steve Bauman
Thomas Carlisle
Ronald Cavin

Rudolph Cook

Burton Covel

Donald Crawford

Everett E. Evans, Jr.

Herbert Harvey

Martin Izquierdo

Kenneth Jakobs

Janusz

Julius Karoblis

Rodney McCoy

Gregorio Mendoza

Lawrence Millner

Paul Newman

James Preovolos

Noble Edward Reynolds

Paul Ricks

Raymond Salazar

Thomas Simrock

Jonathan Spieler

Kent Spiers

Colin Warner

David Williams

Joseph Williams

Gerald Wood

Children

Michelle Brown

Lilo Campeau

Steven Cohen

Hardy Crawford

Martha Crawford

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Anthony Gonzalez

Claudia Heyneman

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1976 Season Repertoire

New Production made possible by a generous gift from Cyril Magnin

San Francisco Opera Premiere

THAÏS
Massenet
IN FRENCH

Sills, Jones, Cummings, South,
Harned*/Milnes, Ahnsjö**, Malta**

Conductor: Pritchard
Production: Capobianco
Designer: Toms
Choreographer: Falco*
Chorus Director: Jones

Friday Sept 10 8PM
Gala Opening Night

Wednesday Sept 15 8PM
Sunday Sept 19 2PM
Saturday Sept 25 8PM
Tuesday Sept 28 8PM
Friday Oct 1 8PM

DIE WALKÜRE
Wagner
IN GERMAN

Knie*, Rysanek (Sept. 11, 14, 17)//
Martin (Sept. 22, 26, Oct. 2), Hesse*,
Goreniuc*, Roark, Sherrard*,
Garabedian, Jones, Harned, Petersen,
Nadler/Vickers, Sotin*, Grant

Conductor: Suitner
Stage Director: G. Hager
Designer: Skalicki

Saturday Sept 11 7:30PM
Tuesday Sept 14 7:30PM
Friday Sept 17 7:30PM
Wednesday Sept 22 7:30PM
Sunday Sept 26 1:30PM
Saturday Oct 2 1PM

New Production made possible, in part, by generous gifts from a number of arts patrons and the William H. Noble Estate

LA FORZA DEL DESTINO
Verdi
IN ITALIAN

Tomowa-Sintow, Marsee*, Jones/
Morell (Sept. 18, 21, 24)//Prevedi*
(Sept. 29, Oct. 3), Bruson, Plishka*,
Davies

Conductor: Adler
Production: Fassini*
Designer: Samaritani*
Choreographer: Guidi*
Chorus Director: Jones

Saturday Sept 18 8PM
Tuesday Sept 21 8PM
Friday Sept 24 8PM
Wednesday Sept 29 8PM
Sunday Oct 3 2PM

Kabaivanska, Marsee, Jones/Ilosfalvy,
Boyagian**, Kovats**, Capecchi,
Malta, Frank, Geiger, Davies

Conductor: Adler
Production: Fassini
Stage Director: Farruggio
Designer: Samaritani
Choreographer: Guidi
Chorus Director: Jones

Sunday Nov 7 2PM
Saturday Nov 13 1:30PM
Friday Nov 19 8PM

TOSCA
Puccini
IN ITALIAN

Rysanek (Oct. 2,)//Martin (Oct. 5, 8, 10,
16, 23)/Aragall, Wixell, Trimarchi,
Johnson*, Frank, Strummer, Davies

Conductor: Peloso
Production: Ponnelle
Stage Director: Prohaska**
Designer: Ponnelle
Chorus Director: Jones

Saturday Oct 2 8PM
Tuesday Oct 5 8PM
Friday Oct 8 8PM
Sunday Oct 10 2PM
Saturday Oct 16 8PM
Saturday Oct 23 1:30PM

PETER GRIMES
Britten
IN ENGLISH

Harper, Nadler, Petersen, Cummings,
South/Vickers, Evans, Malta, Turnage*,
Crook*, Geiger, Frank, Duykers

Conductor: Pritchard
Production: Evans
Designer: Toms
Chorus Director: Jones

Wednesday Oct 6 8PM
Saturday Oct 9 8PM
Wednesday Oct 13 8PM
Sunday Oct 17 2PM
Friday Oct 22 8PM

New Production made possible by a generous gift from Cynthia Wood

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN
R. Strauss
IN GERMAN

Rysanek, Schröder-Feinen*, Hesse,
Cummings, South, Roark, Jones,
Harned, Petersen/Kastu**, Berry*,
Johnson, Alvary, Hecht, Duykers,
Hoback*, Turnage, Geiger, Byrd*

Conductor: Böhm*
Production: Lehnhoff
Designer: Zimmermann**
Chorus Director: Jones

Friday Oct 15 8PM
Tuesday Oct 19 8PM
Sunday Oct 24 1:30PM
Saturday Oct 30 8PM
Tuesday Nov 2 8PM

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Here's a toast to San Francisco Opera and its 54th international fall season.

Keeping it in good health and good spirits for future generations should concern all opera goers. Even with capacity houses, ticket sales account for slightly over 60% of our annual operating funds. The remaining 40% is raised in a variety of ways: through our guarantor program, federal and municipal funds, new program sponsors — and our annual community fund drive.

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War Memorial Opera House
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Repertoire

continued

THE MAKROPULOS CASE

Janáček
IN ENGLISH

Silja, South, Jones, Harned/Lewis,
Evans, Crook, Hecht, Manton,
Rosenshein*, Davies

Conductor: Von Dohnanyi
Stage Director: Pountney*
Designer: Bauer-Ecsy
Production Coordinator: Ecsy*
Chorus Director: Jones

Wednesday Oct 20 8PM
Saturday Oct 23 8PM
Tuesday Oct 26 8PM
Friday Oct 29 8PM
Sunday Oct 31 2PM

New Productions made possible, in part, by a generous gift from James D. Robertson

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

Mascagni
IN ITALIAN

Troyanos (first 5 perfs.)//Crespin (Nov. 16, 21, 24, 27), Esham*, Petersen/
Domingo (first 6 perfs.)//Lloveras (Nov. 21, 24, 27), Janulako

and

I PAGLIACCI

Leoncavallo
IN ITALIAN

Rogers* (first 6 perfs.)//Kabaivanska (Nov. 21, 24, 27)/Domingo (first 6 perfs.)//Prevedi (Nov. 21, 24, 27), Wixell (first 6 perfs.)//Glossop (Nov. 21, 24, 27), Ellis*, Frank, Hoback, Davies

Conductor: Schermerhorn
Production: Ponnelle
Designer: Ponnelle
Chorus Director: Jones

Wednesday Oct 27 8PM
Saturday Oct 30 1:30PM
Friday Nov 5 8PM
Wednesday Nov 10 8PM
Saturday Nov 13 8PM
Tuesday Nov 16 8PM
Sunday Nov 21 2PM
Wednesday Nov 24 8PM
Saturday Nov 27 8PM

World Premiere made possible by generous gifts from the National Endowment for the Arts, City of San Francisco, San Francisco Foundation and a number of arts patrons
In celebration of the Twin Bicentennial of the U.S.A. and the City of San Francisco

ANGLE OF REPOSE

Imbrie
IN ENGLISH

Shade *, Marsee, Garabedian/Ludgin,
Lewis, Duesing**, Hecht, Johnson,
Byrd, Turnage, Davies, Hoback

Conductor: Mauceri*
Production: Freedman*
Set Designer: Schmidt*
Costume Designer: Casey*
Choreographer: McFall*
Chorus Director: Jones

Saturday Nov 6 8PM
Tuesday Nov 9 8PM
Sunday Nov 14 2PM
Thursday Nov 18 8PM
(Tuesday evening prices)
Friday Nov 26 8PM

IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

Rossini
IN ITALIAN

Von Stade, Hinson/Nolen,
Brecknock*, Capecchi, Tozzi, Turnage,
Duykers, Harvey

Conductor: Varviso
Stage Director: G. Hager
Designer: Siercke
Chorus Director: Jones

Friday Nov 12 8PM
Wednesday Nov 17 8PM
Saturday Nov 20 8PM
Tuesday Nov 23 8PM
Thursday Nov 25 8PM†
Sunday Nov 28 2PM

†Special Thanksgiving Night
non-subscription performance,
Friday evening prices

*San Francisco Opera debut
**American opera debut

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Special Events

OPERA ACTION PREVIEWS

MARIN

Previews held at Del Mar School, 105 Avenida Mira Flores, Tiburon. Lectures begin at 8:30 PM. Series registration is \$8.50; single tickets are \$2 (\$1.50 for students and senior citizens). For information, please call (415) 435-0191.

September 16
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO
Ramona Rockway and Singers

October 14
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN
Dr. Jan Popper

October 21
THE MAKROPULOS CASE
Dr. Dale Harris

November 4
ANGLE OF REPOSE
Robert Commanday

A Gala "Overture to the Previews" performance by San Francisco Opera's Brown Bag Opera singers will be held on September 23, 2 PM, at the Sausalito Women's Club, 120 Central Avenue. A donation of \$3.00 is requested. For reservations, please call (415) 332-3922.

SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Community Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road, at 7:30 PM. Series registration is \$10; single tickets are \$2.50 (\$1.25 for students with I.D.). For information, please call (415) 321-9875, or 941-3890.

September 12
THAÏS
Dr. Dale Harris

September 19
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO
Ramona Rockway

October 10
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN
Dr. Jan Popper

October 24
THE MAKROPULOS CASE
Dr. Dale Harris

October 31
ANGLE OF REPOSE
Robert Commanday

Bus Service to San Francisco Opera Performances:

Weekend bus service is available from Stanford Shopping Center. For information, please contact: Palo Alto (415) 493-8636 South Peninsula (408) 295-0073 or (415) 326-0856

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

All Junior League opera previews will be held at the Curran Theatre with the exception of Nov. 2, indicated below. Previews begin at 11 AM. For information, please call (415) 567-8600.

October 1
PETER GRIMES
Dr. Jan Popper

October 11
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN
Michael Barclay

October 20
THE MAKROPULOS CASE
Dr. Dale Harris

November 2
ANGLE OF REPOSE
Robert Commanday
(First Unitarian Church)

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

Two series are offered: Daytime Series, presented in cooperation with West Valley College Community Services and Inter-Disciplinary Enrichment Seminars, at Saratoga Community Theater, Fruitvale Avenue, Saratoga, California. Previews held from 10 AM-12 noon. For 1/2 unit of college credit, please contact LS-90 Series Office, West Valley College, (408) 867-2200, extensions 407 or 363. For other information, please call Mrs. Jerrine Jeffery, (415) 984-3636 or Artie Nicholson, (415) 967-3590.

September 10
THAÏS
Dr. Dale Harris

September 24
TOSCA
James H. Schwabacher, Jr.

October 7
PETER GRIMES
Dr. Jan Popper

October 22
THE MAKROPULOS CASE
Dr. Dale Harris

Evening Series, presented in cooperation with De Anza College as part of their Seminar Lecture Series-90. Previews held from 8-10 PM at De Anza College Campus, 21250 Stevens Creek Boulevard, Cupertino, California. There is a \$2 advance registration fee which permits entrance to one or all previews. For a 1/2 unit of college credit, please contact SLS-90, De Anza College, (408) 257-5550. For other information, please call (415) 984-3636 or (415) 967-3590.

September 17
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO
Dr. Jan Popper

October 1
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN
Dr. Arthur Regan

October 15
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/II PAGLIACCI
James H. Schwabacher, Jr.

October 29
ANGLE OF REPOSE (The Novel)
Dr. Wallace Stegner, Author

November 5
ANGLE OF REPOSE (The Opera)
Robert Commanday

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Special Events

continued

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Weekend bus service is available from San Jose, Los Gatos and Palo Alto. For information, please call (408) 295-0073, 296-4597 or 241-9381.

UC-BERKELEY EXTENSION LECTURE SERIES

DR. JAN POPPER LECTURES will be given at 2 locations:
San Francisco Series, Monday evenings at 7:30 PM at UC Extension Center, 55 Laguna. Series registration is \$40; single tickets are \$5, on a space available basis, payable at the door. For further information (on either the San Francisco or Berkeley series), please call (415) 861-6833, or 642-4111.

September 13
THAÏS

September 20
DIE WALKÜRE

September 27
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO

October 4
TOSCA

October 11
PETER GRIMES

October 18
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN

November 1
THE MAKROPULOS CASE

November 8
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/II PAGLIACCI

November 15
ANGLE OF REPOSE

November 22
IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

Berkeley Series, Tuesday evenings at 7:30 PM at 125 Morrison Hall on the Berkeley Campus. Series registration is \$20; single tickets are 5, on a space available basis, payable at the door.

September 21
DIE WALKÜRE

September 28
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO

October 5
TOSCA

October 12
PETER GRIMES

October 19
ANGLE OF REPOSE

NAPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

For the fourth year Napa Community College is offering a ten-week course called ADVENTURES IN OPERA. The course, which introduces the Sunday Series at San Francisco Opera, will be held in the Library of Ridgeview Junior High School, 2447 Old Sonoma

Road, Napa, California, on Wednesday nights from 7-9 p.m. Registration for the entire series is \$7.00. Ernest A. Fly will again teach the course, using his collection of complete opera recordings, Metropolitan Opera filmstrips, and also introducing guest speakers and vocal artists. For further information, please call Mr. Fly at (707) 224-6162.

September 15
THAÏS

September 22
DIE WALKÜRE

September 29
TOSCA

October 6
PETER GRIMES

October 13
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN

October 20
THE MAKROPULOS CASE

October 27
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO

November 3
ANGLE OF REPOSE

November 10
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/II PAGLIACCI

November 17
IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

YWCA LECTURE SERIES

For the fifth year, the Downtown Center of the YWCA is offering an eight-week course called OPERA SPECTRUMS. The course, held on Monday evenings from 7-9 p.m., at 620 Sutter Street, includes the use of recordings, rare films, slides, live vocal and musical demonstrations, and group discussions of performances attended. Music critic, William Aguiar, Jr., will be the lecturer. Series registration is \$30; single tickets are \$4, on a space available basis, payable at the door. For further information, please call (415) 775-6500.

