

Fidelio

1978

Saturday, November 11, 1978 8:00 PM
Wednesday, November 15, 1978 7:30 PM
Saturday, November 18, 1978 2:00 PM
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Cover: A striking close-up study of the interlocking grill-work used in the *Fidelio* scenery. Photo by Ira Nowinski.

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'So Moving Was Her Dramatic Appeal'

Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient Sang Her First Leonore under Beethoven's Baton and Greatly Moved Richard Wagner with Her Portrayal

by Allan Ulrich



Pastel by E. B. Kietz

It's a great pity that the Hollywood musical biography has slipped from fashion, probably forever. The kind of movie I'm talking about involves myriad heart-throbbing incidents and tumultuous confrontations in the subject's life, lavish infusions of the best music of the period and several of those adorable meetings with the era's most illustrious celebrities. In these skeptical times, audiences tend to distrust such productions, feeling that they strain the limits of credibility virtually to the breaking point. If the

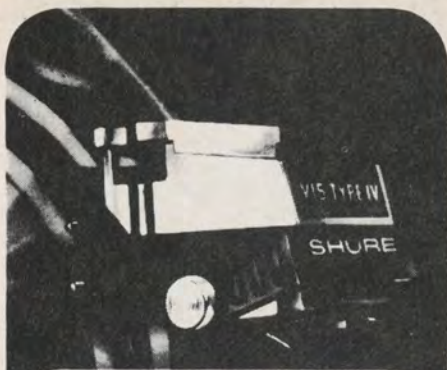
moguls had come up with even the unadorned facts concerning Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient, they might have found their efforts cynically hooted off the screen. Yet the scenario of that amazing lady's life seemed to write itself.

She was born, simply, Wilhelmine Schröder, in Hamburg on 6 December, 1804; with a family background that destined a career in the arts. Her father, Friedrich, was a professional singer of some standing, having been the first baritone to assume the title-

role of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in the German tongue. Her mother's credentials were even more impressive: she was no less than "the German Siddons," the celebrated tragedienne, Antoinette Sophie Bürger.

In some ways, that august lady appeared to have been the stereotypical stage mother, prepared to do almost anything to guarantee that her oldest child would stake out a permanent place in the limelight.

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sitory of ambitious little girls, the ballet. Mama must have started her early, for, by the age of five, she was already appearing in the corps in the company of her native city; and five years later, she was accepted into the children's ballet of the Imperial theater in Vienna.

If Schröder learned to move about a stage almost concurrently with learning to speak, her powers of projection were also honed early on. Travelling around Central Europe with a famous theatrical mother had its advantages, and, by the age of 16, she could be spotted in dramatic roles at Vienna's Burgtheater, and they were substantial parts, too, like Aricie in Schiller's version of Racine's *Phèdre* and Ophelia in *Hamlet*.

That domain conquered, she quickly moved to the operatic world, and debuted as Pamina in Vienna the very next season. Her theatrical training had been extensive, her statuesque form, blue eyes and luxuriant blond curls pleased everybody, while the purity of intonation and dramatic conviction displayed by the 17-year-old soprano did not escape critical ears.

It was in this world, with its labyrinthine intrigues and seething factions that she chose to remain. In quick succession, Schröder appeared in such forgotten gems as Joseph Weigl's *Schweizerfamilie* and André Grétry's *Raoul Barbe bleue*, as well as in classics like Weber's *Der Freischütz*, for which she created the part of Agathe, under the composer's direction in March 1822. Weber was one of the first to observe Schröder's passion for dramatic verisimilitude; her frequent practice of fracturing the musical line to re-inforce a theatrical point (it would later earn her the sobriquet "Queen of tears," conferred upon her by a staid London critic several years hence) seems to have been part of her approach from the beginning. While Berlioz would later be horrified to hear her inter-

perse spoken words in the score of *Fidelio*, yet it was this very same effect which so captivated the young Richard Wagner.

The crucial passage occurs in the Prison Scene of Act 2, just prior to the call of the off-stage trumpets. Holding her gun on the tyrant Pizarro, Leonore exclaims, "Noch einen Laut, und du bist tot!" Schröder's habit of uttering the final word in plain speech occasioned from Wagner one of his more provocative essays on the art of the performer.

Writing in 1871, he observed that logic dictates adherence to a composer's intentions, as displayed within the score. But, sometimes, there are compelling emotional reasons which, in performance, can override common practical sense and result in details which create a kind of super-logic of their own. This is what happened in Schröder's Leonore, and the audience was provided with, in Wagner's words, "as by a lightning-flash, a glimpse of the ideal and the real together. Plainly the ideal was for a moment unable to bear a certain load, and discharged it upon the other."

Wagner was not a man given to excessive compliments, especially if the object of his praises was unable to return the favor. He confessed that the soprano "had no voice, but when we heard her, we thought of neither voice nor singing, so moving was her dramatic appeal."

Her Leonore must have made a tremendous impression on the 13-year-old youth who succumbed to her impersonation one evening in Leipzig in 1829. She was now Schröder-Devrient, having married the actor Karl Devrient in 1823, a five-year liaison which left her with four children and a temporary broken heart. Since 1822, she had travelled throughout Germany, Austria and France, proselytizing for Beethoven's opera.

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V.O.

Some performances deserve
more than polite applause.

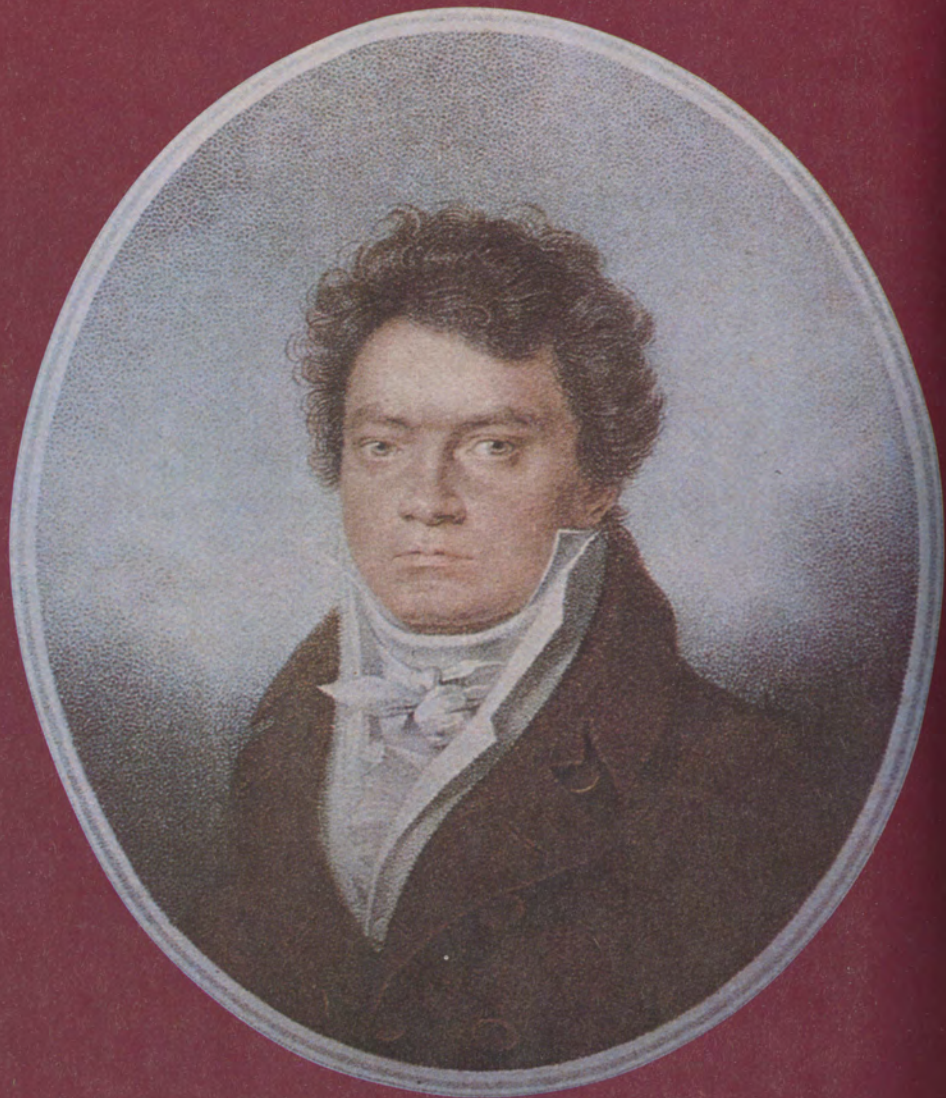
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Portrait of Beethoven by Blasius Höfel (after L. Letronne) engraved in 1814, the year of the *Fidelio* premiere.

but He Wrote It Twice

Beethoven Had Learned a Great Deal about the Theater between the Leonore of 1805 and the Fidelio of 1814

by Joseph Kerman

The first, thoroughly unsuccessful version of Beethoven's opera *Fidelio*, which he wrote in 1803-05 and wanted to call *Leonore*, is a rather different opera from the one we know today. *Fidelio* as we know it emerged only after a thoroughgoing revision by Beethoven in 1814. The original *Leonore* has recently been issued on record (EMI, Angel Series, SLS 999)*, and this should be of real value to those with more than a casual interest in Beethoven, as well as those with an interest in the opera itself.

From the composer's own standpoint, *Leonore* was one of the most important (and difficult) projects he had ever undertaken, or indeed would ever undertake; so the Beethoven buff wants to know what the piece was really like as he wrote it at the time—the more so since the time was a crucial one in Beethoven's artistic development. It was in 1803 that Beethoven exploded his way into his so-called second style period, or what is sometimes also called his "heroic phase." The key work here was the great symphony that he meant to dedicate to Napoleon, at one time his hero—the Third (*Eroica*) Symphony of 1803. This was soon followed by many more symphonies, sonatas, concertos, overtures and even string quartets which seem to march to the same heroic drum-beat. And the major project that Beethoven took up directly after the *Eroica* Symphony was an opera about a woman's act of heroism, the opera *Leonore*.

But for the opera-goer this is no doubt a secondary issue. He is likely to be less interested in what *Leonore*/1805 can tell us about Beethoven and his

*With Edda Moser, Helen Donath, Richard Cassilly, Karl Ridderbusch, Theo Adam et al., Leipzig Radio Chorus and Staatskapelle Dresden, conducted by Herbert Blomstedt (1977).

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"heroic" style than in how it can help us understand and appreciate *Fidelio*/1814 itself. And *Fidelio*, as its warmest friends will readily admit, is a piece that can use all the help it can get. It makes an unfailingly powerful and moving impression in the theater—else it would never have held the stage as invincibly as it has. But it is also a very imperfect piece of dramatic construction. Even after allowances are made for the peculiarity of operatic genres of the time, and for Beethoven's own highly individual approach to things, puzzles remain. Some of them can perhaps be explained by a look at the opera's history.

Up to now, this was not so easy to do, for *Leonore*/1805 was not an easy work to get to know. Conductors, students and other professionals could plough through the score, assuming they were within reach of a major library, and aficionados of that bloodless sport, reading about music, could consult a definitive essay on it by the distinguished English opera authority Winton Dean, published in *The Beethoven Reader* (Norton, 1970). Even for professionals, however, reading opera scores can be a deceptive business, and there is no doubt that this new EMI recording has greatly enhanced everybody's grasp of the entire *Leonore-Fidelio* situation.

What are the main differences between the 1805 and 1814 versions? First, speaking in the most general terms, everything in the new version is tighter, less verbose, and theatrically much more "effective." It was not only that Beethoven had learned a good deal about the theater, and had learned it the hard way. Also his basic musical style had become much more taut in the years between 1805 and 1814. The grandiose, leisurely rhetoric of the *Eroica* Symphony and the "Razumovsky" Quartets had given way to the

leaner, more concentrated language of the Seventh Symphony and the *Quartetto serioso* in F minor, Op. 95.

