Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)

1977

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Un Ballo in Maschera

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Un Ballo in Maschera



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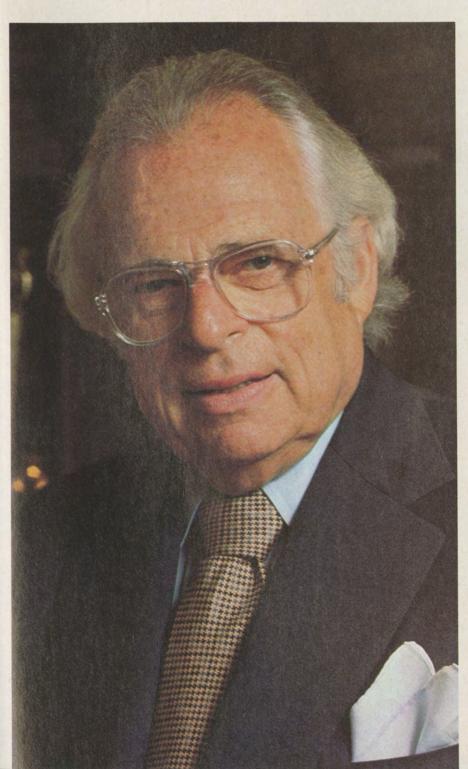


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San Francisco Opera Medal



On the evening of Friday, October 28, soprano Leontyne Price was awarded the San Francisco Opera medal in honor of the twentieth anniversary of her debut with the Company. Kurt Herbert Adler made the presentation of the silver medallion on stage, after the performance of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, before assembled members of the Company and the sell-out audience of 3,500. The ceremony was also included in that evening's nation-wide broadcast and will thus have been heard by millions. The inscription on the medal was "1977 — To our Leontyne Price with love and affection after twenty years of togetherness." Maestro Adler also read a special commendation which had been sent by President Carter from the White House. Miss Price, who was moved to tears, responded with warm words of praise for her "home company" and promised that she would return to sing here often in future years.

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Designer John Conklin: Bringing *Ballo* Back to Sweden

by Arthur Kaplan



John Conklin, designer of the new production of Un Ballo in Maschera.

For the first time since 1961 and only the third time in its twelve-season history with San Francisco Opera, *Un Ballo in Maschera* appears in the original Swedish setting where it historically and artistically belongs. Verdi had very reluctantly agreed to switch the locale to distant Colonial Boston for the Rome premiere in 1859 only because the censors adamantly refused to allow an opera dealing with regicide on the stage just after an Italian revolutionary had made an attempt on the life of French Emperor Napoleon III. No one could be happier about the change in venue than the designer for *Ballo*, John Conklin. Not only did it allow him to create some of the most beautiful and elegant sets and costumes that San Francisco audiences have seen in quite some time, but it coincided with his and stage director Sonja Frisell's conception of the opera. With Swedish King Gustavus III clearly at the center of the drama, the new production stresses the contrast and conflict between the pomp and ceremony of the public figure—a strong enlight-

ened monarch greatly loved by his subjects—and the inner turmoil of the private figure—a man torn by his friendship and loyalty to his secretary, Count Anckarström (Renato), and his love for Amelia, the Count's wife. As Conklin stated, "In the Swedish version you can play with the contrast between his two roles. They diverge and converge several times before reaching their climax in the ball scene where the King is killed for personal reasons, but where his death is also a political





John Conklin's costume design for King Gustavus III in the new Un Ballo in Maschera.

apotheosis. The Boston version is just a triangle drama."

This unifying theme is apparent from the very outset of the opera. The King is sitting in his bedroom surrounded by his court singing about his guilty love for Amelia in front of a huge curtain painted with a coronation scene which clearly identifies him as the leader of his country. "It was Sonja's idea that the first scene be done as a levee with the King's bed and the railing. In this kind of grand room you have both his private world and his kingly world. Since the first scene and last two scenes are connected to the King's palace, we wanted to relate the two sets. They each have a prominent proscenium arch with the royal crest and we repeat the curved railings, in

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Stage director Sonja Frisell, who conceived the new Ballo production, studies John Conklin's scenic designs.

addition to echoes in colors and textures. It is in the final scene that his private and kingly worlds catch up with him and come together in his death." The metaphor of the theater with its play-acting and disguises, which also culminates in the ball scene, is another focal point in this production. "We thought it important that the last scene take place in the theatrical atmosphere of the royal opera house where it historically took place. The opera is so much about disguise. Almost every time you see the king he is disguised or at least playing a role. In the first scene he is the King, but he is playing the part of the monarch which is in contrast to his emotional state. In the second scene he is incognito as a sailor. In the third scene he's sort of playing the King as lover. And, of course, at the ball he is actually in disguise."

Conklin sees *Ballo* as a very personal opera. "It doesn't have the cosmic overtones like *Otello* or *Forza* or *Boccanegra*. It's a social, emotional play. The music does not suggest a kind of abstraction. You couldn't do something



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Costume design for Oscar.

like Svoboda's Vespri Siciliani. Each one of the sets is a very specific place, with very specific people connected to it, in which a very specific thing is going on. As Sonja kept repeating, 'It happens on March 16, 1792.' You couldn't possibly be more specific than that."

Although keeping with period accuracy, Conklin did not attempt any absolute historical accuracy. "It is in-

teresting," he interjected, "that Verdi in his letters talks about the fact that Gustav's court should show a reflection of French taste—specifically the elegance and sophistication of Louis XV. For example, in the first scene, although the arch is copied from an actual Swedish piece of architecture, the general feeling is French. Similarly, in the ball scene, it's not so much based on





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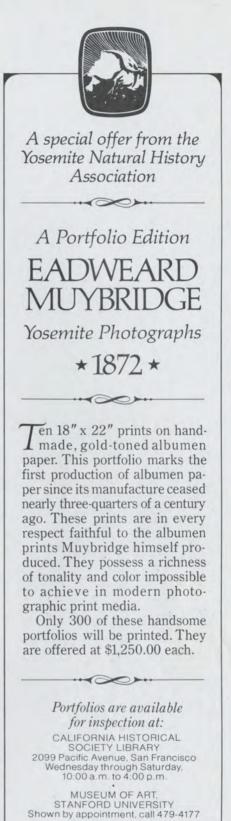
the opera house that Gustav built in Stockholm, but the eighteenth century theaters in Germany, especially the Margrave Theater in Bayreuth, mainly in terms of color. I have used on the front of the opera loges details which come from his opera house."

Conklin's design decisions for Ballo were based on a combination of elements, including paintings of the period. Oscar's costume and many of the chorus costumes for the masked ball, with their odd looking masks, have a Venetian feeling based on the genre scenes of Pietro Longhi. The basic color scheme for the entire opera, the greens and flecks of gold and white, comes from Longhi's contemporary and compatriot, Francesco Guardi. "It's part of my image of Ballo which, despite the drama of love and death, is one of the lightest in weight and most elegant of Verdi's operas. The way Guardi uses that kind of soft, misty, romantic, smoky effect relates to the kind of flecking, pinging sound that Oscar makes, and the King, too." The sets which are basically realistic in the center, move out into a softer, "smoky" look on the sides, which makes it easier to tie together the indoor and outdoor scenes.

In fact, the major problem for Conklin came in trying to unify the interior and exterior scenes with their wildly different scales. "We decided the room in Renato's home should be a big room with big windows, like the sculpture hall of the Drottningholm Court Thea-

tre outside of Stockholm. The cold. white light pouring into the room and casting shadows will have sort of a threatening, ominous effect. This rather cold, bare room contrasts both with the characters, who are boiling over with passion, and later with the warmth of the ballroom. In fact, even in the costume designs there is a coolness in the Amelia-Renato costumes compared with the warmth of the King's costumes. For Ulrica's dwelling we needed an area which could contain sixty people and yet appear small. Sonja wanted to break the stage with Ulrica's house only a small part of it. The house is surrounded by a porch and an outdoor view of the Stockholm harbor which allowed me to put it back into reasonably realistic scale, so that the room is perhaps the size it would naturally be." In this Swedish version Ulrica is no wild fortune-teller trying to out-hag Azucena. She is much more like the historical Mam'zelle Arvidson on whom the character in Verdi's original Gustavo III was based. "We didn't want any caves with strange, mystical things hanging. Her room is just a rustic hut with boards, because it was by the harbor, with nothing in it but a table with a glowing crystal ball-like skull. Ulrica is a sort of middle-class seer rather than a flamboyant gypsy. She is dressed rather simply in white-like a figure out of Blake or Fuselli, with a very pale face-so that she becomes more important as a person."

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Kurt Herbert Adler: The Early Years

by Stephanie von Buchau

San Francisco being an operatic town, for the past twenty-five years Kurt Herbert Adler has been as famous a resident as Willie Mays, Joe Alioto or Patty Hearst. But, while we all know Adler's track record since he took over directorship of the opera from founder Gaetano Merola in 1953, we don't hear too much about his "roots." So, before he began to prepare for his role as conductor of this season's final opera, Un Ballo in Maschera, I asked Maestro Adler to tell me how he got started in music.

Adler was born in Vienna, then capital of the Austro-Hungarian empire, in 1905. His well-to-do parents were both from industrial families; they started their young son studying languages and piano at age five. "My first piano teacher was a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg, and as a result I was taught music



Kurt Herbert Adler (far right) when he worked on the Arturo Toscanini production of Wagner's *Die Meister*singer during the 1936 Salzburg festival with (from the left) Alfred Muzzarelli, Viktor Madin, Laszlo Halasz, Herbert Alsen, Friedrich Schorr, Lorenzo Alvary, Hermann Wiedemann, Ralph Telasko, Charles Kullman, Georg Maikl, Herbert Graf, Richard Sallaba and Anton Dermota. Hovering over Graf and Sallaba is Karl Ettl (in white shirt).



The future general director of the San Francisco Opera practices the piano as his mother watches, in Vienna in 1916.



At the Festspielhaus in Salzburg in 1937 is Kurt Herbert Adler (left) with a group of co-workers including (at right) the famous baritone Alfred Jerger.

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authentic Louis XV theory from Schoenberg's Harmonielehre, not a usual procedure for such a young student. She also insisted that I take musical dictation and study rhythm by the Dalcroze method."

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss educator and composer who had studied with Delibes and Bruckner. He became a professor of harmony in Geneva where he developed a method of coordinating music and bodily movement, to create "by the help of rhythm, a rapid and regular current of communication between brain and body, and to make the feeling for rhythm a physical experience." Adler relates that this method required the student to beat differing times, such as four against three, using his arms or marching around the room. "Dalcroze takes the surprises away from any rhythmic patterns you may encounter; I often recommend it to young singers who are having difficulties with rhythm."

When he was thirteen, Adler's family spent the summer in Bohemia at the home of Dr. Richard Strauss (not the composer), who was also a textile industrialist and a close friend of the Adler family. Young Kurt saw a score of Wagner's Die Walküre sitting on the piano-at that point he had been to the opera many times, but had never heard a Ring opera. He sat down and began to play, so impressing Dr. Strauss that he insisted that Adler's parents take the boy immediately to a firstrate music teacher to develop his talent. Alexander Wunderer, president and first oboe of the Vienna Philharmonic and head of many musical societies throughout Europe, became the young musician's teacher. "He instructed me in theory, and general musicianship."

Franz Schmidt at the Academie in Vienna where he studied counterpoint, composition, musical history, piano and

Adler later became a theory student of

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sang in the chorus. (Schmidt was an Austrian composer whose symphonies and opera, *Notre Dame*, are still sometimes heard today.) Adler remembers singing second tenor in the chorus for a performance of *Masked Ball* given at the Academie.

It must have been in this period that Adler developed his taste for hard work. He told me that at one point he was attending classes at the Gymnasium (high school), the Academie ("Where we were all much more grown up and independent") and at the University (where his teacher was Professor Guido Adler-no relation). "I was not happy in music classes at the University. The musicologists thought they knew everything, and the difference in philosophy between them and the practical atmosphere at the Academie was strong." For a while, Adler also took classes at the Conservatory because there the conducting students were actually allowed to work with an orchestra.

The first time he conducted, his age was "somewhere around fourteen. I conducted the student orchestra at the Gymnasium. I remember that the concertmistress was the daughter of Arnold Rosé, the concermaster of the Vienna Philharmonic and first violin of the Rosé Quartet. He was married to the sister of Gustav Mahler. After the performance, Rosé said: 'You must become a conductor.' "

After all this studying and practicing, it is not surprising that young Adler was burning to get some practical experience. While he was still in school, he was offered a chance to perform in a theater. "I played an aria on the harmonium backstage during *Six Char*acters in Search of an Author." Having survived his debut, Adler was then hired to play the celesta in the celebrated Max Reinhardt production of Midsummer Night's Dream. Reinhardt's conductor was Bernhard Paumgartner who was sufficiently impressed to ask Adler to stay on with the company.