September 20
THAÏS

September 27
DIE WALKÜRE

October 4
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO

October 11
TOSCA and *THE MAKROPULOS CASE*

October 18
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN
and *PETER GRIMES*

October 25
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/II PAGLIACCI

November 1
ANGLE OF REPOSE and a Survey of contemporary American opera

November 8
IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

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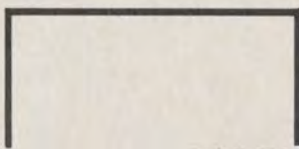
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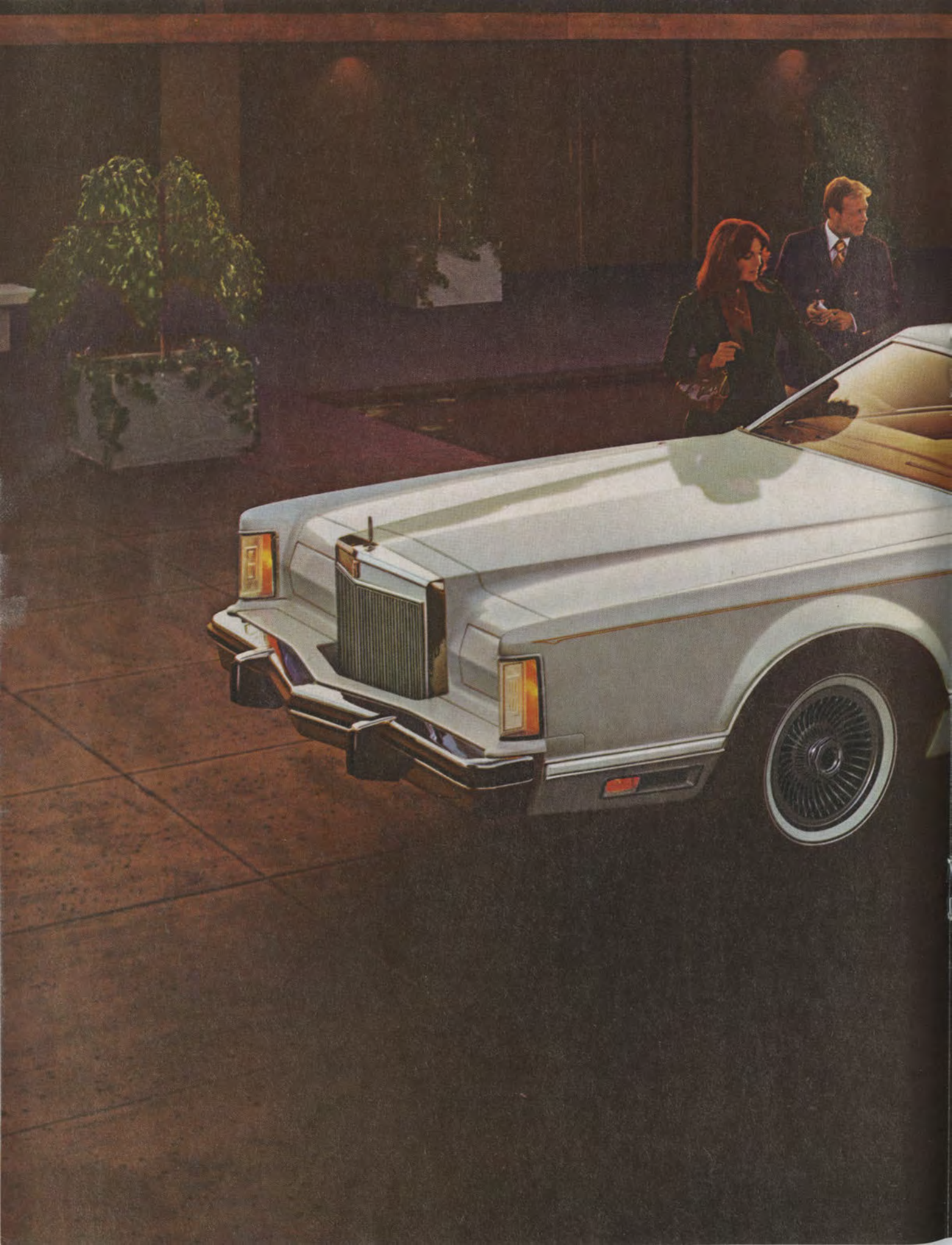
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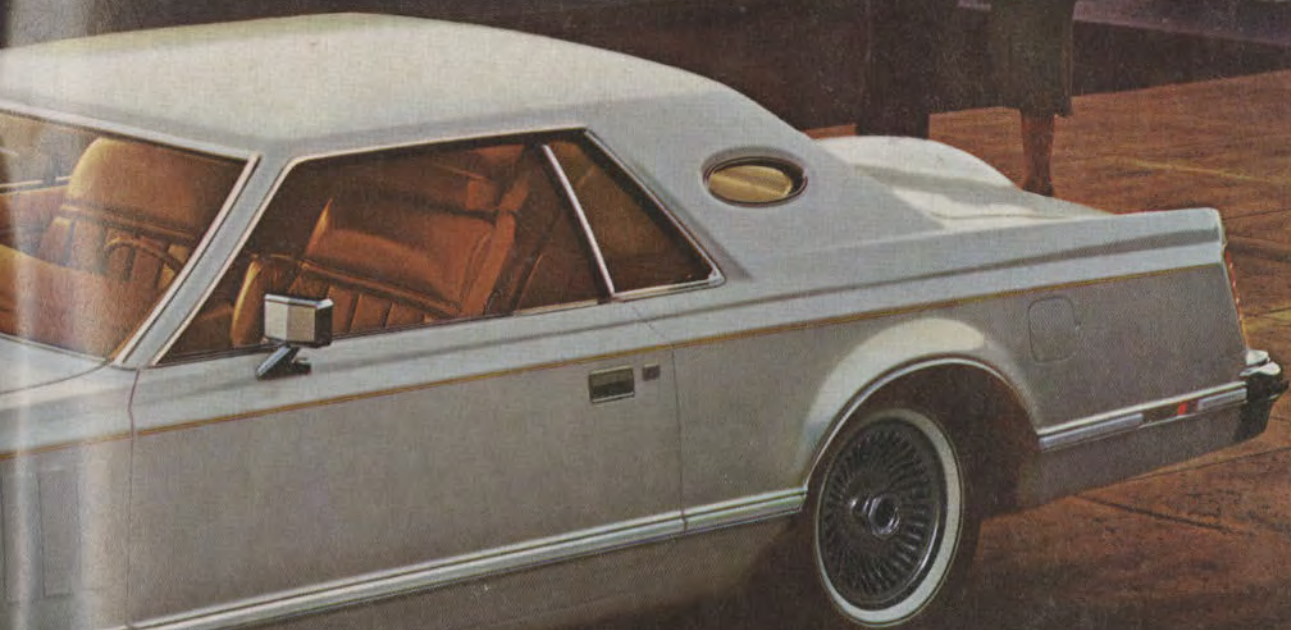
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Angle of Repose

(IN ENGLISH)

Opera in three acts by ANDREW IMBRIE

Text by OAKLEY HALL

Based on the novel by WALLACE STEGNER

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Shelly Ward
Susan Burling Ward
Oliver Ward
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Antonio
Dahl
Frank Sargent
Joaquin Miller
Financiers

Billy Daley
Guests

Agnes Ward
Ollie Ward
Ellen Ward

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Chester Ludgin
Susanne Marsee
Nancy Shade*
Dale Duesing**
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Neil Cooper*,
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Miners and their wives, San Franciscans, financiers, lynch mob, Leadville guests, banjo player, fiddler, bass player, Boise Valley residents

*San Francisco Opera debut
**American debut

PLACE AND TIME:	Grass Valley, California, the present; California, Colorado and Idaho, 1876 to 1890
ACT I, Scene 1	Grass Valley, California (the present), and New Almaden, California (1876)
Scene 2	Interior of mercury mine, New Almaden (1876)
Scene 3	Nob Hill, San Francisco (1876)
ACT II	Grass Valley (the present), and Leadville, Colorado (1879)
ACT III Prelude	Conquering the desert
Scene 1	Grass Valley (the present)
Scene 2	Boise Valley (1890)
Scene 3	Grass Valley (the present)

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The performance will last approximately three hours and fifteen minutes

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TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 9, 1976 AT 8:00
SUNDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 14, 1976 AT 2:00
THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 18, 1976 AT 8:00
FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 26, 1976 AT 8:00 (Broadcast)

SYNOPSIS/Angle of Repose

ACT ONE—Lyman Ward, a historian, is suffering from a crippling disease which has led to his wife's desertion. He has retreated to the Grass Valley cottage that belonged to his grandparents. His grandmother was a minor literary figure in the west, his grandfather an engineer; he is writing their history, hoping to find meaning in his life from a study of theirs. His daughter, Shelly, arrives, having broken up with the man she has been living with, to announce that her mother wishes to return to Lyman. He is, however, unforgiving. As he describes his book to Shelly, the past opens. The scene is New Almaden, California, site of the mercury mine, the year 1876. Young Susan Burling Ward is joining her husband, Oliver, after the long journey from her home in the east. Oliver discourages the miners from holding a shivaree for the newlyweds. Susan meets Oliver's admiring young assistant, Frank Sargent, and the mine manager, Dahl, who is persuaded to allow her to visit the mine. During this expedition a miner is killed. Susan is shocked by Dahl's cruelty to the miners, and incites Oliver and Frank to insubordination, for which they are fired. Sometime later, in a Nob Hill ballroom, Oliver seeks to interest San Francisco investors in his new formula for cement and Susan meets Joaquin Miller, the "Poet of the Frontier." He warns her that she cannot expect to live among the amenities of San Francisco. Her husband is a man of the mountains and the frontiers and Susan must follow where Oliver's work takes him.

ACT TWO—Shelly voices her great bitterness against the wives, husbands, and lovers who desert and betray. Lyman continues with his story: the San Francisco deal has come to nothing and Susan and Oliver now reside in the Colorado mining

town of Leadville. Here the past reopens, with indications that Susan's emotional dependence upon Frank Sargent has increased in these harsh surroundings. A lynching party passes by on the way to the hanging of a claim-jumper. Frank is involved, and while Oliver repudiates such frontier justice he continues to value Frank's friendship. During a party at the Wards' cottage Oliver is offered a position with the United States Geological Survey. This has been his fondest dream, but it would mean that he and Susan would be separated, and so it is impossible. Instead he chooses to plan and build an irrigation system in the Boise Valley. Susan is reluctant to try to make a life in what she regards as desert exile, but she is bound to go where her husband's work takes him. Shelly guesses that she will be unfaithful to Oliver.

ACT THREE — Lyman continues Susan's story. The Wards have lived in the Boise Valley for eleven years, but despite the birth of two children Susan is desperately unhappy. The past opens on the bank of the Susan Canal, whose completion is being celebrated. As a festive crowd passes by, Susan is left alone with her child, Agnes, when Frank appears. He begs her to come to San Francisco with him. The child wanders off and is drowned. Frank hangs himself as responsible for the tragedy. Susan is never to be forgiven by Oliver during the fifty years that remain of their life together. Ellen, Lyman's wife, arrives at the Grass Valley cottage, and past and present come together as Susan's persistent voice is able to impress upon both Lyman and Shelly the long, barren anguish of the unforgiven, and the unforgiving. Lyman and Ellen are reunited, with their daughter's blessing.

On Creating an Opera

by ANDREW IMBRIE

When Kurt Herbert Adler asked me to write a work to help celebrate the Bicentennial, I had just read Wallace Stegner's novel *Angle of Repose*. It was still vivid in my memory, and I felt that, provided a sympathetic and resourceful librettist could be found, the story had great operatic possibilities, and would, moreover, be suited for the occasion, dealing as it does with our national and regional heritage. It impressed me particularly because it exemplifies so poignantly the paradoxes inherent in our recurrent American dream of opening and civilizing new frontiers.

Beyond this, I was strongly attracted by the people who inhabit the pages of Stegner's book. The story was suggested by, and based on, the adventures of an actual family of early settlers. But their characters and the events of their lives have been so altered to fit Stegner's artistic needs that the result must be regarded as fictional, and judged accordingly. Similarly, when Oakley Hall consented to adapt the novel for the operatic stage, he found it necessary, because of his own artistic requirements and the demands of the theater, to make further changes. Yet the characters as they now stand still invite the composer to interpret them as "real" people (though one can also think of Oliver symbolically as the one who "opens," and Susan as the one who tries to "civilize" the West).

They are real because they are human and complex. Susan, brought up in a Quaker tradition of ladylike gentility, has studied art in New York and brings with her, as she joins her new husband in the West, an illustrator's eye for the picturesque and a horror of the uncouth. Her natural warmth, vivacity, and pluck sustain her, but she remains determinedly aloof from the reality of her situation. Oliver, loyal, resourceful, and idealistic, tender but taciturn, whose code requires absolute trust between persons, cannot bring himself at the end to utter the redeeming word. Their descendent Lyman, embittered, seeks peace and self-knowledge. He senses obscurely that through the study of his grandparents' lives he may penetrate the secret of their tragedy and learn to transcend it in his own life. His daughter Shelly, in full revolt against all injustice, refuses to "learn the ways of the world," demands confrontations and showdowns, yet desperately desires her parents' reconciliation. In setting this libretto to music, I found myself getting to know these people better—even, in a sense, becoming them.

Two devices, derived from the novel and preserved in the libretto, should be mentioned because of their potency as sources of musical structure. First, the frequent interpenetration of scenes from present and past provides opportunities for changes of pace, irony, and formal contrast as the descendants observe, comment upon, and learn from their an-

cestors' lives while proceeding toward the turning-point in their own. Second, Susan's letters to Augusta, her correspondent in the East (whom we never meet in the opera) serve in the novel as a window into her soul at the various stages of her emotional life, and survive in the opera as four "letter-arias." These, besides serving the same function as in the novel, also fill the operatic role of providing pretexts for formal soliloquies; and together they create a kind of superstructure, one of several which regulate the large-scale musical flow.

The literary style of the libretto is straightforward: a quality that I welcome, since it has given me every chance to bring out through music the pathos, humor, power, and tenderness that lie in the ordinary rhythms and stresses of the American vernacular. To the attentive American musician, these patterns are subtle, resonant, and capable of numerous levels of musical realization, both dramatic and lyrical.

The question of the *musical* style is hardest for the composer himself to discuss. Even a technical description would have to be stated—by me—negatively: for example, there is at no point in this work a conscious recourse to serialism (though I have employed it elsewhere); there are leitmotifs, perhaps, but what they refer to cannot be filed away in neat Wagnerian pigeon-holes (I often found myself coming up with subconscious cross-references, for which I can now find literary justifications, should I wish to take the trouble). After all, any active composer with a number of instrumental and vocal works under his belt will have developed a personal style which he will find as difficult to describe as his own voice, manner, or personality. Yet he is intuitively aware of the essential character of his own style, which arises out of his own identity, sensibility, and experience.

There are two pitfalls awaiting one who is confronted with the opportunity to compose a work for a major opera company. One is the impact of the lavish resources of the lyric theater, which are now placed at his disposal. The operatic tradition is one in which I feel that my own music can take its place, since my musical thought has always been predicated on a concern for line and dramatic shape. Yet the rich possibilities of stage presentation by the best professional singers, conductor, director, orchestra, chorus, dancers, lighting, and costuming can tempt the composer to wallow in an easy opulence (which tends to become a kind of bloated celebration of the death-wish)—a sin I hope I have avoided without neo-classic prudery.

A more dangerous pitfall is that of eclecticism. In a stage work, a composer must conjure up a time and place—perhaps several. It is not enough for him to achieve this through the juxtaposition of

motley elements, popular, nostalgic, "ethnic," and sophisticated. The sense of his own style leads, rather, to a strong urge toward unity: one which demands that these elements be reconciled and absorbed. I hope that the presence of such elements in this opera will have been made to seem convincing and even inevitable. They include a dance literally quoted from a collection of reels and hornpipes actually used in California one hundred years ago, a Vienna waltz that swirls into and out of the prevailing harmonic idiom, a Cornish miners' song set to an authentic text, a setting of a fragment of Keats in an evocation of "Romantic" style, and a mountain ditty accompanied by five-

stringed banjo and country fiddle. Still other stylistic references, some oblique, some quite direct, will also be evident throughout the score. The methods by which I have tried to integrate them vary, as does the degree of "literalness" or "authenticity" of each; in fact, it is the very multiplicity of approaches to the problem which will, I believe, help to solve it.