The most conspicuous victim of Beethoven's pruning shears was the original 14-minute overture, the one known today as the *Leonore No. 2* Overture. He replaced this with the entirely different *Fidelio* Overture, which takes less than half the time. But time was not the only reason for this particular substitution. *Leonore No. 2* is, in effect, a precocious symphonic poem which tells the story of the opera, up through the crisis in the dungeon, with its distant trumpet calls, and into the triumphant rescue at the very end. This killed the first act, and Beethoven saw that he needed something more neutral. The *Fidelio* Overture is brisk and expectant, a highly effective introduction to the drama rather than an unforgivable give-away of it.

Apart from this general process of tightening up, a second and rather more interesting set of revisions concerns the plot itself and the music provided for it. It is here that differences between the two versions begin to appear in basic conception, not simply in execution. The plot of *Fidelio*/1814, if it is not already indelibly etched upon the reader's mind, can be consulted elsewhere in this program book. I shall attempt to group the main differences from *Leonore*/1805 under four points.

The first two of these are quickly disposed of. Point 1 concerns the unfortunate subplot between Leonore-Fidelio and Marzelline. This ran on and on in 1805. Two whole musical numbers dealing with it were cut out in 1814, including a long duet in which Marzelline engages an extremely unwilling Fidelio in conversation about the baby they are going to have (!). Point 2 concerns the end of Act I, which in 1805 was given over to a second revenge

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Enemies onstage, friends off. Spas Wenkoff, who sings Florestan and Siegmund Nimsgern, Pizarro.

aria for Pizarro (he had sung his first one—the familiar “Ha! welch’ ein Augenblick!”—only about half an hour previously, at his first entrance). This was replaced by a second Prisoners’ Chorus, “Leb’ wohl, du warmes Sonnenlicht.” In the big, impressive Finale of this act, attention is now focused on the Prisoners not only at the beginning (as in 1805) but also, climactically, at the end.

Point 3 is rather more involved. Anyone who is reasonably familiar with *Fidelio*/1814 will be aware of the curious dead spot that comes after the great Quartet in which Leonore holds Pizarro at bay with her pistol, and the trumpet call signals the providen-

tial arrival of the Minister. What happens right after this point? Neither Rocco nor Pizarro says a word, but if the staging follows the directions in the 1814 libretto, Rocco is supposed to make an emphatic gesture of reassurance to Leonore before the two men leave with Jacquino and the soldiers. Whereupon Leonore and Florestan sing their famous duet “O namenlose Freude!” Pardonable behavior, certainly—they have not seen one another for two years — but also strangely oblivious to circumstances which are still, despite Rocco’s dumb-show, highly unstable. There is a casual air of *non sequitur* about people’s actions and responses here, and this is

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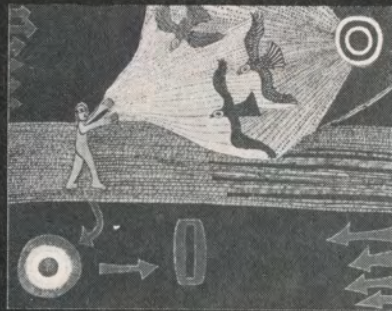
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Conductor Günther Wich in a rehearsal break with soprano Sheri Greenawald.

Photo by Robert Messick.

not relieved when, in the next scene, Rocco inexplicably produces Leonore and Florestan up in the courtyard and introduces them to the Minister. It may be small-minded, but one wonders exactly how they got there.

This particular puzzle is a result of some harsh cutting of the 1805 version. The original action was not only much more "logical" at this point, but also much more dramatic. The 1805 librettist, unwilling to rely on gestures, had Rocco when he leaves actually snatch away Leonore's pistol. That puts a very different complexion on the matter. Leonore, disarmed and as she thinks

deserted by Rocco, assumes that all is lost and collapses. There follows a longish, touching recitative (later cut) for the two principals, which prepares the love-duet; but significantly this 1805 love-duet is also a love-death, or something like one. It is a moment of ecstasy, heightened by the singers' suspicion that it is to be their last. And indeed, as soon as it is over, ominous cries of "Revenge!" are heard from an offstage chorus. Leonora and Florestan believe that their last moment has come, and say so.

What actually happens is that *without any curtain intervening* Rocco returns to

continued on p. 84



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Catherine Deneuve for Chanel

*“Fidelio
Was Actually
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*After 150
Performances
of Leonore
Gwyneth Jones
Continues
to Find
New Aspects
to the Part*

by Arthur Kaplan



photo by Ron Scherl.

Welsh soprano Gwyneth Jones made her first big success as Beethoven's *Fidelio* early in her career, has sung the opera all over the world and now returns to San Francisco, where she made her debut with Leonore in 1969, for additional performances.

In her first American *Tosca*, Gwyneth Jones took over the title role of Puccini's intricately woven melodrama at the October 29 Sunday matinee as if she were born in the production. Not only was she one of the most beautiful and convincing Roman divas ever to grace the War Memorial opera stage, but because of her intense conviction in the role she spurred the rest of the

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After her first San Francisco Opera Tosca last month, Gwyneth Jones takes a curtain call with Luciano Pavarotti.

portraits is a well conceived, finely delineated and sincerely projected impersonation.

Nor is the Welsh soprano unaccustomed to assuming lead roles when another soprano has been unable to sing a performance or a series of performances for reasons of scheduling or ill health. In the fall of 1964, at the very beginning of her career, the almost unknown young singer found herself suddenly thrust into the spotlight on not one, but two such occasions. The previous season, in her first year with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, she had been singing minor soprano roles, preferring Rhinemaidens and Walkyries to the more important mezzo roles for which she was originally contracted and which, as a newly-turned soprano, she no longer felt she wanted to sing. When she was offered only Santuzza for the 1964/65 season, she went to Covent Garden administra-

tor Joan Ingpen, now at the Metropolitan Opera, to ask for additional assignments. She was told that she could have one *Fidelio* performance which Régine Crespin was unable to sing and a second-cast Leonora in *Il Trovatore*. She jumped at the chance, although for the *Fidelio* she would have no rehearsals and in the *Trovatore* she was likely to be overshadowed by her predecessor, Leontyne Price, who was to premiere the new Visconti/Giulini production.

First, the *Fidelio*, for which she prepared by singing it just a few weeks earlier in English with the Welsh National Opera, was an astounding personal triumph. "It was the biggest success," recalls the now internationally celebrated singer. "In that performance at Covent Garden the audience tore up their programs and threw them down like confetti because they were so surprised. No one had ever heard of me

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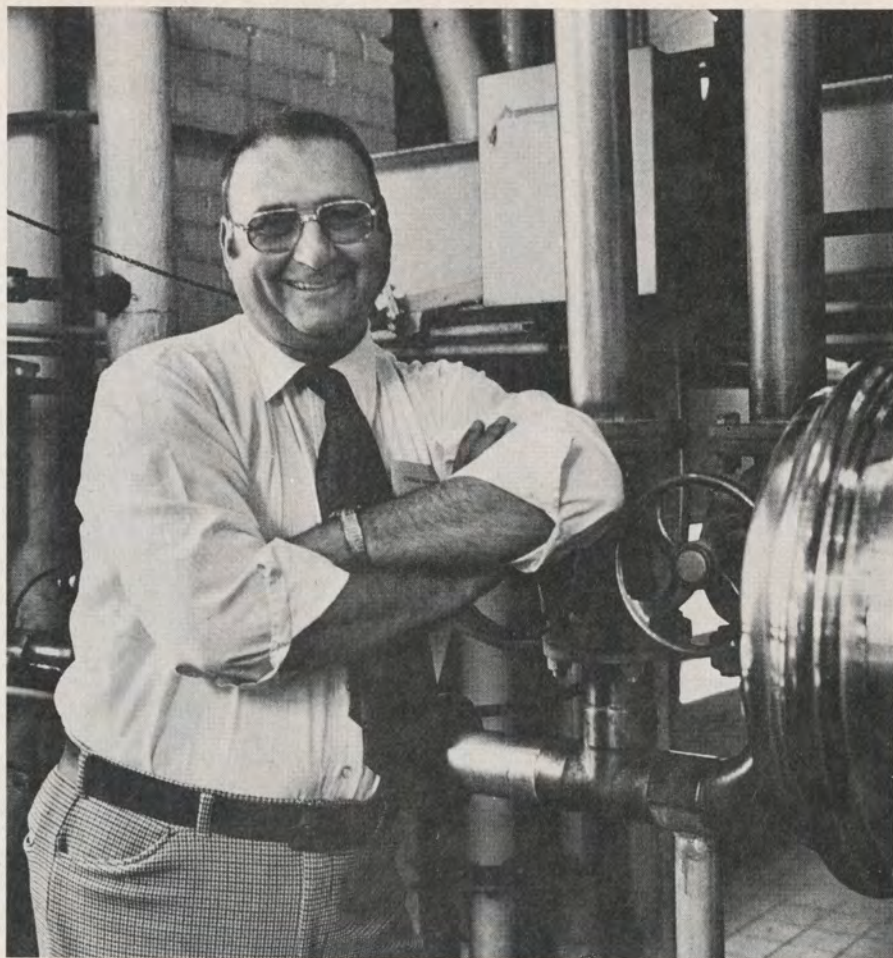
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before. From that performance I was immediately engaged at Munich, Vienna, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Tokyo and La Scala to do Leonore. In Vienna with Josef Krips conducting we had an enormous success and got 40 curtain calls. A couple of days later I made my debut in Berlin with Karl Böhm conducting, again with over 40 curtain calls. Then on to Munich where much the same thing happened. It was wild! *Fidelio* was actually the role with which I made my name at the beginning of my career."

If the *Fidelio* proved the initial flurry of excitement to surround the Jones name, *Trovatore* served to consolidate her reputation and prove that she was far from the proverbial flash in the pan. When Leontyne Price was forced to cancel the premiere *Trovatore* performances, Miss Jones, who had gone to Rome to study the role with Luigi Ricci, was ready to step in. Ricci, who had some inkling of the American soprano's indisposition, brought the young soprano to sing the role for Maestro Giulini, who happened to be in Rome, on the eve of her return to London. "When I arrived in London the next day," she relates, "Sir David Webster [then general administrator of Covent Garden] rang up and said, 'My God, you must have been born with a golden spoon in your mouth! Miss Price had to cancel and we didn't know what we were going to do. We phoned Giulini in Rome and he said, 'I would be very happy with Gwyneth for the premiere. She sang the role for me yesterday and I was very pleased.' And so I got the premiere."

Like the *Fidelio*, the *Trovatore* proved a huge success with the public, including this interviewer, whose initial disappointment upon learning that his famed American compatriot was not to sing was so amply compensated by a stunning production with a brilliant



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new soprano that he returned to see the opera twice more. In the best theatrical tradition, a star was born and the rest is operatic history.

Although she now seldom sings the *Trovatore* Leonora, the *Fidelio* Leonore continues to figure prominently in Miss Jones' repertoire. After some 150 performances of Beethoven's operatic masterpiece, it is still a favorite of hers and one which she still performs to great acclaim around the world, including the three major American opera houses. She first sang Leonore in this country at the San Francisco Opera in 1969 and has subsequently been heard in the role in Chicago and, most recently, at the Met in 1976. She has made two films of the opera—one with Karl Böhm and the Deutsche Oper of Berlin (there is also a recording with Dr. Böhm) and one with Leonard Bernstein, reproducing scenes from the ecstatically received Beethoven centenary performances in Vienna in 1970 at the Theater an der Wien, where the premiere of the opera (then called *Leonore*) was held in 1805.