In 1925, during the production of Reinhardt's King Lear, Paumgartner asked Adler to take the baton while the older conductor went into the theater to check the sound. "There was no pit in that theater," Adler remembers. "So the orchestra was under the stage. In order to tell us to stop or start during rehearsals, they would stamp on the stage over our heads. Well, Paumgartner stamped. His foot went through the floorboards and he injured his leg. So I got to conduct the performance." For three years "music and drama had a monopoly on my life." After Reinhardt, Adler went to work for Otto Preminger, the film director who at that time ran a theater in Vienna. Adler arranged music ("put together out of Russian themes") for a production of Three Sisters. "These three years in the legitimate theater obviously influenced my attitude toward drama in opera. You couldn't work with Reinhardt and Preminger and not be influenced."

Reinhardt, Adler remembers, worked closely with his music director in order to get special effects. "He always wanted a certain sound. Once during a rehearsal at four in the morning I came up with a dissonant second on the harmonium to lend an eerie feeling to the heath scene in *King Lear*. He loved it, but the next day in the cold light he said: 'What is that horrible noise?' and made me cut it. I like to quote Reinhardt, who would stand with his hands behind his back and say, 'Remember, young man. In the theater, *nothing* is impossible.' "

In 1928, a young pianist friend of Adler's recommended him for a job as assistant to the director of the opera

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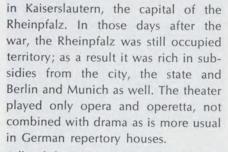
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Adler left Preminger for the post in Kaiserslautern. Before leaving he had been working on a modern play which included the scene of a train passing a switch. "Those were the days before tape and sound tracks, so we had to produce the sound live. I asked for sixteen musicians, who didn't play a note of music, only noises to simulate this train scene. The audience loved it. After I left, I think discipline fell apart, because I received a telegram in Kaiserslautern from Preminger: 'The train is having difficulty passing the switch without its engineer.'"

The director in Kaiserslautern was a man with personal problems. "In my memory, the best *Carmen* and *Otello* I ever heard were conducted by him. But he drank, was a morphine addict and chased women. He wasn't interested in running a theater so his secretary and I, both of us twentythree years old, ran the place. I would have gone through fire for that man, so it was no hardship. But it is funny, is it not, how I always start out to be a conductor and end up being thrown into administration?"

Professional engagements now came steadily for Adler. In the 1934-35 and 1935-36 seasons, he worked at the Volksoper in Vienna. In the 1936 through the 1938 seasons, he was at Reichenberg in Czechoslovakia, then capital of the Sudentenland. "All the German theaters in the area were under the influence of the Nazis except the theater at Reichenberg which was personally subsidized by President Benes, and the theater in Prague. We had more money than you can imagine to work with."

With the mention of the Nazis, I asked Adler his attitude toward politics in those days. "I didn't have any. My parents were political opposites. My father, as an industrialist, was naturally a capitalist. My mother adored her brother who had been named Secretary of Foreign Affairs when Austria became a republic, so she was a Social Democrat. I heard both sides of the political story at home; but I was thinking only of music and the theater in those days."

He illustrates his point by relating that his mother knew many influential government men, and as a result Adler was always given a seat in the imperial boxes at the State Opera. "You know how it is in Vienna, the royal boxes are on the right side of the theater, exactly opposite to where I sit in San Francisco, so now I get a mirror image of those days." Adler always sat in the back of a box, studying his score. "And when the government changed, I was passed on to the next group in power. To them I was just a student, with no political bias. It didn't matter who was in charge, I still got to sit in the box. Franz Schalk, who was head of the Opera until 1928, was a bridge partner of my father, so I was able to attend rehearsals as well."

Musically, Adler tells the same story as many Slavic, German and Austrian artists who were forced to deal with the Nazis in the years before active war broke out. "The orchestra and chorus in Reichenberg were naturally all Nazis, but we were there to make music not discuss politics, so I got along with them and they got along with me."

In the 1935-36 season, Adler conducted a performance of *Faust* at the Vienna Volksoper with a cast consisting of an Italian soprano who sang in

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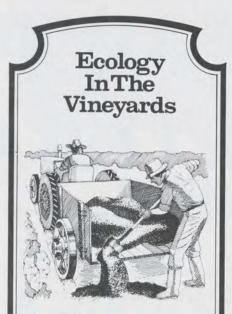
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Italian, a Greek tenor who sang in French, a Polish bass who sang in Russian while the rest of the cast and chorus sang in German. This polyglot evening got a better review in the local press than a more prestigious performance of the same work at the State Opera and, as a result, Adler was asked if he could spend the summer in Salzburg as assistant to Toscanini, who was preparing his first Meistersinger. Not without pride, Adler says: "You know, of course, who the assistants were that year? Solti, Leinsdorf, I and Halasz, the founder of the New York City Opera."

In 1936 Adler assisted Toscanini, and in 1937 returned to Salzburg to coach opera classes at the Mozarteum. He was in the library one day when someone came and told him that a "crazy American singer was firing her coaches one after another and could he come and see what he could do to placate her?" Adler accepted the challenge and pleased the singer who turned out to be Janet Fairbank, the daughter of a corporation lawyer from Chicago. Through Miss Fairbank, Adler was introduced to influential music lovers from Chicago and to American singers such as Lawrence Tibbett.

Back in Reichenberg, he received a letter from his new friend asking if he wished to come to America since "it looks like war in Europe." "It was astonishing," Adler says. "The Fairbanks knew Cordell Hull and suddenly I had a visa." Finishing his contract in Reichenberg, he left the Czech city for Chicago where among his first students was Carol Fox, now head of the Chicago Lyric Opera. By 1943, Adler was in San Francisco as chorus director under Gaetano Merola.

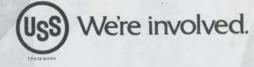
As soon as Adler reached San Francisco, he took his place on the conducting staff, leading Cavalleria Rusticana (1943 and 1952), Secret of Suzanne (1944), Pagliacci (1945), Trovatore (1946), Traviata (1947), Rigoletto (1948), Faust (1949), Suor Angelica (1950 and 1952), Forza del Destino (1951), Aida (1952), Madama Butterfly (1953 and 1961), Marriage of Figaro (1958) and Così fan tutte (1960). Notice that after he took over for Merola in 1953, Adler's regular conducting assignments diminished sharply, stopping altogether after 1961. Why the hiatus? After all, Maestro Adler is not known for his shyness. This sally on my part got a raised eyebrow and a reasonable reply. "I didn't conduct when I felt that it would disturb the operation of the opera company. When I first took over, things were not well enough organized for me to take time away from administration in order to rehearse a work musically.

"An opera director," he goes on, "is more or less successful through the strength of the individual talents of his associates. But finding the right associates to whom you can 'delegate authority'-as certain people accuse me of not being able to do-that is largely a matter of luck, something like finding the right singing teacher. You know, a teaching method may be great for singer A, but it doesn't work for singer B at all. It is the same way with associates in this business. For a long time I had to run everything, financial, artistic, administrative. There was simply no time left for conducting. But eventually . . ."

At this point, Adler shifted uncomfortably in his chair—he had broken his ankle the week before I spoke to

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him, slipping on the curb outside the Annex, a rehearsal hall two blocks away from the Opera House. He chose his next words carefully. "When you are a meat eater, and you are denied meat for years, well . . ." Here his voice trailed off expressively, and I was left with the graphic image of a man denied access to that thing which he loves the most in the whole world. "To be thinking and feeling and living music, but not to be able to practice it, after almost fifty years as a musician, it was agony."

Having ended his purgatory with the Sills *Traviata* in 1973, how does Adler feel about being only a part-time conductor? "I admit freely," he says, "that it is easier emotionally and manually to be a conductor all the time than to conduct only part of the time as I do. But for me, making music is a function of life, like eating or sex. Not to conduct is like strangling. Music is my lifeline; you don't cut off your own arteries. I don't think I am indulging myself; I am simply doing what I was born and trained to do."

What about dealing with other conductors? Adler has a reputation, perhaps undeserved, for meddling during rehearsals. This question doesn't bother him at all, for he laughs and tells me a story about the Hungarian conductor, Janos Ferencsik, who was rehearsing Ariadne auf Naxos while Adler and I were talking. "Ferencsik said the other day that you can tell a beautiful woman that you don't like her hairstyle, and it won't bother her a bit. but if you tell the same thing to an ugly woman you destroy her. Well, it is just like that with conductors. Conductors who know their business do not resent suggestions from someone who also knows his business. I can truthfully say that I am on very friendly terms with all the fine conductors who

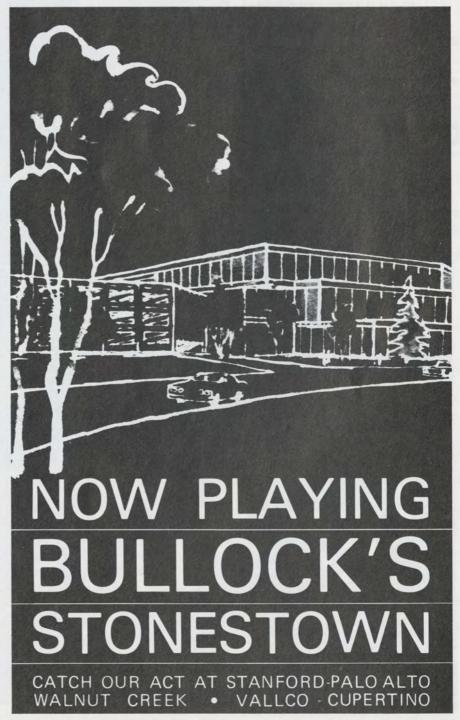
have performed in this house. Many of them tell me how much they like to work here because we are so much better organized than other opera companies."

What happens when Adler is conducting? Does being the boss of the house give him a whip hand over the performers? He looks rather startled at the question. "I don't think that has anything to do with it. When you are conducting, you are concentrating so hard on the music that you forget everything else. I forget I am the general director. And I think the singers and musicians are concentrating so hard that they forget too. You know, everyone does not always agree in the making of music-there are bound to be differing opinions. So there are two things the conductor can do. He can force people to follow him, as it is said Toscanini did, although after working with Toscanini I would argue with that opinion. Or he can lead them by creating a spirit of cooperation among his musicians. This is my method. I try to make everyone sympathetic to the aims of the music."

Whether he is conducting or not, Adler *is* the boss. How does he see the role of an opera director? Since he doesn't hesitate or grope for words, I can tell he has been asked this question many times before. The answer is characteristically tough, humorous and proud. "It is the duty of an opera director to take the blame, to stick his neck out . . ." He pauses and his smile starts. "And, of course, to share the success."

Stephanie von Buchau is the Performing Arts Editor of San Francisco Magazine and the San Francisco correspondent for Opera News.





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John Conklin continued from p. 21



King Gustav III

The entire harbor scene is reminiscent of a Claude Lorrain painting. "When Silvano comes back to Ulrica's hut and sees that he is in the King's presence, we wanted the stage, which has been not murky exactly, but lit by the funny late afternoon Northern light which is not terribly bright, to suddenly become bathed in a golden sunset. It seems to me that the end of this scene is almost like a coronation. When the King doffs his disguise and is surrounded by his officers, there should be a great sweep of golden light which comes across and strikes him."

Another unifying element of this *Ballo* production is its water imagery. In addition to the second scene by the harbor, Act II takes place against a

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misty seascape on a rock-enclosed beach. "The feeling of mist coming from the water creates a kind of mysterious ambiguity which makes the scene less stark and definite. Sonja didn't want to have lots of rotting bodies and skeletons, since the center of the act is the love duet. The water symbolism with waves and undulations appears in other places of the music and text as well."

When asked to trace the genesis of the production, Conklin explained that he and director Frisell first talked on the phone-long distance from Los Angeles to Milan, since she was working at La Scala at the time. "She had some specific thoughts-the Swedish setting, the opening levee, the split scene for Ulrica's hut. She was less specific about the rest. Then, with the help of an assistant who went to the Swedish Information Office (in New York) I did some research-both historical and artistic. Lots of pictures and paintings and photographs, which I like to do, for the feeling of certain scenes, sunsets, etc. Then I spent a week in Milan with Sonja with whom I'd never worked before. I find that pictures are useful with a stage director since they give a more concrete notion of things. The director can say, "I don't like that color. That seems wrong. I like that." So I knew where her tastes were. We discussed the general style and we were very much in agreement. Then I came back and made a quarter-inch, roughlypainted model, more specific ground plans and rough costume sketches. In May, Sonja and Mr. Adler and I met for a day in Munich. Unfortunately, because of our busy schedules, that's the last time we were able to get together until the technical rehearsals in late July-early August. I had already met with Mr. Adler in San Francisco. You know, he's very good. He had concerns from a musical point of view: exactly where would the King be eavesdropping outside Ulrica's hut for the blending of voices in the trio; would the chorus be elevated, and where would the on-stage orchestra be placed in Act III, again for the sound. For the opening of Act II, Adler wanted the curtain to go up halfway through the orchestral introduction, which necessitated a long walkway so that Amelia would have something to do while the music was playing. That's what's so wonderful about Mr. Adler. I had done the Act II set much more like a beach, very open, and he said, 'No, I think it should be closed more.' Then he asked, 'Why did you do it that way?' And I said, 'Because I thought it should be just a kind of sand beach. I mean, if you were doing it in a movie, I think you might do it on a deserted beach.' Instead of saying, 'No, that's wrong,' Mr. Adler said 'Oh, that's interesting', and when I suggested maybe we should do it hidden and enclosed, he said, 'No, no, no. I think we should discuss it the other way.' He really sees the need for discussion and the reasons behind it." In early June, Conklin, clad in work clothes and sporting an attractive beard, had a lengthy two-day series of meetings with the technical staff at the Opera House during which most of the nitty-gritty but essential physical requirements of the production were gone over in minute detail. (e.g.,-how to cut back the ceiling on Ulrica's hut so that it can be split in two and moved off stage quickly; how the ramp from Act I, scene 2 might be re-used for Act Il since storage space backstage would be at a minimum, what with the statue from the concurrent Ponnelle production of Turandot taking up so much room; how to get the proper effect for the moon and the clouds in the gibbet scene; how to construct the loges of the Act III ball scene to make chorus movement practical, etc.) All of this necessitated some minor modifications in design which sent Conklin scurrying

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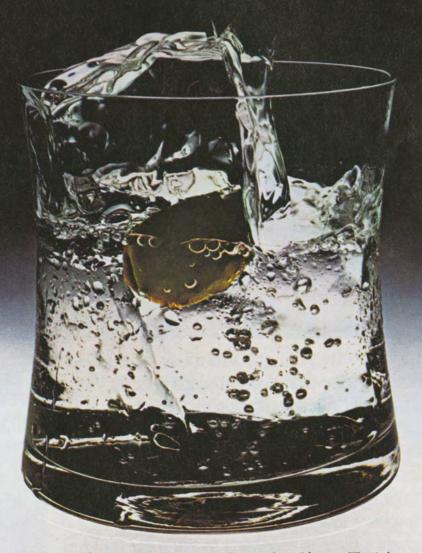
back to the drawing board. By the following day he had already incorporated these changes in a series of six magnificently painted sketches, one for each scene.