What I feel to be essential is that the listener come away with a strong sense of musical individuality and wholeness. This effect should be reinforced by the overriding importance that I attach to the vocal, lyrical impulse, which is at the heart of opera.

The Librettist's Role

by OAKLEY HALL

I came into the project after other hands had already made forays into a libretto for Wallace Stegner's novel, *Angle of Repose*. There was a frantic press for time, as historically there seems always to have been for librettists—whose work must be finished, or at least well along, before the composer can begin his.

The novel is a rich and complex one, and the first task was one of compression. Characters had to be excised or combined, scenes collapsed, and whole sections left out. Throughout I was torn between trying not to damage the fabric of a novel I respected, and what I conceived to be my main effort—to provide the composer with characters and scenes that would challenge his musical imagination.

The story the libretto tells operates in two time sequences, the present in a cottage in Grass Valley, where Lyman Ward, an historian, is convalescing from near-fatal surgery, and from his wife's desertion; and the past of his grandparents, for Ward is writing a biography of his grandmother, a minor western literary figure, in whose life he discovers more and more parallels with his own. Ward's daughter, Shelly, also a walking wounded from betrayal in love, arrives, and the two histories, one upstage and one down, progress through three acts.

As Lyman describes his grandmother's life to Shelly, the past opens in New Almaden, California, in the year 1876. The young artist, Susan Burling Ward, has arrived to join the husband she hardly knows, Oliver Ward, resident engineer at the New Almaden Mine. Oliver has a hero-worshipping young assistant, Frank Sargent. During Susan's visit to the mine, a miner is killed in an accident, and Susan is so shocked at the callousness of the mine manager that she urges Oliver and Frank to rebellion, for which they lose their jobs. In San Francisco, Oliver tries to interest Nob Hill financiers in his formula for cement, while Joaquin Miller, 'the Poet of the Frontier,' warns Susan she must not expect to live in civilized San Francisco, for she must follow where her husband's work takes him.

It takes him to mining camps and construction sites throughout the west, first to Leadville, and later to the Boise Valley, where he is to build an irrigation system. Always, the enamored Frank Sargent is in

attendance, until finally in his torment he declares his undying love to Susan, and flees.

Despite the birth of two children, and some success as an artist and writer, Susan is desperately unhappy in what she considers to be a desert, both of her spirit and literally. During the celebrations for the opening of the Susan Canal, the first stage of Oliver's project, Frank Sargent returns. He begs Susan to escape to San Francisco with him, they embrace, and this moment of disloyalty and inattention on Susan's part results in the death of her youngest child. Frank subsequently hangs himself as responsible for the tragedy, but it is Susan who is never to be forgiven during the fifty years that remain of her life with Oliver. Lyman tells Shelly that during his boyhood he never saw them kiss; he never saw them touch.

Ellen, Lyman's unfaithful wife, arrives unexpectedly at the Grass Valley cottage, and past and present come together in the finale, as three generations must face the problems of betrayal and forgiveness.

Composer and librettist worked together in a catch-as-catch-can manner over two years; via the University of California tie-line, the telephone, mail, and brief sessions at the Imbrie house in Berkeley and the Hall house in Squaw Valley. Important meetings took place at a hamburger stand on Lake Tahoe, and in the board room of the College Entrance Examination Board in New York City.

The completed libretto bears only skeletal resemblance to the working synopsis. When Andrew Imbrie's musical interest was caught, I would expand a scene, or blow up a line or two into an aria or a duet, streamlining elsewhere in the interests of pace and economy. Warnings rang in my head that, for instance, the curtain of the War Memorial Opera House takes 30 seconds to descend, and thus no 'hurricane' curtains could be counted on to reinforce dramatic climaxes; that certain words are unsingable ('cement,' upon which one major scene rather depended, is one); and that necessary information should not be given to the chorus to convey, for their words are liable to be unintelligible.

I found the writing of the libretto, a new form for me, with its ancient requirements and strictures, to be tremendously exciting.

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Archives for the Performing Arts, which
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Novel Into Opera

continued from p. 30



Costume sketch by Lawrence Casey

once of *Angle of Repose*. He had met Stegner on the Peninsula through conductor Sandor Salgo, and later at meetings of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, an elite group to which both belong. When Imbrie called him in Santa Fe, Stegner was temporarily stunned — he couldn't conceive of an operatic version of his far-wandering, historically dense novel (based

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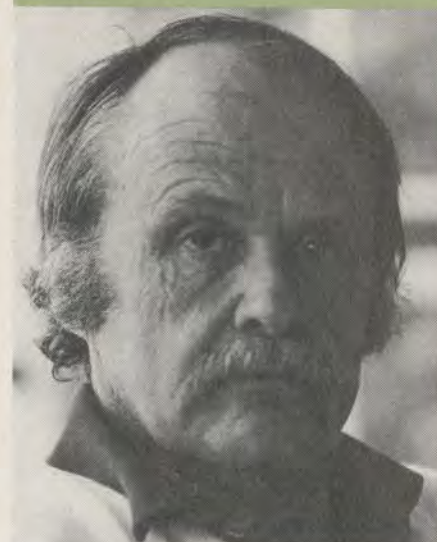
Profiles

ANDREW IMBRIE



Andrew Imbrie, composer of *Angle of Repose*, though born in New York, spent most of his early years in Princeton, New Jersey. At the age of four he started studying piano, and in 1930 became a pupil of Leo Ornstein, until 1942. Imbrie had begun to compose when he studied piano, and after spending a summer with Nadia Boulanger, he began work with Roger Sessions. In 1939 he entered Princeton University and continued his studies with Sessions through his graduation in 1942, when he joined the U.S. Army. Following World War II, Imbrie went to the University of California at Berkeley, where Sessions was on the faculty. In 1947 he received both his Master's Degree and an appointment as an instructor on the University's faculty. His acceptance of the post was delayed so he might accept the Prix de Rome which he was awarded that year. Returning to the University he was quickly promoted and became a professor. Among his compositions are four string quartets, the first of which won the New York Critics' Circle Award, and three symphonies, the Third recently recorded by Harold Farberman leading the London Symphony. He has additionally composed concerti for violin and cello and an opera, *Three Against Christmas*, performed at the University of California at Berkeley in 1964. This past year his Piano Concerto, written for Gita Karasik, was first performed. In 1969 Imbrie was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

OAKLEY HALL



Californian Oakley Hall is responsible for the libretto of *Angle of Repose*. A graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, Hall pursued additional studies at the University of Geneva, University of Paris and Columbia University. He received his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Iowa. Among his numerous novels are *So Many Doors*, *The Pleasure Garden*, *A Game for Eagles*, *Report from Beau Harbor*, *The Adelita*, *Warlock* and *The Downhill Racers*, the last two being the sources for the motion pictures *Warlock* and *Downhill Racer*. His novel *The Lord of Spiral Castle* will be published by Doubleday. Currently a professor of English at the University of California at Irvine, Hall has served as director of the University's programs in writing since 1970. Hall lives in Olympic Valley, is married and has four children.

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NANCY SHADE



For her San Francisco Opera debut, young soprano Nancy Shade creates the role of Susan Burling Ward in the premiere staging of *Angle of Repose*. A vocal student of Vera Scammon, Miss Shade made her New York debut with Eve Queler's Opera Orchestra of New York, in a concert performance of Respighi's *Belfagor*. At Indiana University, she performed Leonora in *Il Trovatore* and the title role in *Salome*. With New York City Opera she has performed Nedda in *I Pagliacci*, the title role in *Madama Butterfly*, Margherita and Elena in *Mefistofele*, and Marietta in *Die Tote Stadt*. She achieved international recognition with her portrayal of the title role in *Manon Lescaut* in the 1973 Visconti staging of the Puccini opera at the Spoleto Festival, which was subsequently presented in Cincinnati in 1974. That same year also marked her London debut in *Mefistofele* in a concert performance of the opera, which led to her 1976 Covent Garden engagement as Giorgetta in *Il Tabarro*. In 1975 she sang for the first time in Germany, interpreting the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Hamburg State Opera. Her 1976 schedule has included operatic performances across the country: *Il Tabarro* and *I Pagliacci* for New Orleans Opera, *Così fan tutte* for Cincinnati Opera, the world premiere of Menotti's *The Hero* for Philadelphia Opera, and *Salome* and *La Traviata* for Santa Fe Opera.

SUSANNE MARSEE



Mezzo soprano Susanne Marsee makes her San Francisco Opera debut this season as Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino* and Shelly Ward in the world premiere of *Angle of Repose*. A native Californian, she made her operatic debut with New York City Opera in 1970, portraying Beverly Sills' rival, Sara, in *Roberto Devereux*. The mezzo has sung opposite Miss Sills in two additional New York City Opera productions; in 1973, Miss Marsee was Jane Seymour in *Anna Bolena* and in 1975 interpreted the trouser-role of Orsini in *Lucrezia Borgia*. Other roles in her New York City Opera repertoire are the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Sextus in *Giulio Cesare*, Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Siebel in *Faust* and Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Miss Marsee has performed with the opera companies of Milwaukee, Washington, D.C., Houston, San Diego and Philadelphia, as well as with symphonies at Hollywood Bowl, the Kennedy Center, Caramoor Festival and Cincinnati May Festival. She was heard in the Public Broadcasting Service television production of Hans Werner Henze's *Rachel: La Cubana*. Last year she opened the New Orleans Opera season in a production of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*. This past summer Miss Marsee briefly left the operatic stage to perform the role of Julie in the Cincinnati Opera staging of Jerome Kern's musical *Showboat*.



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EDNA GARABEDIAN



Embarking upon her fifth season with San Francisco Opera, Edna Garabedian is Waltraute in *Die Walküre* and Ellen Ward in *Angle of Repose*. The mezzo soprano made her debut with this company in 1971, singing Annina in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Olga in *Eugene Onegin*. The following year, she was heard in the Fiftieth Anniversary Season production of the Ring cycle, as Erda in *Das Rheingold*, Waltraute in *Die Walküre* and the First Norn in *Die Götterdämmerung*. Last season, she portrayed Madelon in *Andrea Chenier* and the Third Lady in *The Magic Flute*. Miss Garabedian is additionally remembered here for her critically applauded interpretation of Maddalena in the 1971 Spring Opera Theater production of *Rigoletto*. She made her New York City Opera debut as Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* in 1964, and has performed with Kansas City Lyric Opera, Baltimore Opera, Opera Society of Washington and Houston Grand Opera. The mezzo has also been a guest soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic and the St. Louis Symphony, among other orchestras. In 1974, Miss Garabedian took part in a special educational tour project in South America, where she taught as well as performed.

DONNA PETERSEN



For her fifteenth season as a member of San Francisco Opera, Donna Petersen sings Grimgerde in *Die Walküre*, Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes*, a child and a solo voice in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Mamma Lucia in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Ada Hawkes in *Angle of Repose*. Last year, the mezzo soprano was Inez in *Il Trovatore*, Mary in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the Governess in *Pique Dame* and Amelia's servant in *Simon Boccanegra*. Among her past roles with the company are Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, Filipyevna in *Eugene Onegin*, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Giovanna in *Rigoletto*. In addition to interpreting 25 roles with San Francisco Opera, Miss Petersen has toured extensively with Western Opera Theater and appeared with Spring Opera Theater where she was last heard in the 1974 production of *L'Ormino*. A performer with San Diego Opera and Guild Opera of Los Angeles, she made her highly successful Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in 1974, as Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes*, a role she will repeat with that company in 1977. Miss Petersen additionally performs as guest soloist with the San Francisco, Oakland and Honolulu Symphonies and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. She was recently awarded the Knight's Cross of the Royal Order of Denneborg by Her Majesty Queen Margarethe II of Denmark, an honor recognizing Miss Petersen's service to the Danish-American community of Northern California.

CHESTER LUDGIN



Baritone Chester Ludgin, creating the role of Lyman Ward in *Angle of Repose*, returns to San Francisco Opera where he was last heard in 1967 in several productions, which included his interpretation of the Presiding Officer in the American premiere of Gunther Schuller's *The Visitation*. With this company he also created the role of Baron Prus in *The Makropulos Case* in 1966 and Boris Ismailov in *Katerina Ismailova* in 1964, both works first staged in this country by San Francisco Opera. Ludgin additionally was the first performer of the role of John Proctor in *The Crucible* for New York City Opera, which he repeated for Spring Opera Theater of San Francisco. He has also participated in world premieres of works by Elie Siegmeister, Norman Dello Joio, and Douglas Moore. In the traditional repertoire, San Franciscans will remember Ludgin's performances in *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Boris Godunov*, *Fidelio*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *La Gioconda*. A frequent performer on this country's leading concert stages as well, Ludgin most recently appeared in another world premiere, Richard Owens' *Mary Dyer* with the Eastern Opera Company.

WILLIAM LEWIS



William Lewis returns to San Francisco Opera as Albert Gregor in *The Makropulos Case* and Frank Sargent in *Angle of Repose*. In his debut season last year, the tenor was hailed for his dual interpretation of the Steersman and Erik in the unorthodox Jean Pierre Ponnelle staging of *Der Fliegende Holländer*. Born in Oklahoma, Lewis studied at the University of Colorado, Texas Christian University and New York University. He was a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Auditions and made his debut as Narraboth in *Salome* in 1958, being the youngest tenor to debut in a major role with the company. Lewis is an invaluable member of the Metropolitan, and has frequently been called upon to perform Don Jose in *Carmen*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Aeneas in *Les Troyens*, the Drum Major in *Wozzeck*, Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino*, Arrigo in *I Vespri Siciliani*, and Steva in *Jenufa*, naming only a few of the seventy roles he has sung with the New York company. He has also appeared with every major musical organization in New York City, and has sung in the American premieres of Stravinsky's *Threni*, and Carl Orff's *Antigone* and *Prometheus*. In February, 1976, he participated in the world premiere of *Be Glad then, America* at Pennsylvania state university, under the musical direction of Sarah Caldwell. In May, he performed with Miss Caldwell's Opera Company of Boston in Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*. Prior to joining San Francisco Opera this year, Lewis, who resides in Palm Springs, travelled to Santa Fe Opera for productions of *La Traviata* and Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All*.

DALE DUESING



Baritone Dale Duesing makes his American operatic debut as Oliver Ward in the world premiere of *Angle of Repose*, and also interprets Figaro in the student matinees of *The Barber of Seville* (November 17 and 24). Born in Milwaukee, Duesing began his musical studies as a pianist. In 1967 he won first prize in the Wisconsin District Metropolitan Opera Auditions and received a special award for further European study. Recipient of a Rockefeller Grant in 1968, he began his operatic career with the Münster Municipal Opera. Since then he has appeared with the opera companies of Berlin, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf, Lübeck, Wiesbaden, Rotterdam, and Kassel. In 1973 he first sang at the Hamburg Staatsoper in the role of Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*. This past summer he bowed at England's Glyndebourne Festival, as Olivier in Strauss' *Capriccio*. His performing repertoire includes the varied roles of Raimbaud in Rossini's *Conte d'Ory*, Prince Yeletsy in *Pique Dame*, Ford in *Falstaff*, Ottone in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Sid in *Albert Herring* and the title role in Händel's *Giulio Cesare*. During the current operatic season, Duesing is engaged by Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, and sings recitals in Munich, Hamburg, Bremen, Paris, Chicago and Milwaukee.

