Adriana Lecouvreur

1977

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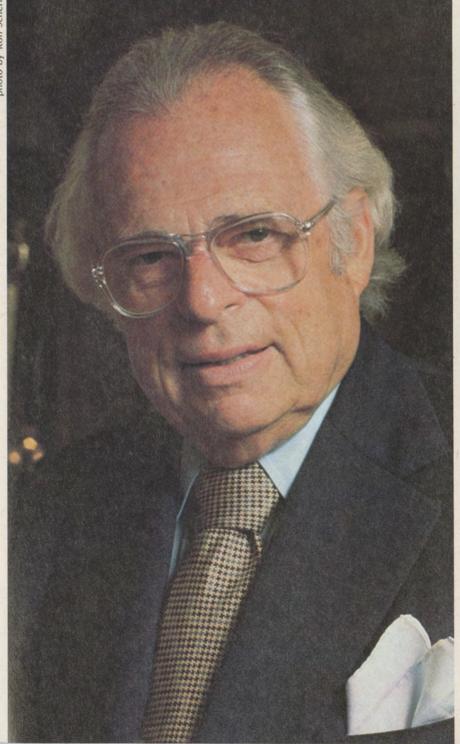


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In Rehearsal



Under the guidance of Maestro Gianandrea Gavazzeni (back to camera) Renata Scotto and Giacomo Aragall prepare for Adriana Lecouvreur.

continued on p. 80



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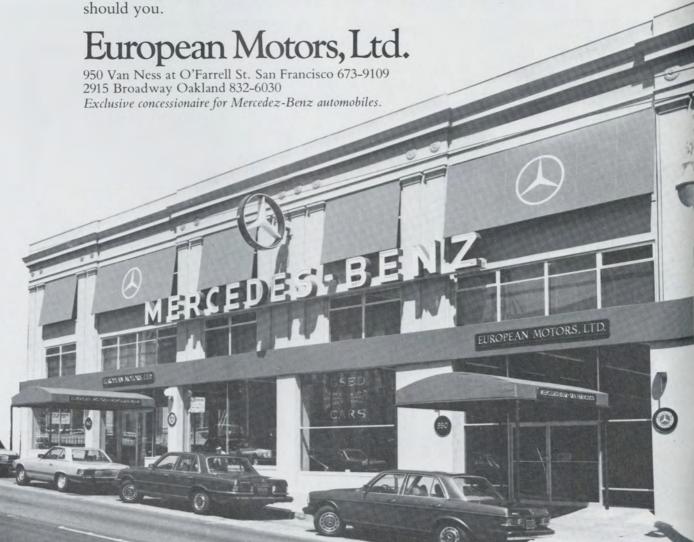
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Raf Vallone: Movies to Stage to Opera

by Arthur Kaplan

"You must face the roots, the cultural roots, before everything," stated Italian screen star Raf Vallone, in response to a question about his approach to directing opera. "Usually I study the century in which the opera is situated. For instance, for *Norma* I went back to the Druidic civilization before the Romans. I tried to recapture the psychology and gestures of those marvel-

ous barbarian people with their primitive outlook toward life."

Vallone had never seen Cilea's Adriana Lecouvreur before he was asked to direct the verismo work in his and its first appearance with the San Francisco Opera. When he came to San Francisco in February to discuss the staging with the technical staff of the Opera, he had obviously done a great deal of

research about *Adriana*, its background, the time and place in which it is set, and the historical characters on which it is based.

For Adriana Vallone wanted to translate the style and spirit of the 18th century. "It was a time of supreme control of the emotions by the will. Although the deepest feelings were not frequently expressed, this does not



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mean it was a superficial civilization. Things were done with a great sense of stylization." In order to communicate the stylized elegance of life in 18th century France, Vallone decided to incorporate a choreographic approach. "There will be two different types of choreographed movement aside from the ballet—one for the lackeys and one for the actors of the Comédie Française.

The opening scene, which takes place in the foyer of the Comédie Française, will be like a ballet. "This is not realistic," admitted Vallone, "but it is more real than reality in its feeling for the period." The coming and going of the actors just before the curtain goes up, which is reflected in the music, will be conveyed by dancers in casual costume scurrying across the stage and in and out of the wings. At the end of Act I there will be lots of backstage activity with the chorus acting like star-struck fans to give a real theatrical atmosphere.

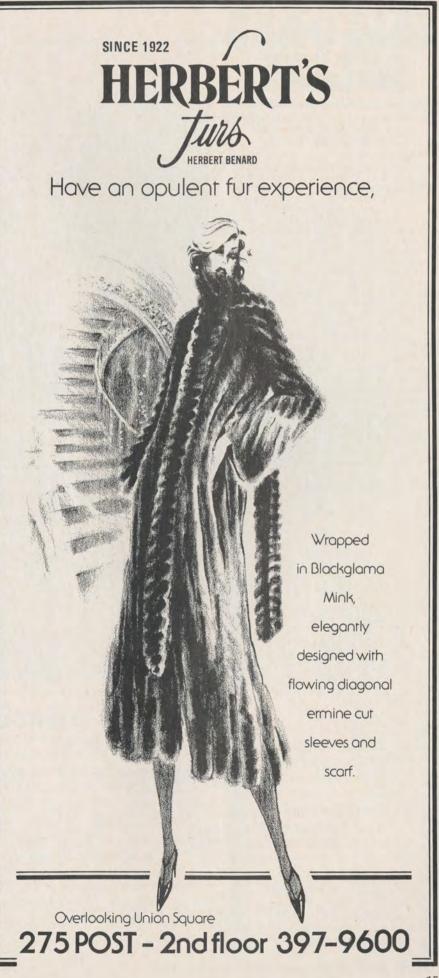
During the third act, male dancers will portray the lackeys of the Prince of Bouillon in elegant liveried costume for the beginning of the festivities. Others will also perform a discreet dance in the background during the scene between the Princess and the Abbé. In addition, there will be a full balletic treatment of the "Judgment of Paris" diversion, with the mythological characters Paris, Mercury, Juno, Athena and Venus escorted by Amazons, Graces, nymphs, etc., all in symbolic costume.

Vallone feels that the production must be visually very graceful. This corresponds, of course, to his sociological approach to opera production, but it also serves to mask some of the inherent weaknesses in the opera. "Adriana is not very deep, musically speaking, and the libretto has lots of incongruities. The original Scribe play is not very good and logic isn't very well observed by the librettist. For example, entrances and exits are sometimes without motivation." In his aim to be

as faithful as possible to the period, he also would like the quality of light to echo the 18th century (similar to what was achieved in Stanley Kubrick's recent film Barry Lyndon). As an example, he cited the end of Act II where he would like the candles extinguished one by one. "At the end of the opera," he continued, "all the stage lights will focus on the three principals, like in a Rembrandt. Everything will go black, except for Adriana, Maurizio and Michonnet who will be in a soft spotlight. It will be a very delicate effect."

Although Adriana is basically a tragic opera, Vallone will try to balance the heavy drama with a light touch whenever possible. This is something he picked up from Peter Brook, who directed him in the immensely successful French adaptation of Arthur Miller's A View from the Bridge, which ran for two years in Paris. "I consider Brook my greatest teacher," says Vallone. "I learned more from him than from anyone else." Comparing the Italo-French filmed co-production of the Miller work, for which he won Italy's Donatello David Award in 1962 for his portrayal of Eddie Carbone, Vallone commented, "The movie for me was too tragic, too tense. The play in Paris was full of a sense of humor. I don't like to announce the tragedy. In modern tragedy, the more the audience laughs, the more you can get through to them when they are relaxed and their guard is down."

Another balance he seeks to emphasize is the one between Adriana's love for the stage and her love for Maurizio. In Act I Maurizio enters just as Adriana is about to go onstage as Roxane in Racine's Bajazet. "For that moment, the stage has the supremacy. After a short but passionate conversation, she gently pushes him away and walks onstage with great majesty and solitude." It is at the end of Act III that Adriana's theatrical and private lives converge most dramatically. When asked to perform before the guests in an elegant pavilion



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Vallone demonstrates a gesture for tenor Giacomo Aragall.

of the Prince of Bouillon's palace, Adriana decides to recite a passage from Racine's great masterpiece *Phèdre*. Vallone would like this passage, in which Adriana takes her revenge on the Princess by hurling the concluding accusatory lines of Phèdre's famous monologue straight at her hostess and rival, to be recited in the original French. He feels this will heighten both the reality and the intensity of the moment by setting it off from the sung Italian.

It may not happen this way, however. "I will try it as an experiment. Perhaps I will abandon the idea. I don't like to come on set for rehearsals with my idée fixe. You must have a general conception, true. But your mind must be flexible to the improvisation that reality may suggest." That is one reason he enjoys working with soprano Renata Scotto, who, he feels, is an intuitive actress and very open to suggestion. "She can be free at any moment. You can write in this white page (pagina bianca) of her what you want. Of course," he laughs, "with a bad director that can be dangerous."

Miss Scotto and Vallone first worked together in a new production of Bellini's Norma at the Teatro Regio in Turin in 1974. It marked the soprano's first assumption of the demanding title role as well as Vallone's first assignment as an opera director, and was a critical triumph for both. "We had a marvelous experience with Norma," declares Vallone, obviously cherishing the memories of that occasion. "It was her first really tragic role. She was a little afraid because she had sung mostly soprano leggiero roles up until then. Since I had done both performing and directing of lots of tragic roles, she thought I might be the right man to direct her. She asked for me, although I had never met her before. I was very happy about her, and I think she was very happy about me." The collaboration was so positive for both artists that they are back together for the opening of the 1977 San Francisco Opera season with Adriana Lecouvreur, another first for them both.

Speaking of the historical tragedienne upon whom Eugène Scribe's play and,

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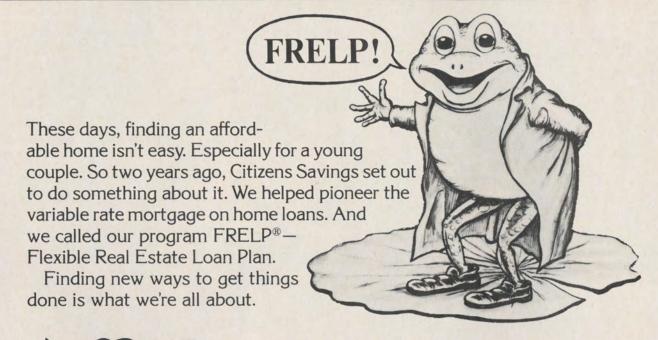
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ultimately, Cilea's opera is based, Val- Although opera direction is a relatively

lone remarked, "Along with Eleanora Duse, Adrienne Lecouvreur was the most intellectual actress in the world. You know, they found 14,000 volumes in her library. And, strangely enough, they were not concerning the theater. There were works of Greek and Roman history, Plato, Aristotle, and the first scientific books of the Enlightenment. She had a vast curiosity about life. She held a salon in her home and was mistress of the most cultivated men of her times, including Voltaire." As for the young military hero Maurice de Saxe, the opera's Maurizio, Vallone described him in his very colloquial and mellifluously accented English as quite a lady's man, using a somewhat stronger Anglo-Saxon term.

Deeply tanned and still a handsome matinee idol thirty years after his exciting screen debut in De Santis' Bitter Rice, Vallone knows what it is like to be a lady's man, a role he has played in more than fifty films. He has appeared in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish films (always performing his role in the original language) with such eminent directors as Marcel Carné, Vittorio De Sica, Pietro Germi and Alberto Lattuada. In addition, he has made a number of popular American films and has lived for a time in Hollywood. He starred in El Cid, Phaedra and The Cardinal, among others, and can currently be seen in the film adaptation of Sidney Sheldon's best-seller The Other Side of Midnight. Still very much active, he recently began shooting on The Greek Tycoon with Anthony Quinn and Jacqueline Bisset.

new phase of Vallone's career, he is by no means a stranger to the stage. In fact, he might well be called a Renaissance man of the theater. He is one of a handful of persons who has made an international reputation as playwright, actor and director. Expressing embarrassment to name himself in such illustrious company, he cited Aeschylus, Shakespeare and Molière as famous predecessors. Nowadays his principal involvement in the theater is as an actor-director. Vallone prefers assuming both roles and has done so in such works as Chekhov's Uncle Vanya, Büchner's Woyzeck and Arthur Miller's The Price, as well as A View from the Bridge.

He does not find it difficult to direct himself on the stage. In fact, he finds it helpful. "It's not that I'm presumptuous," said he unpresumptuously, "but I like to have full responsibility. That way you can control every night's performance. Unfortunately, actors have a tendency after the premiere to cut the play into little pieces for themselves. They lose the communication which is the very strict tissue of the play. By acting in the play, the director keeps a certain standard and assures constant control."

Had he ever thought of directing himself in opera? Vallone's large blue eyes twinkled expressively as he smiled and said, "I was born with opera in my ears. My father, who was a lawyer, used to close up his office and sing me arias. But it was a penance for me, so I hated opera as a child. It's a strange law of life which now makes me a director of opera!"



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Cilea's Opera Comique

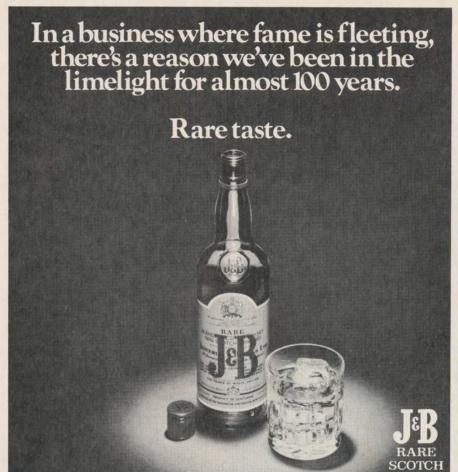
by Jay Nicolaisen

A painting of the French actress Adrienne Lecouvreur as Minerva, by Nicholas Largilliere. This painting is in the permanent collection of the San Francisco Archives for the Performing Arts and is reproduced with their kind permission.