When asked how he managed to handle the highly technical vocabulary of the backstage crew (which had left the interviewer's head reeling) with such understanding and expertise, Conklin who is still in his 30's, replied that it came from long experience in design for straight drama, ballet and musical comedy as well as opera. He created designs for the Royal Ballet of London and the Joffrey Ballet; for the Long Wharf Theater in New Haven, the Arena Theater in Washington, the New York Shakespeare Festival and for several Broadway productions. His

opera credits include Salome and Così fan tutte for Santa Fe Opera, Ginastera's Beatrix Cenci for the opening of the Kennedy Center in Washington, The Marriage of Figaro for Minnesota Opera, a Menotti double bill for Western Opera Theater and two highly acclaimed productions for Spring Opera Theater: Monteverdi's Orfeo (1972) and Britten's Death in Venice (1975). "As an undergraduate at Yale I got to design a lot because there were no other student designers. It's always the best way. You're just presented with a stage which you have to fill up with scenery by yourself. So you do it. It was like being taught how to swim by being thrown into the pool. There was no one around to tell me what to do. I was free to do anything I wanted. I didn't know you couldn't do that, or you weren't supposed to do that. So, I taught myself not only those things you shouldn't do by doing them and having them not work, but also by doing those things you're not supposed to do, but do work."

Opera has its special delights and problems, according to Conklin. "It tends to be bigger than other theater-the scale of the stage, the number of sets. But, it can absorb the big scale because the music is usually so strong that you're not in danger of overwhelming the show. You can often swallow a play or musical in the scenery because it can't fight back. Opera can fight back. It has all that thrust behind it. But it also tends to get out of control because of the scale. You can't get it as perfect as you'd like. With a play you can work and work at it until it's absolutely perfect. You can't afford to do that with opera. It's just too big. But I love doing it. In some ways I would rather do opera than anything else."

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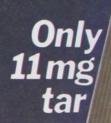
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Three of the ten operas to be performed are new to San Francisco and, of the remaining seven, none has been seen in San Francisco for at least five years. Five of the productions come from other opera companies, two are new designs and only three have 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.

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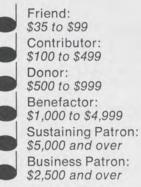
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Artists

Kathleen Battle* Eleanor Bergquist* Montserrat Caballé* Dorothy Cole Fiorenza Cossotto* Christiane Eda-Pierre* Maria Ewing* Gwendolyn Jones[†] Susanne Marsee Eva Marton* Leona Mitchell Carol Neblett* Elena Obraztsova Maria Parazzini** Patricia Payne** Leontyne Price Katia Ricciarelli Hanna Schwarz** Renata Scotto Nancy Shade **Beverly Sills** Elisabeth Söderström* Pamela South[†] Jocelyne Taillon* Carol Todd

Chorus

Janice Aaland Arlene Adams Deborah Alexander Kathy Anderson Candida Arias-Duazo Doris Baltzo Norma Bruzzone Louise Corsale **Beverley Finn** Lisa Louise Hill Lola Lazzari-Simi Cecilia MacLaren Tamaki McCracken Irene Moreci Janet Marie Noffsinger **Rose Parker** Anna Marie Riesgo Shelley Seitz Bonnie Jean Shapiro Claudia Siefer

Extra Chorus

Roberta Bowmann Anne Buelteman Cynthia Cook Patricia Diggs Margaret Hamilton Christina Jaqua Susan D. Jetter Maureen Gail MacGowan Elaine Messer Tatiana Troyanos Mildred Tyree* Carol Vaness*† Ruth Welting* Beverly Wolff

Wolf Appel Giacomo Aragall Aldo Bramante* losé Carreras Allen Cathcart* Gianfranco Cecchele* William Cochran Lawrence Cooper Rémy Corazza** lames Courtney John Davies Joszef Dene** Dale Duesing Joseph Frank Bonaldo Giaiotti David Cale Johnson*† Robert Johnson* William Lewis Frank Little*

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Penelope Rains Nancy Wait

Gennadi Badasov Michael Bloch Riccardo Cascio Joseph Ciampi Angelo Colbasso Kenneth Hybloom Chester Ludgin Barry McCauley*† James McCracken Alexander Malta **Raymond Manton** Yuri Mazurok* Norman Mittelmann Franz Ferdinand Nentwig** Luciano Pavarotti William Pell*† Ray Reinhardt* George Shirley* Cesar-Antonio Suarez* **Giuseppe Taddei** Michael Talley* Eric Tappy Giorgio Tozzi Ragnar Ulfung Ivo Vinco* Ingvar Wixell Giorgio Zancanaro*

*San Francisco Opera debut **American opera debut †San Francisco/Affiliate Artist—Opera Program

Peter Girardot Gerald Johnson Conrad Knipfel Eugene Lawrence Kenneth MacLaren Kenneth Malucelli lim Meyer **Thomas Miller** Eugene Naham Charles L. Pascoe Kenneth Rafanan Thomas Reed Robert Romanovsky Philip L. Siegling Francis Szymkun lames Tarantino D. Livingstone Tigner William Chastaine Tredway John Walters R. Lee Woodriff

Robert Klang Joseph Kreuziger Matthew Miksack Karl Saarni Karl Schmidt Lorenz Schultz Mitchell Taylor Gerald Wood

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1ST VIOLIN Zaven Melikian Concertmaster Daniel Shindarvov Concertmaster Ferdinand M. Claudio William E. Pynchon Assistant Principal Silvio Claudio **Ezequiel** Amador Mafalda Guaraldi Bruce Freifeld George Nagata **Ernest Michaelian** Michael Sand William Rusconi

2ND VIOLIN Felix Khuner Principal Herbert Holtman Virginia Roden Barbara Riccardi Robert Galbraith Gail Schwarzbart Carol Winters Eva Karasik Linda Deutsch

VIOLA Rolf Persinger Principal

Ballet

Elizabeth Cain Dixie Denis Hilda Falkenstein Kimberly Graves Linda Suzanne Heine Ellen Heuer Detlev Olshausen Lucien Mitchell Asbjorn Finess Thomas Elliott Jonna Hervig Ellen Smith

CELLO David Kadarauch Principal Rolf Storseth Judiyaba Melinda Ross Tadeusz Kadzielawa Helen Stross

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

FLUTE Walter Subke *Principal* Lloyd Gowen Gary Gray

PICCOLO Lloyd Gowen Gary Gray

Jacqueline Low Alleluia Panis Sherri Parks Jane Muir Thelen Maria Angela Villa Allyson Way

Supernumeraries

Joan Bacharach Dottie Brown Madeline Chase Barbara Clifford Renee De Jarnett Mary Joyce Nancy Kennelly Francesca Leo Marilyn Mathers Cynthia Milina Edith Modie Ellen Nelson Louise Russo Ellen Sanchez Elizabeth Schultz

Jesse J. Alexander Steve Bauman Bruce Bigel William W. Burns Thomas B. Carlisle Ron Cavin Steven Chaplin Rudolph R. Cook Burton F. Covel Donald Crawford OBOE James Matheson Principal Raymond Duste Deborah Henry

ENGLISH HORN Raymond Duste

CLARINET Philip Fath *Principal* Donald Carroll David Breeden

BASS CLARINET Donald Carroll

BASSOON Walter Green Principal Jerry Dagg Robin Elliott

CONTRA BASSOON Robin Elliott

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

Ric.E. Abel Isom Buenavista Charles Foster Jeffry Judson

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TROMBONE Ned Meredith Principal McDowell Kenley John Bischof

TUBA Robert Z. A. Spellman

TIMPANI Elayne Jones

PERCUSSION Lloyd Davis Peggy C. Lucchesi

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1977 Season Repertoire

San Francisco Opera Premiere ADRIANA LECOUVREUR *Cilea IN ITALIAN* Scotto, Obraztsova, South, Tyree*/Aragall, Taddei, Courtney, Frank, Davies, R. Johnson*

Conductor: Gavazzeni* Stage Director: Vallone** Set Designer: Cristini/Paravicini Choreographer: Rose* Chorus Director: Bradshaw** Scenic production owned by the Metropolitan Opera Association Friday, Sept 9 8PM Gala Opening Night Tuesday, Sept 13, 8PM Friday, Sept 13, 8PM Friday, Sept 14 8PM Saturday, Sept 24, 8PM Wednesday, Sept 28, 7:30PM Sunday, Oct 2, 2PM

San Francisco Opera Premiere IDOMENEO Mozart IN ITALIAN Neblett*, Eda-Pierre*, Ewing*/Tappy, Little*, Shirley*, Bramante**

Conductor: Pritchard Production: Ponnelle Designer: Ponnelle Chorus Director: Bradshaw Production owned by the Cologne Opera Saturday, Sept 10, 8PM Wednesday, Sept 14, 7:30PM

Sunday, Sept 18, 2PM Tuesday, Sept 20, 8PM Friday, Sept 23, 8PM

San Francisco Opera Premiere New Production KATYA KABANOVA Janáček IN ENGLISH Söderström*, Wolff, Marsee, Jones, Tyree/Lewis, Cochran, Ludgin, McCauley*, Cooper

Conductor: Kubelik* Production: Rennert 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 Friday, September 30, 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 14, 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 26, 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 4, 8PM Wednesday, Nov 9, 7:30PM Sunday, 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 5, 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 15, 7:30PM Saturday, Nov 19, 8PM Tuesday, Nov 22, 8PM Friday, Nov 22, 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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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 IDOMENEO 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 JOIN MEROLA!

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

Schedule of *Brown Bag Opera* performances.

Notification of Opera Action previews.

Advance announcements of San Francisco Opera events.

opera program

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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



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continued on p. 59

l want her to live in a world without cancer.

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> Friday, September 16 Friday, September 23 Friday, September 30 Friday, October 7 Friday, October 14 Friday, October 21 Friday, October 28 Friday, November 4 Friday, November 11 Friday, November 25

ADRIANA LECOUVREUR IDOMENEO KATYA KABANOVA DAS RHEINGOLD FAUST AIDA ARIADNE AUF NAXOS TURANDOT I PURITANI UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

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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.

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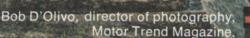
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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12 AT 8:00

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The performance will last approximately three hours and fifteen minutes

CAST

Count Horn (Samuele) Count Warting (Tommaso) Oscar Gustavus III (Riccardo) Count Anckarström (Renato) A judge Madame Arvidson (Ulrica) Christian (Silvano) Amelia's servant Amelia Anckarström Corps de ballet

Courtiers, chiefs of staff, deputies, conspirators, inhabitants of the port area

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 1792 in Stockholm, Sweden

ACT I Scene 1 Morning levée in the king's bedroom Scene 2 Madame Arvidson's house on the waterfront INTERMISSION

Aldo Bramante

James Courtney

Kathleen Battle*

losé Carreras

Yuri Mazurok*

Michael Talley

Patricia Payne

John Davies

Katia Ricciarelli

Lawrence Cooper

ACT II Scene 1 A lonely spot on the seashore

> Scene 2 Count Anckarström's study INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1 The king's box at the opera

> Scene 2 Inside the Stockholm opera house

SYNOPSIS/UN BALLO IN MASCHERA

ACT I-A morning levée in the king's bedroom. Among those waiting are a group of rebellious courtiers led by Count Warting and Count Horn. Oscar, the royal page, announces Gustavus and asks the king's approval of the invitation list for a masked ball. Seeing the name of Amelia, wife of his chief minister, Anckarström, the king, who is romantically attracted to her, momentarily loses himself in thought of a future meeting. As the others leave, Oscar admits Anckarström, who says he knows the cause of the king's distressed look: a conspiracy against the crown. Gustavus refuses to take him seriously and continues his toilette. The minister of justice arrives with a decree banishing the fortune teller, Madame Arvidson, who has been accused of witchcraft. Oscar proclaims her innocent and describes her skill at stargazing. Deciding to see for himself and overruling Anckarström's objections, the king light-heartedly bids the court to join him in an incognito visit to the soothsayer.