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JOSHUA HECHT



Returning to San Francisco Opera after an eleven-year absence, Joshua Hecht performs the One-Eyed Man in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Doctor Kolenaty in *The Makropulos Case* and Dahl in *Angle of Repose*. He debuted with this company in 1961, singing bass roles in nine productions, including the world premiere of Norman Dello Joio's *Blood Moon*, as well as *Boris Godunov*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Nabucco*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Rigoletto*. In 1964 he was engaged by Seattle Opera to sing Scarpia in that company's first staging of *Tosca*, an event which initiated his transition from bass to baritone roles. Later that same year with San Francisco Opera, he was Escamillo in *Carmen*. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1965 in the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer*. Hecht moved to Italy to continue exploring the baritone repertoire, adding demanding Verdi roles to his performance schedule. In 1975, he was *Rigoletto* at the Teatro Verdi in Pisa, Germont in *La Traviata* at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, and performed in *Fidelio*, *Tosca* and *Der Fliegende Holländer* for the Graz Festival. He recently interpreted Iago in *Otello* for the Opera Society of Washington. Hecht, a frequent oratorio and concert performer, is also comfortable in roles from classic works of the American musical theater.

JAMES JOHNSON



James Johnson makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season as Angelotti in *Tosca*, and sings Geisterbot in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and Joaquin Miller in *Angle of Repose*. The young bass received his musical training at Louisiana State University, the Curtis Institute of Music and the University of California, Los Angeles. After completing his studies, he entered several national and international vocal competitions, winning the Emma Fisher and Josef Rossof Awards in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, first prize in the WGN-Illinois Opera Guild Auditions and second prize in the Baltimore Opera Auditions. He made his American debut with Baltimore Opera in 1972 singing the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*. Johnson spent three years as a bass soloist with the United States Army Chorus and began his European operatic career in 1972, singing with several German municipal opera companies. He has performed at Cologne Opera, Hanover Opera and Bavarian State Opera. His performing repertoire includes Orestes in *Elektra*, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco* and Arkel in *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Johnson was also a featured performer in an Italian National Radio broadcast of Schoenberg's opera *Die glückliche Hand*.

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SAMUEL BYRD



Alabama-born baritone Samuel Byrd debuts with San Francisco Opera as a Watchman in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, and also performs the role of Billy Daley in the world premiere of *Angle of Repose*. A finalist in the 1975 San Francisco Opera Regional Auditions, he was a participant in that year's Merola Opera Program, singing in *Carmen* at Sigmund Stern Grove, as well as the Merola Fund benefit performance of Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera* at the Paul Masson Mountain Winery, where he was presented the Program's Bernhardt N. Poetz Award. This year he interpreted the title role in *The Barber of Seville* and Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro* for Western Opera Theater. In 1975, he was Escamillo in Tucson Opera's staging of *Carmen*. A 1972 graduate of Birmingham-Southern College, he received a Master of Music degree from the University of Texas. He was an apprentice artist with Santa Fe Opera in 1973 and 1974, and has been a guest soloist with the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. A finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions in 1972 and 1973, Byrd is a recent recipient of a grant from the National Opera Institute. Following his San Francisco Opera season, Byrd will return to Western Opera Theater for touring performances of *Don Pasquale* and *Susannah*.



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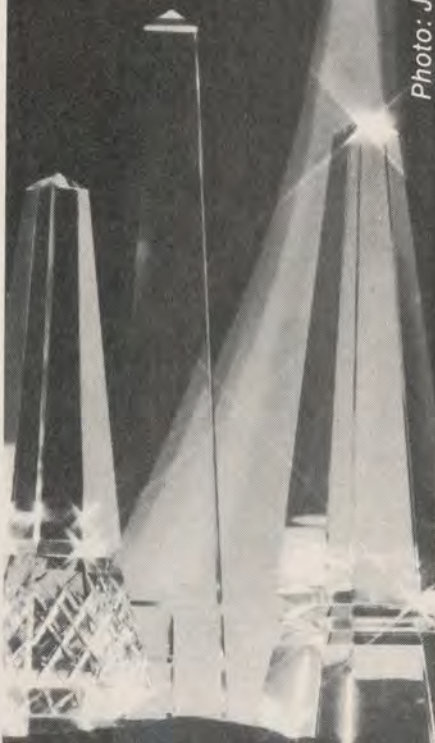
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WAYNE TURNAGE



Young baritone Wayne Turnage makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season, singing Ned Keene in *Peter Grimes*, as well as a Watchman in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Antonio in *Angle of Repose*, and Fiorello in both the regular and special student matinee stagings of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Turnage's first operatic experience was with the Metropolitan Opera Studio and subsequently he performed with Santa Fe Opera, Atlanta Opera and the Oberlin Music Theater. Interpreting the role of Robert Lincoln, he appeared in the 1972 National Educational Television production of *The Trial of Mary Lincoln*. During the 1974 Aspen Music Festival, he was heard in productions of *The Penitentes* and *Don Carlo*. He was Mercury in the New York premiere of *La Calisto* at the Eastern Opera Theater and Figaro for Opera/Omaha's *The Barber of Seville* in 1975. Turnage made his Spring Opera Theater debut in 1976 as Mike Myrick in *Meeting Mr. Ives*, a role he had created originally in the workshop production of the piece at the Lenox Arts Center. The singer, who holds a Master of Music degree from the University of North Carolina, was a winner of the Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions, and a finalist in the Metropolitan National Auditions.

JOHN DAVIES



During his second season with San Francisco Opera, John Davies sings a Surgeon in *La Forza del Destino*, the Jailer in *Tosca*, a Stagehand in *The Makropulos Case*, the Second Farmer in *I Pagliacci* and the First Miner in *Angle of Repose*. In his 1975 debut season, the bass baritone displayed his special singing and acting talents in productions of *Il Trovatore*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Werther* and *Andrea Chenier*. A two-year veteran of Western Opera Theater, he performed in the 1976 production of *The Barber of Seville* as Bartolo, *The Marriage of Figaro* alternating as Figaro and Antonio, and *The Portuguese Inn* as Roselbo. A native of Boston, Davies toured with Opera New England in 1974, singing the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly* and the Crapshooter in Lukas Foss' *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*. In October, 1974, he performed the title role in the coronation scene of *Boris Godunov* with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra at the Worcester Music Festival. A graduate of the Boston University of Fine and Applied Arts, Davies sang in the New Opera Company of Boston production of *The Marriage of Figaro* and the Opera Company of Boston's staging of *War and Peace*. This past summer, Davies made his second appearance as a soloist during the San Francisco Symphony Pops Concerts, conducted by Arthur Fiedler.



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JAMES HOBACK



Young tenor James Hoback makes his San Francisco Opera debut as the Apparition of a Youth in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, and subsequently performs here as the First Farmer in *I Pagliacci*, the Second Miner in *Angle of Repose*, as well as an Officer in the student matinee performances of *The Barber of Seville*. Immediately prior to the start of the season, Hoback was a finalist in the San Francisco Opera Auditions Grand Finals, winning the Il Cenacolo Award. A participant in the 1976 Merola Opera Program, he sang Nathanaël and Pitiichinaccio in the Sigmund Stern Grove performances of *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and interpreted Enrico in the Merola Fund benefit performance of Donizetti's *L'Ajo nell'Imbarazzo* at the Pau! Masson Mountain Winery. The tenor made his Spring Opera Theater debut in 1976 as Federico in *L'Amico Fritz*. He portrayed the title role in *Albert Herring* this spring for the inaugural season of St. Louis Opera Theater. A Bachelor of Music graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts, Hoback performed for three years with the Curtis Institute of Music Opera Theater. Hoback will interpret Fenton in *Falstaff* for Houston Grand Opera, following his San Francisco Opera assignments.

JOHN MAUCERI



New York born conductor John Mauceri makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season leading the premiere of *Angle of Repose*. Mauceri was on the Spring Opera Theater podium for the West Coast premiere of *Death in Venice* in 1975. He is a graduate of Yale University where he was appointed to the music faculty at the age of 21. He served as Leonard Bernstein's assistant for the new Metropolitan Opera production of *Carmen* and its subsequent recording. In the summer of 1973 Mauceri supervised and conducted the European premiere of Bernstein's *Mass* in Vienna, which was video-taped for television by the BBC. He was maestro for Santa Fe Opera's *Lulu*, as well as Welsh National Opera's *Don Carlo* and *The Barber of Seville* in 1974, the year of his first conducting assignments with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and San Francisco Symphony. He was at Wolf Trap in 1975 as guest conductor with the National Symphony Orchestra, and also led Santa Fe Opera's *Così fan tutte*. During the 1975-76 season he made debuts with Orchestre National de France, Scottish National Orchestra, New Orleans opera (*Madama Butterfly*), Scottish Opera (*Otello*), and the Metropolitan Opera, where he conducted *Fidelio*. Following his San Francisco Opera engagement, Mauceri goes to San Antonio for Wagner's *Rienzi* in its first American production since 1885. In the spring of 1977 the maestro conducts the Israel Philharmonic in concerts on Holy Saturday in Tel Aviv and on Easter Sunday in Jerusalem.



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GERALD FREEDMAN



Director Gerald Freedman makes his San Francisco Opera debut staging the world premiere production of *Angle of Repose*. Well known in the Bay Area for his work with Spring Opera Theater, Freedman received international recognition for his stagings of *Death in Venice* in 1975, Monteverdi's *Orfeo* in 1972 and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in both 1972 and 1976. Freedman's additional operatic credits have included the world premiere of Ginasera's *Beatrix Cenci* in 1971 for Opera Society of Washington, and *Die Fledermaus*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, and *Idomeneo* for New York City Opera in 1974. Respected in the legitimate theater as well, Freedman directed Stacy Keach in the New York Shakespeare Festival staging of *Hamlet* in 1972. In 1974 he staged *The Au Pair Man* with Julie Harris, and this past February guided Ruth Gordon and Lynn Redgrave in Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, both works performed at New York's Lincoln Center. From 1966 through 1970 Freedman was artistic director of the New York Public Theater, and recently has served with John Houseman as co-artistic director of the City Center Acting Company. With the latter organization, he staged productions of *Camino Real* and *Love's Labour Lost*. This summer his staging of *The Robber Bridegroom* was seen in Los Angeles, prior to its recent successful opening on Broadway.

DOUGLAS W. SCHMIDT



Douglas W. Schmidt makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season as scenic designer for *Angle of Repose*. During the 1975-76 season he was responsible for two productions at New York City Opera: Strauss' *Salome* and Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, both productions originating from Opera Society of Washington. Schmidt was formerly associated with the Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center and provided settings for over 20 productions, including *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Gorky's Enemies*, for which he won the 1972-73 Maharam Design Award. On Broadway Schmidt supplied designs for the still-running musical *Grease*, as well as *Veronica's Room* and the Andrews Sisters' hit musical *Over Here!*, the latter two shows honored with Drama Desk Awards for outstanding design. As principal designer for John Houseman's City Center Acting Company, Schmidt has designed 15 touring repertory productions. The current critically acclaimed revival of *The Three-penny Opera* is Schmidt's ninth production designed for the New York Shakespeare Festival since Schmidt began his association with the Festival in 1964 as a scenic assistant to Ming Cho Lee. Schmidt additionally collaborated with director Gerald Freedman on the new Broadway musical *The Robber Bridegroom*.

LAWRENCE CASEY



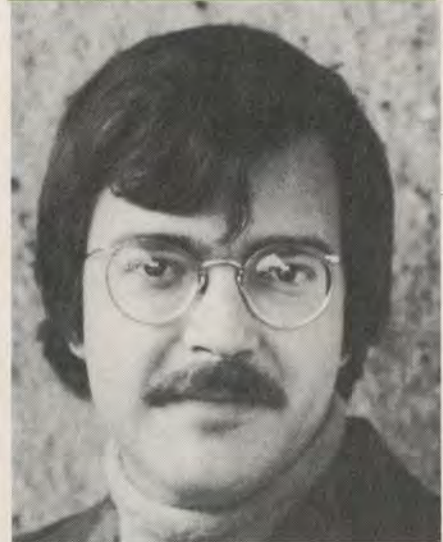
Costume coordinator for the entire international fall season, Lawrence Casey's costume creations for *Angle of Repose* mark his debut as a designer for San Francisco Opera. Originally trained in the discipline of architecture, Casey assisted Beni Montresor with set designs for the 1972 Honolulu Opera Society production of *Cinderella* and the Royal Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty*. He additionally aided Montresor in the design and execution of costumes for the Houston Grand Opera staging of *The Daughter of the Regiment*, subsequently seen at San Francisco Opera in 1974. For two seasons at the American Shakespeare Theater he served as costume assistant to Jane Greenwood for productions of *Measure for Measure*, *The Country Wife*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Macbeth*. Casey's association with Miss Greenwood included working with her on the 1973 San Francisco Opera production of *La Favorita* and the Opera Society of Washington staging of *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. His own costuming efforts were seen by audiences at the McCarter Theater in Princeton in performances of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Grave Undertaking* and *Mother Courage*. Casey also created costumes for the off-Broadway musical *She Would Be A Soldier* and the American Shakespeare Theater Bicentennial staging of *Our Town*.

JOHN McFALL



Kansas City-born John McFall makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season creating choreography for *Angle of Repose*. A member of San Francisco Ballet, McFall's choreographic work for that company includes *Symphonic Impressions* (1972), *Tealia* (1973), *Garden of Love's Sleep* (1976) and a work-in-progress, *Beethoven Quartets*, to be premiered in April 1977. With San Francisco Ballet he has been praised for his performances in *Cinderella*, *Don Juan*, *Symphony in C*, *Pulcinella Variations*, *Shinju*, *Harp Concerto* and *The Nutcracker*. With Seattle Opera he devised the ballet for the 1974 production of *Aida*, presented during the Spokane World Expo. McFall additionally was a featured dancer in Seattle productions of *Die Fledermaus* and *La Perichole*. He and his wife, Victoria Gyorfy, have appeared as featured soloists with the Munich Ballet, Seattle World's Fair and Bayerische Staatsoper.

THOMAS MUNN



Thomas Munn debuts with this company as lighting designer and director for the International fall season at San Francisco Opera, which includes new productions of *Thaïs*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci* and the world premiere of *Angle of Repose*. A versatile designer whose productions have been seen on Broadway, off-Broadway and in films and television, Munn recently created lighting and scenery for the Netherlands Opera production of *Macbeth*, in conjunction with co-designer Robert Israel. Prior to that Munn designed lighting for the Dutch musical *The Angel of Amsterdam*, written and produced to celebrate the 700th anniversary of that city. He was responsible for the lighting designs for the Lake George Opera Festival productions of *The Crucible*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *Die Fledermaus* and *La Traviata*, and designed the sets and lighting for the Minnesota Opera Company's *The Magic Flute*. In addition to his work in opera, Munn has designed over 20 industrial shows, and for the past six years has served as principal designer for the Mary Anthony Dance Theater of New York. Between design assignments he has served on the faculty of Columbia University, and has worked as a scenic artist on numerous films, commercials and television productions.