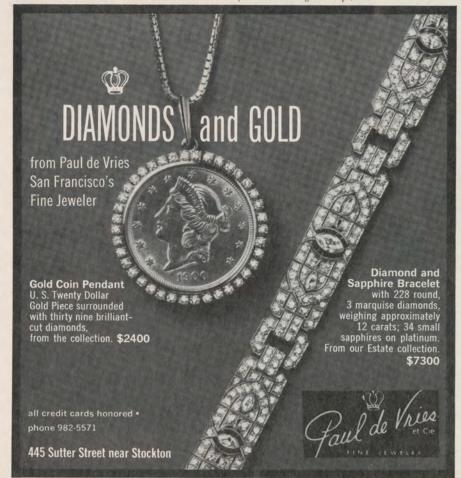


No Italian composer ever set a more thoroughly French subject than *Adriana Lecouvreur*. The play upon which Cilea based his fourth opera has intimate ties with three periods of French history and touches in various ways several of France's proudest cultural traditions. A minor landmark of nineteenth-century French romanticism, it was interpreted in its early productions by the most famous French actresses of that and quite possibly any age. While it has its setting in Paris during the reign of Louis XV, performances of great dramatic poetry from an earlier period of French theater, the classical era of Racine and Corneille, are made an essential feature of the action.





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The heroine herself was a figure of no little importance in the history of French theater. Born in 1692, Adrienne Lecouvreur gained renown in the 1720's for her portrayals of Roxane, Phèdre, Chimène, and other noble ladies of the French classical tradition. Her simple and direct style set her apart from her fellow actors and actresses, whose formal and stilted manner of declamation is championed in the opera by the much-mentioned but never glimpsed Duclos. Among her lovers she counted not only Maurice, Count of Saxony, but also Voltaire, who became a lifelong friend and admirer. Having revolutionized French acting style and entangled herself in one of the most complicated political intrigues of the day (that on which the opera is based), Adrienne died in 1730, probably of natural causes.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Eugène Scribe (1791-1861) and Ernest Legouvé (1807-1903) delved back into history and France's rich theatrical tradition to create their five-act comédie drame en prose, Adrienne Lecouvreur. Scribe. of course, was the dominant French playwright and librettist of the century, providing operatic texts for Meverbeer, Halévy, Verdi, and Auber among others, and numerous plays for the Comédie Française and other leading Parisian theaters. No one could actually have written as many libretti and plays as are ascribed to him. In some cases he merely sketched out a plot and turned it over to the poets of his workshop, who would grind out the requisite verse. In the case of Adrienne Lecouvreur, he and Legouvé were coequals, sharing in the task of writing the dialogue (Legouvé is responsible mainly for Acts I and II) and together creating a highly effective melodrama. The work had its successful première on April 14, 1849, with the great French actress Rachel in the title role. It went on to become a staple of the repertoire, reaching the zenith of its popularity in the 1880's, when another



General Director Kurt Herbert Adler congratulates soprano Renata Scotto at a dress rehearsal of Adriana Lecouvreur.

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Sarah Bernhardt as Adrienne Lecouvreur in her own play of the same title.

great tragédienne—at that time the world's most celebrated actress—made the title role her own. When, as Adrienne, Sarah Bernhardt entered reciting the lines of Roxane in Racine's Bajazet, three centuries of French theatrical history telescoped together in a single dramatic moment.

Massenet would have been the logical choice to turn so thoroughly French a

subject into opera. With his idiomatic setting of his native French language and his sweetly sensual melodic line, he was equipped to deal equally well with the backstage banter of Act I and Adrienne's death in the arms of Maurice and Michonnet. Instead the subject, in an Italian adaptation by Arturo Colautti, was entrusted to a southern Italian composer whose acquaintance

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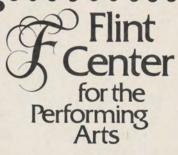
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Tenor Giacomo Aragall as Maurizio.

with the French theater must have been very limited, if indeed it existed at all. Francesco Cilea, born at Palmi in 1866 and educated in Naples, was, along with Puccini, Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and Giordano, a member of what came to be known as the "giovane scuola italiana" (young Italian school), a group of Italian composers who achieved prominence around 1890 and

each of whom, with the exception of Puccini, is represented in the modern repertoire by a single work. So different is the atmosphere of Adrienne Lecouvreur from that of Cavalleria Rusticana, I Pagliacci, and even Andrea Chénier that Cilea's choice of subject seems, on the face of it, a disastrous one.



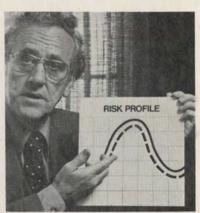
Maurice de Saxe, Augustus' illegitimate son and later Maréchal de France, the great love of Adrienne's life.

Yet the giovane scuola was not, as is so often implied, involved exclusively in the production of veristic works in the style of Cavalleria Rusticana. We have only to consider several of Puccini's successes from around the turn of the century-Manon Lescaut, La Bohème, and Madama Butterfly-to recognize that for the first time French opéra comique was exerting a consistently significant influence on Italian opera. In the works of Verdi's and Ponchielli's generations, comic scenes were rare and, where present, were treated in a heavy-handed manner and poorly integrated with the main action of the opera. But Faust, Carmen, and Manon, all of which achieved notable success in Italy during the last decades of the nineteenth century, represented for the younger Italian composers a new sort of model, one in which comedy, pathos, and sentiment played roles of nearly equal importance, often within a single scene. Along with a few purely veristic works, then, the giovane scuola produced a number of pseudo-opéras comigues. Adriana Lecouvreur, next to La Bohème, comes closer than any other Italian work from these years to

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capturing the spirit of the French operatic model. The actors and actresses, the major source of comedy in both the play and the opera, are the heroine's colleagues, and she, Maurizio, and Michonnet all engage in playful repartee with them at one time or another. They make their final exit only a moment before Adriana opens the fatal casket. Thus as in *La Bohème*,



photo by Caroline Crawford.

Act IV, the imminence of the heroine's death dawns upon us even as our smiles are fading.

Cilea's success in creating a work of this sort lay not only in choosing a subject conceived by its authors along the lines of opéra comique, but also in possessing a musical style that was formed under the influence of Bizet and Massenet. All the composers of continued on p. 33

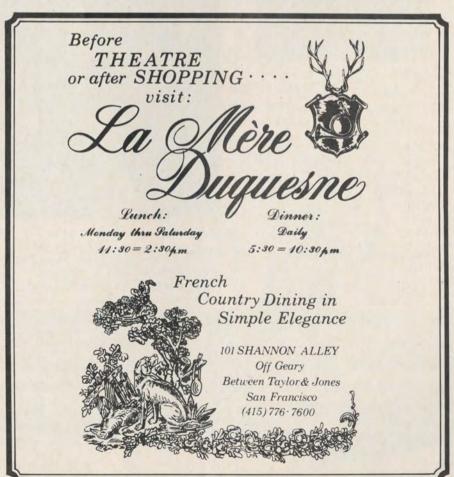


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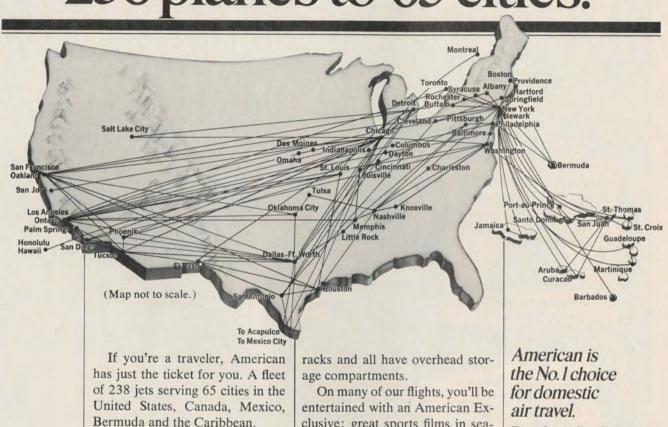


The San Francisco Opera begins its fifty-fifth annual season with the largest advance ticket sales in its history. Here general director Kurt Herbert Adler passes out complimentary doughnuts (and the ladies of OPERA ACTION served coffee) to the early arrivals in line the day the box office opened on August 15. The first customer had arrived to begin waiting at 4:30 in the morning!

Although many performances are sold out, some seats are still available for a number of evenings. Subscribers also often donate tickets they are unable to use to the Opera Company for re-sale and potential patrons are therefore urged to check with the box office late in the day on sold-out dates for these returns (this must be done in person, as telephone inquiries on such availabilities cannot be answered).

Standing room is also available for every performance of the season. It is never sold in advance and is only obtainable two hours before curtain time (although lines to purchase it may start forming earlier).

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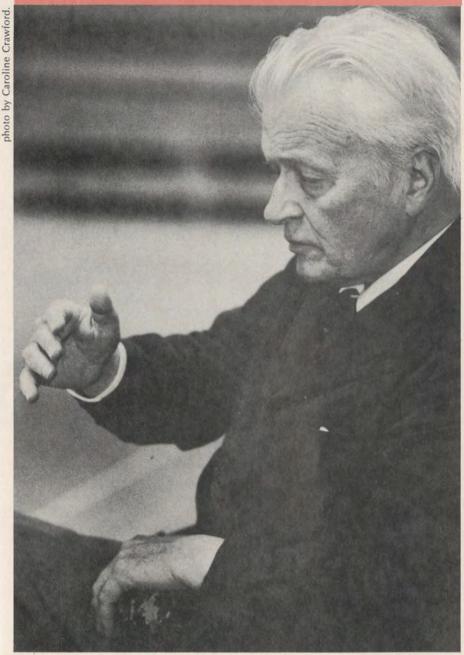
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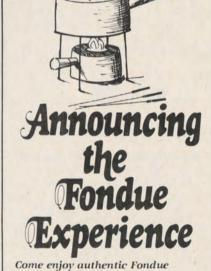


Maestro Gianandrea Gavazzeni coaches a musical phrase in a rehearsal of Adriana Lecouvreur during a preliminary run-through in San Francisco last month.

the *giovane scuola* borrowed certain features of French musical style, but none with more assiduity than Puccini and Cilea. This is apparent not only in the echoes of French opera which may occasionally be heard in *Adriana* (notably of Carmen in the ensemble of Act I), but also in Cilea's harmonic idiom, from the early *La Tilda* (1892) right through *Gloria* (1907), and in the exquisite orchestration of *Adriana*. Like

Massenet, Cilea depends for the superficially modern sound of his harmonies on the economical use of a few well-placed altered chords, particularly chords with an added major seventh and dominant triads with a raised fifth degree. To remove these would be to expose the essentially bland and conventional harmonic framework that underlies most of the set pieces of *Adriana*. And again like Massenet,





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Giuseppe Taddei as Michonnet and Renata Scotto as Adriana Lecouvreur practice a scene with animation.

Cilea favors a light and varied orchestral sound, in which strings and woodwinds predominate. Loud, brassy effects in *Adriana* can be counted on one's fingers and are used principally in association with the sinister Princess theme

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which, like the fate motive in Carmen, presages the heroine's demise early on. Cilea's bittersweet harmonies and delicate orchestral effects give his score a smooth Gallic finish; the opera stands as proof that Italian musical style at the turn of the century was not nearly so insular as many critics, judging mostly from Cavalleria Rusticana and I Pagliacci, have led us to believe.

Yet taken as a whole, or even piece by piece, Adriana Lecouvreur could not be mistaken for the work of a Frenchman. That the heroine of Cilea's opera strikes us as a more passionate individual than the heroine of Scribe and Legouvé's play is to be explained not so much by the differing attitudes of French and Italian men towards

women as by the simple fact that what Adrienne says, Adriana sings. But Cilea's approach to operatic composition is at once typical of that of his Italian contemporaries and entirely opposed to that of Massenet or Debussy. The melodies of the best late nineteenth-century French composers proceed from, indeed are inseparable from the verse they set. Anyone who has heard Massenet's Manon will not be able to recall the phrase "Nous vivrons à Paris!" apart from the tune to which it is set—one instantly evokes the other. But how many opera-goers can recite the words which the Rodolfo of La Bohème sings to the famous Ab major melody of "Che gelida manina"? Cilea's melody, like Puccini's, springs from the general emotional situation, and because it forms no intimate union with the words, must possess a purely musical attractiveness. In this Cilea is usually successful. The wealth and beauty of his melody are not perhaps demonstrable on paper, but they are confirmed year after year in the opera house, where audiences respond enthusiastically to "Poveri fiori," "La dol-

continued on p. 74



This year makes the 55th consecutive year that San Francisco Opera has presented its brilliant fall opera season. Advance ticket sales have been the highest in history, proof that the selection of operas meet with your approval and that you know the quality of the productions will be superb. San Francisco Opera is recognized as one of the great opera companies of the world, and we will do our utmost to continue to earn that reputation.

Three of the ten operas to be performed are new to San Francisco and, of the remaining seven, none has been seen in San Francisco for at least five years. Five of the productions come from other opera companies, two are new designs and only three have been seen in San Francisco heretofore. Productions exchanged with Metropolitan Opera for some of our productions include Adriana Lecouvreur, Aida and I Puritani. Two-Idomeneo from Cologne Opera and Turandot from Strasbourg Opera—were designed by Jean Pierre Ponnelle, who is well known to San Francisco audiences. The sharing of productions among opera companies is a trend of recent years to increase repertoires in an economical way. A new production of Un Ballo in Maschera was made possible by a gift from a friend of San Francisco Opera. Several other generous patrons have made special gifts to help defray the costs of Katya Kabanova.

Production of grand opera is expensive. Even when we enjoy 100% capacity attendance, revenues from ticket sales cover only approximately 60% of our costs. The remainder, which in 1977 is estimated at \$2,800,000, must be raised from a variety of sources-generous patrons who finance new productions, guarantors, income from endowment funds, grants from local and federal governments, donations from the Opera Guild and from contributions to our annual Operating Fund campaign, the single biggest money raiser. Despite all of these generous contributors, we incurred a deficit of \$150,000 in 1976; such deficits, of course, cannot continue. We work hard to keep costs to a minimum (e.g., the sharing of sets and costumes with other opera companies), but they continue to increase as a result of the increase in cost of living. More than 78% of our costs are for payroll and fringe benefits. These increased costs can be recovered only partly through ticket price increases. We must increase significantly the number of contributors to the Operating Fund. If you are not presently a contributor, won't you now join those who help each year? Your tax deductible contributions should be sent to San Francisco Opera Association, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, 94102. Our continued existence depends on you.