"Having sung *Fidelio* in so many different productions with so many different casts, conductors and directors, one obviously grows in the role," states the soprano. "One never ceases to work on a role, to rethink things, to try to improve things, to get nearer to perfection, which, incidentally, I don't think is attainable. I've always loved *Fidelio* so very much. It really is the most wonderful opera. Dr. Böhm feels the same way about it; he also feels that it's one of the most special works in the repertoire.

"There are certain moments in the opera which are so wonderful, so wondrous. For instance, the first moment when Leonore sees Florestan in the dungeon—all the suffering and courage and true love of this marvelous woman comes through. And when he

says, 'Ach, Leonore, was hast du für mich getan?' and she answers quietly and movingly, 'Nichts, nichts, mein Florestan'—every time the tears just start rolling down. The other wonderful moment is the prayer at the end, 'O Gott! welch ein Augenblick!' This prayer is so universal, so fabulous in its message of freedom, especially if you're singing it in cities like Berlin where you are so close to the Iron Curtain."

Perhaps the most emotion-packed performance of them all for Miss Jones was a recent one in Prague. "Many of the chorus members there sing at Bayreuth, so I knew quite a lot of them. They were a little worried about my reception and said to me, 'Frau Jones, you're used to the Bayreuth public, which is so fantastic. [The final 1978 festival performance of *Götterdämmerung* with the soprano as Brünnhilde received over 80 curtain calls, which went on for more than an hour.] Here in Prague the public is much more restrained. There'll probably be only two or three curtain calls at the most tonight.' I told them not to worry, that if I sang *Fidelio* from the bottom of my heart, they needn't worry about the curtain calls. To top it all off, everybody else was singing in Czechoslovakian and I was singing in German, so it was quite tricky, particularly in the dialogue when I never knew quite when I had to come in. But the performance somehow took fire, as *Fidelio* always does, and at the end we had over 40 curtain calls and everybody was just streaming with tears. It was so moving. There was this tremendous love for and with the public because of the meaning of the piece. I felt myself giving even more than usual. You have such a tremendous message to bring. *That's* the most important thing about *Fidelio*; *that's* why I love the opera so much.

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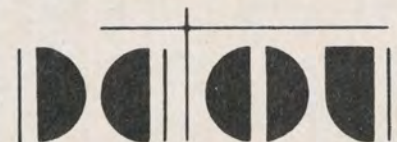
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"The opera really begins with Leonore's entrance. In the first act you have to work hard to make it superdimensional, if you know what I mean. It starts out so every day and mundane. But I think it's meant to be like that—the trivial little things of normal life out of which grows this tremendous meaning. Of course the meaning is already there, in part, in Act one—Pizarro's aria, the "Abscheulicher" and the wonderful Prisoners' Chorus. The second act, with its great feeling and intensity, almost plays itself. The music is so intense it just takes off. It's incredible."

In a sense Gwyneth Jones, who strongly believes in destiny, was destined to be a singer. Born in a small coal-mining town in the South of Wales about 20 miles from Cardiff ("Pontypool is in a valley surrounded by lots of beautiful, rugged mountains; very Dylan Thomas and very Welsh") she began singing at a very early age. "Singing comes natural to us," she says. "It's a vital part of life, just one of the ways of expressing oneself. If you meet a group of Welsh people, they almost immediately burst into song. They're great rugby-loving people and after a rugby match they all go into a pub and in a few minutes everybody is singing Welsh hymns. It's as if they have an inborn harmony; they harmonize automatically without thinking about it. So there are ready-made choirs wherever you go.

"Every church has its anniversary services and harvest festivals, and everybody is in the choir. The song festivals and *Eisteddfodds* [singing competitions] are a fact of life taken for granted. Everybody gets up and sings a little solo, and this is how I started. I remember when I was about five I did my first little hymn solo in the anniversary. A more experienced friend told me, 'It's pretty terrifying. If you keep your eye on the clock, you won't

get nervous.' I tried that and thought to myself, 'What a stupid idea! It's much more fun to look at the people's faces.' From the very first I just loved to see my public and to feel them, to feel their reactions. It's still the same. It's something I can't live without. It's my life.

"I remember I used to go almost every Saturday somewhere or other on the top of a mountain for an *Eisteddfodd* competition. If you won you got a little hand-embroidered bag that they hung around your neck like a trophy with a couple of shillings in it. I started singing lessons along with my friend Jean with a young girl down the road who gave lessons at a shilling an hour. We would sing duets and solos, practicing for the *Eisteddfodds*. When Jean decided to move on to another singing teacher, my teacher said to me, 'Well, if you can't sing duets any more, I'd give it up if I were you because it's not worth it just to sing solos.' Although I can laugh about it now, at the time I figured that she thought I wasn't good enough to sing on my own, and I went around with a complex for a couple of years.

"I only started again because of a children's concert given by a nearby corporate choir. There were these two little tots, aged seven or so, all dressed up and singing "In my sweet little Alice blue gown" with little acting gestures. Then they got costumed as soldiers and sang "They're changing the guard at Buckingham Palace." I was just knocked over by this and thought, 'That's what I want to do!' I didn't even know about opera then, but I *did* know that I wanted to dress up and act and sing. Something in me said, 'That's what I'm meant to do.'" So little Gwyneth Jones went home burning to sing in the corporate choir. She coaxed a friend to smuggle her in. The shy young girl would hide in



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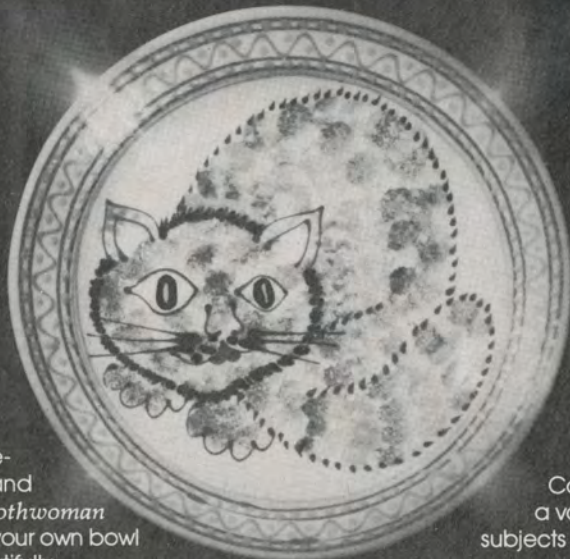
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the back rows, thinking that if anybody heard her sing she'd be thrown right out. She was finally discovered one evening when she fainted during choir practice, stopping the rehearsal, and had to be carried out. Although the choir mistress was livid, the fledgling singer managed to persuade her to let her stay. A short while later, when she was obliged to substitute for some ailing companions and sing a solo, the same choir mistress was most pleasantly surprised by her lovely voice and offered to give her private lessons. "I was absolutely over the moon because someone thought I was good enough to have my voice trained," laughs Miss Jones in retrospect, her bright blue eyes twinkling. "Since my friend was a contralto, I had been standing with the contraltos. The teacher naturally assumed I was a contralto and continued teaching me as one."

When that choir was disbanded, she joined another one run by the music director of her native Monmouthshire. The directress was always complimenting the girl sitting next to her in the back row on what a wonderful voice she had and how fantastically she sang. This went on for two or three years. Then one day Gwyneth was competing in an *Eisteddfodd*, singing "Che farò senza Euridice," and who should be judging, but her own choir mistress. "She looked absolutely staggered and when I finished she said, 'Well, I feel like an utter idiot! For two years I've been thinking that lovely voice belonged to the girl sitting next to you.' She gave me first prize that night and insisted that I come study with her. Later she was the one who moved heaven and earth to see that I got to London because she felt sure I was going to have a career."

The day on which the 17-year-old Gwyneth Jones was accepted to the

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Royal College of Music in London was one of very mixed emotions. She had witnessed her father die just an hour before receiving the acceptance letter (her mother had passed away when she was three). More or less alone in the world, she moved to London and stayed at the YMCA for three pounds ten a week. Forced to live on a mere 280-pound county council grant, she took on all sorts of odd jobs—singing in a church quartet every Sunday morning and evening, babysitting, and even making sandwiches at the Moo-Cow Milk Bar until midnight every night, just to make ends meet. After four years at the Royal College of Music, where she earned a teaching credential ("I wanted to make sure that if I didn't make it as a singer I could always teach music, although I hoped I'd never have to.") along with winning all the prizes available to singers. It was in her final year there that she joined the opera studio, a move which was to have dramatic consequences in just a few short years.

"It was only then that I realized what I really wanted to do in life," Miss Jones admits. "Before that I'd been doing mostly oratorio, lieder and concerts. I'd never even seen an opera. At home we didn't have television or even a gramophone, so we didn't have any records. I really didn't know what opera was." Her first role as member of the opera studio was Hansel. "Running around barefoot with patches on my behind and playing a boy," she laughs infectiously, "I had such a wonderful time!"

Things moved very quickly after that. She was awarded a scholarship to study at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena "in a lieder class of all things. I mean, to go to Italy to study lieder! At least I got to learn the language a bit. I find the Italian language and people very similar to the Welsh. They're both very

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warm and open and giving. The Welsh language has very broad A's and O's—these wonderful, big, wide-open vowels—just like Italian, whereas English tends to be very clipped and closed." When she returned to London it looked as if nothing was going to happen in her career, so she took temporary secretarial jobs all over the city. "I was determined not to go into the opera chorus because I felt that once I got there, I probably would never get out." Fortunately, she received a Boise Foundation Scholarship which took her to the newly opened opera center in Zurich run by Herbert Graf. Her audition was so successful that she was granted a scholarship to cover the fees of studying at the center. She was taken under the wing of Hortense Bühle, wife of pianist Geza Anda, who allowed her to live in a little apartment above her art gallery. With the money she thus saved on lodging and tuition she found a singing teacher in Geneva, Maria Carpi, and spent much of her spare time shuttling between the Swiss cities for lessons.

At the time she was still singing mezzo roles, and at the annual pre-Christmas performance for students, performed scenes from *Aida* and *Orfeo*. "There were lots of agents and opera directors there who had come to hear new talent," the erstwhile mezzo recalls. "That evening I was offered three contracts by German houses. I was a bit bewildered because I didn't know quite what to do. So I went to Herbert Graf and said, 'Dr. Graf, could you help me? I've been offered contracts by Ulm and Bremen and other places, but I don't know any of these houses. Which would you advise me to accept?' He was a little embarrassed and said, 'You've actually put me in a rather difficult position. Although I wasn't planning to do it today, I was going to offer you a contract for Zurich for next season. I guess I'd better do it

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quickly, otherwise you’ll be gone!” That next season in Zurich, Miss Jones sang Orfeo and such small parts as the Third Lady in *The Magic Flute* and Czipra in the *Gypsy Baron*. She was also written down for the Italian repertoire to sing Ulrica, Azucena and Eboli. “Nello Santi heard me singing one night in *Zigeunerbaron* when I was sort of helping the soprano out by singing the top line to make it come through. Afterwards he took me by the hand, led me into a room, and started to play all sorts of things. Because I really hadn’t much looked at the soprano repertoire, I didn’t always know what I was singing. I found myself doing Brunnhilde’s “Ho-jo-to-ho’s” and such difficult patches as Aida’s Nile scene. Of course I was out to impress him, so I just did whatever he asked me to do without any questions, effortlessly singing the high C’s. He suddenly stopped and said, ‘Okay. Basta. You’ll never sing with me again as a mezzo. Don’t waste your time with Ulrica; go home and study Amelia.’”