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On the northern side of the War Memorial Opera House, above the corridors of the auditorium, are the administrative and production offices of San Francisco Opera. On the fourth floor, around the corner from the elevator, and to the left, is the office of Ruth Felt, company administrator. Sitting on her desk is a large magnet; attached to it are small diamond shaped pieces of metal. When you move the bits of metal, the magnet holds them together in whatever shape you arrange.

Ruth's position with the company is not unlike that free-form sculpture; she holds together a variety of different units essential in producing opera. "Perhaps the most important part of my job is working with Mr. Adler in preparing and handling all labor negotiations with the seven unions that have contracts with San Francisco Opera. The principal singers, chorus, corps de ballet, stage directors, stage managers and their assistants are members of AGMA, the American Guild of Musical Artists. The orchestra is represented by the American Federation of Musicians, Local No. 6.

"The stagehands and shop carpenters belong to the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, I.A.T.S.E.,

Local 16. The painters are represented by Scenic and Title Artists, Local 816, the Wig-Makeup Department by Make-up Artists and Hair Stylist Local 706, the dressers by Theatrical Wardrobe Attendants Local 784 and the box office staff, ticket takers and ushers by the Theatrical Employee's Union, Local B-18.

"Most of our contracts have three year terms expiring on alternating years. For example, Stagehands and Scenic Artists Agreements have just been signed in 1976. At the end of this season, negotiations will begin for a new Musicians contract, and in 1978 it will be AGMA, Wig-Makeup and Wardrobe."

Earlier this season, an orchestra strike interrupted New York City Opera's fall season. Fortunately for San Francisco Opera, Ruth does not foresee the probability of such problems developing here. "In the past five years I have not seen any labor situation reach the point of the recent New York City Opera crisis. Our union relations are sound, based on years of mutual trust and respect."

Due to the lack of rehearsal facilities in the Opera House, and in wait of the Performing Arts Complex, Ruth

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ing adequate rehearsal space for productions at San Francisco Opera. Technical rehearsals begin in July, with staging rehearsals starting in mid-August. "In October, for example, five operas were in rehearsal simultaneously, necessitating the use of numerous halls around the city. This year we have rented the Golden Gate Theater, the Palace of Fine Arts, the Orpheum Theater, Nourse Auditorium and Gymnasium, the National Guard Armory, a Golden Gate Avenue warehouse and the International Center."

At the War Memorial Opera House itself, Ruth is the liaison between the management of the War Memorial and San Francisco Opera. This responsibility includes arranging parking facilities for the company and handling security, such as distribution of office keys, stage door passes and so forth.

Among Ruth's additional duties are the rental of keyboard instruments — eighteen Knabe rehearsal pianos, backstage organ, harpsichords, celestes and harmoniums — and maintaining the "backstage bank," cashing checks for staff personnel and visiting artists. Ruth's administrative talents are also enlisted by Spring Opera Theater and Western Opera Theater for their labor negotiations.

How did this pleasant, soft-spoken woman find herself the chief labor negotiator for one of this country's major opera companies? Ruth states, "I was working on the staff of Vice President Hubert Humphrey from 1965 to 1966. I decided, if I had a choice, I would want to be in the administration of a performing arts company. I had a letter of recommendation and several interviews in Los Angeles. I was soon hired to be the Assistant Concert Manager for the Department of Fine Arts Productions at UCLA, a job I held for five years. In 1971, I was recommended to Mr. Adler and interviewed for this present position. I have been here ever since." Perhaps ironically, Ruth's academic background makes her well suited for labor negotiations: she is a political science graduate of UCLA.

—Paul Chaplin

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Novel Into Opera

continued from p. 63



Costume sketch by Lawrence Casey

in part on the real life and letters of Mary Hallock Foote). But he was sufficiently intrigued to say Yes.

Yes, that is, as long as he didn't have to write the libretto. After five years' work on the novel, "I couldn't wade into it all, axe in hand, cut it back to suit, make it fluid." Imbrie applied to several other writers, without success.

(One potential librettist came up with an explicitly erotic version of Stegner's dream-finale — an onstage near-rape of the paralyzed, one-legged old historian — which wasn't quite what either artist had in mind.)

Both men were pleased when another Californian, Oakley Hall, took on the assignment, even though it meant that

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now there were three self-assured artists, and not two, arguing over what should be done. Most of the argument was carried on over a river of letters between Princeton, New Jersey (where Imbrie retreated for two years to write the score) and California. Hall, like Stegner a novelist and writing teacher, divides his year between U.C. Irvine and the Squaw Valley Writers' Conference.

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Novel Into Opera
continued from p. 77



Costume sketch by Lawrence Casey

Beyond the bare libretto, I can't tell you yet "what's missing" from the opera. As I write this, I haven't heard or seen it. At first, I was as astonished by the choice as Wallace Stegner. Short stories and novellas have translated well enough into operas (*Carmen*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Death in Venice*, *Billy Budd*). So have out-and-out melodramas (*Hugo* and *Dumas*, *Scott's*

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Bride of Lammermoor), super-exotic tales (*Thais, Salome, Hérodiade*). Opera seems to tend to the exotic and melodramatic, and to work best with fewest words. But the epic duration of *Angle of Repose* was, I thought, essential: Oliver and Susan Ward's everlasting uprooting and displacement from state to state, their decades-long sequence of hope and failure after hope and failure; their agonizing treks across 19th Century America at its most desolate and hostile: all that, and the interplaying across space (Eastern culture to Western rawness), across time (from Susan's century to her grandson Lyman's) that so illuminated a hundred years of American character. Get all that into an opera? As well try *Moby Dick*.

The laureate of Los Altos Hills has told the story of his West—the harsh, narrow Iowa farmland of his mother's people; the epic winters of a Saskatchewan boyhood; the "Mormon Country" where he first found a home, after too many years of *Moving On* — in book after book, for over forty years. He has tried to do justice to his own ancestors, to Westerners generally, and to individual heroes. Although he is disgusted by westerners' selfish exploitation of their all-to-limited resources, he is no less struck with admiration for the frontier adventure: the foot-loose, dream-drunken men, the wives who followed after, made homes, society. "She saw in his face that he had contracted the incurable Western disease. He had set his cross-hairs on the snowpeak of a vision, and there he would go, triangulating his way across a bone-dry future, dragging her and the children with him, until they had all died of thirst." (In the opera this becomes, "So you have married a westerner also, Mrs. Ward! These men with the crosshairs of their sights always locked on the most distant peak! Ah, their unfulfillable dreams!")

Stegner has tried, moreover, to reconcile this mixed admiration for his eld-

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Novel Into Opera

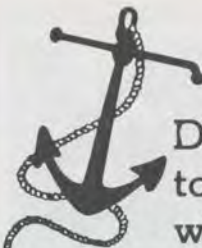
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ers and ancestors with his dismay at many of the ideas of his juniors and students. (As Director of Stanford's Creative Writing Workshop, he has guided more than his share of the best: Ken Kesey, Ernest Gaines, Vardis Fisher, Alan Lelchuk, Tom McGuane, Larry McMurty.) If he mixes fact and fiction freely—his novels shift into history, his memoirs drift into short stories—"Why not?" he asks. "My life is at least as much fiction as fact."

At one extreme, Wallace Stegner can seem a displaced, unhurried 19th Century "epic realist," even—in the sexual scandals he hurries into the final pages of several novels—a Victorian melodramatist. The illicit embrace, the drowned baby daughter in *Angle of Repose*: that I could fancy on an opera stage, almost too easily. (Oakley Hall, I see, has joined it to two other highly charged scenes from earlier in the novel: the triumphant opening of the Susan Canal twenty days before, and another embrace to 4th of July fireworks three days before the drowning. At such times this opera does indeed become "bigger than life," and more passionate than literature.)

Simplify and condense what is in the text, then open it all up again through the music: Imbrie half-seriously compares his work to that of the makers of "reconstituted" fruit juice or coffee—the novel is shrunk back into tiny nuggets of text, then made to bloom back to its essential fullness through music. Music can, he insists, convey the richest sense of time, time passing, centuries contrasting. Music exists in, is half-made out of time, in a way that words on a page are not. One thing he would not cut, at any cost, was the double time structure. That, to him, was what *Angle of Repose* is all about.

So Old Lyman Ward, c. 1970, sits in his wheelchair at stage left throughout the evoked dramatization of his grandparents' tragedy. Nineteenth century and twentieth century sing to each other in the final tableau. And all along, Imbrie hopes, music will be say-



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ing what text has been forced to leave out. Susan's *sung* letters to her friend Augusta ("not so much arias, as my answer to the problem of arias") should evoke Boston, New York, all her cultural longings. Lines from the miners' rollicking, bawdy chorus of Act One, Scene One ("My sweetheart is a burro named Lou") re-echo darkly and ominously down in the mineshaft in Scene Two. The miners' entr'acte chorus ("Twenty thousand Cornish men") is an authentic old British song discovered by Oakley Hall, for which Imbrie has written new music.

In Act One Scene Three, an authentic early California reel follows a slightly dissonant, speeded-up Viennese waltz ("I asked Kevin Starr what people would have been dancing at a Nob Hill party in 1879"). The waltz blends in and out of expressive sung dialogue written in Imbrie's own atonal, contemporary idiom. "You have to be able to assimilate all these strains," Imbrie insists, "and yet keep coherent, prove that you have your own identity. I don't want to create a pastiche—oh, maybe it *is* a pastiche—but I want to make a *unity* as well."

The whole ballroom scene, as I mentioned, is an interpolation in Stegner's plot, although faintly justified by hints he has given. (Susan *does* go to San Francisco, she *does* long for European-style culture, she *is* warned to accept her husband's destiny.) But Imbrie felt that the act demanded a big, brilliant, upbeat, "operatic" conclusion—hence this *Traviata* ball in the Paris of the West. Shelly's "blockbuster" aria at the end of Act Two—

I will not learn business as usual,
Politics as usual,
Lies, corruption,
Oppression, rape, torture,
Murder, war as usual!
No! No! No!

I will not learn the ways of the
world.

was created for the same reason, somewhat to the consternation of her creator.

continued on p. 82

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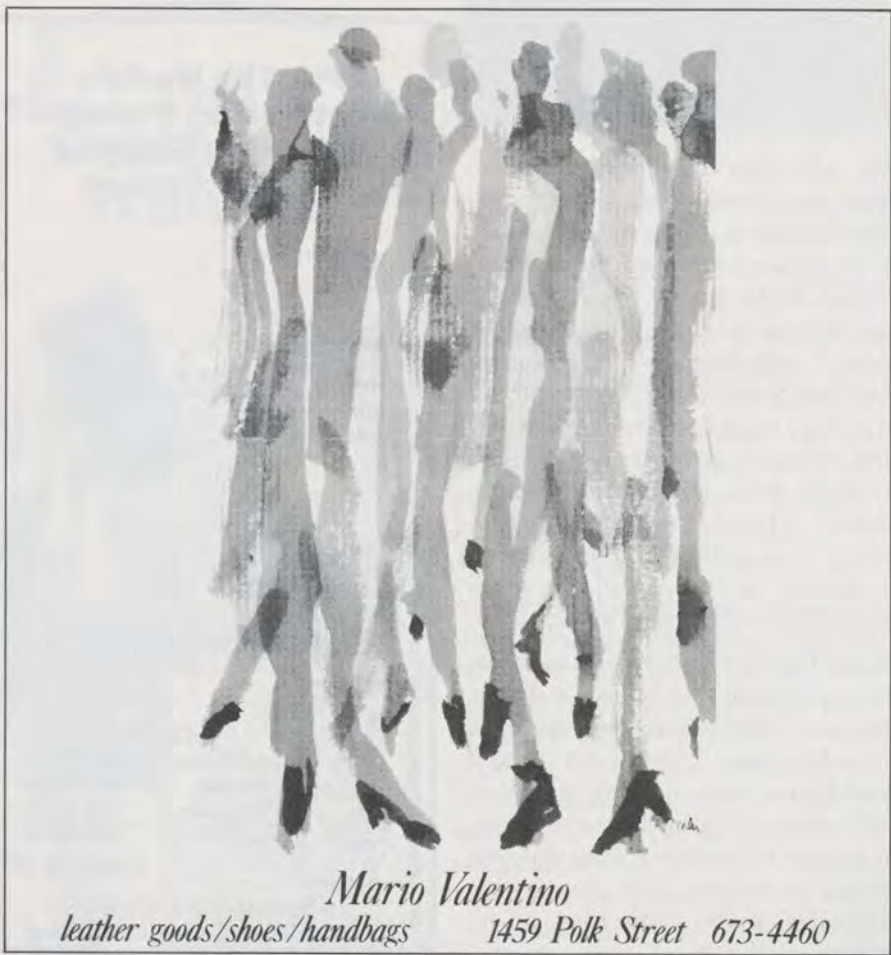
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Novel Into Opera

continued from p. 81

Oakley Hall's libretto for *Angle of Repose*, therefore, is far less subtle, less artfully ambiguous, more confined and affirmative, more high-passionate and assertive than the novel. But the music may indeed "say" many things that the script does not. Until now, Andrew Imbrie has been best known for his Violin Concerto and his chamber works, exploratory, provocative, eloquent works outside the reach of many auditors. He has also written three rich symphonies (two for Josef Krips and the San Francisco Symphony), and set to music poems by several American writers. Once before he tried an opera—*Three Against Christmas*, a one-act fable in which traditional carols wound their way into atonality, conducted for three performances at Berkeley by Robert Paul Commanday in December 1964. That one, I felt, didn't work.

Now he is venturing something far larger, far more realistic, more approachable and denotative, at once more vividly humane and more limited by stage constraints and the demands of collaboration than ever before in his honored career.

Three times before Kurt Herbert Adler and the San Francisco Opera have tried to commission into being a living, lasting work: Norman Dello Joio's *Blood Moon*, Peggy Glanville-Hicks' *Sappho*, Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*. The critics, the people flying in for the opening from other opera companies, you, and I will soon decide whether the reincarnation of Wallace Stegner's novel into Andrew Imbrie's opera is to live beyond its first five performances in San Francisco this November.

David Littlejohn is a local writer, critic, and professor.