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 Roger Boas, 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. This year's five student matinees, sponsored, as in the past, by the San Francisco Opera Guild, will present Gounod's *Faust*. Thousands of young people, most for the first time, are exposed to grand opera and they enjoy it thoroughly.

Just as this letter was written, the good news was announced that the funds are now available to complete the Opera House, by extending the rear to Franklin Street to provide vitally needed storage space, chorus rooms and other facilities. This is part of the Performing Arts Center project which contemplates a new symphony hall on the block bounded by Van Ness Avenue, Hayes, Franklin and Grove Streets, a rehearsal hall suitable for opera and ballet and a parking garage to replace the parking facilities displaced by the proposed new symphony hall.

Once again, San Francisco Opera is indebted to Chevron U.S.A., Inc. and the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, Oakland, California, for making live radio broadcasts of the complete 1977 season possible as a public service. These live broadcasts are heard up and down the West Coast and in Chicago, in the Bay Area over station KKHI AM/FM. This year, for the first time, delayed broadcasts of all ten operas will also be heard over more than 120 member stations of National Public Radio beginning early in October, an expansion that will enable millions of opera lovers throughout the country to enjoy our fine performances.

Enjoy our season!

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President,

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Gala Opening Night Tuesday, Sept 13, 8PM Friday, Sept 16 8PM Saturday, Sept 24, 8PM Wednesday, Sept 28, 7:30PM Sunday, Oct 2, 2PM

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Set Designer: Schneider-Siemssen* Costume Designer: Walek** Chorus Director: Bradshaw Saturday, September 17, 8PM Wednesday, September 21, 7:30PM Sunday, September 25, 2PM Tuesday, September 27, 8PM

DAS RHEINGOLD Wagner IN GERMAN

Schwarz**, Todd, Payne** (Oct 1, 4, 7) Taillon (Oct 12, 16, 22), Bergquist*, Tyree, Jones/Nentwig**, Ulfung, Dene**, Appel, Malta, Bramante, McCauley, Cooper

Conductor: Hollreiser* Stage Director: Hager Designer: Skalicki Saturday, Oct 1, 8PM Tuesday, Oct 4, 8PM Friday, Oct 7, 8PM Wednesday, Oct 12, 7:30PM Sunday, Oct 16, 2PM Saturday, Oct 22, 1:30PM

FAUST Gounod IN FRENCH

Shade, Marsee, Taillon*/Aragall, Zancanaro*, Tozzi, Davies

Conductor: Périsson Stage Director: Karpo* Designer: Skalicki Chorus Director: Bradshaw Wednesday, Oct 5, 7:30PM Saturday, Oct 8, 8PM Tuesday, Oct 11, 8PM Friday, Oct 14, 8PM Sunday, Oct 23, 2PM

Special Family-Priced Matinee

Todd, Jones, Cole/McCauley, Cooper, Courtney, Davies

Conductor: Bradshaw Stage Director: Karpo Rehearsed by: Farruggio Designer: Skalicki Chorus Director: Bradshaw Saturday, Nov 26, 1:30PM

AIDA Verdi IN ITALIAN

Parazzini**, Cossotto*, Vaness*/ McCracken, Mittelmann, Vinco*, Bramante, Talley*

Conductor: Gavazzeni Stage Director: Frisell Set Designer: Reppa* Costume Designer: Hall* Choreographer: Lamb* Chorus Director: Bradshaw Production owned by the Metropolitan Opera Association

Saturday, Oct 15, 8PM Tuesday, Oct 18, 8PM Friday, Oct 21, 8PM Monday, Oct 24, 7:30PM Sunday, Oct 30, 2PM Saturday, Nov 5, 1:30PM

AIDA Verdi IN ITALIAN

Marton*, Troyanos, Vaness/Cecchele*, Wixell, Giaiotti, Bramante, Talley

Conductor: Gavazzeni
Stage Director: Frisell
Rehearsed by: Farruggio
Set Designer: Reppa
Costume Designer: Hall
Choreographer: Lamb
Chorus Director: Bradshaw
Production owned by the
Metropolitan Opera Association
Friday, Nov 18, 8PM
Thursday, Nov 24, 8PM†
Saturday, Nov 26, 8PM

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS

Strauss IN GERMAN

Price, Welting*, Troyanos, Bergquist, South, Jones/Cathcart*, Ludgin, Duesing, Malta, R. Johnson, Frank, Davies, Cooper, Pell*, Reinhardt*

Conductor: Ferencsik Stage Director: Hager Designer: Jenkins Wednesday, Oct 19, 7:30PM Saturday, Oct 22, 8PM Tuesday, Oct 25, 8PM Friday, Oct 28, 8PM Sunday, Nov 6, 2PM

TURANDOT

Puccini IN ITALIAN

Caballé*, Mitchell, South, Jones/Pavarotti, Tozzi, Duesing, Corazza**, Frank, Bramante, Manton

Conductor: Chailly*
Production: Ponnelle
Assistant Director: Joël**
Set Designer: Ponnelle
Costume Designer: Halmen
Chorus Director: Bradshaw
Production owned by the
Strasbourg Opera
Saturday, Oct 29, 8PM
Tuesday, Nov 1, 8PM
Friday, Nov 1, 8PM
Friday, Nov 1, 8PM
Wednesday, Nov 9, 7:30PM
Sunday, Nov 13, 2PM
Wednesday, Nov 16, 7:30PM
Saturday, Nov 19, 1:30PM

I PURITANI Bellini IN ITALIAN

Sills, Vaness/Suarez*, Zancanaro, Giaiotti, D. Johnson*, R. Johnson

Conductor: Peloso Stage Director: Capobianco Set Designer: Lee Costume Designer: Hall Chorus Director: Bradshaw Production owned by the Metropolitan Opera Association Wednesday, Nov 2, 7:30PM Saturday, Nov 5, 8PM Tuesday, Nov 8, 8PM Friday, Nov 11, 8PM Sunday, Nov 20, 2PM Wednesday, Nov 23, 7:30PM

New Production
UN BALLO IN MASCHERA
Verdi
IN ITALIAN

Ricciarelli, Battle*, Payne/Carreras, Mazurok*, Bramante, Courtney, Cooper, Talley, Davies

Conductor: Adler
Production: Frisell
Designer: Conklin*
Choreographer: Lamb
Chorus Director: Bradshaw
Saturday, Nov 12, 8PM
Tuesday, Nov 15, 7:30PM
Saturday, Nov 19, 8PM
Tuesday, Nov 22, 8PM
Friday, Nov 25, 8PM
Sunday, Nov 25, 8PM
Sunday, Nov 27, 8PM

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

*San Francisco Opera debut **American opera debut

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December 1, 1977 May 28, 1978

La Boheme (new production) (Puccini)

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Susannah (Floyd)

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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 p.m. Series registration is \$8.50; single tickets are \$2 (\$1.50 for students and senior citizens). For information, please call (415) 388-2850.

September 8
ADRIANA LECOUVREUR
Gordon Engler

September 15
KATYA KABANOVA
Dr. Dale Harris

September 29 FAUST Dr. Jan Popper

October 6
ARIADNE AUF NAXOS
Michael Barclay

October 27 TURANDOT Dr. Dale Harris

SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Community Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Rd., at 7:30 p.m. Series registration is \$10; single tickets are \$2.50 (\$1.25 for students with I.D.) For information, please call (415) 325-8451 or (415) 321-9875.

September 11 IDOMENEO James H. Schwabacher, Jr.

September 18
KATYA KABANOVA
Dr. Dale Harris

October 9
ARIADNE AUF NAXOS
Dr. Jan Popper

October 16 TURANDOT Dr. Jan Popper

October 30 I PURITANI Dr. Dale Harris

Bus Service to San Francisco Opera performances is available. For information, please call (415) 493-8636.

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

All Junior League opera previews will be held at the Curran Theatre at 11:00 a.m. There is no admission charge. For information, please call (415) 567-8600.

September 7 ADRIANA LECOUVREUR Michael Barclay

September 14 IDOMENEO James H. Schwabacher, Jr.

September 20 KATYA KABANOVA Dr. Jan Popper October 18
ARIADNE AUF NAXOS
Stephanie von Buchau
October 27
TURANDOT
Dr. Dale Harris

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

Co-sponsored by the San Jose Opera Guild and Sunnyvale Community Center. All presentations will be held in the Sunnyvale Community Center, 550 East Remington Drive, Sunnyvale. All participants (including members of San Jose Opera Guild) must register directly to De Anza's Seminar-Lecture Series 90. Registration fee of \$3.00 entitles participants to attend one or all of the Opera Preview lectures. For information, please call Mrs. Artie Nicholson, (415) 967-3590.

Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. IDOMENEO James H. Schwabacher, Jr.

Sept. 15, 10:00 a.m. KATYA KABANOVA Dr. Dale Harris

Sept. 22, 10:00 a.m. ADRIANA LECOUVREUR Dr. Jan Popper

Sept. 28, 7:30 p.m. FAUST James H. Schwabacher, Jr.

Oct. 6, 7:30 p.m. AIDA Dr. Marie Gibson

Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m. ARIADNE AUF NAXOS Dr. Arthur Regan

Oct. 20, 7:30 p.m.

UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

Dr. Marie Gibson

Oct. 28, 10:00 a.m. TURANDOT Dr. Dale Harris

Nov. 3, 10:00 a.m. I PURITANI Dr. Jan Popper

UC-BERKELEY EXTENSION LECTURE SERIES

DR. JAN POPPER LECTURES will be given on one Tuesday and nine Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. at Richardson Auditorium, UC Extension Center, 55 Laguna St., San Francisco. Series registration is \$40; single tickets are \$5, on a space available basis, payable at the door. For further information, please call (415) 642-4141.

September 6 (Tues.)
ADRIANA LECOUVREUR

September 12 IDOMENEO September 19 KATYA KABANOVA

September 26 DAS RHEINGOLD

October 3
FAUST

October 10 AIDA

October 17
ARIADNE AUF NAXOS

October 24 TURANDOT

October 31 I PURITANI

November 7 UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

NAPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

For the fifth 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 Jr. High School, 2447 Old Sonoma Rd., Napa, on Wednesday nights from 7-9 p.m. Registration for the entire series is \$5.00. Ernest Fly will again teach the course, using his collection of complete opera recordings, filmstrips, and also introducing guest speakers and vocal artists. For further information, please call Mr. Fly at (707) 224-6162.

September 7 ADRIANA LECOUVREUR

September 14 IDOMENEO

September 21 KATYA KABANOVA

September 28 DAS RHEINGOLD

October 5
FAUST

October 12 AIDA

October 19 ARIADNE AUF NAXOS

October 26 TURANDOT

November 2 I PURITANI

November 9 UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

OPERA EDUCATION WEST

EAST BAY FRIENDS OF THE OPERA

Previews will be presented by Michael Barclay at the Marketplace Antiques in Emeryville. Individual admission is \$3.00 with a \$15.00 series ticket for the full series of 7 lectures. Complimentary refreshments before and after each lecture. All lectures begin at 8:00 p.m. For further information, please call (415) 526-5244.

September 5
ADRIANA LECOUVREUR

September 8

September 12 KATYA KABANOVA

September 19 DAS RHEINGOLD

September 26
ARIADNE AUF NAXOS

October 3 TURANDOT

October 31 I PURITANI

FRIENDS OF THE KENSINGTON LIBRARY

A Preview of *Un Ballo in Maschera* will be held on Monday, November 7 at the Kensington Library, Arlington Ave., Kensington. The preview will begin at 8:00 p.m. and admission is free.

COGSWELL COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

Series will be given at Cogswell College at 600 Stockton Street on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Lectures by Stephanie von Buchau, Performing Arts Editor of San Francisco Magazine, Arthur Kaplan, Staff Writer of the San Francisco Opera and Allan Ulrich, free-lance music writer. Series registration is \$50; single tickets are \$6, on a space available basis, payable at the door. For further information please call (415) 433-1994, extension office.

September 6
ADRIANA LECOUVREUR & IDOMENEO
(double lecture)

September 13 KATYA KABANOVA

September 27
DAS RHEINGOLD

October 4
FAUST

October 11 AIDA

October 18 ARIADNE AUF NAXOS

October 25 TURANDOT

November 1 I PURITANI

November 8 UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

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Calendar of *Merola Opera Program* events.

Invitations to dress rehearsal of Spring Opera Theater and Western Opera Theater.

Schedule of *Brown Bag Opera* performances.

Notification of *Opera Action* previews.

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Student Matinees

FAUST Gounod IN FRENCH

Tuesday, November 1, 1977, 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 9, 1977, 1:00 p.m. Friday, November 11, 1977, 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 15, 1977, 1:00 p.m. Friday, November 18, 1977, 1:30 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA COLOR POST CARDS









A new series of twelve beautiful full-color mailing cards of artists, scenes from operas and the exterior of the Opera House. On sale in the Box Office and lobby at every performance.

Our Generous Supporters

The San Francisco Opera Association extends its sincere appreciation to all those contributors who have helped sustain and maintain our Company over the past year. Listed below are those corporations, foundations and individuals whose gifts and pledges of \$200 and over to the annual fund drive, the Guarantor Plan, production sponsorships, endowment payments, or other special projects were received between August 1, 1976 and September 1, 1977. Space does not permit us to pay tribute to the hundreds of others in our opera family of supporters who help make each season possible. To all we are deeply grateful for your continued support, so essential to the ongoing success of San Francisco Opera.

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Broadcasts



Live quadraphonic broadcasts are made possible by Chevron U.S.A., Inc. and the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California.