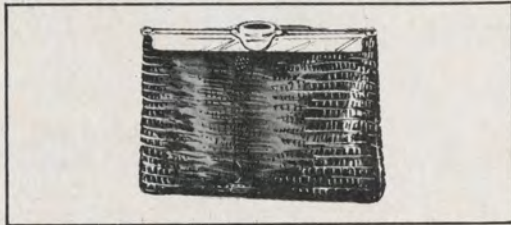
Santi kept his word. Although the then-mezzo learned Azucena and Ulrica, she never got to sing them on the stage. When the conductor saw the name Gwyneth Jones down on the list to sing Maddalena in the opening night *Rigoletto*, he refused to allow her to sing it and brought in a guest artist to perform the role. When it came time for *Ballo in Maschera* and she was still studying Ulrica, Santi met the singer in the corridor and said, “Listen. When are you going to admit you’re not a mezzo.” That was the final stroke.

“When I came to my next singing lesson with the *Ballo* score under my arm,” Miss Jones smiles in retrospect, “Maria said, ‘Oh no, not Ulrica, please.’ You see, my teacher in Geneva had been trying to convince me of the same thing for two years. And I said, ‘No, Amelia!’ And that was it!” She



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On the way to dig Florestan's grave—Gwyneth Jones rehearsing for *Fidelio*.

auditioned for the soprano lead, learning the two arias in a week. The direction's response was immediate: "fantastic—nine performances."

It was the singer's very first soprano role and an immediate hit. Rudolph Bing, who happened to be in the audience for the second performance, sent someone backstage summoning the overnight soprano sensation to his hotel the next day. "He asked me where I'd been singing before and I said, 'Nowhere.' When he said that it didn't matter and asked me for a list of my repertoire, I said, 'You heard it last night.' Then, seriously, I told him I didn't think I was ready for the Met yet, that I'd better get myself some repertoire first."

Just before the Zurich *Ballos* and the big switch, Miss Jones returned to London to audition for the Welsh National Opera, Sadler's Wells Opera and Georg Solti at Covent Garden, and was offered contracts by all three. Although she was still officially a mezzo, her audition pieces, Fidès' "Ah, mon fils!" from *Le Prophète* and Eboli's "O don fatale" from *Don Carlos*, with their high tessitura, showed the makings of a true soprano. Immediately after singing Amelia in Zurich, she wrote to Covent Garden telling them to cancel her mezzo assignments. By that time the soprano roles had already been distributed, so during her initial season with the Royal Opera in 1963-64, she

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sang only small parts, except for a Lady Macbeth and an Octavian on tour in Manchester and Coventry. The following season included the two fateful Leonore/Leonora roles, and the soprano's meteoric career was launched. Now Gwyneth Jones is primarily in demand for her great Wagner and Strauss roles and could easily make a career of Brünnhildes, Salomes, Fidelios and Marschallins, the bread-and-butter of the German repertoire. But she refuses to give up her Verdi and Puccini heroines. "I'm a person that needs variety and I feel very strongly that singing the Italian repertoire with those wide, wonderful vowel sounds and the bel canto technique helps you to sing the German repertoire better. I alternate them as much as possible. If I'm in Vienna or Munich, for example, which are on the repertory as opposed to the stagione system, I find myself singing *Flying Dutchman* one night, *Tosca* or *Aida* a few nights later and a Brünnhilde a few nights after that.

"In the Italian repertoire I still think of myself as a lirico-spinto. For me the Italian roles are medicine for the voice, like singing Mozart. The agility and flexibility of roles like Donna Anna and the *Trovatore* Leonora are important to keep the voice fresh. The secret of vocal longevity is to be able to make the voice light and flexible. To sing Brünnhilde and a couple of nights later to be able to sing *Butterfly*, getting the lightness and the *pianissimi*, that's very important. The quickest way to go downhill is to sing nothing but the big dramatic roles where you're giving, giving, giving all the time. Even in the *Götterdämmerung* Brünnhilde I try to give the voice as much lightness and variety of color as possible, to play with the voice, and I'm able to do that because of the Italian repertoire. "I find this variety wonderful," she continues. "You never get bored. You



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never get stale. You're able to keep your repertoire alive and fresh. Because you're changing so often, you're able to do the different roles often, and each time it comes out new and fresh. It's always exciting. Whichever opera I'm performing, it's always a new experience, even if I've done a role, such as *Fidelio*, over 100 times. You never do it the same way twice; each performance is different and each performance is very real—it's happening right then and there.

"In fact," she adds, "each role is real for me. I have to become the character I'm playing. When I'm doing a role for the first time, it sometimes takes me a long while to find the character. Then, sometimes in rehearsal, suddenly something snaps and you cease to be yourself and become the character you're playing. The whole situation suddenly becomes real to you. This doesn't mean that you're so intensely involved and living the role that you're not in control. There's still a fraction of yourself outside looking in, watching, controlling. I'm always aware of what I'm doing. It's difficult to explain; it's as if your mind has special antennae—one part watching over the voice, one part watching over the movement, etc. You can think thousands of thoughts simultaneously and still be completely involved and completely in control. It's fascinating.

"And each character is very different; each must have a different deportment. I give every new role a lot of thought before coming to rehearsals. I've walked around thinking about the character—how he or she walks, sits, sleeps, eats, thinks. It has to be convincing and real down to the tiniest movement of the fingertips. Different characters have different bone structures. Octavian, for example, stands and walks quite differently from the *Fidelio* Leonore, although in both roles

I have to pretend to be a young man. With *Salome*, for instance, I have to know how she thinks, how her body moves. I love doing *Salome* because of the combination of singing, acting and dancing. I find it a wonderful fulfillment to be able to do all three things. In the dance *Salome* loses her naïveté—I think she's a virgin—and develops this incredible lust to the point that she becomes mentally deranged. At the end she goes into an *Isolde*-like *Liebeshod* in her desire to unite with Jokanaan.

Salome was the soprano's entry into the heavy dramatic repertoire in 1970. "People had been asking me to sing *Isolde* and *Brünnhilde* for years, but at the beginning of my career I'd absolutely made up my mind that I'd wait 10 years before going into that sort of repertoire. It was after 20 performances of *Salome*, with the size and sound of that orchestra, and the way it felt so wonderful and so easy, that I said, 'Now the right time has arrived.' It isn't a question of the size of the voice; it's a question of stamina, experience, a thousand little things. Without all of these behind you, you risk ruining the voice."

Wolfgang Wagner was the first to ask her to sing *Brünnhilde*, and for several years she refused. In 1974, the season of the 3 different *Brünnhilde* sopranos at Bayreuth, he wanted her to do the *Walküre* *Brünnhilde*. "I said 'no' because I wasn't willing to give up *Sieglinde*, which I had done in the original production and which I had been singing for five years. So then he asked me for the *Siegfried* *Brünnhilde*. And again I said 'no' because it was too short and I still wasn't willing to give up *Sieglinde* for it. I said I was willing to sing the *Götterdämmerung* *Brünnhilde*. I think that rather surprised everybody because it's not normal to

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Each year as I write this message, I look for new superlatives to describe the current season since each year seems to be better than the preceding season. This year, our 56th, is no different. Ten operas again will be performed, one of which, Benjamin Britten's *Billy Budd*, will have its San Francisco premiere. Our general director, Kurt Herbert Adler, has assembled a galaxy of the world's renowned singers, conductors, directors and designers, some of them making their San Francisco or American debuts and many of them favorites of San Francisco opera patrons from previous years. In addition to *Billy Budd* we will enjoy a new production of *Lohengrin*; we are grateful to an anonymous donor for a generous gift making this new production possible. We are also indebted to the San Francisco Foundation for a grant to finance the costs of bringing to San Francisco the production of *La Bohème* owned by L'Opéra du Rhin of Strasbourg, France.

We have an added reason for excitement this year—1978 marks the 50th anniversary of Maestro Adler's professional association with the opera world, and even more important, his 25th anniversary as General Director of the San Francisco Opera. To celebrate this extraordinary milestone and to honor him, the Anniversary Gala Concert will be held at the Opera House on the

evening of November 19, 1978. Proceeds from this evening will benefit the San Francisco Opera Association and the San Francisco Opera Guild. A large number of singers intimately associated with San Francisco Opera history will be with us to participate in this event. Probably never in the history of opera has there been such an occasion. Don't miss it!

I am happy to report that the new fund-raising plan adopted this year has been well accepted by our subscribers. We have attracted several thousand new contributors which was the main purpose of the plan. Nevertheless, our financial problems continue. While ticket sales for this season exceed any previous year, revenues from ticket sales cover about 60 percent of costs, a percentage, incidentally, higher than that of probably any other major opera company. As a result of the passage of Proposition 13, we have been informed that our allocation from the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund will be only one-half that of last year, a reduction of approximately \$200,000. Inflation continues to force increases in our expenses despite our vigorous cost-control efforts. Thus, we must constantly seek new and increased gifts from our supporters. If you are not now included among our thousands of contributors, won't you please join them now? Your tax-deductible gifts should be sent to San Francisco Opera Association, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco 94102.

You are all keenly aware, I am sure, that the Performing Arts Center is well underway. Construction on the extension of the Opera House commenced in 1977, and on the new Symphony Hall across the street early in 1978. Unfortunately, this has eliminated the parking lot which will cause us some inconvenience until the proposed new garage is constructed, hopefully in time for our 1979 season. Funding for the Center is still several million dollars short. If you have not yet joined those

who have made this important project possible, I urge you to do so as soon as possible.

We continue to be grateful for the financial support from various sides, without which 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, the Board of Supervisors, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees. We are indebted to the San Francisco Opera Guild, which this year combined with Opera Action, for its sponsorship of five student matinees and for its many other activities which not only help in raising funds and reducing our costs, but in spreading the word of opera throughout our community.

One performance of each opera is broadcast by radio live up and down the Pacific Coast and in Chicago, and by delayed Public Radio throughout the rest of the nation. For making this important public service possible, we are grateful to Chevron U.S.A., Inc., and the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, Oakland, California.

For many years, we have been numbered among the six greatest opera companies in the world. This year, the National Opera Institute bestowed on Maestro Adler and the company an award for "excellence in repertoire," and OPERA America proclaimed the Maestro the Dean of American opera producers. With the help of our excellent staff and of our supporters, we will continue to earn this enviable reputation.

Enjoy the season.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Walter M. Baird". The signature is fluid and cursive.

WALTER M. BAIRD
President,
San Francisco Opera Association

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The San Francisco Opera Association extends its most sincere appreciation to all those contributors who help maintain the Company's annual needs and to those whose gifts are insuring continued growth and a secure future. Listed below are those individuals, corporations and foundations, whose gifts and pledges of \$200 or more, singly or in combination, were made to the Opera's various giving programs from the latter part of 1977 through September 15, 1978. These programs include the annual fund drive, the Endowment Fund, production sponsorships and special projects. Gifts received during the Opera season will be added to subsequent issues of the magazine. Space does not allow us to pay tribute to the hundreds of others who help make each season possible. To all, we give our warmest thanks.