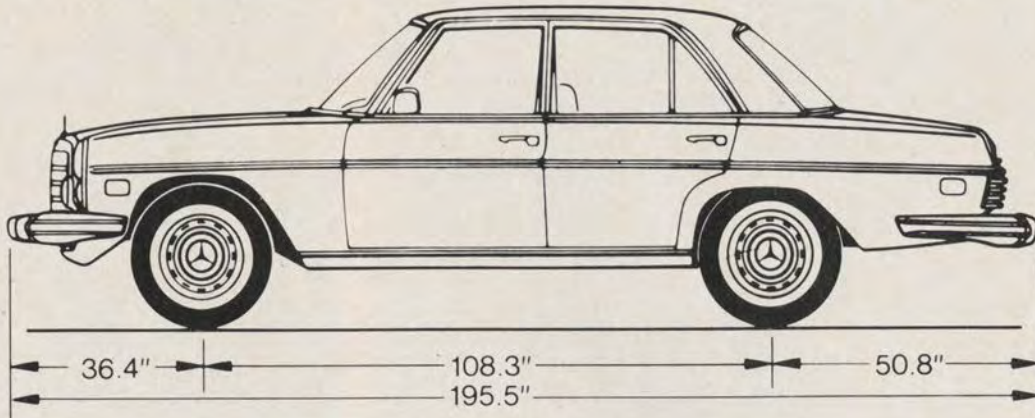
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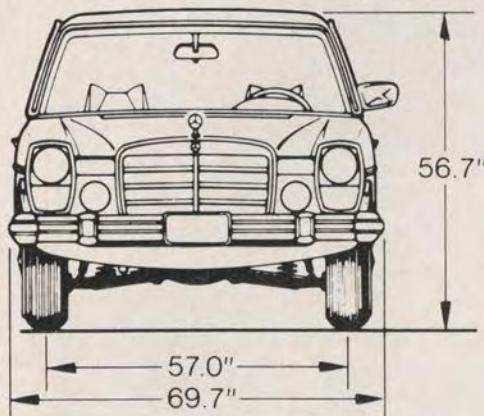
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Poster



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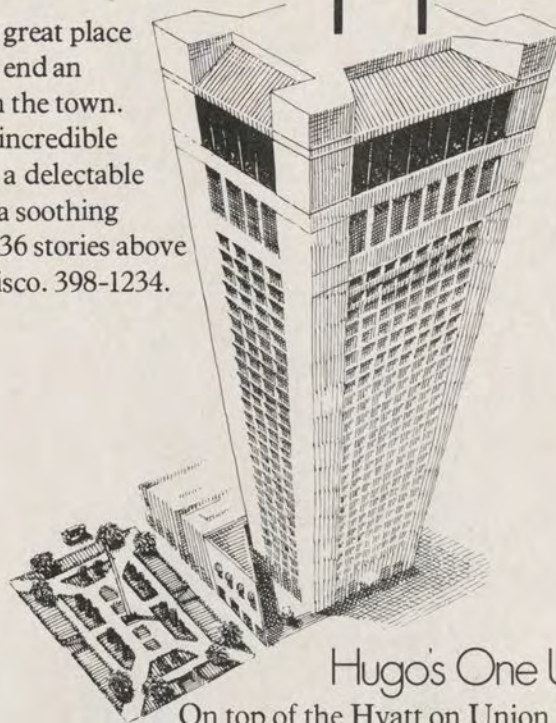
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A special commemorative poster has been created by the San Francisco Opera for the world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose*, only the second world premiere in the Company's history. Already acclaimed by connoisseurs, the new poster features a reproduction of a painting by California artist Sam Tchakalian, which is currently on display in the exhibit "Painting and Sculpture in California: The Modern Era" at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The painting is used through the courtesy of the museum and of the Quay Gallery, as well as the artist.

Printed on glossy stock in full color, the *Angle of Repose* poster is available for \$5 at the Opera Box Office and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art gift shop.

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FRIDAYS 7:50 P.M.*

- September 10 Thaïs — Opening Night
- September 17 Die Walküre (7:20 P.M.)*
- September 24 La Forza del Destino
- October 8 Tosca
- October 15 Die Frau ohne Schatten
- October 22 Peter Grimes
- October 29 The Makropulos Case
- November 5 Cavalleria Rusticana and I Pagliacci
- November 12 Il Barbiere di Siviglia
- November 26 Angle of Repose

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In addition to inviting you to listen to this year's opera broadcasts, we at Standard would also like to take this opportunity to invite you to visit our Chevron Gallery at 555 Market Street in San Francisco weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

An exhibit depicting the changing scenes of San Francisco from the early nineteen hundreds until the fifties will be on display through November 30. The photographs in this unique documentation of the growth of the city are from the Moulin collection.



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San Francisco Opera

	Monday	Tuesday
September		
	13	Die Walküre 7:30 pm A,B
	20	La Forza del Destino 8 pm A,B
	27	Thaïs 8 pm B
October		
	4	Tosca 8 pm A,C
	11	
	18	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm A,C
	25	The Makropulos Case 8 pm A,B
November		
	1	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm D,F
	8	Angle of Repose 8 pm A,C
	15	Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 8 pm A,C
	22	Il Barbiere di Siviglia 8 pm A,C

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1976 Calendar

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		Opening Night Thäis 8 pm A	Die Walküre 7:30 pm J,K	
		10	11	12
Thäis 8 pm D,F		Die Walküre 7:30 pm G,H	La Forza del Destino 8 pm J,L	Thäis 2 pm M,N
15	16	17	18	19
Die Walküre 7:30 pm D,E		La Forza del Destino 8 pm G,I	Thäis 8 pm J,K	Die Walküre 1:30 pm M,O
22	23	24	25	26
La Forza del Destino 8 pm D,E		Thäis 8 pm G,I	Die Walküre 1 pm X Tosca 8 pm J,L	La Forza del Destino 2 pm O
29	30	1	2	3
Peter Grimes 8 pm D,F		Tosca 8 pm G,H	Peter Grimes 8 pm J,K	Tosca 2 pm M,N
6	7	8	9	10
Peter Grimes 8 pm A,C		Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm G,I	Tosca 8 pm D,F	Peter Grimes 2 pm M,N
13	14	15	16	17
The Makropulos Case 8 pm D,E		Peter Grimes 8 pm G,H	Tosca 1:30 pm X The Makropulos Case 8 pm J,L	Die Frau ohne Schatten 1:30 pm M,N
20	21	22	23	24
Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 8 pm D,F		The Makropulos Case 8 pm G,I	Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 1:30 pm X Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm J,L	The Makropulos Case 2 pm M,O
27	28	29	30	31
3	4	5	6	7
		Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 8 pm G,H	Angle of Repose 8 pm J,K	La Forza del Destino 2 pm M,N
		11	12	13
Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 8 pm B	Fol de Rol 8:30 pm	Il Barbiere di Siviglia 8 pm G,I	La Forza del Destino 1:30 pm X Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 8 pm J,L	Angle of Repose 2 pm M,N
10	11	12	13	14
Il Barbiere di Siviglia 8 pm E	Angle of Repose 8 pm D,F	La Forza del Destino 8 pm H	Il Barbiere di Siviglia 8 pm J,K	Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 2 pm M,O Leontyne Price Recital 8 pm
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 8 pm E	Il Barbiere di Siviglia* 8 pm	Angle of Repose 8 pm G,H	Cavalleria Rusticana/ I Pagliacci 8 pm K	Il Barbiere di Siviglia 2 pm M,O

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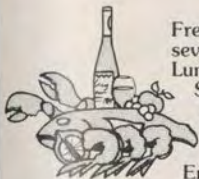
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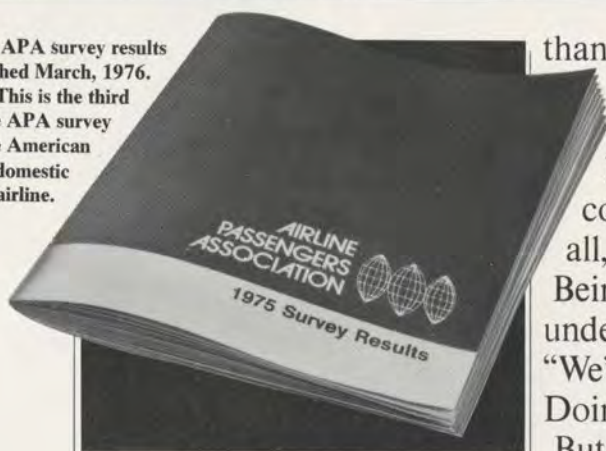
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Brand W Lights	13	0.9
Brand K Milds Menthol	13	0.8
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ANGLE OF REPOSE

Dear Friend of Opera,

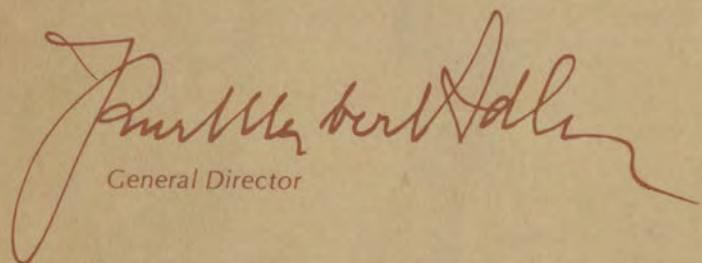
San Francisco Opera is both pleased and honored to celebrate the Twin Bicentennials of the Nation and of the City of San Francisco by presenting the world première performances in November of *Angle of Repose*. A world première is always an exciting event, and ours will be the first to be offered by any of the three major opera companies in the United States in a decade!

We are most grateful to the various private foundations, governmental agencies, and individuals who have all contributed to make this première come into being.

And we feel that it is especially appropriate and fitting that the City of San Francisco has chosen an opera as one of the main vehicles to express its 200th anniversary. *Angle of Repose* has been entirely created and will be exclusively interpreted by Americans. Bringing it alive on stage, and no opera is a reality until it exists in performance, is an intensive labor of love on the part of many. We must single out the creative efforts of the all-California team of Andrew Imbrie, composer, Oakley Hall, librettist, and Wallace Stegner, on whose formidable novel this opera is based.

We are anxious that you, our audience, know as much as possible about *Angle of Repose* before attending a performance. Toward this end it has been our pleasure to prepare this booklet which represents the views on the opera of various people intimately involved in achieving its presentation. On behalf of San Francisco Opera, I hope you will enjoy getting acquainted with *Angle of Repose* and that these selected articles will give you an added dimension to more fully appreciate this impressive addition to the operatic repertoire.

Sincerely,

A large, elegant handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "Paul Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

General Director

Costume Design: Lawrence Casey



Robert Commanday

Music Critic, The San Francisco Chronicle

In all its prior and external facts, Imbrie's opera is eminently suited to its status as the major musical effort of the Bicentennial in San Francisco. Its creators are of the region. Imbrie has been a distinguished composer on the University of California, Berkeley, faculty for 26 years. Wallace Stegner, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel on which the opera is based, is a professor at Stanford. Oakley Hall, the librettist, is another noted California author. The opera is about a family of Californians from the post-pioneer generation in the mining camps of the 1870s to the present.

"Angle of Repose" is not a play set to music, a mode which has been most frequent for American operas. Imbrie's score reveals that it is really an opera. The singing voice is dominant, the primary expressive medium. The voices are given full range to glory, and in set pieces, arias and ensembles conceived in the spirit and form of opera.

Imbrie's music is not 12-tone nor strictly "atonal," whatever those terms have commonly come to mean, nor is it avant-garde, experimenting with performers and audience. Simply stated, it is a melodious language, mostly non-tonal, a style which freely uses all the chromatic tones, the sound and color elements essential to its musical and dramatic purpose.

There are even numbers which distinctly suggest music of California in the 1870s—a lusty work ("O my sweetheart is a burro named Lou") and a Cornish song for the miners ("And have they fixed the where and when?"), an extended waltz sequence in a Nob Hill salon, a banjo-fiddle tune. The people who inhabit this operatic old west, retain their musical character.

Even Joaquin Miller is introduced in the Nob Hill scene, the frontier poet singing first "I was born in a covered wagon," then his own poem, "See once this boundless bay and live!"

The opera does not attempt to capture all the detail and sweeping panorama of Stegner's novel. "Angle of Repose" is rather about important elements of the novel. Imbrie and

librettist Oakley Hall focused on two troubled marriages which are linked by family ties, separated by a whole generation. These two stories are worked together in a dramatic counterpoint which is the opera's dynamic and structural force, two time levels, individual and interacting.

In the opera's foreground, the temporal present, sits a historian Lyman Ward (sung by Chester Ludgin), crippled by disease. He is retired to the Grass Valley home in which his grandparents lived out their days in a withdrawn accommodation to their fated marriage, in unforgiving near silence. Lyman has searched out the meaning of this, how two such vital pioneers, the mining engineer Oliver Ward, and the sophisticated, eastern-bred artist-writer Susan, became settled in their "angle of repose." That is a geological term referring to the angle at which a free-rolling particle rests when it is stopped by chance contact or a block which momentum cannot overcome.

Lyman is in anguish over his own fate, his wife Ellen having left him for another man. He has come home to learn. "Those failing to learn from the past are doomed to repeat its errors," he sings in the first aria ("O time deliver me."). The music from this aria returns in the entr'acte before the final scene, acting then as a frame for the entire opera.

His daughter Shelly (the mezzo-soprano Susanne Marsee) comes to assist him, taking down his dictation of his grandparents' story as he now writes it. Brash, querulous, a "with it" youth of today's college generation, Shelly is far more than a foil for Lyman's narration.

As her great-grandparents' lives unfold in flashback, the impatient Shelly challenges, needles, questions, unsympathetic to Victorian ways, herself embittered by a love affair. She also tries to bring the estranged parents together, but hesitantly. She herself is in conflict; her sympathies rest with Lyman.

The opera shifts back and forth between the two time levels, a separation which Imbrie maintains musically. There is greater tension, more compressed rhythms, a higher level of dissonance, for the scenes of the present, its characters and their contemporary mode of speech. There is however much that is lyric and eloquent in the foreground time.

Meanwhile, back in the 1870s, Susan Burling Ward (Nancy Shade) and her husband Oliver (Dale Duesing) sing their story in a musical speech more appropriate to the broader time sense of their century. Susan yearns ever for the cultivated life. If that cannot be in the east where her beloved intimate and correspondent, Augusta, lives, then at least in San Fran-

cisco. Yet the Quaker lady loyally follows Oliver through rough living and hardships on western locations: a mercury mine at New Almaden (near San Jose), Leadville in the mountains, finally in the Boise Valley, Idaho, where their marriage comes to grief.

Oliver remains a man of simple eloquence, intent on solving the great engineering problems of the west, but destined always to miss success, to lose the fruits of his achievements as he goes from project to project. He is equally dedicated to protecting Susan in her daily life and fantasies. Oliver even shields her from learning unflattering truths about his young assistant, Frank Sargent (William Lewis), an eastern boy who, with all propriety, becomes her admiring and admired friend.

For her part, Susan never gives in to the new environment, no matter how vividly she depicts its wonders in the articles and illustrations she creates for publication and the income which supports them during his hard times.

She came "to endure the west, not to join it," Lyman observes. So the Susan Ward story by itself, is that of the cultural transplant who brings civilization to the new frontier, yet, resisting assimilation, suffers from the change, the loss of intellectual, aesthetic, social nourishment.

With terrible irony, tragedy occurs to the Wards during the celebration of his biggest project, the opening of the "Susan Canal" for the irrigation of the Boise Valley. In an unguarded moment, her Victorian reserves are swept away and she yields to Frank Sargent in one fleeting embrace. Left unattended, the Wards' daughter drowns in the new canal and all is shattered. The Wards retire to Grass Valley to live out "the long postscript of their lives" in near silence, at their angle of repose.

Lyman has reached the end of his grandparents' story but the events of his own life bring him to crisis. His wife Ellen (Edna Garabedian) arrives, wishing reconciliation. The figures and voices of Susan and Oliver appear to Lyman, speaking out their failures, the guilt, the lack of forgiveness. Lyman is moved, strengthened to bridge the gap, to forgive and accept Ellen.

Now it is the stubborn Shelly's turn to be affected by the ghosts. In the grip of her family history, she too finally faces and conquers her ambivalence about her parents' reconciliation. She accepts her father's act and blesses her reunited parents to close the opera's story.