Friday, September 16 ADRIANA LECOUVREUR Friday, September 23 **IDOMENEO** Friday, September 30 KATYA KABANOVA Friday, October 7 DAS RHEINGOLD Friday, October 14 **FAUST** Friday, October 21 AIDA Friday, October 28 ARIADNE AUF NAXOS Friday, November 4 TURANDOT Friday, November 11 I PURITANI Friday, November 25 UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

KKHI-AM 1550/FM 95.7 San Francisco KFAC-AM 1330/FM 92.3 Los Angeles **KING-FM 98.1** Seattle **KOAP—FM 91.5** Portland KFBK-FM 92.5 Sacramento KMJ-FM 97.9 Fresno KFSD-FM 94.1 San Diego WFMT-AM 1450/FM 98.7 Chicago

All live broadcasts begin at 7:50 p.m. Pacific time.

San Francisco Opera broadcasts can also be heard throughout the United States on member stations of National Public Radio beginning in early October. Check local listings for date and time.

KQED FM 88.5

SUNDAY MORNING AT THE OPERA

Recorded operas with John Roszak, host.

Gene Parrish interviews artists of the 1977 San Francisco Opera season during intermission. 11 a.m. every Sunday.

ARTS REPORTING SERVICE

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

Ticket Information

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA BOX OFFICE

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

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

Unused Tickets

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

Opera Museum

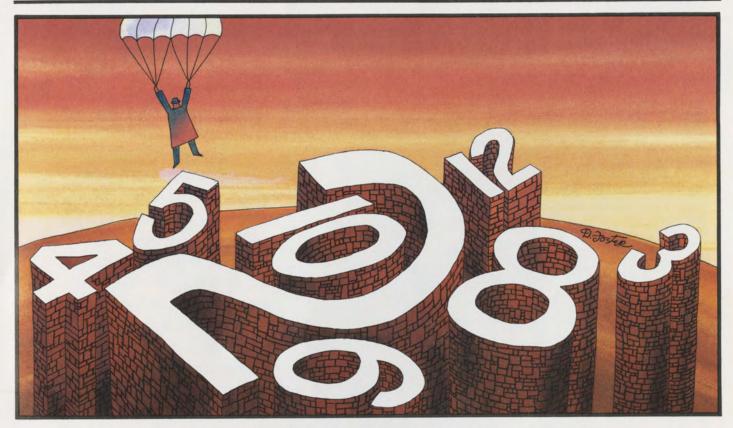
The 1977 exhibit in the opera museum, prepared by the Archives for the Performing Arts, represents a survey of the 1977 San Francisco Opera repertoire and a special retrospective devoted to the career of Licia Albanese with the San Francisco Opera.

Archives for the Performing Arts, which serves as a repository for invaluable collections pertaining to opera, dance, music and theater, is a non-profit, tax exempt corporation, with headquarters in the San Francisco Public Library, Presidio Branch. The museum display represents countless hours of research and preparation of visuals by Archives' director, Russell Hartley, and Judith Solomon, his assistant, with Herbert Scholder handling arrangements for the section on Licia Albanese.

The specific purpose for which Archives for the Performing Arts was formed was to collect, preserve, classify and exhibit all types of memorabilia pertaining to all the performing arts and to make the educational and historical material accessible to the general public on a continuing basis.

The opera museum, in the south foyer, box level, is open free of charge during all performances.

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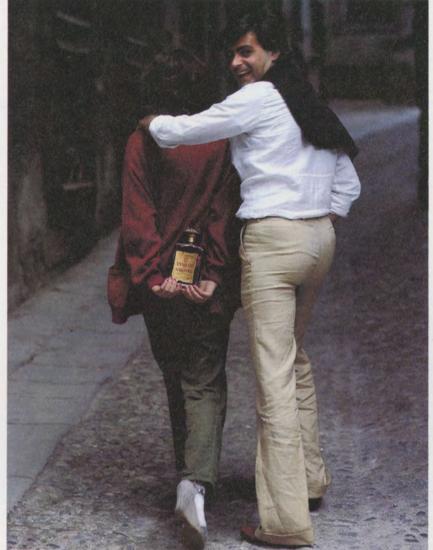
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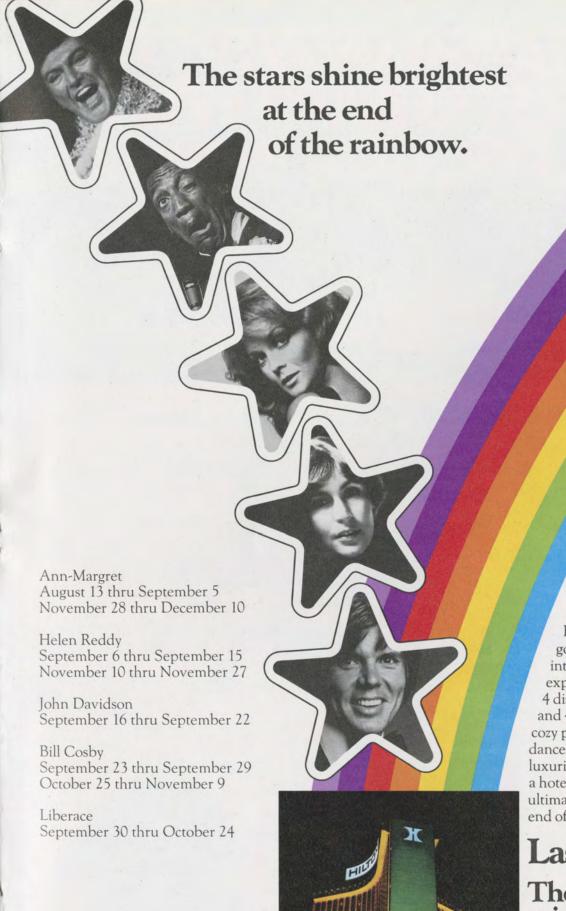
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Text by ARTURO COLAUTTI

Based on the drama by EUGENE SCRIBE and ERNEST LEGOUVE
(By arrangement with Belwin Mills Publishing Corp.)

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Adriana Lecouvreur

(IN ITALIAN)

Conductor Gianandrea Gavazzeni*

Stage Director Raf Vallone**

Designer C. M. Cristini*

after sketches by Camillo Paravicini*

Scenery supervised by Thomas Munn

Costume Designer Ray Diffen*

Chorus Director Richard Bradshaw**

Choreographer Bonita Rose*

Lighting Designer Thomas Munn

Musical Preparation Louis Salemno

Scenery and costumes owned by the Metropolitan Opera Association

First performance: Milan, November 6, 1902

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 AT 8:00 OPENING NIGHT OF THE SEASON

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16. AT 8:00 (Live Broadcast)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 AT 7:30

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2 AT 2:00

Please do not interrupt the music with applause

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

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

The performance will last approximately three and one-half hours

CAST

Mlle. Jouvenot

Michonnet

Poisson

Mlle. Dangeville

Ouinault

Abbé de Chazeuil

Prince de Bouillon

Adriana Lecouvreur

Maurizio, Count of Saxony

Princess de Bouillon

Major-domo

Corps de ballet

Members of the Comédie Française, servants, guests of the Prince de Bouillon

Pamela South

Giuseppe Taddei

Robert Johnson*

Mildred Tyree*

John Davies

Joseph Frank

James Courtney

Giacomo Aragall

Elena Obraztsova

Winther Anderson

Renata Scotto

PLACE AND TIME: Paris in 1730

ACT

The greenroom of the Comédie Française

INTERMISSION

ACT I

A villa on the outskirts of Paris

INTERMISSION

ACT III

The Prince de Bouillon's palace

INTERMISSION

ACT IV

Adriana's house

^{**} American debut

^{*}San Francisco Opera debut

SYNOPSIS/ADRIANA LECOUVREUR

ACT ONE-In the green room of the Comédie Française, the stage manager, Michonnetwho remains at his irksome job only because of his secret love for the famous actress Adriana Lecouvreur - frantically helps members of the company dress for Racine's Bajazet. Excitement runs high backstage, for the bill pairs Lecouvreur and her rival Duclos. When the Prince de Bouillon, lover of Duclos and an amateur chemist, arrives with the Abbé de Chazeuil, the two men exchange banter with the vain actors. Soon Adriana appears, costumed as Roxane and rehearsing her lines; in answer to effusive compliments, she replies she is but the handmaid of poetic genius. Alone with her, Michonnet starts to tell his true feelings when she confesses her love for "an ensign," Maurizio. No sooner is Michonnet gone than Maurizio arrives to set a rendezvous with Adriana; she gives him a bouquet of violets before he returns to his box to watch her performance. The Prince and Abbé come back with a letter they believe Duclos has written to Maurizio asking for a meeting that night at the Prince's villa; not realizing the note was actually penned by the Prince's wife, the two men plot to trap Duclos in this infidelity, but other actresses overhear their plan. Michonnet watches Adriana from the wings, commenting rapturously on her performance. Maurizio, having meanwhile received the Princess' message, cleverly sends a note to Adriana onstage in the form of a prop letter, canceling their rendezvous. Crestfallen, Adriana returns, surrounded by admirers, and accepts the Prince's invitation to supper in order to plead Maurizio's cause with the influential Count of Saxony, who she does not know is Maurizio himself.

ACT TWO—At the Prince's villa, the Princess nervously awaits Maurizio. On his arrival she questions him about the bouquet of violets, which he gives her to allay her suspicions. When she warns him of possible political arrest, he resolves to leave Paris; stung by his decision, she suspects a rival, whereupon Maurizio begs her to stop reproving him. At the sound of approaching footsteps she panics and hides in an adjoining chamber. The Prince and Abbé enter, expecting to confront Duclos with her lover; Maurizio halts them with a challenge to a duel. Adriana interrupts, joyfully discovering the true identity of Maurizio, with whom she reaffirms her love. Michonnet

comes in search of Duclos and confirms Maurizio's claim that it is not the actress whom he hides. Reassured by Maurizio that he loves only her, Adriana promises to assist the mysterious person to escape unknown; alone in the darkened room, she anonymously offers the Princess her help, but suspicion and jealously flair up between the two rivals. No sooner has the Princess slipped through a secret doorway than Michonnet brings a bracelet she dropped in flight.

ACT THREE-In an elegant pavilion, with the Abbé fawning over her, the Princess muses on her rival's identity. When other guests arrive. Adriana among them, she recognizes her voice. To confirm suspicions she pretends Maurizio has been wounded, at which Adriana faints. Wrongly believing the Princess has secured his release from prison, Maurizio enters and greets her warmly; he tells of his latest military exploits. After an elaborate ballet depicting the Judgement of Paris in which the lead dancer presents the prize golden apple for beauty, not to Venus, Juno. or Minerva, but to the Princess of Bouillon, the Princess taunts Adriana further with the posy of violets; in answer the actress flashes the lost bracelet. As the guests comment excitedly, the Princess, with forced control, asks the actress to recite Ariadne Abandoned. Instead, Adriana declaims Phaedra's lines branding "Brazen unchaste creatures" at the Princess, who vows revenge.

ACT FOUR-Disillusioned by Maurizio's neglect, Adriana has retired from the stage. Visiting her, Michonnet says he too knows unrequited love. They are joined by former colleagues, who bring the actress birthday gifts and sing a gossipy madrigal to cheer her. She is especially moved when Michonnet gives her the diamonds with which she secured Maurizio's freedom. As the others retire into another room, Adriana opens a package she thinks is from Maurizio; it contains the violets she had given him. Kissing the faded flowers, she throws them into the fire. A moment later Maurizio himself arrives and is reconciled with Adriana. As they embrace she goes deathly pale. At his cries for help, Michonnet rushes in, but it is too late. Adriana dies, having inhaled poisonous fumes from the flowers, which were sent by the vengeful Princess.

Voltaire and Adrienne Lecouvreur

by ARTHUR KAPLAN

Francesco Cilea's opera Adriana Lecouvreur is based on a popular drama by the dean of 19th century French playwrights Eugène Scribe and his collaborator Ernest Legouvé. It is a fictionalized account of the rivalry between Adrienne Lecouvreur, the foremost tragedienne of the French stage in the 18th century, and the Duchess of Bouillon for the love of the famous, young military hero of the day, Count Maurice of Saxony. The action of the opera reaches its dramatic climax when Adriana dies from inhaling the fumes of poisoned violets sent by her vengeful rival which she tragically mistakes as a birthday gift from her lover.

In real life things did not happen quite this way. Although the actual circumstances surrounding Mlle. Lecouvreur's death remain somewhat shrouded in mystery, it is generally believed that she died of internal complications which set in after an acute attack of dysentery—a disease from which she had suffered four years earlier. However, it was commonly rumored at the time that the Duchess had, in fact, concocted an elaborate scheme to poison her rival. Despite some incriminating testimony from a young abbé, a would-be accomplice in the plot, there is no proof that it was ever put into execution. Perhaps because of such rumors an autopsy was performed on the body. No hint of foul play was discovered.

The true drama of Adrienne Lecouvreur's death lies not in its cause, but in its tragic aftermath. Moreover, it involves one of the most prominent men of her day, François-Marie Arouet, better known under his nom de plume as Voltaire. Voltaire (1694-1778) is remembered today as the greatest figure of the French Enlightenment, an implacable foe of the Ancien Régime and precursor of the French Revolution. Voltaire himself, however, was sure that his immortality rested not on his philosophical or political writings, but on his plays. It must be remembered that for more than two hundred years until the advent of the realist novel in the mid-nineteenth century, the center of literary life in France was the theater, and, more specifically, the Comédie Française. Although his more than fifteen versed tragedies, written in pallid imitation of the great seventeenth century classical dramatist Jean Racine, are very rarely performed today, even in France, Voltaire was the most successful and honored playwright of his day.

The twenty-four-year-old Arouet first attracted attention as a writer when his tragedy *Oedipe* was produced with great success at the Comédie Française in 1718. He began frequenting the actors of this prestigious troupe whom he sincerely admired and respected. It was inevitable that he should fall sway to the charms of the promising new actress of the company, Mlle. Lecouvreur.