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<i>Chorus Director</i>	Richard Bradshaw
<i>Assistant to the Chorus Director</i>	Ernest Fredric Knell
<i>Musical Supervisor</i>	Otto Guth
<i>Assistant for Artists</i>	Philip Eisenberg
<i>Musical Staff</i>	Paul Connelly, Terry Lusk, Christofer Macatsoris, John Miner*, Susan Webb
<i>Boys Chorus Director</i>	William Ballard
<i>Stage Directors</i>	Ande Anderson*, Sonja Frisell, Ghita Hager, Nicolas Joel, Federik Mirdita**, Jean Pierre Ponnelle, Wolfgang Weber
<i>Productions Designed by</i>	Leni Bauer-Ecsy, Toni Businger, Beni Montresor, Jean Pierre Ponnelle, Steven Rubin, Wolfram Skalicki, Jose Varona
<i>Costume Designers</i>	Erni Kniepert, Martin Schlumpf
<i>Lighting Designer/Director and Art Consultant</i>	Thomas Munn
<i>Assistant Stage Directors</i>	Matthew Farruggio, Sheila Gruson, Daniel Helfgot, Robert Ripps
<i>Stage Managers</i>	Ralph Clifford, Matthew Farruggio, Robert Ripps
<i>Language Coach</i>	Barbara Hardgrave*
<i>Production Assistants</i>	Sylvia Klein*, Gretchen Mueller*, Preston Terry*
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<i>Assistant to the Lighting Director</i>	Larry French
<i>Assistant to the Technical Director</i>	Larry Klein
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<i>Wig and Makeup Department</i>	Richard Stead, Karen Bradley, Candace Neal, Bruce Geller, Rex Rogers
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<i>Scenic Construction</i>	Pierre Cayard
<i>Scenic Artist</i>	Jay Kotcher*
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*San Francisco Opera debut **American debut

The Knabe is the official piano of the San Francisco Opera

The 1978 San Francisco Opera season is supported by a much-appreciated grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal Agency, and a grant from the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

Kathleen Battle
Montserrat Caballé
Ileana Cotrubas*
Anne Evans*
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Sheri Greenawald*
Shirley Harned
Christina Jaqua
Gwendolyn Jones†
Gwyneth Jones
Elizabeth Knighton*
Carol Malone
Janis Martin
Julia Migenes*
Alexandrina Milcheva*
Patricia Miller*
Magda Olivero*
Katia Ricciarelli
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Hanna Schwarz
Ellen Shade*
Pamela South†
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Carol Vaness†
Shirley Verrett
Ruth Welting

Gene Albin*
Giacomo Aragall
Walter Berry
Frederick Burchinal*
Barry Busse*
Samuel Byrd
José Carreras
Guy Chauvet
Lawrence Cooper
Federico Davià
John Del Carlo*
Justino Díaz*
Placido Domingo
Dale Duesing
John Duykers
Francis Egerton**
David Eisler*
Brent Ellis
Clifford Grant
Raimund Herincx*
James Hoback
Gwynne Howell*
Paul Hudson**
Richard Lewis
Juan Lloveras
Chester Ludgin
Alexander Malta

Raymond Manton
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John Miller
Allan Monk
Siegmond Nimsgern
Luciano Pavarotti
Jerome Pruett*
Samuel Ramey*
David Rendall*
Marius Rintzler
Forbes Robinson*
David Rohrbaugh*
Guillermo Sarabia
Giuseppe Taddei
Nunzio Todisco**
Giorgio Tozzi
William Wahman
Spas Wenkoff*
Stephen West††

*San Francisco Opera debut

**American opera debut

†San Francisco/Affiliate
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Mr. & Mrs. Harold Pischel
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Mildred J. Quinby
Filomena M. Ranuio
Mr. & Mrs. Roger A. Ritchey
Mr. & Mrs. Justin M. Roach
Sylvia Rohde
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Dr. Frank W. Young
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Chorus

Janice Aaland
Deborah Alexander
Elisabeth Anderson
Kathy Anderson
Candida Arias
Doris Baltzo
Norma Bruzzone
Louise Corsale
Constantina Economou
Beverley Finn
Lisa Louise Hill
Anne Huffington
Gail MacGowan
Cecilia MacLaren
Tamaki McCracken
Anna Marie Riesgo
Iris Miller
Irene Moreci
Rose Parker
Penelope Rains
Suzanna Schomaker
Shelley Seitz

Bonnie Shapiro
Claudia Siefer
Lola Lazzari-Simi
Linda Millerd Smeage
Ramona Spiropoulos
Sally Winnington
Arlene Woodburn
Garifalia Zeissig

Winther Andersen
Daniel Becker-Nealeigh
Duane Clenton Carter
Riccardo Cascio
David Chervenoy
Angelo Colbasso
Joseph Correllus
James Davis
Robert Delany
Bernard J. DuMonthier
Peter Girardot

Gerald Johnson
Conrad Knipfel
Eugene Lawrence
Kenneth MacLaren
Kenneth Malucelli
Edward Marshall
Robert McCracken
Jim Meyer
Thomas Miller
Eugene Naham
Kenneth Rafanan
Thomas Reed
Robert Romanovsky
Karl Saarni
Francis Szymkun
Mitchell Taylor
Randolph Tingle
B. Tredway
John Walters
Robert Waterbury
R. Lee Woodriff

Extra Chorus

Roberta Bowman
Anne Buelteman
Hilda Chavez
Teresa Colyer
Patricia Diggs
Marcia Gronewold
Susan Jetter
Liya Kushnirskaya
Marena Lane

Heidi Parsons
Alma Simmons
Jennifer Sullivan
M. W. B. Adamson
Michael Arighi
Manfred Behrens
Kristen R. Bjoernfeldt

Michael Bloch
Gerald Chappell
Joseph Ciampi
John L. Glenister
Henry Metlenko
Steven Oakey
Robert Philip Price
Mitchell Sandler
Lorenz Schultz

Additional Chorus composed of members of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, Louis Magor, director, and the Masterworks Chorale of the College of San Mateo, Galen Marshall, director.

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Orchestra

1ST VIOLIN

Zaven Melikian
Concertmaster
Sherban Lupu
Co-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

David Schneider†
Gerard Svazlian†
Janice Konigsmark†

2ND VIOLIN

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

Linda Deutsch†

VIOLA

Rolf Persinger *Principal*
Detlev Olshausen
Asbjorn Finess
Thomas Elliott
Jonna Hervig
Ellen Smith
Mary Jo Ahlborn

John Konigsmark†
Kenneth Harrison†

CELLO

David Kadarauch
Principal
Rolf Storseth
Judiyaba
Doug Ischar
Barbara Wirth
Helen Stross

Marianne Meredith†

BASS

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

Michelle Millard†
Jonathan Lancellet†

FLUTE

Walter Subke *Principal*
Lloyd Gowen
Gary Gray

Barbara Breedent†
Rebecca Friedman†

PICCOLO

Lloyd Gowen
Gary Gray

OBOE

James Matheson *Principal*
Raymond Duste
Deborah Henry

Eleanor Duste†

ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Duste

CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*
Donald Carroll
David Breeden

Diana Dorman†

BASS CLARINET

Donald Carroll

BASSOON

Walter Green *Principal*
Jerry Dagg

Robin Elliott

Carla Wilson†
John Leonest†

CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

FRENCH HORN

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

Erich Achen†
Carlberg Jonest†

TRUMPET

Donald Reinberg
Principal
Edward Haug
Chris Bogios

John Aymong†
Charles Davall†
William Holmest†
Robert Hurrell†
Joyce Johnson†
Carole Kleint†
Laurie McGaw†
Tim Wilson†

TROMBONE

Ned Meredith *Principal*
McDowell Kenley
John Bischof

Stephen Kohlbachert†
Philip Zahorsky†

TUBA

Robert Z. A. Spellman

Chong Hwa Kum†

ALTO SAXOPHONE

Gregory Dufford†

TIMPANI

Elayne Jones

PERCUSSION

Lloyd Davis
Peggy C. Lucchesi

Richard Kvistadt†
David Rosenthal†
John Van Geem†

HARP

Anne Adams *Principal*
Marcella de Cray

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Peggy Davis
Anna Franklin

Jacqueline Low
Marilyn Mather
Terry McGlone

Monica Prendergast
Dorothy Reiff
Maria Angela Villa

J. Michael Dwyer
Dan Gardner
Randall Krivonic

Jay Lehman
Sulpicio Wagner

Boys Chorus

John Aalberg
Sean Barry
Joel Benson
Howard Bentley
Bruce Boettjer
Matthew Brauer
Mark Burford
Michael Burke
Malcolm Calder
Michael Cavette
Anthony Chu
Alex Clemens
James Datri
David Devine

John Dougery
James Dreer
Victor Fernandez
David Flores
Christopher Frey
Matthew Gary
Michael Geronimo
Lionel Godolphin
Jason Gruen
Philip Hommes
Daniel Howard
Nicholas Johnson
David Kersnar
Jonathan Knowell

Benjamin Lewis
Douglas Lynn
Stephen Martin
Eric Marty
Christopher Metcalf
Paul Mohun
Alex Moreno
Gregory Naeger
Edward Nurge
Timothy O'Neill
Jason Parke
Ronald Ponce
Daniel Potasz
Douglas Price

David Roberts
Philip Robertson
Steven Rothblatt
Eric Savant
Jordan Silber
Roger Sinasohn
Val Smalley
Mark Swope
Richard Treadwell
Christopher Tucker
Eric Van Genderen
Perrin Yang

Avi Downes
Lara Downes
Shana Downes
Kristin Genis
Angela Harrison
Claudia Heynemann
Sharon Johnson
Nina Kent
Susan Kim
Marion Lee
Gayane Plavdjian
Lara Poligono
Linda Poligono
Keiko Steimetz

Anna Stelmak
Dorothy Stone
Zara Tinkleman
Lilith Von Foerster
Jennifer Watts
Rebecca Watts
Mary Angela Whooley
Patricia Whooley
Margaret Wong
Faith Yang

Girls Chorus

Supernumeraries

Joan Bacharach
Barbara Clifford
Martha Crawford
Renee de Jarnatt
Megan Fogarty
Christine Gember
Mary Joyce
Nancy Kennelly
Francesca Leo
Cynthia Milina
Edith Modie

Ellen Nelson
Louise Russo
April Sack
Celia Sack
Ellen Sanchez
Elizabeth Schultz
Mary Van Perre

Steve Bauman
Nick Bernardini
Bruce Bigel

Allerton Blake
Steve Caldwell
Thomas Carlisle
Steve Cohen
Rudolph Cook
Robert Corrick
Burton Covell
Don Crawford
Tom Curran
Danny De Jarnatt
Everett Evans Jr.

Jimmy Exon
Albert Frettoloso
Robert Fuller
Clifford Gold
Tom Grey
Mark Huelsmann
Ken Jakobs
Janusz
Bill Joyce
Julius Karoblis
Terrance Kyle

George Lenahan
Rodney McCoy
Robert Montano
Gregory Moreci
James Muth
Steve Polen
Joel Posner
Noble Edward Reynolds
Paul Ricks
Gil Rieben
James Sagerson

Robert Schmidt
Michael Scoffield
Thomas Simrock
Kent Speirs
Jon Spieler
George Tyree
Richard Weil

1978 Season Repertoire

OTELLO

Verdi

IN ITALIAN

Ricciarelli, Gwen. Jones/Domingo,
Sarabia, McCauley, Grant, Busse*,
West*, Del Carlo

Conductor: Patanè
Production: Ponnelle
Designer: Ponnelle
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Friday, Sept 8, 7PM
Gala Opening Night
Wednesday, Sept 13, 7:30PM
Sunday, Sept 17, 2PM
Friday, Sept 22, 8PM
Tuesday, Sept 26, 8PM
Saturday, Sept 30, 8PM

NORMA

Bellini

IN ITALIAN

Verrett, Milcheva*, Gwen.
Jones/Todisco**, Grant, Busse

Conductor: Peloso
Stage Director: Frisell
Designer: Varona
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Sept 9, 8PM
Tuesday, Sept 12, 8PM
Friday, Sept 15, 8PM
Wednesday, Sept 20, 7:30PM
Sunday, Sept 24, 2PM
Saturday, Sept 30, 1:30PM

San Francisco Opera Premiere

BILLY BUDD

Britten

IN ENGLISH

Duesing, Lewis, Robinson*, Herincx*,
Monk, Hudson**, Burchinal*, Egerton**,
McKee*, Hoback, Busse, Eisler*, Byrd,
West, Miller, Del Carlo, Rohrbaugh

Conductor: Atherton*
Stage Director: Anderson*
Designers: Piper/Munn
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Sept 16, 8PM
Tuesday, Sept 19, 8PM
Saturday, Sept 23, 8PM
Thursday, Sept 28, 7:30PM
Sunday, Oct 1, 2PM