Shelly is much more important in the opera than in the novel. Her music, distinctive from that of the others, is jazzy and brash. Imbrie focuses further on Shelly, on the present,

on the play of tensions between eras and generations, by giving her the Act II finale aria. It is a stirring denunciation of the ways of the world and the creed of "that's the way it is." Thus the act closes on a musical climax which is dramatic, in the operatic tradition, and showy in the tradition of the Broadway musical, rather than on a suspenseful dramatic incident set musically.

The other roles have their own musical characterizations. Susan is often treated musically with an open, lacy musical texture. There are musical motives working and developing through the opera. Frank Sargent's appearances are identified with broad chord clusters articulated in syncopations, but this figure is more broadly used in association with the idea of guilty or forbidden love.

The score contains some very lyrical pieces including rhapsodic moments, the love duets between Susan and Oliver, strong arias for Oliver and Lyman. The singers have very vocal lines. The words, in sound and rhythm, flow naturally to the music. There are theatrical numbers which suggest the original folk and period styles without mocking or caricature. Imbrie's score indicates that he knows theater and the stage and that opera must also be a show.

Imbrie is best known as a composer of concert music, symphonies, concertos and chamber works, but he has considerable experience writing for voices, in numerous choral pieces and one earlier opera, "Three Against Christmas" (1964, later retitled "Christmas in Peeblestown).

Three years in the creation, "Angle of Repose" now follows Kurt Herbert Adler's master plan, into the hands of the producers: John Mauceri, conductor, Gerald Freedman, producer, Douglas W. Schmidt, sets, Lawrence Casey, costumes, a cast of 20 and chorus. Now, it's up to the audience.

ANGLE OF REPOSE

World Premiere

November 1976
San Francisco Opera



Andrew Imbrie, *Composer*



Oakley Hall, *Librettist*



Wallace Stegner, *Author*



John Mauceri, *Conductor*



Gerald Freedman, *Director*



Douglas W. Schmidt, *Scenic Designer*

Costume Design: Lawrence Casey



Andrew Imbrie

Composer

When Kurt Adler asked me to write a work to help celebrate the Bicentennial, I had just read Wallace Stegner's novel *Angle of Repose*. It was still vivid in my memory, and I felt that, provided a sympathetic and resourceful librettist could be found, the story had great operatic possibilities, and would, moreover, be suited for the occasion, dealing as it does with our national and regional heritage. It impressed me particularly because it exemplifies so poignantly the paradoxes inherent in our recurrent American dream of opening and civilizing new frontiers.

Beyond this, I was strongly attracted by the people who inhabit the pages of Stegner's book. The story was suggested by, and based on, the adventures of an actual family of early settlers. But their characters and the events of their lives have been so altered to fit Stegner's artistic needs that the result must be regarded as fictional, and judged accordingly. Similarly, when Oakley Hall consented to adapt the novel for the operatic stage, he found it necessary, because of his own artistic requirements and the demands of the theater, to make further changes. Yet the characters as they now stand still invite the composer to interpret them as "real" people (though one can also think of Oliver symbolically as the one who "opens," and Susan as the one who tries to "civilize" the West).

They are real because they are human and complex. Susan, brought up in a Quaker tradition of ladylike gentility, has studied art in New York and brings with her, as she joins her new husband in the West, an illustrator's eye for the picturesque and a horror of the uncouth. Her natural warmth, vivacity, and pluck sustain her, but she remains determinedly aloof from the reality of her situation. Oliver, loyal, resourceful, and idealistic, tender but taciturn, whose code requires absolute trust between persons, cannot bring himself at the end to utter the redeeming word. Their descendent Lyman, embittered, seeks peace and self-knowledge. He senses obscurely that through the study of his grandparents' lives

he may penetrate the secret of their tragedy and learn to transcend it in his own life. His daughter Shelly, in full revolt against all injustice, refuses to "learn the ways of the world," demands confrontations and showdowns, yet desperately desires her parents' reconciliation. In setting this libretto to music, I found myself getting to know these people better—even, in a sense, becoming them.

Two devices, derived from the novel and preserved in the libretto, should be mentioned because of their potency as sources of musical structure. First, the frequent interpenetration of scenes from present and past provides opportunities for changes of pace, irony, and formal contrast as the descendants observe, comment upon, and learn from their ancestors' lives while proceeding toward the turning-point in their own. Second, Susan's letters to Augusta, her correspondent in the East (whom we never meet in the opera) serve in the novel as a window into her soul at the various stages of her emotional life, and survive in the opera as four "letter-arias." These, besides serving the same function as in the novel, also fill the operatic role of providing pretexts for formal soliloquys; and together they create a kind of superstructure, one of several which regulate the large-scale musical flow.

The literary style of the libretto is straightforward: a quality that I welcome, since it has given me every chance to bring out through music the pathos, humor, power, and tenderness that lie in the ordinary rhythms and stresses of the American vernacular. To the attentive American musician, these patterns are subtle, resonant, and capable of numerous levels of musical realization, both dramatic and lyrical.

The question of the *musical* style is hardest for the composer himself to discuss. Even a technical description would have to be stated—by me—negatively: for example, there is at no point in this work a conscious recourse to serialism (though I have employed it elsewhere); there are leitmotifs, perhaps, but what they refer to cannot be filed away in neat Wagnerian pigeon-holes (I often found myself coming up with subconscious cross-references, for which I can now find literary justifications, should I wish to take the trouble). After all, any active composer with a number of instrumental and vocal works under his belt will have developed a personal style which he will find as difficult to describe as his own voice, manner, or personality. Yet he is intuitively aware of the

essential character of his own style, which arises out of his own identity, sensibility, and experience.

There are two pitfalls awaiting one who is confronted with the opportunity to compose a work for a major opera company. One is the impact of the lavish resources of the lyric theater, which are now placed at his disposal. The operatic tradition is one in which I feel that my own music can take its place, since my musical thought has always been predicated on a concern for line and dramatic shape. Yet the rich possibilities of stage presentation by the best professional singers, conductor, director, orchestra, chorus, dancers, lighting, and costuming can tempt the composer to wallow in an easy opulence (which tends to become a kind of bloated celebration of the death-wish)—a sin I hope I have avoided without neo-classic prudery.

A more dangerous pitfall is that of eclecticism. In a stage work, a composer must conjure up a time and place—perhaps several. It is not enough for him to achieve this through the juxtaposition of motley elements, popular, nostalgic, "ethnic," and sophisticated. The sense of his own style leads, rather, to a strong urge toward unity: one which demands that these elements be reconciled and absorbed. I hope that the presence of such elements in this opera will have been made to seem convincing and even inevitable. They include a dance literally quoted from a collection of reels and hornpipes actually used in California one hundred years ago, a Vienna waltz that swirls into and out of the prevailing harmonic idiom, a Cornish miners' song set to an authentic text, a setting of a fragment of Keats in an evocation of "Romantic" style, and a mountain ditty accompanied by five-stringed banjo and country fiddle. Still other stylistic references, some oblique, some quite direct, will also be evident throughout the score. The methods by which I have tried to integrate them vary, as does the degree of "literalness" or "authenticity" of each; in fact, it is the very multiplicity of approaches to the problem which will, I believe, help to solve it.

What I feel to be essential is that the listener come away with a strong sense of musical individuality and wholeness. This effect should be reinforced by the overriding importance that I attach to the vocal, lyrical impulse, which is at the heart of opera.

Oakley Hall

Librettist

I came into the project after other hands had already made forays into a libretto for Wallace Stegner's novel, *Angle of Repose*. There was a frantic press for time, as historically there seems always to have been for librettists—whose work must be finished, or at least well along, before the composer can begin his.

The novel is a rich and complex one, and the first task was one of compression. Characters had to be excised or combined, scenes collapsed, and whole sections left out. Throughout I was torn between trying not to damage the fabric of a novel I respected, and what I conceived to be my main effort—to provide the composer with characters and scenes that would challenge his musical imagination.

The story the libretto tells operates in two time sequences, the present in a cottage in Grass Valley, where Lyman Ward, an historian, is convalescing from near-fatal surgery, and from his wife's desertion; and the past of his grandparents, for Ward is writing a biography of his grandmother, a minor western literary figure, in whose life he discovers more and more parallels with his own. Ward's daughter, Shelly, also a walking wounded from betrayal in love, arrives, and the two histories, one upstage and one down, progress through three acts.

As Lyman describes his grandmother's life to Shelly, the past opens in New Almaden, California, in the year 1876. The young artist, Susan Burling Ward, has arrived to join the husband she hardly knows, Oliver Ward, resident engineer at the New Almaden Mine. Oliver has a hero-worshipping young assistant, Frank Sargent. During Susan's visit to the mine, a miner is killed in an accident, and Susan is so shocked at the callousness of the mine manager that she urges Oliver and Frank to rebellion, for which they lose their jobs. In San Francisco, Oliver tries to interest Nob Hill financiers in his formula for cement, while Joaquin Miller, 'the Poet of the Frontier,' warns Susan she must not expect to live in

civilized San Francisco, for she must follow where her husband's work takes him.

It takes him to mining camps and construction sites throughout the west, first to Leadville, and later to the Boise Valley, where he is to build an irrigation system. Always, the enamored Frank Sargent is in attendance, until finally in his torment he declares his undying love to Susan, and flees.

Despite the birth of two children, and some success as an artist and writer, Susan is desperately unhappy in what she considers to be a desert, both of her spirit and literally. During the celebrations for the opening of the Susan Canal, the first stage of Oliver's project, Frank Sargent returns. He begs Susan to escape to San Francisco with him, they embrace, and this moment of disloyalty and inattention on Susan's part results in the death of her youngest child. Frank subsequently hangs himself as responsible for the tragedy, but it is Susan who is never to be forgiven during the fifty years that remain of her life with Oliver. Lyman tells Shelly that during his boyhood he never saw them kiss; he never saw them touch.

Ellen, Lyman's unfaithful wife, arrives unexpectedly at the Grass Valley cottage, and past and present come together in the finale, as three generations must face the problems of betrayal and forgiveness.

Composer and librettist worked together in a catch-as-catch-can manner over two years; via the University of California tie-line, the telephone, mail, and brief sessions at the Imbrie house in Berkeley and the Hall house in Squaw Valley. Important meetings took place at a hamburger stand on Lake Tahoe, and in the board room of the College Entrance Examination Board in New York City.

The completed libretto bears only skeletal resemblance to the working synopsis. When Andrew Imbrie's musical interest was caught, I would expand a scene, or blow up a line or two into an aria or a duet, streamlining elsewhere in the interests of pace and economy. Warnings rang in my head that, for instance, the curtain of the War Memorial Opera House takes 30 seconds to descend, and thus no 'hurricane' curtains could be counted on to reenforce dramatic climaxes; that certain words are unsingable ('cement,' upon which one major scene rather depended, is one); and that necessary information should not be given to the chorus to convey, for their words are liable to be unintelligible.

I found the writing of the libretto, a new form for me, with its ancient requirements and strictures, to be tremendously exciting.

Costume Design: Lawrence Casey



Wallace Stegner

Author

Angle of Repose is not only a long novel, it is a complex one. It covers more than a century of time, four generations of a family, and a good part of the American West, and it is not one story only, but two. One is that of Susan Ward, a literary and artistic lady who came west in 1876 to join her mining engineer husband Oliver, and participate as an often-unhappy exile in his life as developer and civilizer. The other is the story of her grandson Lyman Ward, a historian crippled by bone disease and abandoned by his wife, who tries to compensate for his own lack of a future by investigating his grandmother's life and the mysterious ruin of her marriage.

Lyman Ward tells both stories, but two attitudes and two fictional techniques are involved. The story of Susan Ward, which I adapted (with some drastic changes) from the life of a real literary-artistic Victorian lady whose papers are in the Stanford University Library, derives its technique from the literal process of historical research. Its pretense is that it is reconstructed from actual documents, pieced out with the memories of Lyman Ward, some speculation, and some frank guessing. But if Lyman displays an objective curiosity about his grandmother's life, he has a protective reticence about his own. The first he labors to work out and record; the second he will not examine. In consequence, Susan Ward's experiences, including her ambiguous, unwilling involvement with her husband's assistant, Frank Sargent, are presented in full detail and fully commented upon. The story of Lyman Ward's betrayal by his wife is only leaked. He gives it away inadvertently. We must read it between the lines.

Through this narrator, who is to be believed about his grandmother but not about himself, the novel studies these two marriages, each in the context of its place and time. The complexity was deliberate on my part, and cost me months and years of groping trial and error. After I had started to write Susan Ward's story I found that I simply wasn't satisfied to write a costume drama of the late 19th century West. My invention of Lyman, his crippling, his ambivalent attitudes

and evasions, his relation to his grandmother both as historian and as echo, was an unconscious adaptation to the felt need for a more complex view than simple storytelling provided. I felt compelled to devise a method that would set present against past and past against present; that would not only make the obvious contrasts between Victorian and contemporary, but would at the same time assert the ineluctable human similarities between the generations.

The angle of repose that Lyman half consciously seeks, the accommodation that he finds represented in rigid and frozen form by the lives of his grandparents, is not a historical need, but a human one.

Thinking about the book now, some years after its publication, I see it as something whose intention is rather like that of Charles Ives's "Decoration Day," where we hear the music of two bands, each playing a different tune at a different tempo, one band receding and growing fainter, the other coming on and getting loud. As Ives, by setting his two bands in opposition to one another against the background of a unifying theme and festival, created the controlled chaos which so often constitutes the truest perception of a fragment of time, so I wanted to present grandmother and grandson, past and present, old West and contemporary West, Victorian marriage and its unbuttoned contemporary equivalent, in such a way that they would sound against one another, and reverberate.

Considering the multiple intentions and the involved structure of the novel, I had reason to be both astonished and skeptical when Andrew Imbrie telephoned me one day in the summer of 1974 and said he wanted to adapt it as the basis for an opera. I was afraid the story was too long and complicated, and I didn't see how it could be reduced to something that would sing in two hours or less without its being injuriously

simplified. What I feared, I think, was the loss of Lyman Ward's commentary as well as his somewhat analagous story. I was afraid that Susan's story would take over completely, and the opera's libretto come out as a simple triangle in miners' clothes.

I could not forestall all this by writing the libretto myself. I knew too little about opera and too much about the novel. Though there is a time when any story material is malleable, and may be molded almost as one wishes, that time had long passed. The thing was set like cement. If I tried to break it up it would simply be chunks. The only person who could, by approaching it fresh, make the story plastic again was someone entirely outside it. That person turned out to be Oakley Hall.

How he did it, how he dealt with the formidable problems of cutting, simplification, and dramatic highlighting, Oakley should tell himself. I can only say that I admire the essential ruthlessness with which he took apart and remade something that for me would have been untouchable, and I am especially grateful that he was able to save for the opera and for me the double vision provided by Lyman Ward. Though in necessarily simpler ways, past and present still play against one another in the opera. There is a sense of successive generations working their way through similar difficulties; and though whole sections are missing — Santa Cruz and Mexico for two — the opera proceeds from premises quite like those of the novel to a solution more explicit but not out of line.