After she has invoked the dark spirits before a group of fearful and fascinated women, Madame Arvidson tells the seaman Christian that he will soon prosper. Gustavus, disguised as a sailor, surreptitiously slips money and a promotion into Christian's pocket. When he finds it, all are suitably impressed. The king stays in hiding when Madame Arvidson sends her visitors away to grant an audience to Amelia, who comes seeking release from her illicit passion for Gustavus. The fortuneteller instructs Amelia to find a magic herb that grows at the foot of the gallows outside the city gates and must be plucked at midnight. Amelia, though horrified, undertakes to do so that very night, and Gustavus resolves to follow her there. The disguised courtiers are now heard arriving as Amelia hurriedly departs. The king, still incognito, asks Madame Arvidson to read his palm. When she says that he will die by the next hand he shakes, he laughs and invites anyone in the company to give lie to her prophesy. When they refuse to do so, he clasps the hand of Anckarström, who had just arrived. Gustavus is then recognized and hailed by the crowd.

Act II—A frightened Amelia arrives at the gallows as midnight strikes. Gustavus appears and declares his love for her. She admits her own love for him, but begs him to think of her honor. Anckarström rushes in to warn the king to flee the approaching assassins. Gustavus asks Anckarström to escort the hooded lady back to the city gates without attempting to discover her identity. Receiving his promise, the king leaves and the conspirators arrive shortly thereafter. Finding Anckarström instead of their intended victim, they curse their luck. Anckarström draws his sword against Horn, and as Amelia rushes to defend her husband, Warting pulls back her hood, revealing her identity. The conspirators make fun of Anckarström's discomfiture. He asks Warting and Horn to meet him at his home in the morning and, as the conspirators leave, coldly reminds his wife that he had sworn to escort her to the gates of the city.

Amelia, left by her husband at the city gates, has returned home alone and fearfully awaits his arrival. He enters, declaring that death is the only possible punishment for her betrayal, but accedes to her request for a last meeting with her son. Amelia leaves and Anckarström, in anger and sorrow, deplores the double loss of friendship and love. He is interrupted by Warting and Horn. When he asks to join the conspiracy, they are at first suspicious, but become convinced when he offers his own son as hostage. United in purpose, they cannot agree who should have the privilege of assassinating the king. Amelia returns just as the men are about to draw lots. Seeing the irony in Amelia's choosing her lover's assassin, Anckarström forces his wife to draw a name from the urn and rejoices when it is his. A moment later Oscar brings an invitation to the masked ball. While the men hail this chance to execute their plan and arrange to identify themselves at the ball by the color of their costume and a red ribbon in their cloaks, Amelia determines to warn Gustavus.

ACT III—In his box at the Royal Opera House, Gustavus acknowledges that honor compels him to renounce his love and resolves to send Amelia and Anckarström on a diplomatic appointment abroad. Oscar delives a note to the king from an unknown lady, warning him of a murder plot. He decides to ignore it, not wanting his absence to be taken as a sign of cowardice.

In the confusion of the masked ball, Anckarström informs Warting and Horn that the king will not be present. Oscar, playfully identifying Anckarström through his disguise is, in turn, unmasked by the minister. The page lets slip the news that the king is, after all, present, and when Anckarström insists that he must speak to the king on urgent state business, Oscar reveals Gustavus' disguise. Amelia, recognizing the king, urges him to leave as his life is in danger. He refuses, but tells her of the foreign assignment for her husband, and bids her an ardent farewell. Anckarström discovers them and shoots him. The dying Gustavus, surrounded by his grieving court, forgives Anckarström, who learns too late his wife's innocence.

Un Ballo in Maschera

BY CHARLOTTE GREENSPAN

Un Ballo in Maschera is the only mature work Verdi composed to a libretto which he knew to have been set by another composer. The source work, *Gustave III, ou le Bal Masqué* by Eugène Scribe had fascinated several composers in the nineteenth century. Daniel Auber's setting of the work was successfully received in Paris in 1833. Auber's success must not have been particularly intimidating, however, for in 1835, after the triumph of *I Puritani*, Bellini toyed with the idea of setting the same text—a project he did not live to carry out. In 1857 it was Verdi who was drawn to the work although, it must be admitted, somewhat half-heartedly.

In a letter written on September 19, 1857 to his Neapolitan friend Vincenzo Torelli, Verdi relates, "Now I am working on a French play, Gustave III of Sweden, a libretto by Scribe which was done at the Opéra over twenty years ago. It's grandiose and huge, and really beautiful, but it's in many ways conventional, like all of Scribe's works for music, which I've never liked but which I now find insufferable. . . . I'm in a state of despair, because it's too late now to find another subject, and in any case I don't know where to find one. I'm not inspired by any that I've read." Verdi went on to suggest that rather than write a new opera for San Carlo that season (1857-58) he might come and conduct three earlier works of his, La battaglia di Legnano, Aroldo, and Simon Boccanegra. "Unless my amour propre is deceiving me," Verdi stated modestly, "one or the other of them would be a success." And he concluded, "but if you don't like this proposal, I shall have to write Gustave, which I'm luke-warm about."

Luke-warm or not, it was Gustave III that Verdi finally set, choosing it over Garcia Gutierrez' The Treasurer of King Don Pedro and Victor Hugo's Ruy Blas among other works. Gustave III is "grandiose and huge, and really beautiful," just as Verdi stated, and has several other virtues besides. Like any of Scribe's works, Gustave III is a well-made play. The actions follow one another logically, even compellingly. Verdi had found Scribe an uncooperative or at least uncompliant collaborator when he worked with him on Les Vêpres Sicilienne in 1854-55, but this did not blind him to the playwright's talents. Gustave III is tidy in a way that, say, Il Trovatore or Simon Boccanegra (both based on plays by Gutierrez, author of the abovementioned rejected Treasurer of King Don Pedro) are not.

Tidy though the plot is, it nevertheless allows, indeed demands, a great deal of variety. In 1853, several years before *Un Ballo in Maschera* was a glimmer in the eye of either Verdi or his translatoradapter Antonio Somma, Verdi wrote to Somma, "I find that the fault of our opera is excessive monotony, so much so that today I should refuse to write in the manner of *Nabucco, Foscari*, etc. which present the most interesting points, but without variety."

Variety and contrast exist on many levels in Un Ballo in Maschera. On stage, we move from a reception room, to the den of a fortune teller, to a lonely gallows field, to a private dwelling, and finally to a grand ballroom. The emotional variety is even greater. Ballo is not lacking in passion or in tragedy, but it is, in a way, one of the most lightspirited works Verdi had written up until then. In defending his work from the mutilations of the Neapolitan censors Verdi called attention to "the touch of brilliance and color . . . the aura of gaiety which runs throughout the dramatic action, which creates contrast shimmering like a light among the dark tragic moments in the drama."

The razor-edge balance between tragedy and comedy can be observed in the way laughter occurs in the drama. Gustavus laughs at Madame Arvidson's prophecy of his death in his miniature cabaletta "E scherzo od è follia" (to be sung, Verdì directs, con eleganza). The laughter is, of course, ironic for the prophecy is true. It finds a grim echo in the sepulchral chuckle of Horn and Warting when they discover that Anckarström is apparently trysting with his own wife. Once again, there is little to laugh about and the final outcome of the laughter is tragedy. But how many other of Verdi's characters, before *Falstaff* that is, seem capable of any kind of laughter, even ironic?

Most striking of all is the variety of vocal types in this opera. The cast of Ballo is a large one, but it is remarkable not so much for its size as for its richness of characterization. The basses Horn and Warting, caricature-like though they may be, are not as two-dimensional as many an operatic conspirator. They have their individual reasons for desiring the death of Gustavus and, as has just been mentioned, they can laugh. The baritone Anckarström is far more fully modelled. His transformation from Gustavus' most faithful friend to his mortal enemy is as startling to him as it is to the conspirators he joins; after he has shot Gustavus he is full of remorse. His devastating aria "Eri tu" expresses not only fury, but injury, disappointment, and disillusion. Gustavus is not only an ardent tenor, but a charming one. This greater dimension of Gustavus is apparent if he is compared, say, with the Duke in Rigoletto.

Verdi had developed a full range of male vocal types as early as *Ernani* (1843) in which, as Julian Budden observes, "all three types—tenor, baritone and bass—are clearly marked off from one another, each with his own emotional properties and characteristic line." It took longer for Verdi to define his female vocal types quite so clearly. *Ballo in Maschera* may be considered the key work here. In this opera we have the prototype of the sparkling coloratura, the warm lyric soprano, and the mezzo soprano "with less poetry than the soprano but more power."

Oscar is quite a new type for Verdi, and his only trouser role. Although there are examples of female pageboys or young heroes among Verdi's Italian predecessors, such as Maffio Orsini in Donizetti's Lucrezia Borgia, Oscar's ancestress is more likely Urbain in Meyerbeer's Les Huguenots, (another Scribe libretto), for Orsini is a contralto while Urbain, like Oscar, is a high soprano. Oscar is an entirely public character, devoid of introspection. He sings only in rooms full of people (or at least with no fewer than four people on stage). His music teems with trills, leaps, staccato passages and is full of exhortations to shine. (Verdi marks brillante e leggiero, Allegro brillante, and brillantissimo at various points in Oscar's solo parts). But as a character Oscar seems only to reflect rather than generate light.

Amelia is more typical of Verdi's sopranos, though perhaps more mature. Dynley Hussey notes "she has at once a more heroic nature than the girlish Gilda or the pathetic Violetta, and more subtlety than the Leonora of *II trovatore.*" (Verdi had hoped that the soprano who had created Leonora, Rosina Penco, would also be the first Amelia, but this was not to be.) Guilt is Amelia's predominating emotion but she is capable of feeling courage mingled with fear, passion blended with reluctance, and undiluted maternal love.

Madame Arvidson is such a strongly profiled character and leaves such an enduring impression on us, it seems hardly possible that she appears in only one scene in the opera. But in this scene everyone else pales before her — certainly the frightened Amelia, and even the swaggering Gustavus. He may laugh and bluster after Madame Arvidson's prophecy, but no one on stage or in the audience shares his skepticism. The c-f# tritone so striking in Madame Arvidson's aria reappears in the opera at moments of imminent danger, making her presence felt even when she is not on stage.

Un Ballo in Maschera is the first opera in which Verdi developed three contrasting female types. In a few operas he did work with a pair of contrasting women: a more serious and more comic soprano in Un Giorno di Regno (1840), a heroine and a villainess in Nabucco (1842), a noblewoman and a peasant girl in *Luisa Miller* (1849), a young noblewoman and an older gypsy woman in *II Trovatore* (1853). But he did not again attempt to create as wide a spectrum of female voices as exists in *Ballo* until his last opera, *Falstaff*.

There was, nevertheless, another opera requiring three female parts that Verdi had been thinking about before he composed *Ballo*, indeed an opera that Verdi continued to think about for some four decades—*King Lear*. As early as 1850 Verdi had sketched a full plot outline for *Lear* which he sent to Salvatore Cammerano, author of the libretto of *Il Trovatore*. The cast was to include five principals (Lear, Cordelia, the fool, Edmond, and Edgar), two secondary female roles (Regan and Goneril) and two secondary bass roles (Kent and Gloucester).

Cammerano died in 1851, but the Lear project did not die in Verdi's mind. In 1853 he proposed the subject to Somma and for the extraordinarily long period of more than three years they worked together on the libretto. During this time although the cast of characters was altered and reduced, the idea of three female roles remained. But instead of the three daughters of Lear the roles were to be Cordelia, Goneril, and the fool who was to be set as a contralto. Verdi was very attracted to the role of the fool in Lear-"così originale e così profonda" as he described it to Somma. It is perhaps not too fanciful to suggest that the complex role of the fool splits into two simpler ones in Ballo: the lighter side becomes Oscar, always ready to amuse the people at court, and the darker side Madame Arvidson, who prophetically warns Gustavus, but whose warning is laughed at.

It was King Lear that Verdi had wanted to write for San Carlo rather than Gustave III. In a letter to Torelli dated April 22, 1856 he explained the cast he would need: "a really fine baritone for Lear; a leading soprano, not a dramatic soprano, but a singer of expressive quality for Cordelia; two good secondary performers; a very good contralto; a dramatic tenor with a good voice, for a less important role." The Lear project foundered, in part because Verdi could not get the cast he wanted. He had hoped for Marietta Piccolomini for the role of Cordelia and Giuseppina Brambilla for the role of the fool, but neither of these singers could be engaged for the 1857-58 season. Verdi declared to Torelli in October, 1857, "Re Lear is impossible: it would be a sure fiasco because no one-except [the baritone] Coletti-would be right for it."