New Production

LOHENGRIN

Wagner

IN GERMAN

A. Evans*, Martin/Chauvet, Herincx,
Howell*, Monk, Albin*, Eisler,
Del Carlo, Miller

Conductor: Adler
Production: Weber
Designer: Montresor
Chorus Director: Bradshaw
Friday, Sept 29, 7:30PM
Tuesday, Oct 3, 7:30PM

Friday, Oct 6, 7:30PM
Wednesday, Oct 11, 7:30PM
Saturday, Oct 14, 1PM
Sunday, Oct 22, 1:30PM

DON GIOVANNI

Mozart

IN ITALIAN

Stapp*, Shade*, Welting/Diaz*, Berry,
Rendall*, Howell, McKee

Conductor: Drewanz**
Stage Director: Hager
Designer: Businger
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Wednesday, Oct 4, 7:30PM
Saturday, Oct 7, 8PM
Tuesday, Oct 10, 8PM
Friday, Oct 13, 8PM
Sunday, Oct 15, 2PM
Saturday, Oct 21, 1:30PM

TOSCA

Puccini

IN ITALIAN

Caballé, Gwyneth Jones (Oct 29),
Olivero* (Nov 22, 25)/Pavarotti,
Lloveras (Nov 22, 25), Taddei, Tozzi
(Nov 22, 25), Davià, Hudson, Egerton,
West, Miller

Conductor: Peloso
Stage Director: Joël
Set Designer: Ponnelle
Costume Designer: Schlumpf
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Oct 14, 8PM
Tuesday, Oct 17, 8PM
Friday, Oct 20, 8PM
Monday, Oct 23, 8PM
Wednesday, Oct 25, 7:30PM
Sunday, Oct 29, 2PM
Wednesday, Nov 22, 7:30PM
Saturday, Nov 25, 8PM

WERTHER

Massenet

IN FRENCH

Ewing, Battle, Schuman*/Carreras,
Monk, Hudson, Manton, West, Byrd

Conductor: de Almeida*
Stage Director: Frisell
Designer: Rubin

Wednesday, Oct 18, 7:30 PM
Saturday, Oct 21, 8PM
Saturday, Oct 28, 8 PM
Tuesday, Oct 31, 8 PM
Friday, Nov 3, 8PM
Sunday, Nov 5, 2PM

DER ROSENKAVALIER

Strauss

IN GERMAN

Rysanek, Schwarz, Malone, Miller*,
Harned, South, Knighton*, Jaqua,
Schuman/Berry, Ludgin, Pruett*,
Egerton, Malta, Duykers, West, Eisler,
Albin, Byrd, Miller, Wahman

Conductor: Ferencsik
Stage Director: Hager
Set Designer: Bauer-Ecsy
Costume Designer: Kniepert

Friday, Oct 27, 8PM
Saturday, Nov 4, 8PM
Monday, Nov 6, 7:30PM
Sunday, Nov 12, 2PM
Tuesday, Nov 14, 8PM
Friday, Nov 17, 8PM

New Production

LA BOHÈME

Puccini

IN ITALIAN

Cotrubas*, Migenes*/Aragall, Ellis,
Duesing, Ramey*, Davià, Eisler,
Del Carlo, Rohrbaugh

Conductors: Varviso/Simmons
(Nov 23, 26)

Production: Ponnelle
Designer: Ponnelle
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Wednesday, Nov 1, 7:30PM
Saturday, Nov 4, 1:30PM
Tuesday, Nov 7, 8PM
Friday, Nov 10, 8PM
Monday, Nov 13, 7:30PM
Saturday, Nov 18, 8PM
†Thursday, Nov 23, 8PM
Sunday, Nov 26, 2PM

Special Family-Priced Matinee

Vaness, South/McCauley, Cooper,
Byrd, Hudson, West, Eisler, Del Carlo,
Rohrbaugh

Conductor: Simmons
Production: Ponnelle
Designer: Ponnelle
Chorus Director: Bradshaw
Saturday, Nov 25, 1:30PM

FIDELIO

Beethoven

IN GERMAN

Gwyneth Jones, Greenawald*/
Wenkoff*, Pruett, Nimsger, Rintzler,
Malta, Busse, Miller

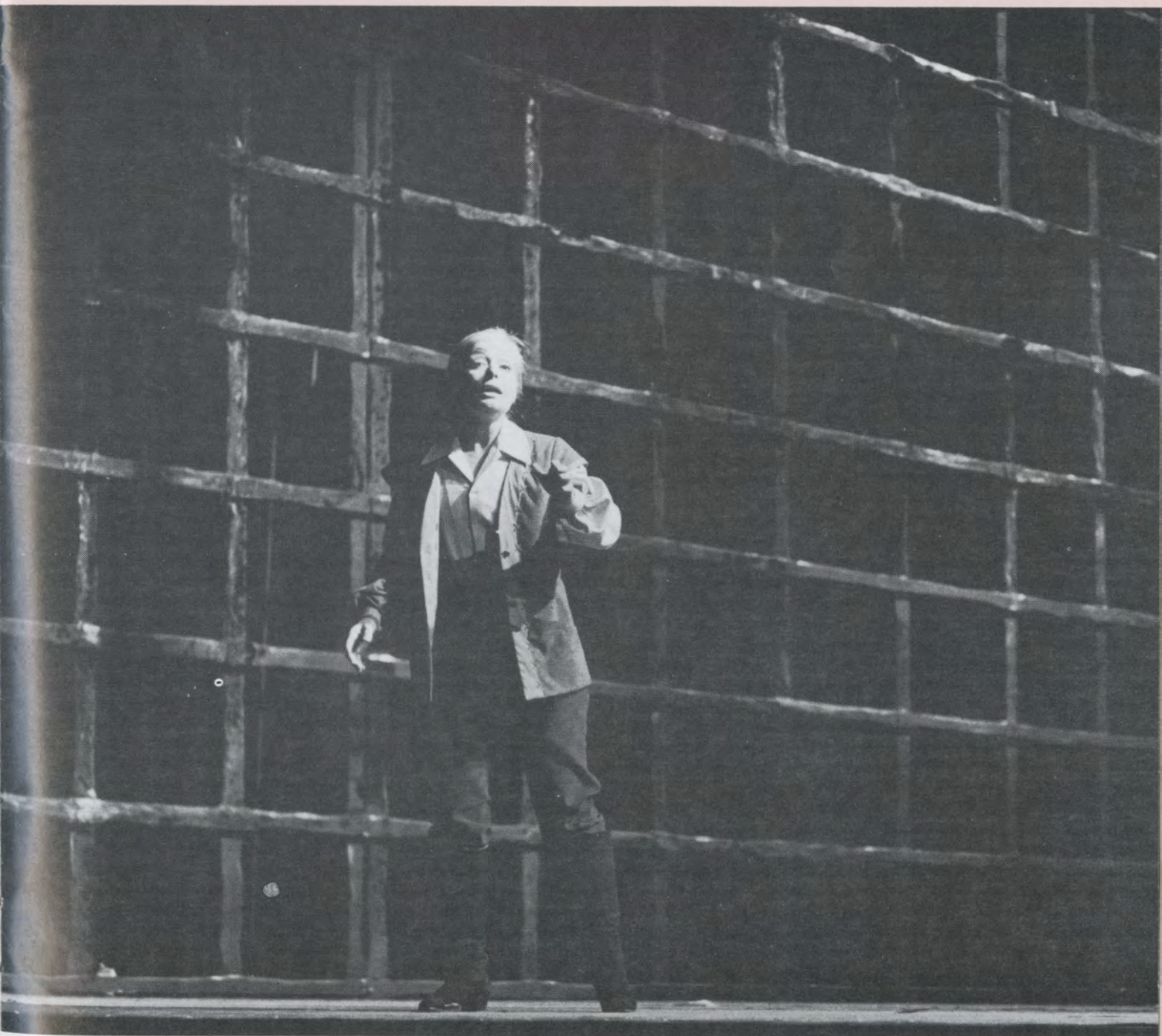
Conductor: Wich**
Stage Director: Mirdita**
Designer: Skalicki
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Nov 11, 8PM
Wednesday, Nov 15, 7:30PM
Saturday, Nov 18, 2PM
Tuesday, Nov 21, 8PM
Friday, Nov 24, 8PM

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

*San Francisco Opera debut
**American opera debut
REPERTOIRE, CASTS AND DATES
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Fidelio



Gwyneth Jones as Fidelio.

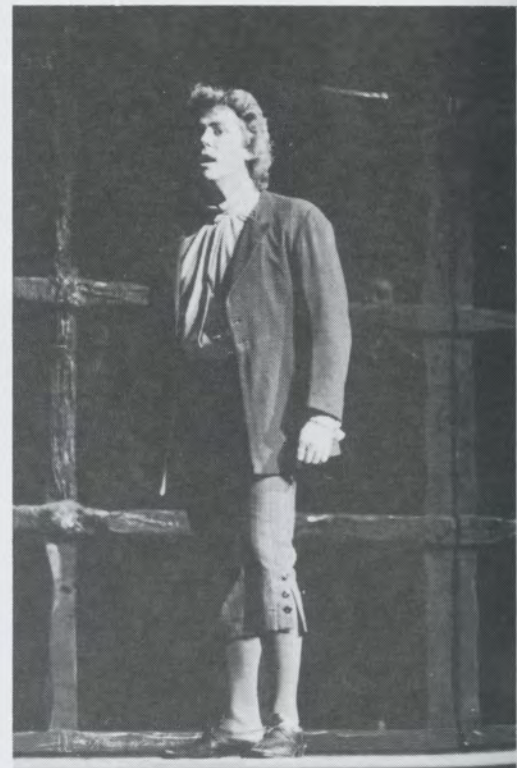
photos on next four pages by Ira Nowinski.



Blinded by the sunlight, the political prisoners are let out of their dungeons for a glimpse of daylight and fresh air.



Sheri Greenawald, Marius Rintzler and Gwyneth Jones as Marzelline, Rocco and Fidelio.



Jerome Pruett as Jaquino.



Siegmund Nimsgern as Pizarro.



Alexander Malta, Gwyneth Jones and Spas Wenkoff as Don Fernando, Leonore and Florestan.