Adrienne Lecovreur (1692-1730), who was two years Voltaire's senior, shared his youthful passion for the theater. When Monsieur Couvreur (Adrienne added the artistocratic sounding particle on the advice of her acting coach) brought his family to Paris in 1702 from a small village in Champagne, he chanced to lodge very near the Comédie Française, where Adrienne's dreams of becoming an actress were nurtured. At 14 she was already playing the demanding role of Pauline in Corneille's *Polyeucte* with a troupe of young amateur actors. From 1708

to 1716 she toured the northeastern provinces of France with various acting companies and returned to Paris in 1717 to make a triumphant debut at the Comédie Française in Crébillon's Electre. Her unaffected style of delivery and simple but eloquent acting, so in contrast to the pompous sing-song declamation and posturing of her rivals, had created a sensation. Although her voice was not strong, she used it with such a variety of inflection and expressiveness that she was able to convey a full range of emotions. Her noble appearance and graceful charm made her the ideal interpreter of the suffering young heroines of Corneille and Racine. She became an immediate hit with the public and performed 139 times in her first season, an extraordinary accomplishment for a young actress.

According to all accounts Mlle. Lecouvreur was a woman of great personal magnetism and charm, wit and intelligence. Her noble bearing, refined manners, discreetness, and devoted friendship made her sought out by the most illustrious ladies of the day. She was the first member of her profession to be accepted into the drawing rooms and salons of Paris at a time when actors were generally held in disrepute and treated as pariahs by polite society.

The relationship between Voltaire and Mlle. Lecouvreur dates from 1719 when Adrienne was rehearsing the title role in the author's ill-fated new tragedy, Artémire, which was withdrawn after only eight performances. She went on to create the role of Mariamne in Voltaire's Hérode et Mariamne (1725) which, despite an all-star cast that included her arch-rival Mlle. Duclos in the role of Salomé, was an almost equal disaster. Interestingly, Voltaire, who often blamed the failure of his plays on poor performances, never had anything but praise for Mlle. Lecouvreur's talents.

In fact, he often paid written tribute to her histrionic gifts, both in his poetry and in his correspondence. He best summed these up in a poem written shortly after her death:

'Seule de la nature elle a su le langage; Elle embellit son art, elle en changea les lois. L'esprit, le sentiment, le goût fut son partage; L'Amour fut dans ses yeux et parla dans sa voix.

(She alone knew the language of nature; She enhanced her art, she changed its laws. Intelligence, feeling, and taste were granted her; Love shone in her eyes and spoke in her voice.)

Her style of acting with its "simple and natural grace" was in complete accord with his ideas for the theater: "True and natural words make an impression by their simplicity."

Voltaire undoubtedly tried to become Adrienne's lover. In a letter to his friend and agent Thiériot a year after her death, he calls himself her "admirateur, ami, amant." Since there is no indication of any intimacy between the two, we must take "amant" in its older meaning of one who is openly in love with a woman, whether or not that love is reciprocated. She apparently rejected his suit with the greatest of tact, offering instead her friendship, which he accepted without the slightest rancor. Thus began a life-long attachment based on mutual respect, esteem and devotion. Voltaire did not take it amiss when Adrienne fell in love with Count Maurice of Saxony upon his arrival in Paris in 1720.

In fact, it was this love which brought perfection to her art according to Voltaire:

... A peine eut-il parlé Que dans l'instant vous devîntes parfaite: Sans aucuns soins, sans étude, sans fard, Des passions vous fûtes l'interprèt.' (... Scarcely had Love spoken

Than instantly you became perfect: Without any application, any study, any pretense, You were the interpreter of the great passions.)

Mlle. Lecouvreur was indeed a true friend. She wrote, "When, after having given the matter much thought, I adopt someone into the circle of those I love, I will not be neglected, nor will I neglect." When Voltaire was severely stricken with smallpox during the epidemic of 1723, she paid frequent visits to his bedside despite the great risk to her own health. It was Adrienne who prevented a potentially disastrous set-to between Voltaire and the Chevalier de Rohan-Chabot in 1725 by feigning a fainting spell on the stage of the Comédie Française when the two adversaries nearly came to blows in a bout of name-calling provoked by the Chevalier.

Adrienne and Voltaire maintained their warm friendship through the years of his self-imposed exile in England which resulted from the Rohan-Chabot affair. "L'aimable Lecouvreur," as he called her, had become the reigning tragedienne of the Comédie Française despite the jealousy and scheming plots of the majority of her fellow actors. Voltaire reports that during a series of performances at Fontainebleau to celebrate the marriage of Louis XV to Marie Leczinska of Poland in 1725, Mlle. Lecouvreur "buried la Duclos." The new queen had, in fact, publicly expressed her preference for the young actress over her rival.

When Voltaire returned to Paris in 1729, Oedipe reappeared on the roster of the Comédie Française, this time with Mlle. Lecouvreur announced in the role of Jocasta. She had been in ill health and absent from the theater for some time. The first few months of 1730 saw her play in Corneille's Horace, Crébillon's Electre, and Molière's Le Malade imaginaire. She first performed Jocasta on March 13. On the following two days she repeated the role, in addition to starring in a light comedy, Le Florentin. During the performance on March 15, her final appearance on the stage, she suffered another attack of dysentery and vomited blood in her dressing room. Somehow she managed to finish both plays. Her condition worsened rapidly, however, and she died five days later in Voltaire's arms with only the surgeon and Maurice in attendance.

Since Adrienne had refused to repent "the scandals of her profession" and to sign the usual renunciation of the theater which the Church demanded before administering the final sacraments, the parish priest of Saint-Sulpice, backed by the Archbishop of Paris, denied her a Christian burial. The Minister of Interior, who did not wish to tangle with the Church authorities, ordered that her body be disposed of clandestinely during the night of March 21 in order to avoid a public scandal. She was taken by a police officer and two street porters in a dilapidated hackney to a desolate lot on the banks of the Seine where her body was dumped in a hole and unceremoniously covered with guicklime.

Upon hearing of this Voltaire was outraged. Unfortunately, he could not speak out publicly for fear of a dramatic reprisal from the authorities. On March 22, in front of a special assembly of the

Comédie Française, he exhorted the actors to refrain from performing until they were accorded the respect due ordinary citizens. Three days later, at the annual closing ceremonies of the theater, the actor Grandval pronounced Voltaire's eulogy for Adrienne Lecouvreur:

... this inimitable actress who had almost singlehandedly invented the art of speaking to the heart and putting feeling and truth where only pomp and declamation had been before.

. . . She adorned society as she did the theater.

When the English actress Anne Oldfield was buried with a state funeral in Westminister Abbey seven months later, Voltaire could no longer contain his indignation and wrote the famous elegy, "La Mort de Mlle. Lecouvreur, célèbre actrice," which was later set to music by Frederick the Great of Prussia. It opens as follows:

'Que direz-vous, race future, Lorsque vous apprendrez la flétrissante injure Qu'à ces arts désolés font des prêtres cruels? Un objet digne des autels Est privé de sépulture!

Et dans un champ profane on jette à l'aventure De ce corps si chéri les restes immortels!

(What will you say, future race, When you hear of the degrading insult Perpetrated by cruel priests upon the grieving arts? An object worthy of altars Is deprived of burial!

And the immortal remains of so beloved a body Are thrown at random into unhallowed ground!)

He wrote the poem with the acknowledged intent of pointing up the difference between England and France, "between their liberty and our bondage, between their judicious innovations and our foolish superstitions, between the encouragement which the arts receive in London and the shameful oppression under which they languish in Paris." Voltaire sent the elegy to Thiériot knowing full well that he would recite it in the salons of Paris, where it quickly acquired the desired notoriety and got Voltaire into considerable trouble with the authorities. He incurred their anger further by repeating this odious comparison in the dedicatory epistle to his most famous tragedy, Zaïre, in 1732. A similar diatribe also appears in the twenty-third letter of his Lettres philosòphiques ou anglaises first published in England in 1733:

Some have claimed that they [the English] had pretended to so honor the memory of this actress [Mrs. Oldfield] in order to underline the inhuman and cowardly injustice with which they reproach us for having thrown Mlle. Lecouvreur's body on the garbage heap.

Adrienne's ignominious fate haunted Voltaire throughout his lifetime, perhaps because he was so afraid of ending up the same way himself.

The operatic Adriana Lecouvreur is a heroine of great sympathy, charm, and nobility. The combined appeal of the lyric melodies which flowed naturally from Cilea's pen and the chance to portray the leading actress of the Comédie Française in the 18th century have exerted an inevitable fascination for great singing actresses. Mafalda Favero, Maria Caniglia, Magda Olivero, and more recently Renata Tebaldi, Licia Albanese, Montserrat Caballé, and now Renata Scotto have kept the name of Adrienne Lecouvreur alive before the opera-going public. One can only think that Voltaire would have been pleased.

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Profiles

GIANANDREA GAVAZZENI



RAF VALLONE



BONITA ROSE



Dean of Italian conductors, Maestro Gavazzeni makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season leading all performances of Adriana Lecouvreur and Aida. Born in Bergamo, the birthplace of Gaetano Donizetti, he studied with Ildebrando Pizzetti at the Verdi Conservatory in Milan. He debuted with La Scala in 1948 and remained there for twenty consecutive seasons as principal conductor (with ten opening nights) until becoming its artistic director in 1967. He held that post until 1972. Considered a leading interpreter of the works of Verdi, he also has a predilection for the bel canto repertoire and the verismo works of his close friends Mascagni, Giordano, Zandonai, Pizzetti, Catalani and Cilea. Outside of Italy Maestro Gavazzeni has conducted at the Vienna Staatsoper and at the Salzburg Festival, in Geneva, throughout Germany, in Budapest and at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires. In the United States his first appearance was with Chicago's Lyric Opera in 1957, where he returned in 1959 and 1960. His Metropolitan Opera debut occurred on the opening night of the 1976-1977 season with Il Trovatore. He conducted the first intercontinental opera radio broadcast live by satellite in January 1977—a performance of Norma from La Scala with Montserrat Caballé and Tatiana Troyanos. Maestro Gavazzeni has recorded for various companies and has written over twenty volumes of music criticism, journals and various other works on music and literature.

Star of the international stage and screen, Raf Vallone makes his American debut as an opera director with Adriana Lecouvreur, which opens the 1977 San Francisco Opera season. His initial engagement in this field was in a new production of Bellini's Norma at the Teatro Regio in Turin in 1974, also with soprano Renata Scotto in the title role. Vallone is a renaissance man of the theater with various billings as actor, director and playwright. He has written a play for the Italian stage, has had numerous directorial assignments in Italy and France, and has appeared in several plays in both countries. Perhaps his most famous role as an actor is the stevedore Eddie Carbone in Arthur Miller's A View from the Bridge. It served as his triumphant debut on the Paris stage in Marcel Aymé's adaptation of the Miller work, directed by Peter Brook. He later appeared in the film version of the play, for which he won Italy's Donatello David Award for the best performance by an actor in 1962. He has starred in over fifty films since his first appearance in the celebrated De Santis Bitter Rice in 1948. He subsequently performed in English, French, German and Spanish, as well as in Italian, in films by such eminent directors as Carné, Germi, De Sica and Lattuada. Vallone has lived in Hollywood where he starred in several of his most successful films. His latest film is The Other Side of Midnight, based on Sidney Sheldon's best-selling novel, and he will soon appear in The Greek Tycoon.

Choreographer Bonita Rose is making her debut with San Francisco Opera in its opening production of the 1977 season, Adriana Lecouvreur. Miss Rose received her training in classical ballet and attended the Department of Theater and Dance of the California Institute of the Arts, where she was awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1973. She also studied in the graduate school of choreography at U.C.L.A. In 1971 she joined the Bella Lewitzky Dance Company, with which she performed for a year and a half. She choreographed her first piece at the University of Nevada in 1972 and, in collaboration with Morton Subotnick, performed and choreographed Light Sound Dance for the Ojai Festival that year. In 1973 she became co-director of "Flavors," a dance company established to pursue original works and performances in the Los Angeles area, for which she choreographed several works. In addition to giving classes in modern dance at U.C.L.A., Miss Rose has also taught tap, ballet and jazz and, at the Hathaway Children's Village in Pacoima, California, she has organized and taught movement and motor skills classes for emotionally disturbed children.

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THOMAS MUNN



Thomas Munn returns for his second year as lighting designer and director of the San Francisco Opera. This season he takes on an additional responsibility as supervising scenic designer for Adriana Lecouvreur and Faust. A versatile artist whose productions have been seen on Broadway, off-Broadway. in films and on television, Munn recently created the scenery and lighting for the Netherlands Opera production of Verdi's Macbeth in conjunction with co-designer Robert Israel. Prior to that, he devised the lighting for the Dutch musical The Angel of Amsterdam. written to celebrate the 700th anniversary of that city. Munn was responsible for the lighting design at the Lake George Opera Festival for two seasons, which included productions of The Crucible, Tosca, Rigoletto, Die Fledermaus, La Traviata and The Magic Flute. He has created designs for the Kansas City Lyric Theater, the Minnesota Opera Company and the Michigan Opera Theater, among others. In addition to his work in opera, Munn has designed over thirty industrial shows and was the resident designer for the Mary Anthony Dance Theater of New York for six years. Local audiences will remember his imaginative lighting for the new productions of the 1976 season, Thaïs, La Forza del Destino, Die Frau ohne Schatten, Cavalleria Rusticana, I Pagliacci and the world premiere of Angle of Repose. Munn's designs will be featured in the 1978 Netherlands Opera production of Alban Berg's Lulu.