Verdi never did compose a Re Lear, although he never quite abandoned the idea either. Instead, it served as a wellspring for him, fructifying a number of works—*Rigoletto* and *Simon Boccanegra*, with their tender father-daughter relationships, and most resplendent of all, *Un Ballo in Maschera*.



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continued on p. 61

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Profiles



JOHN CONKLIN



Kurt Herbert Adler, general director of the San Francisco Opera since 1953, conducts this season's performances of Un Ballo in Maschera. Born and educated in Vienna, he was conductor for the Max Reinhardt theaters at the age of 20 and was an assistant to Arturo Toscanini at the Salzburg festival. In 1938 he came to the United States, having conducted at the Vienna Volksoper and throughout Germany, Italy and Czechoslovakia. After five years with the Chicago Opera, he came to San Francisco Opera in 1943 as conductor and chorus master, making his debut with Cavalleria Rusticana. Maestro Adler has wielded his baton for such memorable performances here as Aida with Renata Tebaldi and Mario del Monaco in 1950, Madama Butterfly with Licia Albanese in 1953 and with Renata Scotto in 1974; Le Nozze di Figaro in 1958 and Così fan tutte in 1960. both with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf; La Traviata with Beverly Sills in 1973, and Il Trovatore with Miss Scotto in 1975. Additionally, he has conducted the NBC Standard Hour Symphony Broadcasts and the Los Angeles Philharmonic at Hollywood Bowl. He has recently collaborated with Luciano Pavarotti and Maria Chiara on recorded recital albums. Maestro Adler was the first cultural leader to be given San Francisco's St. Francis of Assisi Award in 1973. During 1976, he received the Berkeley Citation, the highest honor of the University of California at Berkeley, an honorary Doctor of Music degree from the University of San Francisco, and the honorary title of "Professor" from the Federal Government of Austria. This fall he was appointed to the opera section of the Music Advisory Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts.



Renowned stage director Sonja Frisell was born in England of Swedish-Canadian parents. Widely acclaimed for her staging of Simon Boccanegra with the San Francisco Opera in 1975, she is back for two other Verdi assignments. Aida and a new production of Un Ballo in Maschera. While attending the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, she joined an amateur theater group and took a course in acting based on the teachings of Stanislavsky. She became a student director for two years at the Glyndebourne Festival and spent a year studying with Carl Ebert in Berlin. In 1960 Miss Frisell received a grant to further her studies in Italy, where she has worked continuously ever since. Before joining the staff of La Scala in 1964, she was an assistant director at the Verona Arena summer festival and an aide to both Franco Enriquez and Margharita Wallmann. In 1975 she was appointed head stage director of La Scala. Miss Frisell's productions in opera have included Khovanshchina (1969) and Lucia di Lammermoor (1970) in Chicago and La Traviata and Lucia again in Toronto (1971). Recent successes have been stagings of Donizetti's La Favorita in Bregenz and the same composer's Don Pasquale for Festival Canada in Ottawa.



Stage designer John Conklin makes his San Francisco Opera debut with the new production of Un Ballo in Maschera, for which he created both sets and costumes. He previously designed highly acclaimed productions of Monteverdi's Orfeo (1972) and Britten's Death in Venice (1975) for Spring Opera Theater, and a Menotti double bill of The Old Maid and the Thief and The Medium for Western Opera Theater. A long time associate with the Santa Fe Opera, Conklin's credits there include Così fan tutte, Salome, and a critically praised set design for Giordano's Fedora this past summer. On Broadway, Conklin has been responsible for the stage sets of the 1975 revival of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, the New York Shakespeare Festival production of Richard III and The Au Pair Man at Lincoln Center. For the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis he designed another production of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, in addition to Stoppard's Rosenkranz and Guildenstern are Dead and O'Neill's A Moon for the Misbegotten. His designs were featured at the new Hartford Stage Company, which opened with James Agee's All the Way Home. In San Francisco Conklin's work can currently be seen in the costumes for the American Conservatory Theatre production of Julius Caesar. The designer has also created sets for productions at the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, the Arena Theatre in Washington, the Joffrey Ballet and the Royal Ballet of London.

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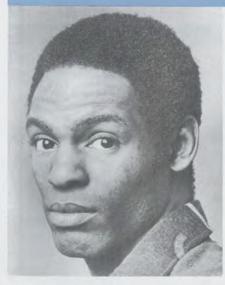
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RAEL LAMB



Rael Lamb makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season as ballet master and choreographer for Aida and Un Ballo in Maschera. Previous assignments in opera include the American premiere of Sessions' Montezuma with the Boston Opera Company in 1976 and Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors. Founder and director of the Bostonbased Dance for the New World (1974-1977), Lamb has worked with Twyla Tharp and the Rod Rodgers Dance Company, among others. For Dance Spectrum in San Francisco he presented his rapturously received Butterfly this past spring, which was repeated in the Summer Dance series. In August, Lamb performed in his own Mudbird, a tribute to the late Martin Luther King, Jr. An alumnus of the North Carolina School of the Arts and Juilliard, Lamb has received scholarships and choreographic grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Detroit Urban League, Alvin Ailey, Maurice Béjart, the Martha Graham School and American Ballet Theatre, among others. Lamb has several film credits to his name and has staged revues, fashion shows and the first Black Arts festival in North Carolina. The young choreographer is already well known for his master classes and works widely with young people in hospitals, public schools and city sponsored recreational projects.

KATIA RICCIARELLI



Italian soprano Katia Ricciarelli returns to the San Francisco Opera after her 1974 debut in the title role of Verdi's Luisa Miller to sing Amelia in Un Ballo in Maschera, a role she performed last season with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, also opposite José Carreras. Since winning the coveted Giuseppe Verdi Award in Parma in 1970, Miss Ricciarelli has skyrocketed to the top of the international opera scene. In the short space of two years, from 1972 to 1974, she debuted in Chicago in Verdi's I Due Foscari, at La Scala as Suor Angelica, in Vienna as Liù, in Hamburg, London and Paris as Mimi and as Luisa Miller in San Francisco. In addition to the standard repertoire roles. Miss Ricciarelli sings the soprano leads in such rarely heard works as Bellini's La Straniera and Il Pirata, Donizetti's Maria di Rohan and Catarina Cornaro, Rossini's Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra and L'Assedio di Corinto, and Verdi's II Corsaro and Giovanna d'Arco. During the 1976-77 season the soprano performed the Verdi Requiem in Washington with Claudio Abbado on La Scala's tour of the United States. Subsequently she was heard in Florence as Mathilde in William Tell with Riccardo Muti conducting. She participated in a highly successful tour of Anna Bolena and returned to the United States in the spring for Mimi at the Metropolitan Opera and as soprano soloist in the Verdi Requiem with the San Francisco Symphony. This summer Miss Ricciarelli appeared in Hamburg, opposite Placido Domingo, as Desdemona in Otello, a role she will repeat at the Metropolitan Opera early next year. She just completed a series of performances as Elisabetta in Don Carlos at Covent Garden with tenor Carreras.

Photo by William Gunderson

KATHLEEN BATTLE



Making her San Francisco Opera debut, young American lyric soprano Kathleen Battle sings Oscar in Un Ballo in Maschera. She previously portrayed the role with the Frankfurt Opera. Other recent engagements include Pamina in The Magic Flute with the Michigan Opera Theater, and Virtue in The Coronation of Poppea with the Houston Grand Opera. In September, 1976, she received high critical praise in her first appearance with the New York City Opera as Susanna in The Marriage of Figaro. A winner of many awards, Miss Battle is a seasoned concert artist. She has sung often with James Levine at Chicago's Ravinia festival and last year debuted with the New York Philharmonic in Mahler's 8th Symphony under his baton. She first appeared with Maestro Thomas Schippers in 1972 when he invited her to Spoleto to sing Brahms' German Requiem. A native of southern Ohio, she has appeared at the Cincinnati May festival every year since 1973 and has sung many times with the Cincinnati Symphony. She has also been heard as Despina in Così fan tutte with the Cincinnati Opera. In 1975, Miss Battle sang the title role in Scott Joplin's Treemonisha, both on Broadway and at the Kennedy Center in Washington. Later this season she makes her Metropolitan Opera debut as the Shepherd in a new production of Tannhäuser.

PATRICIA PAYNE



New Zealand-born contralto Patricia Payne got her operatic start by winning the Sydney Sun Aria Competition in 1966. She first appeared at Covent Garden in the opening of the 1974-75 season as Schwertleite in Die Walküre, which also served as her debut role at Bayreuth this past summer. Now a member of the Royal Opera, she has appeared there as Mrs. Sedley in Peter Grimes, Grandmother Buryha in lenufa and the two roles which she sings in her American debut with the San Francisco Opera, Erda in Das Rheingold and Ulrica in Un Ballo in Maschera, Ulrica has become a signature role for Miss Payne. It will mark her debut at La Scala this coming winter, and later at the Hamburg Staatsoper and the Metropolitan Opera. She will record the role with Colin Davis next summer. Miss Pavne recently performed in Barcelona as La Cieca in Ponchielli's La Gioconda, Fricka in Die Walküre and Néris in Cherubini's Médée opposite Montserrat Caballé. At the opening of the 1976-77 Covent Garden season she was heard in each of the operas of the Ring cycle under Maestro Davis. Between her performances in Das Rheingold and her later appearances in Un Ballo in Maschera, Miss Payne has been released by the San Francisco Opera to record Beethoven's Missa Solemnis with Maestro Davis.





JOSÉ CARRERAS



One of the world's most exciting young tenors, José Carreras sings King Gustavus in Un Ballo in Maschera with the San Francisco Opera this season. Past performances with the Company include a memorable debut as Rodolfo in La Bohème in 1973, Pinkerton in Madama Butterfly in 1974 and Nemorino in L'Elisir d'Amore in 1975. Among the most sought-after artists on the international scene, Carreras has appeared at all of the major opera houses in Europe and the Western Hemisphere. He often sings with his Catalan compatriot, Montserrat Caballé, who was one of the first to recognize and encourage the tenor's talents. Recently they were heard together in Tosca at Covent Garden, Barcelona and Mannheim, Adriana Lecouvreur in Nice and Roberto Devereux in Aix-en-Provence. Within the last year Carreras performed in La Bohème at La Scala, Covent Garden and the Metropolitan Opera, the last on the occasion of Ileana Cotrubas' debut there as Mimi, in Karajan's successful production of Don Carlos in Salzburg and Un Ballo in Maschera with Katia Ricciarelli in Chicago. Future plans include an opening night Don Carlos at La Scala next month and premiere performances of the season in L'Elisir d'Amore and Tosca at the Metropolitan Opera in February. Carreras returns to Milan for La Forza del Destino with Miss Caballé under the baton of Zubin Mehta during the spring and to Salzburg for a world-wide telecast performance of Il Trovatore under von Karajan next summer.

YURI MAZUROK



Celebrated Russian baritone Yuri Mazurok makes his debut with an American opera company in the new San Francisco Opera production of Un Ballo in Maschera. He previously appeared as Renato at Covent Garden in November, 1975. He was first heard in this country when the Bolshoi Opera came to New York in July, 1975. A star of the Bolshoi since joining the Company in 1964, Mazurok's roles include the baritone leads in Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin and The Queen of Spades, Rimsky-Korsakov's Sadko, Prokofiev's War and Peace and October by Muraldi. Outside of the Russian repertoire he also sings Germont in La Traviata, which he performed at Aix-en-Provence in 1976, Rodrigo in Don Carlos and the title role of Il Barbiere di Siviglia. Mazurok, who had studied at the Moscow Conservatory, won several vocal awards before taking first prize from among 37 singers at the Montreal World's Fair in 1967. Now Mazurok sings regularly at London's Covent Garden and the Vienna Staatsoper. The government of the Soviet Union conferred on Mazurok the honorary title of Merited Artist of the Russian Federation.

ALDO BRAMANTE

JAMES COURTNEY



In his American debut season with the San Francisco Opera bass Aldo Bramante sings five roles: the Voice of the Oracle in Idomeneo, Fafner in Das Rheingold, the King in Aida, a Mandarin in Turandot and Samuele in Un Ballo in Maschera. After studying at the Milan Conservatory and La Scala's Centro Artisti Lirici, he won a television competition dedicated to Rossini in 1972 and participated in two televised concerts and a filmed version of the composer's L'Italiana in Algeri. In 1974 and 1975 he won vocal competitions in Lonigo, Treviso, Macerata and Legnano. He has sung in both opera and concert throughout Italy in such theaters as La Scala in Milan, and Teatro Donizetti in Bergamo, the Teatro Bibbiena in Mantua, the Teatro Comunale in Genoa and the Teatro Regio in Turin. Since 1972 he has been a regular guest at the Autunno Musicale in Como and in 1974 and 1975 he performed during the Settimana Musicale in Siena. For Italian television he took part in the filming of Pergolesi's La Serva Padrona. Recently he sang in Notte Tempo, an opera ballet dedicated to composer Silvano Bussotti, at the Teatro Lirico in Milan. At the Vienna festival he performed in Rossini's La Gazzetta, Paisiello's Il Barbiere di Siviglia and Haydn's Il Mondo della Luna. This summer he appeared in Verdi's I Masnadieri at the Montepulciano festival under Riccardo Chailly.