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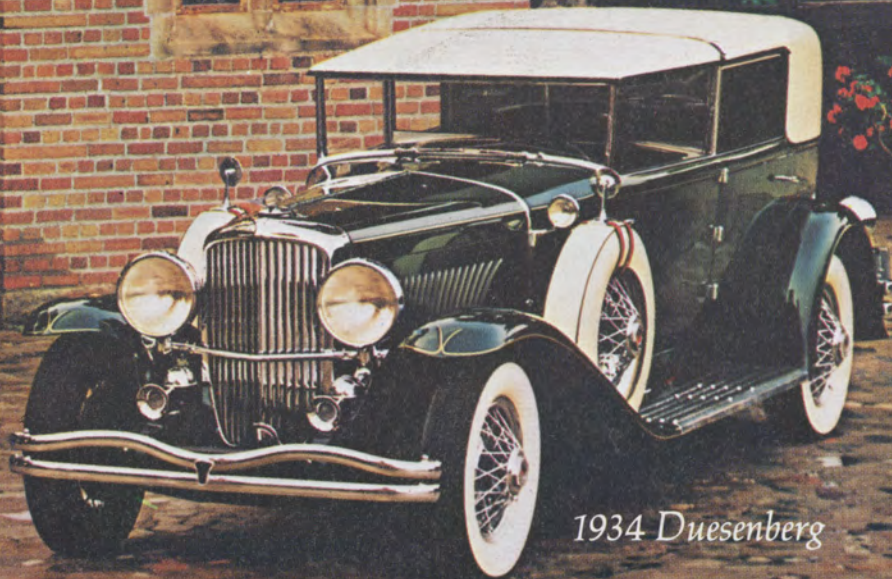
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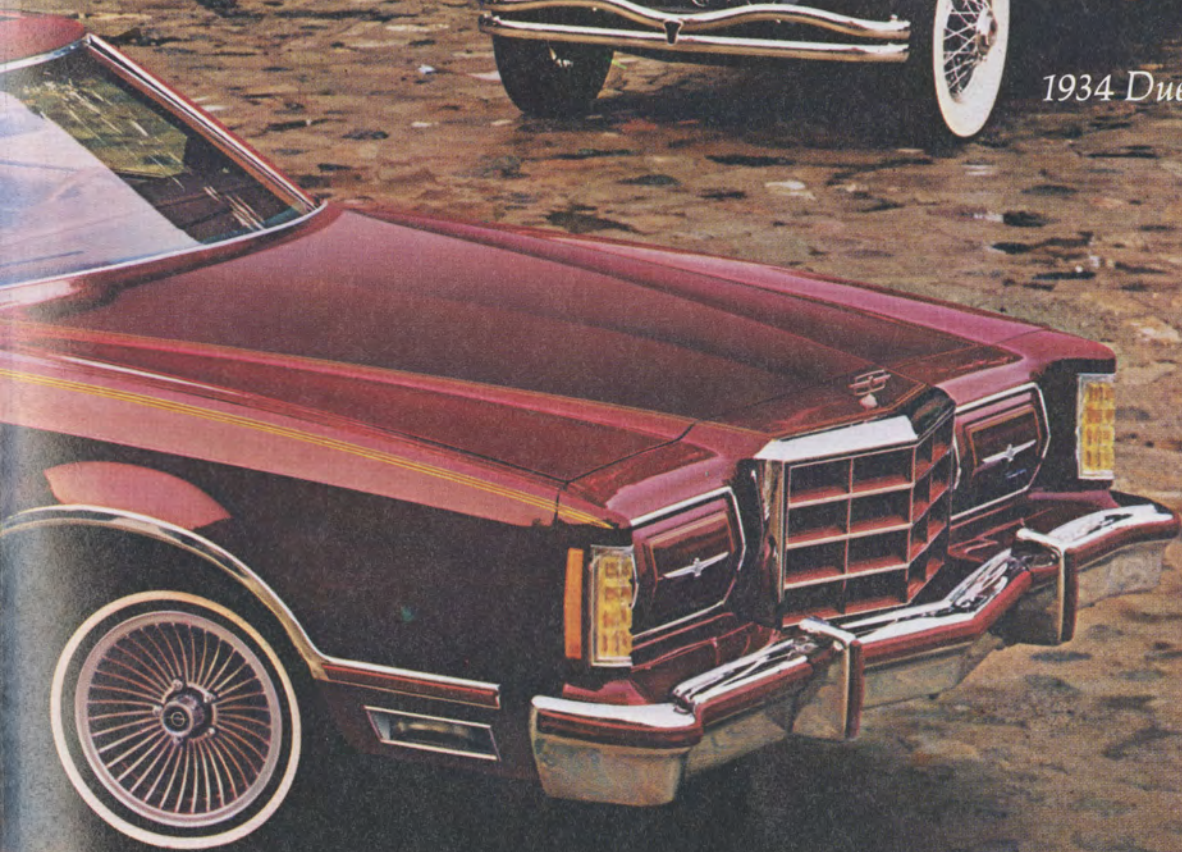




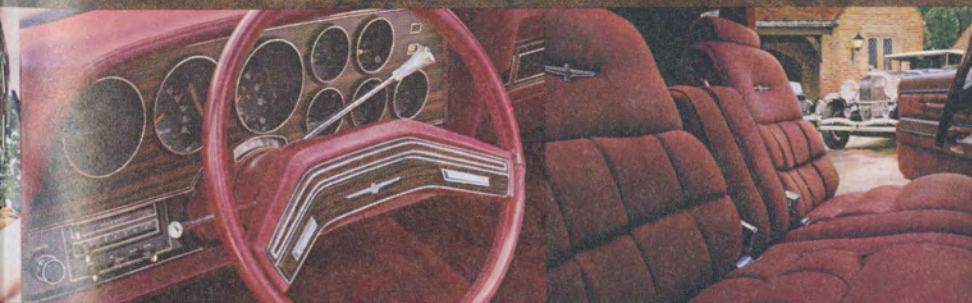
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1934 Duesenberg



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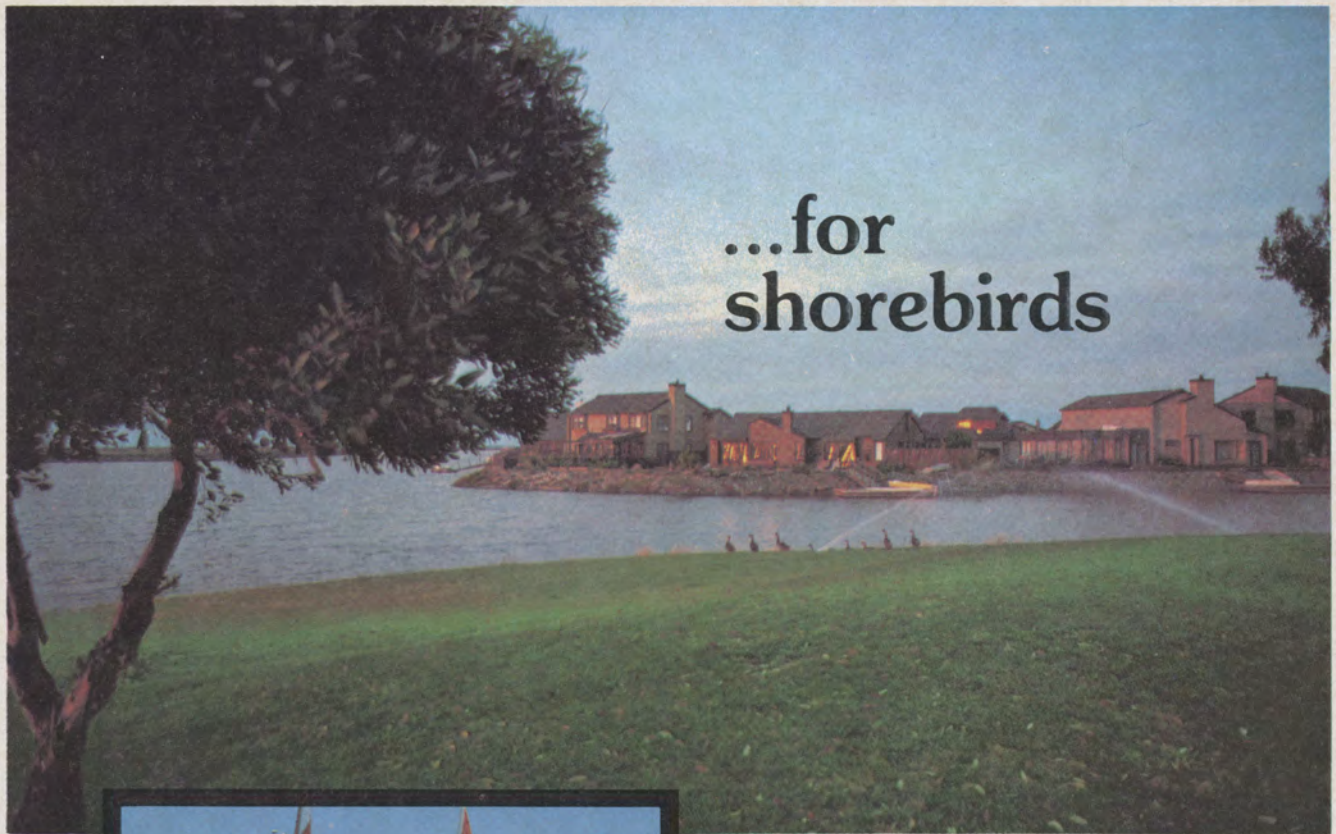
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REDWOOD SHORES

Opera in two acts by LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Text by JOSEF SONNLEITHNER

After a play by JEAN NICOLAS BOUILLY

Fidelio

(IN GERMAN)

Conductor
Günther Wich***

Stage Director
Federik Mirdita**

Designer
Wolfram Skalicki

*Lighting Designer and
Scenery Supervision*
Thomas Munn

Chorus Director
Richard Bradshaw

*Musical Preparation
and Prompter*
Philip Eisenberg

CAST

<i>Jaquino</i>	Jerome Pruett
<i>Marzelline</i>	Sheri Greenawald*
<i>Rocco</i>	Marius Rintzler
<i>Leonore/Fidelio</i>	Gwyneth Jones
<i>Don Pizarro</i>	Siegmund Nimsgern
<i>First prisoner</i>	Barry Busse
<i>Second prisoner</i>	John Miller
<i>Florestan</i>	Spas Wenkoff***
<i>Don Fernando</i>	Alexander Malta
<i>Prisoners, guards, townspeople</i>	

***American opera debut

**American debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

*First performance: Vienna, November 20, 1805 (first version)
Vienna, May 23, 1814 (final version)*

*First San Francisco Opera performance:
November 8, 1937*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1978 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1978 AT 2:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1978 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1978 AT 8:00 (Live broadcast)

PLACE AND TIME: A state prison near Seville, Spain, about 1800

Act I Scene 1

In front of Rocco's house

Scene 2

The prison courtyard

INTERMISSION

Act II Scene 1

The deepest vault of the prison

Scene 2

Just inside the prison gates

Please do not interrupt the music with Applause

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

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

*This performance lasts approximately
two hours and forty-five minutes*

SYNOPSIS/FIDELIO

BACKGROUND—Florestan, a fighter for freedom, has been imprisoned by his enemy, Pizarro, the governor of a fortress used to detain political prisoners. There he is slowly being starved to death while rumors of his death are spread abroad. Florestan's wife, Leonore, has heard the rumors but clings to the hope that it is another villainous game of Pizarro's. As a last desperate measure, she resolves to search for her husband in the prison and free him. Disguised as a young man, Fidelio, she is employed by the chief jailer, Rocco, as his assistant.

ACT ONE—Scene 1—The young prison attendant Jaquino courts Marzelline in vain, for she has fallen in love with Fidelio. Her father, Rocco, also wants a union between his daughter and Fidelio and hopes for the governor's permission to use the latter as a helper with the secret prisoners. Marzelline fears that Fidelio won't be able to bear all the misery that such work entails, but Leonore knows she must have courage and strength to carry out her secret plan—the rescue of her husband.

Scene 2—Pizarro receives news from a friend that the minister, Don Fernando, intends a surprise inspection of the prison. Fearing that Florestan will be found, he resolves to have him killed. A sentry is posted on the tower to give a trumpet signal as soon as the minister is sighted. Rocco, while not willing to be a murderer, agrees

to hold his tongue for money and later hide Florestan's body in a ruined cistern. Leonore, who has overheard the plan to murder a prisoner, resolves to save him, whoever he may be. At her request Rocco allows some of the prisoners to go into the courtyard. Leonore is distressed that Florestan is not among them. Pizarro, furious at Rocco's independent action, has the prisoners locked up again.

ACT TWO—Scene 1—In prison, Florestan, weakened from hunger and thirst, has a vision: his wife appears to him as an angel of freedom. Rocco and Leonore come down into the deepest vault of the prison to open the cistern which is to be used as a grave. Leonore recognizes the unknown prisoner as her husband. Against Pizarro's orders she hands him bread and wine but dares do no more. When Pizarro appears and tries to stab the defenseless Florestan, she rushes to shield him. Pizarro, in a burst of rage, attempts to kill them both. Leonore draws a pistol and levels it at him. Suddenly a trumpet call is heard announcing the minister's arrival. Leonore and Florestan are saved and reunited.

Scene 2—Florestan's fellow prisoners have been freed by the minister and Leonore removes Florestan's chains. Marzelline, recovered from her infatuation, consents to marry Jaquino and Pizarro is arrested and led away, as the chorus sings in praise of conjugal love.