RENATA SCOTTO



Internationally renowned soprano Renata Scotto sings the title role in Cilea's Adriana Lecouvreur for the first time in her career. Born in Savona, on the Ligurian Riviera, she began her vocal studies as a mezzo soprano. She moved to Milan, where she studied with famed Spanish soprano Mercedes Llopert, who persuaded her to switch to the soprano repertoire. Until recently Miss Scotto has been known primarily for her unique interpretations in the bel canto literature, including the title role in Lucia di Lammermoor, Norina in Don Pasquale, Adina in L'Elisir d'Amore, Elvira in I Puritani and, her first international success, Amina in La Sonnambula, performed at the Edinburgh Festival. In the less frequently performed repertoire she has sung the title roles in Spontini's La Vestale at the Maggio Musicale in Florence, Bellini's Zaïra in Catania, Donizetti's Anna Bolena with Houston Grand Opera and Griselda in Verdi's I Lombardi. In the last few seasons she has undertaken several roles in the dramatic soprano repertoire, where she has achieved equal success. In Turin she has triumphed in Norma and as Amelia in Un Ballo in Maschera; and in Paris and San Francisco as Leonora in Il Trovatore, the role with which she opened the 1976-1977 Metropolitan Opera season to great acclaim. This past year has been an especially busy one for Miss Scotto in New York City. In addition to Leonora, she also sang Berthe in Meyerbeer's rarely performed Le Prophète and both Mimi and Musetta in La Bohème. As Mimi she captivated over six million television viewers when the Metropolitan production was shown over live television.

PAMELA SOUTH





Russian mezzo soprano Elena Obraztsova captivated American critics when she appeared in New York and Washington, D.C., during the historic first visit of the Bolshoi Opera to this country in 1975. When she portrayed Azucena for her debut with an American opera company in the all-star Il Trovatore which opened the 1975 San Francisco Opera season, critics and audiences were equally enthusiastic. She consolidated this impression with outstanding performances of Dalila's "Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix" and the dramatic fourth act duet from Aida with Placido Domingo during the 1976 Fol de Rol. Miss Obraztsova's repertoire includes such diverse roles as Orfeo in Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice, Adalgisa in Bellini's Norma, Princess Eboli and Ulrica in Verdi's Don Carlo and Un Ballo in Maschera, Santuzza in Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana, Kundry and Ortrud in Wagner's Parsifal and Lohengrin and the mezzo heroines of such Russian classics as The Tsar's Bride, Prince Igor, Khovantschina and Pique Dame. Following graduation from the Leningrad Conservatory, she was immediately engaged by the Bolshoi Opera where she debuted as Marina in Boris Godunov. She won numerous gold medals in international competitions, including the 1970 Tchaikovsky Competition, the first Glinka All-Union Competition in Moscow in 1963 and the Eighth World Festival of Youth and Students in Helsinki in 1962. Audiences in the West were first able to hear her perform in opera during the Bolshoi visits to La Scala in 1964 and to the Montreal Expo in 1967. Last year at the Metropolitan she made her debut as Amneris in Aida.

After her highly successful debut with Spring Opera Theater, which showed her versatility as a singing-actress as the Prima Donna in Donizetti's lighthearted farce Viva La Mamma and Servilia in Mozart's opera seria Titus, Pamela South returns for her third consecutive season with San Francisco Opera to portray Jouvenot in Adriana Lecouvreur, Echo in Ariadne auf Naxos, and a lady-in-waiting in Turandot. In 1973 she won both the Seattle Opera and San Francisco Opera Regional Auditions and placed third in the Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions. She debuted with Seattle Opera that year in Rigoletto and was chosen for the Merola Opera Program where she sang Pamina in The Magic Flute. This led to contracts with Western Opera Theater, with which she toured the Western States and Alaska in 1975 and 1976 in such roles as Susanna and Barbarina in The Marriage of Figaro and Gabriella in Cherubini's The Portuguese Inn. Miss South's debut in the San Francisco Opera international season came in 1975 as Giannetta in L'Elisir d'Amore. During her first two seasons with the Company her roles have included Christa in The Makropulos Case, Mascha in Pique Dame, Nella in Gianni Schicchi and Papagena in The Magic Flute. As a soloist she appeared in 1975 and 1976 with the San Francisco Symphony Pops Concerts, conducted by Arthur Fiedler, and with the Anchorage Symphony. Miss South is the U.S. Steel Affiliate Artist in the Affiliate Artists/San Francisco-Opera Program.





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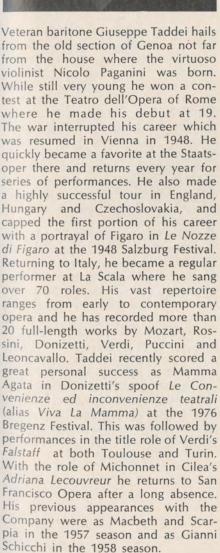
Mezzo soprano Mildred Tyree, who makes her debut with San Francisco Opera this season, is currently singing leading roles with the Luzern Stadttheater. A former student at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, she first appeared in opera with the Chautauqua Opera Association in 1971 and 1972. From 1971 through 1973 she was also on the roster of the Gran Teatro del Liceo in Barcelona. She sang for four seasons with Philadelphia Lyric Opera and in 1974 was heard in France with the Opéra de Lyon and over the French radio network in Paris. In 1976 she was a member of the Basel Stadttheater. Miss Tyree's repertoire includes Dorabella in Mozart's Così fan tutte, Adalgisa in Bellini's Norma, Maddalena in Verdi's Rigoletto, Preziosilla in his Forza del Destino and Emilia in Otello, Siebel in Gounod's Faust and Olga in Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin. After her engagement here as Dangeville in Adriana Lecouvreur, Feklusha in Katya Kabanova and Wellgunde in Das Rheingold, she returns to Luzern to perform Rosina in Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Prince Orlofsky in Johann Strauss' Fledermaus, Cherubino in Mozart's Le Nozze di Figaro and the Composer in Richard Strauss' Ariadne auf Naxos.

Celebrated for the beautiful lyrical quality of his voice and for his exciting stage presence, Catalan tenor Giacomo Aragall appears in his fifth consecutive season with San Francisco Opera to portray Maurizio in Cilea's Adriana Lecouvreur and the title role in Gounod's Faust. He made his local debut in 1973 as the Duke in Jean Pierre Ponnelle's provocative production of Rigoletto, returning for Esclarmonde and Madama Butterfly in 1974, Werther in 1975 and Tosca in 1976. Aragall emigrated to Italy in 1962, where he won first prize in the International Vocal Competition at Busseto, the birthplace of Giuseppe Verdi. The following year he made his operatic debut at Venice's La Fenice in that composer's Gerusalemme. Soon thereafter he was engaged by La Scala, first singing the title role of Mascagni's L'Amico Fritz. An accomplished athlete, Aragall would have participated with the Spanish gymnastics team in the 1964 Olympics had his musical career not progressed so rapidly. Debuts outside Italy followed in Vienna (1966) and at Covent Garden and the Metropolitan (1968). Since 1973 he has added several French roles to his repertoire. In addition to Werther and Roland in Esclarmonde, he has sung the title roles of Gounod's Faust and Roméo et Juliette and performed Des Grieux in Massenet's Manon, staged by Jean Pierre Ponnelle at the Vienna Staatsoper. During 1976 he teamed up with his compatriot Montserrat Caballé for a series of Don Carlos performances (Barcelona, Valencia, Madrid, and Vienna) and Adriana Lecouvreur (Barcelona).

GIUSEPPE TADDEI

JOSEPH FRANK







Tenor Joseph Frank in his fourth season with the Company adds four more portraits to the impressive gallery of character roles he has already performed with San Francisco Opera: L'Abbé in Adriana Lecouvreur, the Dancing Master and Scaramuccio in Ariadne auf Naxos and Pong in Turandot. In 1973 he made his New York debut in Three Church Fables (Curlew River, The Burning Fiery Furnace and The Prodigal Son) by Benjamin Britten under the direction of Nathaniel Merrill for the Concert Artists' Guild. After performing Almaviva in Il Barbiere di Siviglia in Capetown, South Africa, in 1974, he debuted with Spring Opera Theater as Pedrillo in the 1975 production of The Abduction from the Seraglio. In the 1975/1976 season he appeared as the old roué in Manon, as Nick in La Fanciulla del West, and as Piquillo in La Perichole with various companies. In the summer of 1976 Frank was associated with Cincinnati Opera, performing in Carmen, Tosca, The Ballad of Baby Doe and Jerome Kern's musical Showboat. San Francisco audiences will remember his vivid portrayals of such roles as Trabucco in La Forza del Destino and the Reverend Horace Addams in Peter Grimes in 1976, Valletto in L'Incoronazione di Poppea, L'Incredibile in Andrea Chenier and Monostatos in The Magic Flute in 1975, and Goro in Madama Butterfly and Hortensius in Daughter of the Regiment in 1974.



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James Courtney returns for his third season with San Francisco Opera to sing the Prince of Bouillon in Adriana Lecouvreur, Méphistophélès in the student matinee and special popularpriced performance of Faust and Tommaso in Un Ballo in Maschera. This spring he performed Zuniga in Carmen and Death in Gustav Holst's chamber opera Savitri with Spring Opera Theater. He first appeared with SPOT in L'Amico Fritz and The Passion According to St. Matthew in 1975. That summer he was a member of the Wolf Trap Company and sang roles in four twentieth century works: Britten's Albert Herring, Copland's The Tender Land, Ravel's L'Enfant et les sortilèges and Ward's The Crucible. A finalist in the 1974 San Francisco Opera Auditions, he joined the Merola Opera Program and sang Don Basilio in Il Barbiere di Siviglia at Sigmund Stern Grove and Sarastro in The Magic Flute at the Paul Masson Mountain Winery. He has also appeared extensively with Brown Bag Opera. Courtney has performed with Tucson Opera for the past two years, first as Colline in La Bohème and last year as Méphistophélès in Faust. His previous appearances with San Francisco Opera include the 1974 productions of Daughter of the Regiment, Otello and Manon Lescaut, and the 1975 productions of Pique Dame, Simon Boccanegra, Andrea Chenier, Gianni Schicchi and The Magic Flute.



In his third year with San Francisco Opera, bass-baritone John Davies sings Quinault in Adriana Lecouvreur, Wagner in Faust, a Lackey in Ariadne auf Naxos and a Servant in Un Ballo in Maschera. Before his appearance in the 1977 Spring Opera Theater season as the Composer in Donizetti's Viva la Mamma, he completed an engagement with the Opera Company of his native Boston in Puccini's La Bohème and Glinka's Russlan and Ludmilla. A two-year veteran of Western Opera Theater, he has appeared in its productions of The Barber of Seville as Bartolo, The Marriage of Figaro as Figaro, and Don Giovanni as Leporello. Last fall, in his second season with the Company, he was heard in productions of La Forza del Destino, Tosca, The Makropulos Case, I Pagliacci and Angle of Repose. He has sung the title role in the coronation scene of Boris Godunov with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and has been heard on several occasions as soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In 1976 Davies made his third appearance as soloist during the San Francisco Pops Concerts, conducted by Arthur Fiedler.

ROBERT JOHNSON



Young lyric tenor Robert Johnson makes his initial appearance with San Francisco Opera this season in three roles: Poisson in Adriana Lecouvreur, Brighella in Ariadne auf Naxos and Bruno in I Puritani. His debut in opera occurred with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in a concert performance of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas in 1968. Also in the Windy City he performed for several years at the Grant Park Concerts in The Merry Widow, The Bartered Bride and L'Heure Espagnole. In 1971 Johnson sang Ferrando in Così fan tutte with New York City Opera, a role which he repeated at the Glyndebourne Festival in 1975. During the 1974-1975 season he toured with the Goldovsky Grand Opera Theater as Alfredo in La Traviata and Don Ottavio in Don Giovanni. For the past three summers he has been a member of the Lake George Opera Festival troupe, singing Tom Rakewell in The Rake's Progress, Fenton in Falstaff, Des Grieux in Manon and, most recently, Ernesto in Don Pasquale. Earlier in 1977 Johnson portrayed Almaviva in Il Barbiere di Siviglia with New Orleans Opera and Jenik in The Bartered Bride with Pittsburgh Opera.

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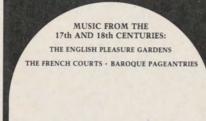
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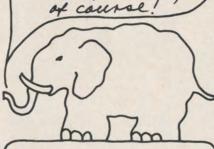
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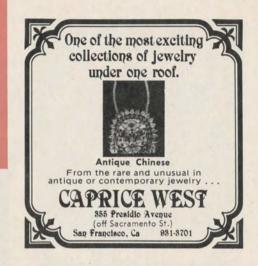
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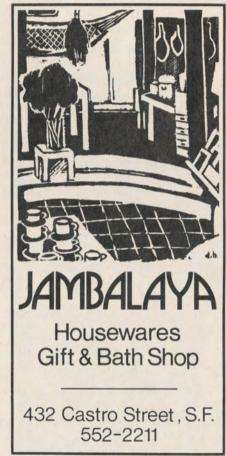


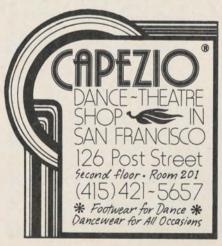
The Shy Celebrity-Francesco Cilea

by Ruth Kreitzman

The magnificent reception which met Adriana Lecouvreur at its first performance in Milan on November 6, 1902, might have meant a heady triumph for a less level-headed individual than its composer, Francesco Cilea (1866-1950). The opera achieved instant acclaim, boasting a lyrical richness interpreted by an unrivaled cast, including Caruso and Pandolfini. It followed up its domestic success with performances in Buenos Aires in 1903, Covent Garden in 1904, Paris and Santiago in 1905, and St. Petersburg in 1906, and took its place among the repertoires of opera houses throughout the world. It climaxed Cilea's work as a composer, established him among his contemporaries, such as Puccini, Mascagni and Giordano, and won him invitations to work in the major music centers of Europe and America.