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.



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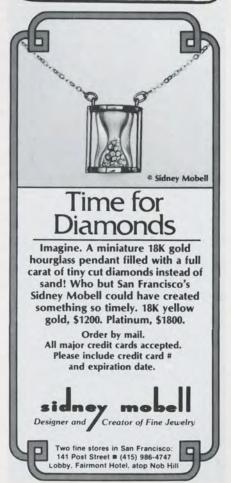
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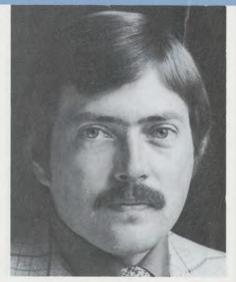
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LAWRENCE COOPER



Canadian baritone Lawrence Cooper was last heard in San Francisco as the Loudspeaker in the 1977 American premiere of Viktor Ullmann's The Emperor of Atlantis with Spring Opera Theater. A winner in the grand finals of the 1971 San Francisco Opera Auditions, he appeared with the Merola Opera Program and toured for three years with Western Opera Theater in such roles as Germont in La Traviata, Figaro in The Barber of Seville, Dandini in La Cenerentola and Belcore in The Elixir of Love. In 1972 he debuted with Spring Opera Theater in The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny and later that year appeared in the fall season productions of Tosca and The Visit of the Old Lady. In the summer of 1976 Cooper portrayed Lionel in the American premiere of Tchaikovsky's Joan of Arc with Reno Opera. Immediately following, he sang Magua in the world premiere of Henderson's The Last of the Mohicans in Wilmington, Delaware. He then toured with the Canadian Opera Company as Marcello in La Bohème and as Germont. He has just appeared with Harford Opera of Baltimore as Guglielmo in Così fan tutte under Eve Queler. With the San Francisco Opera this fall he sings Kuligin in Katya Kabanova, Donner in Das Rheingold, a Wigmaker in Ariadne auf Naxos, Silvano in Un Ballo in Maschera and Valentin in the student matinees and special popularpriced performances of Faust.

MICHAEL TALLEY



Young Texas-born tenor Michael Talley bows with the San Francisco Opera as the Messenger in Aida and a Judge in Un Ballo in Maschera. A winner of the St. Louis regional auditions of the San Francisco Opera, he joined the Merola Opera Program this past summer and sang Rodolfo in La Bohème at Stern Grove and Don Ottavio in Gazzaniga's Il Convitato di pietra at the Paul Masson Winery. He won the Il Cenacolo award for his performance at the 1977 grand finals of the San Francisco Opera auditions in August. Talley is currently completing a doctorate in vocal performance at Indiana University, where he studied with former Metropolitan Opera star Margaret Harshaw. At the university he had lead roles in Carmen, La Traviata, Idomeneo and Masked Ball. He has also been heard in I Pagliacci with the Kentucky Opera Association and in Madama Butterfly with Norfolk. Virginia Opera. As a soloist Talley has appeared with the Houston, Shreveport and Dallas Symphonies.

JOHN DAVIES



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.

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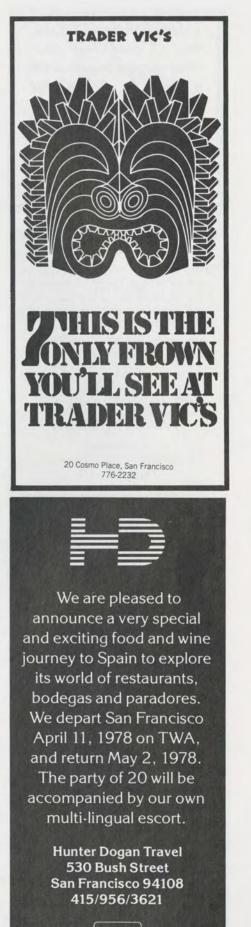
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Verdi and the Censors

by Allan Ulrich



Jose Carreras and Katia Ricciarelli at a rehearsal for the new production of Un Ballo in Maschera.

Without too feverish a quest among the annals of human achievement, one may find works like *Un Ballo in Maschera*, pieces incredibly assured in both minute detail and larger contour that grant not the tiniest hint to posterity of the travails surrounding their creation. Perhaps the seal of quality in the present case was most succinctly applied by Verdi's biographer, Carlo Gatti, when he declared that "from beginning to end in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, there is a swiftness, a sweep of musical discourse more varied than any of Verdi's preceding operas... it is a work of broad melodic 'breath,' every word sings, every phrase is part of the melodic line that runs unbroken from beginning to end." And any disciplined student of the New Criticism will ignore all extra-artistic



Photo by Robert Messick.

considerations and head right for his score and his local opera house to savor and perhaps to devour the pleasures that await him. Yet, there are certain artists who justly demand more from us; their utter professionalism, their refusal to theorize breeds a certain deductive curiosity in the listener. When the composer is a Verdi, a pioneer in his field, it becomes an obligation to search behind the notes. And when the composer is a pioneer whose destiny was as intimately bound up with that of his country as was Verdi's, the distinction between creator, creation and the arena of creativity grow hopelessly blurred.

Throughout the intense five-and-a-half decades of Verdi's career as opera composer, Un Ballo in Maschera remains



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Baritone Yuri Mazurok in rehearsal for the current production of Un Ballo in Maschera.

the extraordinary example of the extent to which outside events, with all their impersonality, may impinge upon the creative process. A lesser talent would surely have dissolved in the crucible of the times, but Verdi, seizing the challenge, was still capable of turning the project to artistic advantage. In doing so, moreover, he resorted to a considerable body of written documentation, correspondence and legal briefs, that provide us with a highly illuminating insight into his characteristic manner of working.

First, it is necessary to distinguish history from imagination. Gustavus III was 26, when, in 1772, he ascended the Swedish throne on the death of his father. Although he achieved some distinction as a warrior, his interests ran to the arts and to the occult. In this connection he was known to have frequently engaged the services of one Mme. Arfvedson, a famous Stockholm fortune-teller, whose curiosity was not restricted to the future. While he remained admired by the populace, he incurred the considerable wrath of the nobility by eliminating much of its privileged status at no expense to himself. Two noblemen, the Counts Warting and Horn, instigated a conspiracy against the monarch, and an unbalanced ex-officer, one Captain Ankarstroem, was elected to carry out the assassination at a masked ball in 1792, at the Royal Opera House. If there had been a real Mrs. Ankarstroem, it is doubtful whether she would have had a personal relationship with the homosexual Gustavus, though, given the monarch's predilections, a real-life figure on the order of Oscar was not exactly implausible.

How acute was Verdi's knowledge of Scandinavian history remains a mystery. He found the story in a pre-existing libretto, Gustave III ou Le bal masqué, written by Scribe for Auber's opera twenty-five years earlier. Now Verdi had contracted with the San Carlo Theatre in Naples for a new opera to be produced in January 1858 and time was running out. He approached the famous Venetian playwright Antonio Somma and asked him to translate the libretto into Italian and to alter the structure from five acts to three. (Somma had been Verdi's choice for librettist for the projected King Lear, abandoned in its embryonic stage when the soprano the composer desired for Cordelia was contracted elsewhere.)

The pair set to work scarcely three months before the proposed production date. For the most part, Verdi approved of Somma's versification of the first two acts, although he cautions his collaborator to tighten up the dramatic situation in the fortune-teller's hut, especially in Gustav's reaction to the dire prophecy.

Meanwhile, the composer had taken a wise precaution: to Vincenzo Torelli, the Associate Secretary of the San Carlo, Verdi had sent a prose synopsis of the opera. The depiction of a ruling monarch's murder might just try the limit of the Neapolitan censor. To forestall censorship, Verdi and Somma had



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Kathleen Battle, who sings Oscar, with Kurt Herbert Adler.

discussed moving the action back to the twelfth century, but Verdi decided against the idea:

"... I really think the twelfth century is a little too remote for our Gustav. It is such a raw and brutal period, especially in those countries, that it seems a serious contradiction to use it as a setting for characters conceived in the French style as Gustav and Oscar are, and for such a splendid drama based on customs nearer our own time. We shall have to find some great prince or duke, a rogue whether of the North or not,



Photo by Robert Messick.

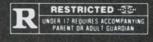
who has seen something of the world and caught something of the court of Louis XIV."

Anticipating problems, the collaborators transferred the action from eighteenth-century Sweden to seventeenthcentury Stetin in Pomerania, reduced Gustav from king to duke and altered the title of the libretto from *Gustave III* to *La vendetta in domino*. Without hearing from Torelli, Verdi forwarded the completed libretto and heard nothing for ten days. And there the matter was to rest until Verdi departed his

EQUUS

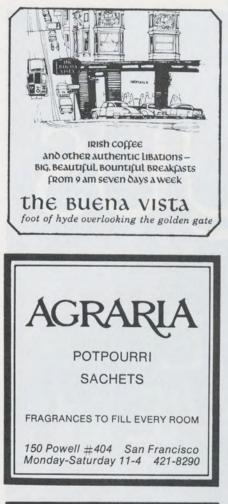
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Sonja Frisell staging a scene with Jose Carreras.

Photo by Robert Messick.







Conductor Kurt Herbert Adler.

Photo by Robert Messick.

home in Busseto, and arrived in Naples in early January, with his common-law wife, Giuseppina Strepponi, and beloved dog Lulu in tow.

Only now was Verdi apprised of what his instincts had told him: with or without changes in century and locale, the opera was forbidden to proceed. From the censor's point of view, there was sufficient justification for the ban. In the previous year, the reigning king had been attacked by one of his own soldiers. And then there was Felice Orsini's attack on Napoléon III; on January 14, Orsini, a released political prisoner attempted to murder the French ruler by throwing a bomb under his carriage, bound, ironically, for the Paris Opéra. Although Napoléon emerged unscathed, several in his party were killed. Italy could not afford to lose a powerful ally like Napoléon, especially after the statesman Count Camillo Cavour had manoeuvred a rather ingenious defense pact with France against Austria.

But the censor was a rather wily fellow, and instead of banning the opera outright, he ordered alterations to which Verdi could not possibly accede. Verdi described them to Somma in a letter dated February 7, and, to anyone who knows and understands the work, they must be met with an admixture of laughter and tears:

"1. Change the hero into an ordinary gentleman, with no suggestion of sovereignty.

2. Change the wife into a sister.

3. Alter the scene with the fortuneteller, and put it back to a time when people believed in such things.

4. No ball.

5. The murder to be off-stage.

6. Omit the scene of the drawing of the name."

But this was not to be the end of a gruesome situation. If Verdi was depressed about the possible withdrawal of his opera, the San Carlo management, with an eye on the box office for a Verdi première, hastily prepared a different libretto for the censor, one





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Baritone Yuri Mazurok and soprano Katia Ricciarelli during a pause in rehearsals.

Adelia degli Adimari, set, for no discernible reason, in fourteenth-century Florence. The characters became leaders of the Guelph and Ghibelline factions. There was even less sense in changing Amelia's name to Adelia and Oscar's to Arpini.

That did it. Verdi refused to accept these grotesque alterations, broke his contract and withdrew the opera. The San Carlo threatened to sue the composer, while Verdi and his lawyer, in turn, issued a counterclaim. The case was to be settled out of court, with Verdi free to offer the première to another company.

The brief offered to the Naples court is something more than a dry legalistic record; it expresses, in graphic form, the clear-headed logic of Verdi's artistic intentions:

"1) If through the terms of the contract, I had expected to make the choice of subject and poet, what right does the management have to change the former, and to make use of a poet, who, precisely because he is unknown, is unable to share my confidences? . . . The title *Una vendetta in domino* offers to the mind

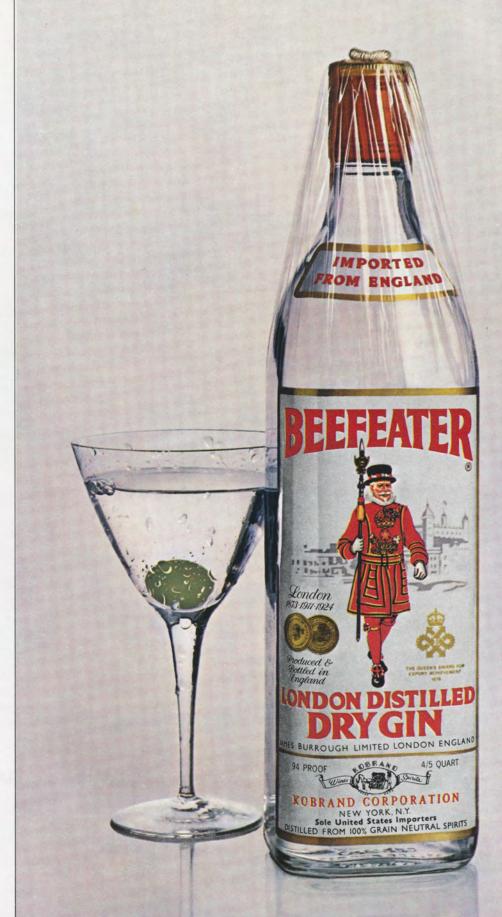
College Opera Association

The College Opera Association, a subsidiary of the San Francisco Opera Guild, is a group of students representing more than twenty college and university campuses in the Bay Area, from Sonoma State in the north to the University of the Pacific in the east to the University of California at Santa Cruz in the south. Through its activities, the College Opera Association seeks to stimulate greater interest in opera among college students.