It isn't my opera, but I have been an exhilarated bystander during its making, and I do not object to the changes that were necessary to translate the novel into another form. The essential fact is that, in the transformation, the core of historical and human truth that I tried to give the book has been preserved.

John Mauceri

Conductor

The first performance a conductor gives of any composition is the end product of months of demanding work. Since this is the first time for him, he must investigate every note, every dynamic and tempo indication and every instrumental entrance. He must learn all there is to know of the composer's musical intentions, not only as they are delimited by his notational system but also as they are expressed in his writings and the works of other writers about him. Every moment must be examined vertically (harmony) and horizontally (melody and counterpoint) not only to know how the work sounds, but also to know how the piece is constructed. Once this is determined the performance practice of the work must be investigated; that is, how have the great exponents of the work performed it. This information can be obtained from the past seventy years of recording, as well as from older instrumentalists, senior conductors, a set of orchestral parts which have been used over a long period of time, and sometimes from the writings of contemporaries. When all this is done, the conductor must decide for himself on the tempos and their inner relationships as well as how the work will "sound." Once this last and most personal step is taken he can then permit himself to stand before the orchestra and begin his first rehearsal.

If the work is an opera his job is even more complicated. Not only is an opera longer than any symphony and the orchestral writing usually far more complicated, but the conductor also has to know all the vocal parts at least as well as his singers. They, after all, are performing from memory and singing the notes is only one of the many tasks they must accomplish while performing on stage. Therefore the conductor must be with them at all times, helping them with entrances, balancing ensembles, even mouthing words if necessary, so that each singer is comfortable and confident.

Finally, if the work is a *world premiere* of an opera, the conductor's task is made all the more difficult—as well as excit-

ing. How a conductor prepares himself for this awesome responsibility includes most of the procedures mentioned above, but because the work has no past, the conductor must examine the corpus of earlier music by the composer in order to develop a sense of style and proportion for the new work. In this way one can see a score like *Angle of Repose* as the logical next step—though leap is a better word—in Andrew Imbrie's mature and personal musical language. It is the culmination of his many years of musical achievements.

Meeting the composer himself is of course the great luxury of working on a contemporary composition. With Imbrie one senses the quiet determination and integrity which has enabled him to survive and develop as a composer. He has not compromised his personal esthetic nor has he sacrificed his rich family life. It is no accident that his opera is thoroughly consistent and even able to absorb the tonal music of America's heritage without it seeming artificial. (All the tonal music—the Welsh miners' hymn, the banjo—blue grass music, the waltzes and reel, the Streisand-like aria for Shelly at the close of Act II, and the song "My Sweetheart's a Burro named Lou" were composed by Imbrie and not borrowed from other composers.)

Once all three acts of the new opera were in piano/vocal score, the entire work had its first airing—with the composer and conductor singing and playing as much as could be negotiated—so that the basic size and pacing of *Angle of Repose* could be determined.

This fall, when all the performers meet in San Francisco, it will be after many months of private work, and during a month of intensive work we will join together to create the very first performance of this most ambitious work—a three act opera. It will also be the very best performance we can give because performing musicians owe everything to the composer and we know that *Angle of Repose* will be judged by our realization of it.

Gerald Freedman

Director

An unromantic and unmusical definition of an opera might read like this: "An Opera is an enormously complicated machine made up of the most intricately interacting pieces that must seem to be of spontaneous invention issuing effortlessly from the composer's muse as it is being experienced by an audience in a theatre." There are obvious advantages for a director in doing a well known work. The audience can concentrate on the interpretive aspects of the work having experienced it before; nuances of singing, acting, and decor concern the audience. With an old work, the audience is comfortable, they have a point of reference from past performances. But who is going to alert the audience to the nuance of a *new* work when they must experience idea, vision, aural stimulus and conception all at once — a formidable task when one considers the obstacles. I sometimes wonder at the daring and romance that impels artists and impresarios to undertake the impossible, but I know there is no greater miracle than imagination and one must continually strive to discover its possibilities.

With an Opera all the stimuli the audience is receiving from the stage through sight and sound and intuition must seem to confirm the composer's intention. How does one accomplish this with a *new* opera — a never experienced before sensation? How does one arrive at interpretive decisions months before one has heard a note of music or read a complete or coherent libretto? How does one assemble a cast of American singers for roles that are still unfinished and musically undefined?

How can one make a decision on a color of the leading character's costume when one will *never* hear the orchestral color that gives meaning and nuance — indeed coherence to the

whole project—until a few days before the audience will also hear these new colors for the first time? The music is all—the language, the color, the characterization, the pulse and heartbeat itself—and yet it is the last thing experienced. For the longest time it remains something solely within the Composer's imagination while all kinds of activities are going on generated by these as yet unheard sounds!

Then how does one go about it? By instinct, intuition, lengthy discussions with composer and librettist in the inadequate language of speech which must be reinterpreted to the language of sound and sight. Intellectual ideas and communications must be reinterpreted as feelings and emotions.

In addition to the usual problems in presenting a new work *Angle of Repose* has a complex structure and story: The Past is The Present is The Future. It seems to be about a period of intense and exciting growth of our Western inheritance but it is actually an intimate study of a marriage, its relationships, and its resonance. Its title comes from physics and geometry, but its resolution is in the human heart.

A few practical questions are answered by the above. You must create a physical space where the past and present can co-mingle. You must ease the transition from scene to scene so that the music flows without interruption. You must allow for big panoramic scenes that create the expanse and sensation of our Western geography and still provide a means of focusing on intimate relationships.

And everpresent and always recurrent are the words "How can I communicate the composer's intention to a new audience on its initial hearing?" "What will make them know—or better yet—experience Andrew's idea?"



Douglas W. Schmidt

Scenic Designer

"Let me illustrate my point this way," he said indicating that he might need to leave the whole affair in the neutrality of the Haitian cotton love-seat which molded the body into cat-postures of perfection and would find clearer articulation from the comfortably padded and mobile drafting stool in the large white work area behind us. Clearer articulation but: Would he answer the question, "What was he expressing? Why does it look this way rather than any other way?" He cut a path towards it and the telephone began to ring an interruption of progress. Crossing the room somewhat stiffly in obvious reaction to both his lack of sympathy with the question itself, newly re-encountered, and the mild annoyance of answering the call: What would they ask next? He reached for the receiver and said as he reached for it; "The action is completely justified from every point of view." He could see the electric conch shell glowing in the shadowy hallway. "It is ideal for those who find riled emotional energies somewhat difficult. Pardon me."

In the romanticism of darkly colorful gradually collapsing models perched or on shelves resting randomly about the studio, the mosaicked crumbling claw; a Judean palace of two seasons ago, my mind turned to the questions — some had by this time been discussed two or three times during the previous months. But resolution evaded even the simplest and most obvious of them.

Mr. S, having finished his call, returned and anxiously noting how late it had grown was anxious and nervous. He said: "Forces and events push and force issues to interact — the emotional intensity refines the spiritual charge. The magic forces in musical sound are catalysts between the event and the observers." Then anxiously noting how late it had grown: "anyone just anyone can read and understand the story and then see and understand the story but since this is a new piece, we must try to express what in our vision the characters are through the visual and aural senses. And what the audience looks at is telling them what it is telling them; obvi-

ous or subtle and as various as spoken and unspoken. And now we are telling them, for the first time, something new because they have never seen this before. So that is what makes it significant like any first experience; Now take *The Marriage of Figaro*. The blaze of rhetoric left us gasping, steadying ourselves against a handy *cache pot*.

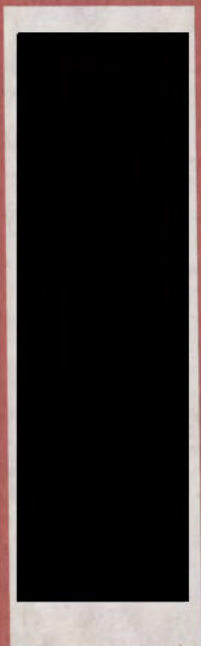
"Why people often remark on how improbable double coupling in opera is when the couples are of unequal status in some way and especially simultaneously on stage. Why look at it this way: It is a stage in the evolution of an idea heavy with mystic and spiritual insight. We need only cite such examples as *Die Zauberflöte*, *Die Entführung*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, and *Oberon*." Lighting up a smoke, and the rolley stool groaned, itself perhaps a metaphor for this spiritual mission. He was getting on dangerous ground and he knew it. An ambulance siren wailed from the street below. For it was a whole question in fact *the* whole question can you question a question in the Temple and can you question the metaphor and of it, and then still call it (A)rt. A thorny question indeed. The stool groaned again as he shifted his considerable but not ungraceful Temple.

But in resignation to my determination to have some answers and clearly not some little impatience to finish the interview before dusk he continued, gathering momentum, "Developing visual metaphor is by its nature interpretive and therefore limited and expanded by personal insight. No two artistes will come to the same conclusion. What we hope to accomplish is to create a presentation and a representation of life in such a way as to illuminate our own. The non-literal and illusive uses made by and of the bits of graceful lace give us Susan's fragmented life torn from her eastern traditions; an atmospheric interpretation, if you will," he said standing to indicate our chat was nearing its end, "of the temporal, physical, and metaphysical forces which bring Susan and Oliver to their 'angle of repose'."

And as he showed me to the door, "But of course the audience should never be told any of this."

Excerpts relating to *Angle of Repose* from a biography of Douglas W. Schmidt by David Alessandro Bravo, May-June 1976

San Francisco Opera
War Memorial Opera House
San Francisco, California 94102



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Angle of Repose

San
Francisco
Opera

Kurt Herbert Adler, general director

54th Season

September 10 through November 28, 1976

War Memorial Opera House

SYNOPSIS/Angle of Repose

ACT ONE—Lyman Ward, a historian, is suffering from a crippling disease which has led to his wife's desertion. He has retreated to the Grass Valley cottage that belonged to his grandparents. His grandmother was a minor literary figure in the west, his grandfather an engineer; he is writing their history, hoping to find meaning in his life from a study of theirs. His daughter, Shelly, arrives, having broken up with the man she has been living with, to announce that her mother wishes to return to Lyman. He is, however, unforgiving. As he describes his book to Shelly, the past opens. The scene is New Almaden, California, site of the mercury mine, the year 1876. Young Susan Burling Ward is joining her husband, Oliver, after the long journey from her home in the east. Oliver discourages the miners from holding a shivaree for the newlyweds. Susan meets Oliver's admiring young assistant, Frank Sargent, and the mine manager, Dahl, who is persuaded to allow her to visit the mine. During this expedition a miner is killed. Susan is shocked by Dahl's cruelty to the miners, and incites Oliver and Frank to insubordination, for which they are fired. Sometime later, in a Nob Hill ballroom, Oliver seeks to interest San Francisco investors in his new formula for cement and Susan meets Joaquin Miller, the "Poet of the Frontier." He warns her that she cannot expect to live among the amenities of San Francisco. Her husband is a man of the mountains and the frontiers and Susan must follow where Oliver's work takes him.

ACT TWO—Shelly voices her great bitterness against the wives, husbands, and lovers who desert and betray. Lyman continues with his story: the San Francisco deal has come to nothing and Susan and Oliver now reside in the Colorado mining town of Leadville. Here the past reopens, with indications that Susan's emotional dependence upon Frank Sargent has increased in these harsh surroundings. A lynching party passes by on the way to the hanging of a claim-jumper. Frank is involved, and while Oliver repudiates such frontier justice he continues to value Frank's friendship. During a party at the Wards' cottage Oliver is offered a position with the United States Geological Survey. This has been his fondest dream, but it would mean that he and Susan would be separated, and so it is impossible. Instead he chooses to plan and build an irrigation system in the Boise Valley. Susan is reluctant to try to make a life in what she regards as desert exile, but she is bound to go where her husband's work takes him. Shelly guesses that she will be unfaithful to Oliver.

ACT THREE—Lyman continues Susan's story. The Wards have lived in the Boise Valley for eleven years, but despite the birth of two children Susan is desperately unhappy. The past opens on the bank of the Susan Canal, whose completion is being celebrated. As a festive crowd passes by, Susan is left alone with her child, Agnes, when Frank appears. He begs her to come to San Francisco with him. The child wanders off and is drowned. Frank hangs himself as responsible for the tragedy. Susan is never to be forgiven by Oliver during the fifty years that remain of their life together. Ellen, Lyman's wife, arrives at the Grass Valley cottage, and past and present come together as Susan's persistent voice is able to impress upon both Lyman and Shelly the long, barren anguish of the unforgiven, and the unforgiving. Lyman and Ellen are reunited, with their daughter's blessing.

A City of San Francisco and United States of America twin bicentennial world premiere production made possible by generous gifts from the City of San Francisco, the San Francisco Foundation, the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Hearst Foundation, the National Opera Institute, an anonymous foundation, and numerous arts patrons.

Angle of Repose

(IN ENGLISH)

Opera in three acts by ANDREW IMBRIE

Text by OAKLEY HALL

Based on the novel by WALLACE STEGNER

By arrangement with Shawnee Press, Inc., sole agent for Malcolm Music, Ltd., publisher and copyright owner

Conductor
John Mauceri*

Production
Gerald Freedman*

Scenic Designer
Douglas W. Schmidt*

Costume Designer
Lawrence Casey*

Choreographer
John McFall*

Chorus Director
Robert Jones

Lighting Designer
Thomas Munn

Projection Art by
Greg Peterson

Photographs of New Almaden courtesy of
California Historical Society

Musical Preparation
Warren Jones

Scenery Built in
San Francisco Opera Scenic Shop

CAST

<i>Ada Hawkes</i>	Donna Petersen
<i>Lyman Ward</i>	Chester Ludgin
<i>Shelly Ward</i>	Susanne Marsee
<i>Susan Burling Ward</i>	Nancy Shade*
<i>Oliver Ward</i>	Dale Duesing**
<i>Miners</i>	John Davies
	James Hoback
	Wayne Turnage
	Joshua Hecht
	William Lewis
	James Johnson
	John Del Carlo,
	D. Livingstone Tigner*
	Robert Delany*
	Samuel Byrd
	Eugene Lawrence,
	Neil Cooper*,
	Kenneth Malucelli*
	Claudia Heyneman*
	Hardy John Crawford*
	Edna Garabedian

Corps de ballet

Miners and their wives, San Franciscans, financiers, lynch mob, Leadville guests, banjo player, fiddler, bass player, Boise Valley residents

*San Francisco Opera debut
**American debut

PLACE AND TIME: Grass Valley, California, the present;
California, Colorado and Idaho, 1876 to 1890

ACT I, Scene 1 Grass Valley, California (the present), and
New Almaden, California (1876)

Scene 2 Interior of mercury mine, New Almaden (1876)
Scene 3 Nob Hill, San Francisco (1876)

ACT II Grass Valley (the present), and Leadville,
Colorado (1879)

ACT III Prelude Conquering the desert
Scene 1 Grass Valley (the present)
Scene 2 Boise Valley (1890)
Scene 3 Grass Valley (the present)

Please do not interrupt the music with applause

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

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

The performance will last approximately three hours and fifteen minutes

SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 6, 1976 (WORLD PREMIERE) AT 8:00

TUESDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 9, 1976 AT 8:00

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 14, 1976 AT 2:00

THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 18, 1976 AT 8:00

FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 26, 1976 AT 8:00 (Broadcast)