Cilea, however, was not swayed by accolades and ovations. He refused all the invitations and temptations. Nothing could lure him away from his career as a teacher and scholar. He was devoted to education. Out of a long professional career spanning more than 45 years, Cilea never allowed anything to come before his teaching, or to distract him from it. Once he had abandoned the theater and its demands, he never chose to return. All his major works were produced in a twenty-year period between 1889 and 1913. From. then on, teaching took priority in his life. From 1913 to 1916 he was director of the Conservatory at Palermo, and from 1916 until his retirement in 1935, he was director at his alma mater, the Conservatory di San Pietro a Majella in Naples. Thus he returned to spend most of his life in the school which







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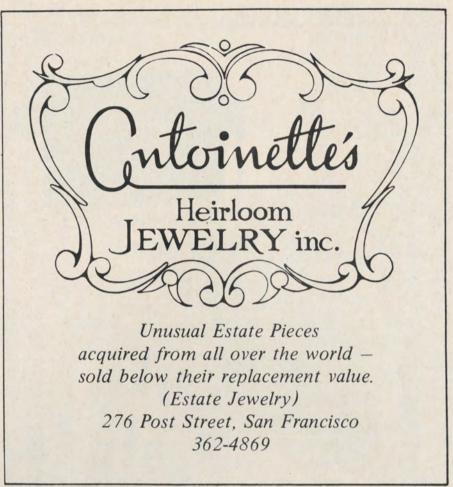
Francesco Cilea (left, standing) joins other renowned composers Engelbert Humperdinck (standing center) and Jules Massenet (seated, left) and conductor Cleofonte Campanini (standing, right) as judges in the musical competition of the Italian publishing house of Sonzogno in 1905.

he had first entered as a student in 1879, at the age of twelve.

It was one of those happy sets of circumstances which brought Cilea to the school in Naples that played such an important role in his life. If not for a chance meeting with Francesco Florimo, Cilea might have exchanged his music scores for law volumes, and the music world would have been robbed of one of its most devoted mentors. Cilea was destined to follow in his family's footsteps, and study law in Naples, when Florimo intervened. Florimo, fellow-Calabrian, renowned librarian of the Collegio di Musica, first historian of the Scuola Musica Napoletana, and close friend of Bellini, heard two piano pieces composed by Cilea at the age of nine. He recognized the boy's talents and convinced Cilea's parents that their son should study music. They bowed to Florimo's opinion, and Cilea began his studies in Naples. He was a diligent and assiduous student, characteristics which no doubt shaped his work in later years. They may have been responsible in part for his predilection for a scholarly career, and for his unsustained creative activity.

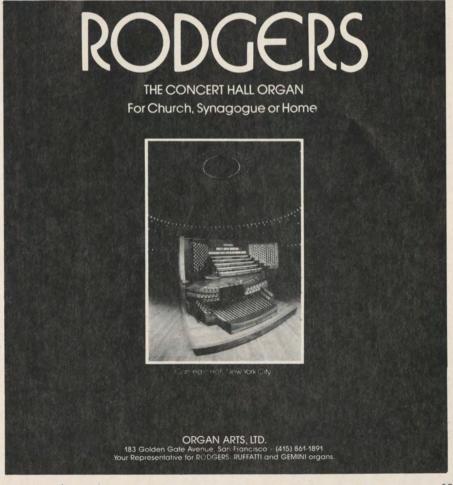
Even though Cilea has a respectable reputation as one of the chief followers of the Neapolitan School, and holds a place among the *veristi* of his time, he is perhaps more remarkable for his dissimilarities to his peers than for his affinities with them. He was an intellectual, and a loner. He was not a man of overwhelming passions or flamboyant tastes and ideas. By nature he was rather shy and reserved, with a strong sense of self-criticism and professional rigor. He was reluctant to take part in the somewhat turbulent and unsettled life of the theater, and





hesitant to embrace a career as an opera composer. He approached teaching with considerably more enthusiasm. By contrast to his fellow-artists, his very lack of temperament distinguished him as an extremely stable personality in the artistic milieu. Amidst the bared emotions and primitive passions of fin-de-siecle dramas, Cilea expressed a sensitive lyrical quality wrapped in a hazy melancholy.

Cilea is placed among the veristi more for his historical position than for his typification of that movement. The year before Mascagni won Sonzogno's contest for one-act operas with Cavalleria Rusticana (1890), Cilea had presented an academic thesis for his diploma. The thesis was called Gina and was a three-act melodrama, performed at the Conservatory Theater. Among the fellow-students who supported and helped him in this venture





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were Leoncavallo and Giordano, both also destined to fame, if not exactly fortune, by the end of the century. Gina was a success and attracted the attention of Sonzogno, the Milan editor and music publisher, who promoted so many new works and composers, and who was later responsible for the Italian season in Paris in 1905, during which Adriana Lecouvreur was introduced to the French public. Sonzogno's music contest attracted enormous talents, and a stable of young musicians clustered around him and his competitor, Ricordi. A commission from Sonzogno was an enviable prize, and Cilea welcomed his sponsorship. Impressed by Gina, Sonzogno commissioned a second work from Cilea. In response he composed an opera in three acts, Tilda. During the two years in which he worked on Tilda, Cilea was also teaching piano at "his" conservatory in Naples. Tilda was performed for the first time in April 1892, the same year as Cilea's friend, Leoncavallo, set another cornerstone of verismo with Pagliacci, also composed for Sonzogno. Tilda was a huge success at its opening in Florence, and was performed later that year in Vienna. Cilea ceased teaching, and turned to composing.

His break from teaching was purely temporary, however. By 1896 he had moved to Florence to take up a position as a professor of harmony at the Istituto di Musica, where he stayed until 1904, a period during which his two most famous works were first performed. The first one, however, L'Arlesiana (taken from the same Daudet play for which Bizet wrote music). went through a number of revampings before it achieved more than a lukewarm reception. In its original form, presented in 1897 in Milan, it met with little enthusiasm, despite Caruso's performance. It was clear, especially to a sensitive critic like Cilea, that the work needed to be improved. He recognized the possibilities of certain drastic changes, added an act, and presented

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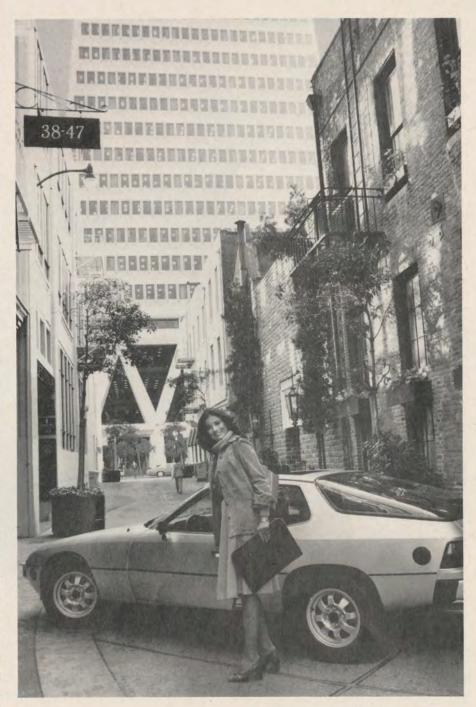
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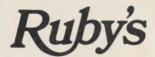
the new version in 1898. This time it scored a great success. Still dissatisfied, however, Cilea worked on it over the next few years, and in 1910 yet another version was ready, enriched by music previously not included. This version was extremely well-received at its first performance in 1912, but that was not to be the end of it for a composer so acutely aware of any shortcomings. Later still Cilea added a prelude interwoven with the most significant cues of the score. The opera is said to be remarkable for a number of passages of outstanding melodic suggestion, and the famous Lamento di Federico has become a test piece for the lyrical tenor in Italy, and equal to certain passages by Massenet. Not surprisingly, this role presented Caruso with one of his great triumphs.

But none of these matched up to the success of Adriana Lecouvreur. It brought Cilea international recognition, which he, despite his shyness and reticence to become a public figure, enjoyed with some modesty. At the Covent Garden production in 1905, he took several curtain-calls at the end of the performance to acknowledge the riotous applause. He must have felt the same pleasure and gratification when, forty years later, the new Teatro Lirico Sperimentale di Spoleto opened with a performance of L'Arlesiana at which Cilea, present in the audience, received the enthusiastic applause for his work. For, in those forty years, Cilea had participated hardly at all in the theater. Adriana Lecouvreur did not prove to be a precedent. The following work, Gloria, first performed at La Scala in 1907, conducted by Toscanini, did not fulfill any promises. The final years of Cilea's creative period were on the wane. 1909 was remarkable simply for the fact that he wrote Matrimonio Selvaggio, a work which was never edited. The year after L'Arlesiana was performed in its final version, 1913, he returned to his teaching ca-

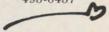


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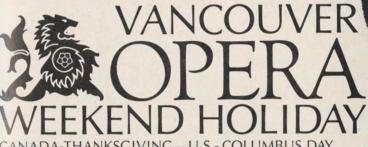
Francesco Cilea and his wife Rosa in July of 1950.

reer, and never left it again until his retirement in 1935.

Little is known of Cilea's personal life and his interests and other occupations. As the director of the conservatory in Naples—"his" conservatory—he set an exemplary model of creating an educational environment. He was responsible for establishing, in 1928, the important Museo Storico in Naples, a cultural institution through which Cilea realized an old dream of his friend Florimo. On retiring in 1935, Cilea withdrew to a life of solitude at his home in Varazze, Liguria, where he lived until his death in 1950.

In his will he left all the copyrights to the performances of his works to a home in Milan for retired musicians, founded by Verdi, called the Casa di Riposo per Musicisti. His bequest carries a tribute which illustrates his own modesty and lack of ostentation. It reads: "In reverent homage to the great master who created a charitable institution for poor musicians, and in gratitude to the city which was the first to welcome and christen my works."

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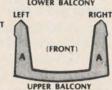
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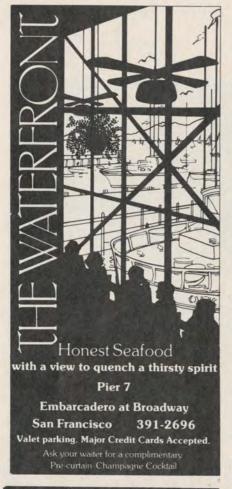
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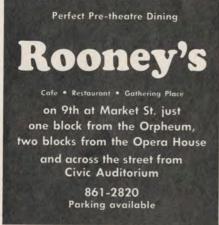
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the other lyrical numbers of the score. Cilea's melodies share two characteristic features. One is a quirk in the underlying harmonies, which surfaces as an altered tone in the vocal line. The arresting quality of the opening phrase in Adriana's first aria, "Io son l'umile ancella," results from the harmonization of the B natural (marked "*") with a chord that lies far outside the orbit of the A^b major tonic of the piece:

cissima effigie," "Ah! Che giova?", and



The other characteristic feature is the sequence—immediate restatement of a phrase at a higher or lower pitch. The composer was reluctant to abandon his always beautiful melodic ideas until he had repeated them several times in sequence. The duet of Adriana and Maurizio in Act II is built almost entirely of melodic sequences, and the mid-section of both soprano arias is constructed in similar fashion. Outside the set pieces, orchestral melodies such as the Princess theme are introduced and then repeated sequentially almost as a matter of course.

The musico-dramatic techniques in fashion at the turn of the century only encouraged Cilea in his tendency to repeat rather than elaborate or develop. Like other composers of the day he adopted Wagner's system of attaching musical themes to the important characters and plot elements of his drama. As in Wagner's works, when a character appears or is mentioned, the appropriate musical theme is sounded. But Cilea had no interest in using these themes to develop a quasi-symphonic structure or in advancing the course of his drama through subtle alterations in, or combinations of these themes. Rather, he merely restates the appropriate musical material at every appropriate moment. Adriana's entrances in Acts I, II, and III are accompanied by the melody of "lo son l'umile ancella"; and as beautiful as this melody is, it is doubtful whether we need to be reminded so many times that the actress believes herself to be the humble servant of her art. Were the aria theme any less attractive we would find these repetitions intolerable.

In a more sophisticated work such repetitions would represent a capitulation of the music-dramatist to the composer. But Cilea had no pretensions to sophistication. His approach to opera was that prevalent in Bellini's day-the beauty of the music was paramount, its aptness to the dramatic situation only desirable, and its originality in anything other than melody entirely unimportant. Three times the composer halts his drama in mid-course so that his soprano and tenor may sing a love duet. In general thrust these pieces are textually identical: "I love you because . . ." They also share a common musical structure: a melody of twelve or more bars is sung by one character and then repeated either by the other character or by both together; a few extra phrases may be inserted in the middle or at the end. Such an inflexible approach would be anathema to the real music-dramatist. It has only one justification, but that is a substantial one—the beauty of the pieces themselves.

Indeed no apologies need to be made for Cilea's modus operandi. To condemn it would be to condemn that of such illustrious forebears as Bellini and Donizetti, the bulk of whose work is more successful as music than as theater, but who were also responsible for Norma and Lucia di Lammermoor. If Adriana Lecouvreur is not on quite the same plane as those masterpieces, neither is it deserving of the neglect which after some initial international popularity early in the century it has suffered outside Italy. Like many more popular works it has attractions of various sorts, some complementing each other and some working at cross purposes. The play of Scribe and Le-

continued on p. 76

Opera Fair

A new event designed to appeal to San Francisco Opera "fans" of all ages will take place from noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday, October 9, not only in, but all over the War Memorial Opera House. It's designated as the first annual San Francisco Opera Fair and is meant as an opportunity to allow patrons to mingle informally with both stars and opera staff members and to raise money for the San Francisco Opera in the process.

The Fair is open to the public with a low admission charge of \$3.50 per person and only \$1.50 for children under twelve and for senior citizens. These tickets may be purchased at the Opera Box Office beginning September 10 and may also be ordered by mail. Admissions will be sold at the door on October 9. Everyone purchasing an admission ticket will automatically be entered into a drawing for various valuable door prizes.

Free musical entertainment will be provided throughout the Opera House. Food at low prices will be sold at various locations including quiche-and-salad in the basement, Swedish, French, Oriental and Middle Eastern plates in the Dress Circle, and an Opera Family Bake Stall offering home-made items by artists, chorus, orchestra, stage-hands, staff members, etc. The Balcony Circle will be run as a special "childrens' floor" with clowns, jugglers, an organ grinder and monkey, and a frisbee contest.

Various craft booths are to be featured, with ceramics, knitwear, needlepoint, jewelry, woodwork, batik, etc. Memorabilia including rare old opera photographs, posters and programs will be for sale, along with various current boutique items such as canvas Opera Guild tote bags, tee-shirts, opera buttons, post-cards, autographed silk scarves and much more.