So that they may more fully appreciate what is involved in the mounting of an opera production, the students are given the opportunity of visiting backstage at the War Memorial Opera House, visiting the set shops, attending demonstrations by wig and makeup artists, and having discussions with musicologists, critics, directors, conductors and performers. The students are able to meet in an informal atmosphere not only with young singers just embarking on their careers, but also with some of the international stars who appear with the San Francisco Opera each year. The most exciting activity of the College Opera Association each year is the possibility of attending various rehearsals of a production, from its inception to the final dress rehearsal.

Thanks to a generous subsidy from the San Francisco Opera Guild, College Opera Association students are also able to purchase tickets to the San Francisco Opera at substantially reduced prices.

The College Opera Association always welcomes new members, whether students from schools already represented, or students from new campuses. For further information please write to lack Palmtag, College Opera Association, San Francisco Opera Guild, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, California 94102.



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Kathleen Battle preparing to sing Oscar.

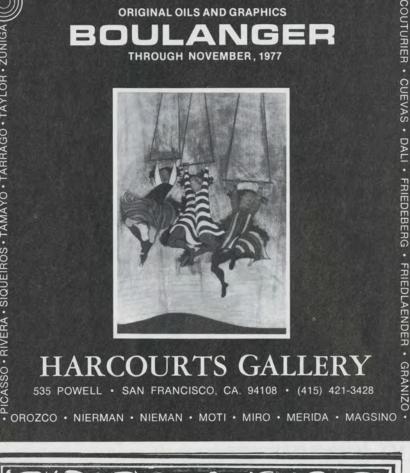
of the spectator the promise of a great tragic vendetta that will be satisfied; Adelia degli Adimari expresses nothing.

2) The libretto of this Adelia has omitted the name of the poet. Praised be the Management who have not wished to involve anyone in this artistic assassination!

3) We shall see what inconveniences are occasioned by the change of characters, and particularly that of the Duke into the head of a political party and that of the page into one of his followers.

4) The absence of the masquers completely destroys many important scenes . . .

5) These changes of time and place remove the characters from the drama and from the music. The coloring, the very basis of the musical framework becomes necessarily false ... it is well known that all periods of history have their particular character: the men who lived in the year 400 had both clothing and feelings which were very different from those of the year 800; nor do people of the north resemble those of the south. Thus, the musical characters of these folk will also be totally different; for example, take a Nea-



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Mezzo-soprano Patricia Payne goes over the Ballo score with Maestro Adler.

politan song, put it with a Swedish song, and notice the difference. A master can and should be aware of these distinctions; otherwise, he will never rise above the crowd, never create anything that is not mediocre, whatever his artistic intentions might have been . . . "

Verdi follows this almost manifesto-like opening with very detailed examples of the butcheries to be found in the altered libretto. Throughout one observes simple but eminently sensible comments about how characters act within a drama. He finds it necessary to chastise the debased diction now issuing from the mouth of Gustav. He observes that his protagonist now arrives in the fortune-teller's hut disguised as a hunter and with some condescension evident points out that the undulating song he composed for the feigned sailor will sound more than slightly ridiculous on any other character's lips.

He concludes the brief:

"There are a multitude of other things which might be said in this case; but even these few observations should suffice to prove that my drama has been totally mutilated and therefore it is impossible that the music might obtain the effect that I had imagined for it. The Vendetta in domino consists of 884 verses, of which 297 are altered in Adelia, besides many additions and a great many omissions. Moreover what remains of my work as revised?

The title? No. The poet? No. The period? No. The characters? No. The situations? No. The drawing of lots? No. The festival ball? No."

Verdi was released from his obligations to the San Carlo, and even before the decision, he had offered the opera to Vincenzo Jacovacci, the impresario of the Teatro Apollo in Rome. Yet, here again, he faced another censor, that set up by the Vatican.

There were to be changes, notably in locale. The papal censor demanded

that the action be transported to some non-European country and Verdi and Somma hit upon America during the Puritan period, and Verdi notified his collaborator in August 1858:

"The lines and expressions deleted by the censor are numerous, but it might have been worse. In any case, it is better like this, since now we know how to proceed, what we can leave in and what must go. Also a great many lines would have had to be changed, since the king is now only a governor. Don't worry about the gallows in Act II, I'll try to obtain permission for it."

Aside from Gustav's metamorphosis into Richard, or Riccardo, of Norwich, Ankarstroem became Renato, the Governor's secretary of inexplicable Creole origins; Arfvedson became Ulrica and the two conspirators were altered to Samuel and Tom, gentlemen whose continual unison singing is emblematic of the lack of distinction in their personalities. Slight changes are effected in Amelia; only Oscar survives whole, untransformed from Verdi's original intentions.

It will always remain something of a mystery why Verdi assented to the Papally ordered changes and even worked hard at integrating them into the score. Some hint is provided by a letter to a friend in which he laments the sacrifices to be endured in the theatrical life. Certainly, in the feeling of studied elegance surrounding his protagonist, the composer seems to have adhered to his earliest design.

Fortunately the current San Francisco production banishes, once and for all (one hopes), the colonial American setting that has prevailed in the world's opera houses for the past 120 years. The curtain will rise on a very special Sweden, a nation not immune to the philosophic insights and cultural *modes de vie* practiced to the south. And perhaps, now, we, too, will find ourselves capable of exclaiming, as did the première audience on that February night in Rome 1859: "Viva Verdi."

One might even add: "per sempre."



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From All Over the Country

Again this year the entire San Francisco Opera repertoire is being broadcast live on Friday evenings of the season over radio station KKHI in San Francisco and in Chicago, Los Angeles, Seattle, San Diego, Portland, Sacramento and Fresno. These quadraphonic broadcasts are made possible through much appreciated help from Chevron, U.S.A., Inc. and the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California.

In addition, this year for the first time the San Francisco Opera is being heard throughout the United States over the approximately 150 stations of National Public Radio, with the aid of funds from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Each opera is heard live-on-tape from three-to-four weeks after its actual performance. The response has been tremendous and thousands of letters have been received by the San Francisco Opera praising the broadcasts, the performances and the quality of the sound reproduction. From these letters, broadcast producer Marilyn Mercur has culled a sampling which is printed herewith:

The final notes of ADRIANA LECOUV-REUR are still in my ear and perhaps my eyes are not quite dry—thank you so much for such beauty. I have seldom been so moved by an opera performance.

I have heard a lot about the San Francisco Opera but never had the opportunity to hear the company. I am very impressed.

Thank you for this beautiful Sunday afternoon.

Bruce C. Boyce Haddonfield, N.J. 08033

This is in response to your request for comments from the radio audience regarding the San Francisco Opera broadcasts. I have just heard the broadcast of Adriana Lecouvreur. In a word —MATCHLESS! I do not think I have heard a broadcast before which was flawless—the Met, the Chicago Opera are all fine, but this one—wow! Aside from the performance itself, which I have been referring to so far, I find the commentary and synopses crisp and highly informative. The interviews during the intermission are excellent.

Thank you for making this series available to this opera lover—ON TO TELE-VISION!

Joseph Steffen Kansas City, MO 64131

I want to offer my thanks to all concerned for the fine broadcast of Adriana Lecouvreur I heard on the radio here in Morristown, New Jersey this evening coming over station WNYC-FM, New York.

I would also like to extend a word of praise to the audience attending this performance of *Adriana*. It marks the first time in many years that I have been able to actually hear the closing moments of an opera without the in-



trusion of applause as the final notes faded and the curtain fell.

BRAVO to the audience and to all concerned for a great evening of opera. Vince Butler

Morristown, N.J. 07960

We are sending you this letter to express our appreciation to you for broadcasting the Friday night performances of the S.F. Opera. We thoroughly enjoy these broadcasts and listen to them as often as we possibly can. The fact that we are also regular subscribers to the Opera does not detract from our desire to listen to the performances a second time over the radio.

You might be interested to know that I am a share-holder of Standard Oil of California (as custodian for my daughter). In that role I thoroughly approve of these broadcasts too—i.e., of my company's sponsorship thereof. I have in the past written directly to them to advise them of my approval; I trust this letter will serve the same function this year.

(Mr. and Mrs.) George R. Offen Woodside, California 94062

Thank for for your splendid radio broadcast of *Aida*.

I have attended many presentations of *Aida* at the Met and elsewhere, going clear back to 1908, and I do not recall a better tonal presentation than yours. I am old and more or less "house-bound," and such a musical feast is tonic indeed.

J. E. Child Long Beach, CA 90806 TE PENTHOUSE ALER A The Penthouse Galleria is a small penthous shop that is a small penthouse, And, like most penthouses,

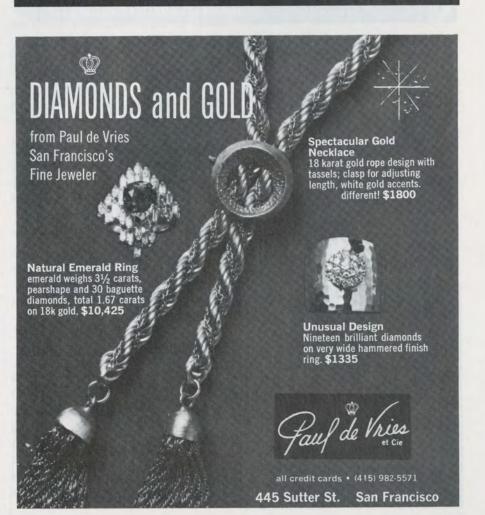
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The interesting thing is, The Penthouse Galleria has the feel of someone's home. There are kitchen accessories in the kitchen, dinner settings in the dining room, <u>objects</u> <u>d'art</u>, and furniture in the living room, and a boutique in the bedroom.

New York has quite a few shops like The Penthouse Galleria, and now San Francisco has one.

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91



About 2 weeks ago for the first time your opera broadcasts were presented in Salt Lake on radio station KUER. Of course the first opera was *A. Lecouvreur* and in my opinion it was very outstanding in every respect. The sound was very good and seemed so much better than the Metropolitan broadcast sound. It's great to hear your opera co. on radio and we do appreciate those that make this possible.

In about 6 months Salt Lake is going to have a new theatre for Ballet and opera, why don't you bring your company to Salt Lake City?

Thanks for the broadcasts,

Ray Emerson

Salt Lake City, Utah 84109

I can't begin to tell you how much I enjoy your Friday night broadcasts of San Francisco Opera—they are so excellent and come to me perfectly over FM station KFSD, San Diego. I hate to say this, but the sound is vastly superior to the Metropolitan broadcasts —it's almost as good as being there but not quite. I am enclosing a small check as a token of thanks for the pleasure of hearing these great performances.

Dorothy H. Quinn La Jolla, CA 92037

I have thoroughly enjoyed the opera broadcasts of San Francisco performances over our local station, WGTE-FM in Toledo.

I especially enjoy the rarer operas one doesn't often have a chance to hear, such as "Katya Kabanova," which was a magnificent experience.

And the "Rheingold" this week was thrilling.

Frank Baldanza Bowling Green, Ohio 43402

We are season ticket holders for the Saturday night series (all ten operas) and we find that listening to the Friday night broadcasts adds considerably to our enjoyment of the San Francisco Opera season. Also, as an electronic engineer, I can appreciate the extra effort and expense required to bring the sound to the broadcast transmitter with wide-band width, high-fidelity lines and equipment. Thank you for the pleasure we receive, and please thank the sponsors and those persons and organizations who cooperate in producing the broadcasts.

Robert C. and Ursula E. Morwood Redwood City, California 94061

At last the Met has *absolutely* nothing over us in S.F. I have listened to the Met Opera broadcasts for 30 years and am so proud we at least can do the same for people on the West Coast to let them hear the glorious performances of the S.F. Opera.

Anne Anderson San Francisco, CA

I have been listening to opera with love for years but never have I heard anything so beautiful as today's dramatic broadcast. It doesn't seem possible that human beings could produce such beauty—the marvelous voices and acting and orchestra—the beautiful harp. It came too at a time when I truly needed it—my husband in the hospital and me sitting here alone.

Thank you, thank you!

Nina Blood

El Paso, Texas 79905

P.S. If anyone thinks the great operatic voices are gone with those that we old people are familiar with, let this be a lesson to them!

I am an avid listener of the broadcasts from the SFO over National Public Radio, and since you ask for comments at the end of the broadcasts, I couldn't resist expressing my thanks and congratulations.

As a former Bay Area resident, I, along with a lot of others, left my heart in San Francisco, but not on the "little cable cars that climb etc." (I once left a bag with a twelve dollar necktie from Roos & Atkins on a little cable car, but never mind that.) I left my heart in the first row (left section) of the balcony of the War Memorial Opera House. That's where I sat for dozens of wonderful performances not so many years ago, and now I can sit at home and pretend that I'm really listening to KKHI. Take my word for it, it's a grand feeling, and when the performance is over, you don't even have to fight the traffic getting out of the parking lot. Nothing can substitute for a live (even on tape) performance, and nothing can quite substitute for the SFO. Thomas I. Clark

Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Last evening I heard the first of the 1977 opera broadcasts from WOUB-FM, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, and I felt I should write a note to convey something of the great pleasure this experience gave me.