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Cilea's Opera Comique continued from p. 74



Renata Scotto as Adriana Lecouvreur and Elena Obraztsova as the Princess de Bouillon.

gouvé was carefully constructed and in adapting it the librettist Colautti retained its psychological verity, its striking dramatic situations, and its varied action. On the score of clarity he was not so successful; certain details become obscure, and the instrument of Adriana's death, the poisoned bouquet, seems outlandish because the scene which dealt at length with the Prince's

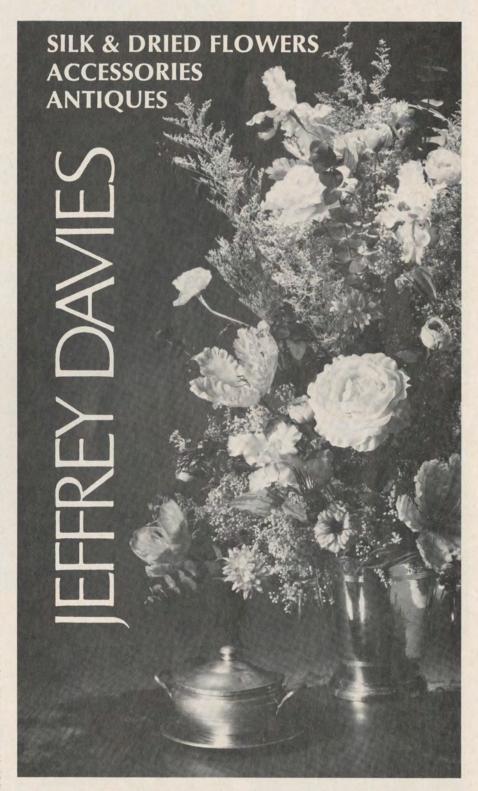
activities as a dabbler in chemistry, specifically in poisons, was dropped. To this flawed but attractive libretto Cilea brought his polished musical style. With its sweetly dissonant chords, elegant orchestration, and arching legato vocal line, it could hardly fail in the characterization of a humble romantic heroine, emboldened by her passion and defeated ultimately by



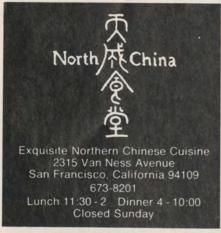
The great French actress Rachel was the first to play the role of Adrienne Lecouvreur in Scribe's play. Here Rachel is shown in the costume of Roxane in Bajazet, which is the same role that Adriana Lecouvreur appears in in the first act of Cilea's opera.

circumstances. In some respects the score is old-fashioned, depending more than Puccini's works of the same period on set pieces. These do not always advance the course of the drama; sometimes, as we have seen, they positively hold it up. But without exception they are vocally well-written and possess an immediate melodic appeal.

An opéra comique, Adriana enjoys the additional advantage of passionate Italianate melody. It has the wit and sparkle and dramatic organization of its French relative, and the unflagging lyricism of a Mascagni or Puccini. Whether audiences are touched by the work depends to a large degree on the quality of the performance, but they will certainly go home humming its tunes. And that is no small proof of Cilea's claim to the same melodic gift which generations of Italian composers prized above all others.







Bardellis

Albanese Exhibit



Soprano Licia Albanese made her debut with the San Francisco Opera in 1941 as Cio Cio San in Puccini's Madama Butterfly. Her career with the Company spanned seventeen seasons and included twenty-two roles in twenty-one operas (at different times she sang Zerlina and Donna Anna in Don Giovanni) in numerous performances in Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, San Jose, Pasadena and Sacramento as well as San Francisco. She often performed under the baton of the San Francisco Opera's founder and first

general director Gaetano Merola, with whom she is shown in the photograph above after a Standard Hour broadcast. This season the San Francisco Opera is mounting a special retrospective exhibit devoted to the Albanese career here, in the Opera Museum on the south foyer on the box level of the Opera House. The exhibit is to contain rare photographs from the Company archives, memorabilia and actual costumes graciously loaned for this purpose by Mme. Albanese. The exhibit is inaugurated on Monday, September

26, with a reception honoring Mme. Albanese, and will then be open until the end of the current season. Tickets for the reception, which is a benefit for the Merola Fund and the Friends of the War Memorial are available at \$10 through the Merola Fund, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, CA 94102.

At present Mme. Albanese lives in New York and remains extremely active. She gives master classes throughout the United States and Italy, serves as a judge in national and international voice competitions, and is Chairman of the Board of the non-profit Puccini Foundation. Her most recent appearance in San Francisco was in concert opposite tenor Luciano Pavarotti under the baton of San Francisco Opera general director Kurt Herbert Adler in Golden Gate Park in September of 1973. In February of 1975 when she sang in New York's Town Hall, New York Times critic John Rockwell said that "Miss Albanese's soprano is something of a miracle-amazing."

The San Francisco Opera Magazine for this year's *Turandot* production will contain an in-depth interview of Mme. Albanese.



Licia Albanese, who will attend a reception in her honor at the War Memorial Opera House on September 26, was most recently heard in San Francisco opposite Luciano Pavarotti in a Golden Gate Park concert conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler in 1973.

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In Rehearsal continued from p. 9



Maestro Gianandrea Gavazzeni at rehearsal with soprano Renata Scotto.

continued on p. 84

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	Monday	Tuesday
September		
	12	Adriana Lecouvreur 8 pm <i>B</i>
	19	Idomeneo 8 pm <i>A,C</i>
	26	Katya Kabanova 8 pm <i>A,B</i>
October	3	Das Rheingold 8 pm <i>A,C</i>
San Francisco Opera FAIR Sunday, October 9, 1977 Noon to 6 pm War Memorial	10	Faust 8 pm <i>A,B</i>
Opera House	17	Aida 8 pm <i>A,B</i> 18
	Aida 7:30 pm <i>D,E</i> 24	Ariadne auf Naxos 8 pm A,C 25
November	31	Turandot 8 pm <i>A,B</i>
San Francisco Opera Guild FOL de ROL Monday, November 14, 1977 8:30 pm Civic Auditorium	7	I Puritani 8 pm <i>A,C</i>
Code letters indicate subscription series	FOL DE ROL 8:30 pm	Un Ballo in Maschera 7:30 pm <i>D,F</i>
Special non-sub- scription Thanksgiving performance *Family-priced matinee with special cast	21	Un Ballo in Maschera 8 pm A,C 22

Opera Calendar

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		Opening Night Adriana Lecouvreur 8 pm A	Idomeneo 8 pm <i>J,K</i>	11
Idomeneo 7:30 pm <i>D,E</i> 14	15	Adriana Lecouvreur 8 pm G,H	Katya Kabanova 8 pm <i>J,L</i>	Idomeneo 2 pm <i>M,N</i>
Katya Kabanova 7:30 pm <i>D,F</i>	22	Idomeneo 8 pm <i>G,I</i>	Adriana Lecouvreur 8 pm <i>J,L</i>	Katya Kabanova 2 pm <i>M,O</i>
Adriana Lecouvreur 7:30 pm <i>D,E</i> 28	29	Katya Kabanova 8 pm <i>G,H</i>	Das Rheingold 8 pm <i>J,K</i>	Adriana Lecouvreur 2 pm <i>M,N</i>
Faust 7:30 pm <i>D,F</i>	6	Das Rheingold 8 pm <i>G,I</i>	Faust 8 pm J,L	S.F. OPERA FAIR Noon to 6 pm
Das Rheingold 7:30 pm <i>D,E</i>	13	Faust 8 pm <i>G,H</i> 14	Aida 8 pm <i>J,K</i> 15	Das Rheingold 2 pm <i>M,O</i>
Ariadne auf Naxos 7:30 pm <i>D,F</i>	20	Aida 8 pm <i>G,I</i>	Rheingold 1:30 pm X Ariadne 8 pm J,K	Faust 2 pm <i>M,N</i> 23
26	27	Ariadne auf Naxos 8 pm G,H	Turandot 8 pm <i>J,L</i> 29	Aida ? pm <i>M,O</i>
I Puritani 7:30 pm <i>D,F</i>	3	Turandot 8 pm G,H	Aida 1:30 pm <i>X</i> T Puritani 8 pm <i>J,K</i>	Ariadne auf Naxos 2 pm <i>M,N</i>
Turandot 7:30 pm <i>D,F</i>	10	I Puritani 8 pm <i>G,I</i>	Un Ballo in Maschera 8 pm <i>J,L</i>	Turandot 2 pm <i>M,O</i>
Turandot 7:30 pm <i>E</i>	17	Aida 8 pm <i>H</i>	Turandot 1:30 pm X Ballo 8 pm K	1 Puritani 2 pm <i>M,N</i>
1 Puritani 7:30 pm <i>E</i> 23	Aida** 8 pm 24	Un Ballo in Maschera 8 pm <i>G,l</i> 25	Faust 1:30 pm X*** Aida 8 pm L	Un Ballo in Maschera 2 pm <i>M</i> , <i>O</i> 27



In Rehearsal continued from p. 80



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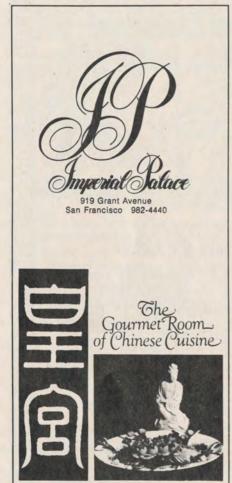
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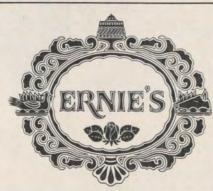
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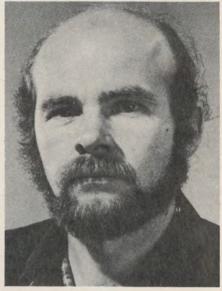
Audiences will undoubtedly have noticed that the covers of the 1977 San Francisco Opera Magazine are strikingly different from any in the past. Each program features the reproduction of a creation by a California artist, which conveys the mood and spirit of a particular opera. The inspiration for this idea, which coincidentally celebrates the ties that have existed between art and music over the centuries, came from the tremendous response to last year's Angle of Repose poster. A painting by Sam Tchakalian was chosen for reproduction to commemorate the world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's opera based on the Pulitzer Prize winning novel by California writer Wallace Stegner.

The works of art featured on the 1977 covers are not commissioned, but selected from among existing compositions by San Francisco Opera's Director of Public Relations, Herbert Scholder, who initiated the project. The ten selections, eight paintings and two sculptures, represent a cross-section of California artists, living and dead, men and women, abstract and representational. Some of them may prove controversial, and it is not expected that everyone will agree with all of the choices.



Adriana Lecouvreur:
Bruce Conner (1933-), Triptych (1964)

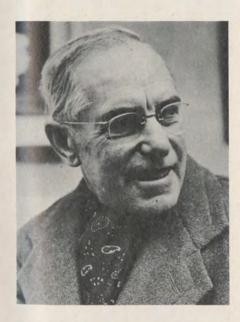
Born in Macpherson, Kansas, Bruce Conner now lives in San Francisco and was an important member of the 'beat generation' during the late '50's. He has been exhibiting for over 20 years and his works may be found in museums and galleries throughout the United States and in Europe. After a period of activity in film-making, he is now working primarily in drawing and photograms.



Idomeneo: Eugene Sturman (1945-), Xanthos (1974)

Eugene Sturman, who was born in New York, currently resides in Venice, California and teaches at UCLA. He has recently had several exhibits featuring his copper wall reliefs, which retain the two-dimensionality of a painting. They are achieved by controlled oxidation of copper in an "accentuated aging" process which takes six months. These sculptures reflect his concern with the fusion of qualities found in ancient metals and the contemporary aesthetic of the "process school" of artists at work in the United States today.

The San Francisco Opera would like to extend its thanks for assisting in this project to Harvey L. Jones, Deputy Curator of Art, the Oakland Museum; Ursula Gropper, Grapestake Gallery, San Francisco; Jacqueline Anhalt, Jacqueline Anhalt Gallery, Los Angeles; Betty Asher, Curatorial Assistant, Modern Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Ruth Braunstein, Braunstein/ Quay Gallery, San Francisco, and Edwin Janss, Jr., The Janss Foundation/ University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley.



Katya Kabanova: Matthew Barnes (1880-1951), Dusk Fantasy (1929)

Scottish-born Matthew Barnes was a self-taught artist who painted his eerily expressionistic evening scenes directly on canvas with no preliminary sketches. He came to San Francisco a few weeks after the 1906 earthquake and remained a North Beach fixture until his death. Admirer William Saroyan said of his work, "He paints the face of infinity itself."



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And when you examine our symbol further, it isn't really a double S but a single intertwined S, representing our fundamental strength, all parts working together for the entity.

You'll find the same is true of our investment department. We have one of the most talented groups of money managers in the country, and among the largest... approximately one hundred people.

The capabilities of our research department are extensive, and the expertise of our people is second to none. Our computer facilities are among the finest and largest in the country. Our size and our experienced traders mean decisions on your portfolio are executed quickly and effectively.

Together, the sum total of these parts work together to help build your personal portfolio of investments. Call us collect at (415) 445-4137, and discover security in numbers, at Security

Pacific Bank.



SECURITY PACIFIC BANK

There's Security in Numbers

Box or menthol:

Carlton is lowest.

See how Carlton stacks down in tar. Look at the latest U.S. Government figures for:

	tar mg./cig	nicotine mg./cig
Brand D	13	0.9
Brand D Menthol .	11	0.8
Brand V Menthol	11	0.7
Brand V	10	0.7
Brand M Menthol	8	0.5
Brand M	8	0.5
Carlton Soft Pack	1	0.1
Carlton Menthol less than	1	0.1
Carlton Box less than	*1	*0.1

*Av. per cigarette by FTC method

Of all brands, lowest...Carlton Box:

1 mg. tar, 0.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

Carlton
brings you
the lighter
100.



Less

1 mg. tar.

than

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Soft Pack and Menthol: 1 mg. "tar", 0.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report DEC. '76.

Box: 1 mg. "tar", 0.1 mg. nicotine; 100 mm: 5 mg. "tar", 0.5 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.