As a longtime opera addict, I have writhed in envy for years when I read about the performances in San Francisco. It seemed almost too good to be true when I learned that the entire 1977 repertory was scheduled for radio broadcast by an accessible station. This is good luck indeed, and I am looking forward to the rest of the programs.

It was a particular pleasure to hear Renata Scotto in the new role of Adriana Lecouvreur, which was such a contrast to her magnificent Norma I heard this past summer in Cincinnati's Music Hall. It also was a thrill for me to hear, for the first time, the superb voice of Elena Obraztsova.

With gratitude,

Richard A. Suter Parkersburg, West Virginia 26101

We have been thoroughly enjoying the magnificent broadcasts from the S.F. Opera this Fall and certainly hope they will continue in future seasons. Not only the interesting repertoire, but the calibre of the productions in general, the outstanding voices and excellent orchestra, makes each Friday evening a special occasion—many thanks.

Laila Storch Seattle, WA 98105



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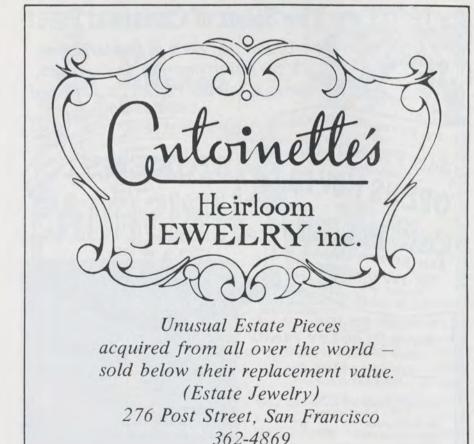
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Bravos, Bouquets and Thanks for those wonderful Friday night Broadcasts of the San Francisco Opera. And what a joy to share in the tribute to Leontyne Price. To state my thanks poetically:

Attention, St. Peter! Please reserve the choicest seats In your Kingdom vast, For those beautiful people who sponsor The Opera Broadcasts. Esther M. Olson San Francisco, CA 94123

Just a note of deep appreciation for the "Live" opera broadcasts. I have no way of being there in person, and this is next best. It is a thrill to be able to listen to the lovely operas on my stereo on KKHI, F.M. And what a thrill tonight —to hear Leontyne Price, not only sing, but speak—her appreciation for the medal awarded her. What a lovely, gracious LADY! And what a voice!!

Please keep the broadcasts going always . . .

Thank you, thank you!! Ruth E. White Petaluma, CA 94952

I wish to tell you how much I enjoyed the broadcast of *Das Rheingold* which I heard on WUHY in Philadelphia this Sunday. It is great after reading so much in *Opera News* to finally get to hear the San Francisco Opera on a regular basis. This performance of Wagner's work was truly an exciting experience to have. The singers were exceptionally good and the orchestra outstanding.

Curtis L. Kiefer Philadelphia, PA 19104

A note of appreciation for the wonderful broadcasts coming to us from the San Francisco Opera.

Today's *Katya Kabanova* was a special treat, not only for the splendid production but for the opportunity to hear a seldom performed work in America. Congratulations on this gift to American Opera Lovers.

L. W. Wood Virginia Beach, VA 23454

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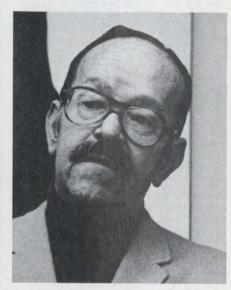
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t i V P

The Covers

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.

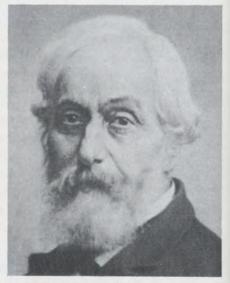
The works of art featured on the 1977 covers are not commissioned, but selected from among existing compositions by San Francisco Opera's Director of Public Relations, Herbert Scholder,



Turandot:

Ralph DuCasse (1916-

The Pure One (1969), Oakland Museum Leading West Coast painter Ralph Du-Casse, a member of the Mills College faculty since 1958, has been teaching in the Bay Area since 1947. A native of Kentucky, he holds a M.A. in painting from the University of California at Berkeley and an M.F.A. in ceramics from the California College of Arts and Crafts. Extensively exhibited in this country and abroad, DuCasse was the only West Coast painter represented in the 1961 international inaugural exhibition at New York's Guggenheim Museum. A 20-year retrospective of his works was shown at the de Young Museum in 1967 and a 30-year retrospective at Mills College this year. The cover painting, described by the artist as "one of a kind," is an acrylic on raw canvas.



I Puritani:

Domenico Tojetti (1806-1892), Ophelia (1878), Oakland Museum Roman-born Domenico Tojetti painted in the style of the Vatican court. He was made Marguis of the Church for works commissioned by Popes Gregory XVI and Pius IX and was decorated by the King of Naples and King Ludwig of Bavaria. When Tojetti moved to San Francisco in 1871, he continued to paint highly popular portraits, frescoes, religious art and large mythological and allegorical works (including "California" and "Progress of America") in an Italianate style. In 1959 an exhibition of Tojetti's painting was selected to celebrate the centennial of the University of San Francisco.

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.

The San Francisco Opera would like to extend its thanks for assisting in this

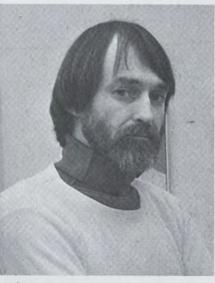
project to Harvey L. Jones, Deputy Curator of Art, the Oakland Museum; Ursula Gropper, Grapestake Gallery, San Francisco; Jacqueline Anhalt, Jacqueline Anhalt Gallery, Los Angeles; Betty Asher, Curatorial Assistant, Modern Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Ruth Braunstein, Braunstein/ Quay Gallery,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



Un Ballo in Maschera:

Manuel Neri (1931-), Untitled head (1974), Braunstein/Quay Gallery, San Francisco

A native Californian, Manuel Neri is one of the foremost figurative sculptors in the Bay Area. He has been exhibiting since 1957 in galleries, universities and museums throughout the West. Within the last year Neri was the subject of an important one-man retrospective at the Oakland Museum, which later travelled to the Utah Museum of Art, and was featured in the "Painting and Sculpture of California, The Modern Era" show at the San Francisco Museum of Art and the National Collection of Fine Art in Washington, D.C. He is best known for his plaster heads, busts and life-size figures which are built on armature, carved, and then painted.



Aida:

Llyn Foulkes (1934-), Blue Landscape (1963); Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Painter Llyn Foulkes now resides in Los Angeles and has taught there at UCLA and the Art Center. Exhibiting since 1959, he has won several awards, including the first prize Medal of France at the Fifth Biennale at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris. Foulkes has had oneman shows in Paris, New York and various places in California, and group shows throughout the United States and Europe. His works are represented in the collection of such museums as the Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts in Vienna, the Musée Beaubourg in Paris, the Chicago Art Institute and the Whitney, The Guggenheim and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

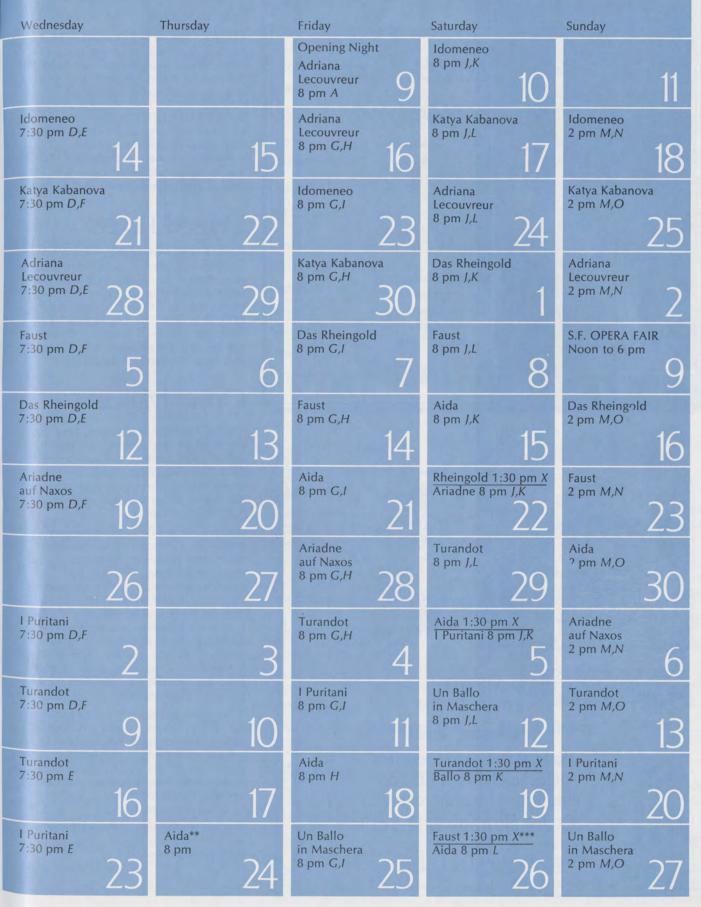


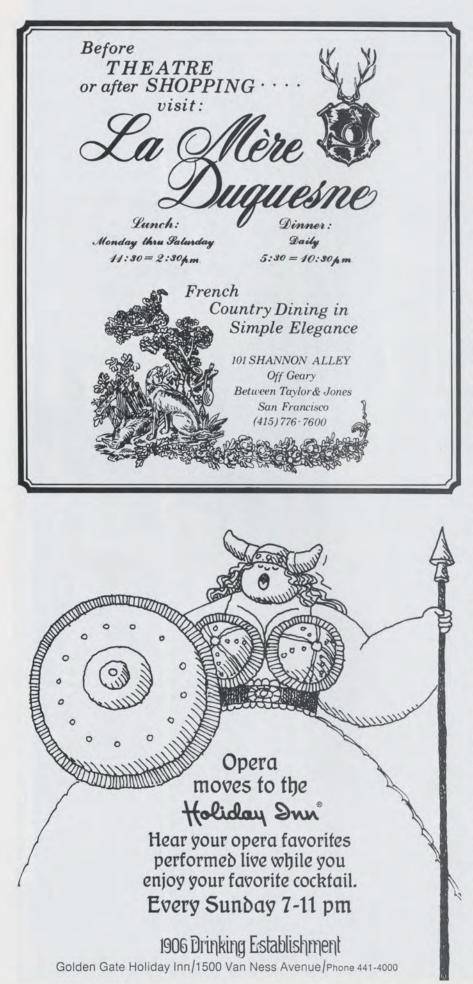


1977 San Francisco



Opera Calendar





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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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Open until Midnight



J. Nelson Pianos & Organs Nob Hill Restaurant (The Mark Hopkins) North China Restaurant

Omar Khayyam One World Travel Service L'Orangerie Organ Arts Ltd. Oronte's

The Penthouse (Hotel St. Francis) Penthouse Galleria

Reno Opera Guild Revlon Rooney's Rosebud's English Pub Ruby's Rums of Puerto Rico

Salmagundi La Scala Ristorante Seagram's VO Sebastiani Vineyards Sheraton at Fisherman's Wharf Shure® Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., S.F. Stead Motors Stewart's Treasure House **Pierre Stück** Superscope Trader Vic's United Artists U.S. Audio United States Steel University of California Committee for Arts & Lectures Victor's (Hotel St. Francis) Volvo The Waterfront Wells Fargo Bank White Elephant

Yosemite Natural History Association

Zenith

Wholly Cats



ELEBRATE WITHUS

Ten years ago from the ruins of an old canning factory emerged a most beautiful and unusual place to shop...The Cannery, named in honor of the people of San Francisco whose laughter and labor filled the original cannery walls. The laughter in The Cannery today is the laughter of shoppers, friends and lovers who come to spend an afternoon, an evening and often the entire day, for The Cannery has much to offer. Forty-five shops abound in the exceptional and treasured from around the world and here at home. Our restaurants are famous for culinary delights from sandwiches to an evening's repast.

This November the Cannery abounds with excitement as we celebrate our Tenth Anniversary Jubilee. Come celebrate with us. It's your anniversary too, for you helped make The Cannery happen, filling it with your laughter and joy. All you need to do is come. We'll do the rest. Our forty-five shops are extending their celebration values throughout November. Plus you'll be entertained by many of the most talented San Francisco street musicians and entertainers. Come celebrate with us and enjoy these rare Cannery-wide values during our Tenth Anniversary Jubilee through the month of November.



Box or menthol:



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

	tar mg./cig	nicotine mg./cig
Brand D	12	0.8
Brand D Menthol	11	0.8
Brand V Menthol	11	0.8
Brand V	11	0.7
Brand M	8	0.6
Brand M Menthol	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.

Less than 1 mg. tar.

Only

5 mg.

tar.

brings you the lighter

> 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 Aug. '77. Box: 1 mg. "tar", 0.1 mg. nicotine; 100 mm: 5 mg. "tar", 0.5 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.