The Life and Time of Fidelio

By BARRY HYAMS

Early in July of 1805, summering in Hexendorf, Beethoven sat in the shade of an oak tree in the Schonbrunn gardens working to meet the autumn deadline for the premiere of *Fidelio*. Two underground springs which fed his deepest roots were gushing up within him to celebrate freedom and the idealization of love—*l'amour conjugal*. His head rang with Florestan's fervent "Lovingly you freed me from my chains . . ." and the chorus' closing outburst, "Every man who has won a noble wife will join us in our jubilee!"

At that very moment, not distant from where he sat, Vienna was engulfed in a bread riot, the food shortage brought on by the provisioning of the Austrian army which was preparing to take the field once more against Napoleon. Called up to quell the mob, cavalry sabres and the bayonets and bullets of grenadiers strewed the streets of the capital with more than a hundred dead and wounded.

The actions of musician and military joined *Fidelio* and Vienna in a metaphor of the era: a cataclysm accompanied by an "ode to freedom and love." For Beethoven, these two, turbulence and idealism, composed the canon of his life.

He was born into this age a year after Napoleon Bonaparte whom he never met but whose career wove alternate threads of hope and disillusion into Beethoven's spirit. In 1770, steam power and textile machines were turning "international free trade" into a hymn to progress; the industrial revolution was harnessing social revolution to transform feudal serfs into wage slaves; kings were about to topple from their "divine rights," and old institutions about to receive new names. In London, Edmund Burke was delivering his *Thoughts On The Cause Of The Present Discontents*. The first public restaurant opened in France. It was the year of the Boston Massacre.

Beethoven was three when British tea was dumped into Boston Harbor. Two years later, as Beethoven listened to his father sing and his grandfather play in the court orchestra of the Elector of Cologne, Paul Revere was galloping across the environs of Boston to sound the tocsin and summon the Colonists to the Battle of Lexington. The American Revolution had begun.

A lad of sixteen and already court organist, Beethoven returned to Bonn from his aborted visit to Vienna to meet Stefan von Breuning and Count Waldstein, later Chancellor to Emperor Franz II, noblemen who became his friends and supporters. He sat enrapt as they discussed, and himself read, the poetry and essays of Schiller, Goethe, Lessing, Rousseau, and he went to see the plays of Shakespeare and Beaumarchais. He enrolled in the

new university and attended the lectures of Eulogius Schneider, a libertarian who spoke for revolution with the same fire he had formerly, as a Franciscan monk, preached against Satan. The next year, the *sans culottes* stormed the Bastille and Schneider greeted the event with:

Think not this a mere stroke of the pen—
This more, this is our will,
The fate of each French citizen.
Shattered in fragments the Bastille—
Now France is free, and free her man.

Schneider's book of poems appeared in 1790, and among the subscribers to the Frankfurt publication was "L. van Beethoven—hofmusiker Bonn."

For buttressing the revolution, Schiller and Klopstock received honorary Citizenship from France. At home their works were relished and enkindled Beethoven. Schneider continued to hold forth in the lecture hall with his exhortations—"One year of freedom is more use to mankind than a century of despotism, for despotism stifles thought in the mind and virtue in the heart." When he decried the fanaticism of the Church and its "priestly nonsense," Roman Catholic headquarters at Cologne threatened him with disciplinary action. To the delight of his students, he persisted. Beethoven inscribed the ex-monk's words on his heart as he heard Schneider declare: "The real worth of mankind is higher than the advantage of birth; true nobility can be attained only by greatness of spirit and goodness of heart." Schneider had to flee from Bonn to refuge in Strasbourg. In 1793, the Terror gripped Paris. The following year, in April, he was arrested on orders from Robespierre and executed. The irony was not lost on Beethoven.

Fiercely proud and an egalitarian, the young composer from the start was the protege of aristocrats. At 22 he left Bonn for Vienna with introductions from Count Waldstein to Princes Lichnowsky and Lobkowitz. Soon the lion of the salons was entertaining the nobility with piano improvisations—and hating it. He laughed in derision when his toying at the keyboard drew an emotional response from his audience in the palace of Frederick, King of Prussia, whose offer of a court post Beethoven turned down, saying, "Who can live with such spoiled children?" Not bothering to hide his feelings, Beethoven stamped out of the house of a countess who had seated him below her titled guests.

Beethoven loathed monarchy and dictatorship, particularly the despotism of the Hapsburgs; and he admired Napoleon at the time as "the incarnation of liberal ideals of the French Revolution." Yet, in 1796, Beethoven felt impelled to write a battlesong—it proved uninspired—to

cheer the Austrian troops on their way to stop Napoleon's incursion into Italy. The Austrians were routed at Lodi and Arcola, a defeat, however, which must not be attributed to the mediocrity of the marching song.

The Grand Army swept into Germany and paraded through Dusseldorf to the blare of trumpets and the beat of drums, the populace waving flags and cheering and joined lustily by a five-year-old boy, named Heinrich Heine. All of Beethoven's republican sentiments applauded also as in the wake of Napoleon came the abolition of feudal governments, education of the people and a program of public works which brought material prosperity. In Milan, the conqueror cut the budget of the secret service from 700,000 francs to 200,000.

"If conditions are improved in our land," Beethoven stated hopefully, perhaps ingenuously, "my art will be used for the good of the poor." Adapting his teacher's words, he wrote afterward to his own pupil, Archduke Rudolph: "In the world of art, as in the whole of our creation, freedom and progress are the main objectives." Beethoven poured the same intense feelings into his private relationships, especially with women. The year he began working on *Fidelio*, he protested: "If I had spent my time on women and love, what would have become of me?" His good friend, Dr. Wegeler, knew otherwise. "There was never a time," he said, "when Beethoven was not in love, and that in the highest degree."

Beethoven's fascination with Leonore sublimated his lack of success with women. Throughout his manhood, he lavished his passion on three types, all unattainable. The ladies were either the young daughters of close acquaintances, or of a rank beyond the reach of a commoner, or were already married. His storms, brusqueness of manner, even his boorishness were ascribed to the prerogatives of genius. More likely it was his impatience, with himself, with his loneliness, with his art not being suitably appreciated.

He was capable also of the utmost delicacy. Felix Mendelssohn told of the time Baroness Ertmann lost her last child and was invited by Beethoven to visit him. "When she came, he sat himself down at the pianoforte and said simply, 'We will talk to each other in music,' and for over an hour he played without stopping; and, as she remarked, 'He told me everything and at last brought me comfort.'"

Among his close friends were Baroness Erdody, a pianist, and a special favorite, Madame Marie Bigot, who on one occasion played one of his sonatas. When she finished, he exclaimed, "That isn't exactly the character I meant to give this piece; but if it isn't quite me, it's better than me!"

Some speculate that Josephine Deym was the "immortal beloved" of the correspondence which ceased in 1807; others identify his *unsterbliche Geliebte* in the letters of 1812 to Therese von Brunsvik who presumably, a year later, bore him an illegitimate daughter, Minona. The conjectures only confirm Beethoven's unremitting search for the ideal marriage. A couple of years after the acclaim of *Fidelio*, following the second revival of his paean to female fidelity, Beethoven still longed for domesticity. Forty-six at the time, he said, "Unfortunately, I have no wife."

But not only conjugal bliss eluded him. He became disenchanted with heroes. As dahlias bloomed in England for the first time, in the cathedral of Notre Dame the Corsican crowned himself Emperor Napoleon I. Furious, Beethoven struck his name from the title page of the newly composed Symphony #3 and dedicated it "to the death of a great man." The *Eroica* received its first performance earlier in the year of *Fidelio's* premiere.

The closer Beethoven came to completing *Fidelio*, the nearer Napoleon's army approached Vienna. In October 1805, after two weeks on the battlefield, the French trounced the Austrians at Ulm, proceeded to take Salzburg, and began their march down the Danube toward Vienna.

Panic seized the capital. On the Josefsplatz, a hundred horses stood hitched to transports loaded with gold, Treasury possessions, silver, linen—"everything," said one account, "even bed-warmers and shoe-trees." The Empress and her retinue departed and "it looks as if they have no intention of ever coming back." Noblemen, bankers and merchants fled, conveying their private property to safety. Resentment from those less fortunate forced His Majesty to provide ships to remove their valuables and to guarantee their goods "against receipt"—barring acts of God. Singers and musicians reporting to the Theater-an-der-Wien for *Fidelio* rehearsals had to pick their way through chaos.

On November 13th, a week before *Fidelio's* first performance, the vanguard of the French army, banners flying, entered the city. Fifteen thousand men had to be billeted. Food shortages became acute. Those who had two or three florins (\$4 to \$6) could purchase a pound of butter. "The French behave considerably, even gallantly, but take everything," a diarist recorded; "nothing is to be found in the market . . . Famine stares us in the face."

In Beethoven's view, *Fidelio* was able to survive all but the absence of his regular patrons. People of means,

continued on p. 97

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Friday, October 6	LOHENGRIN
Friday, October 13	DON GIOVANNI
Friday, October 20	TOSCA
Friday, November 3	WERTHER
Friday, November 10	LA BOHÈME
Friday, November 17	DER ROSENKAVALIER
Friday, November 24	FIDELIO

*Broadcast from an earlier performance

All broadcasts begin at 7:50 PM Pacific Time, except *Lohengrin*
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*Check local listings for day and time

San Francisco Opera broadcasts can also be heard live-on-tape throughout the
United States over National Public Radio beginning October 15. Please check
local listings for date and time.

KQED FM 88.5

Matters Musical, including commentary on the San Francisco Opera season, can
be heard bi-weekly at 8:30 AM and 12:15 PM on Tuesdays and Fridays on KQED-
FM, (88.5). Allan Ulrich is the host. The program is made possible through grants
from the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California, and The
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Sunday Morning at the Opera. Recorded operas with John Roszak, host. 10 a.m.
every Sunday.

Special Events

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

MARIN

Previews held at Del Mar School, 105 Avenida Mira Flores, Tiburon. Lectures begin at 8:30 p.m. Series registration is \$10.00 (\$6.50 for Opera Guild members, students and seniors). Single tickets are \$2.50 (\$1.50 for Guild members, students and seniors). For information, please call (415) 388-2850.

September 7 <i>OTELLO</i> Dr. Jan Popper	October 19 <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i> Dr. Dale Harris
September 14 <i>BILLY BUDD</i> Dr. Dale Harris	November 9 <i>FIDELIO</i> To be announced
September 28 <i>LOHENGRIN</i> Dr. Jan Popper	

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 10 <i>OTELLO</i> Dr. Jan Popper	October 8 <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i> Dr. Jan Popper
September 17 <i>BILLY BUDD</i> Dr. Dale Harris	October 22 <i>FIDELIO</i> Dr. Dale Harris
September 24 <i>LOHENGRIN</i> Dr. Jan Popper	

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. Series registration is \$10 (\$7 for senior citizens and students); single tickets are \$2 per lecture. For additional information, please call (408) 354-4068 or (408) 268-6681.

Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m. <i>OTELLO</i> James Schwabacher	Sept. 28, 7:30 p.m. <i>LOHENGRIN</i> Dr. David Kest
Sept. 15, 10 a.m. <i>BILLY BUDD</i> Dr. Dale Harris	Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m. <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i> Dr. Jan Popper
Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. <i>DON GIOVANNI</i> Dr. Jan Popper	Oct. 20, 10 a.m. <i>FIDELIO</i> Dr. Dale Harris

UC-BERKELEY EXTENSION LECTURE SERIES

DR. JAN POPPER LECTURES will be given on one Tuesday and nine Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in Richardson auditorium, UC Extension Center, 55 Laguna St., San Francisco. Series registration is \$40; single lectures

are \$5, on a space available basis, payable at the door. For further information, please call (415) 642-1061.

September 5 (Tues.) <i>OTELLO</i>	October 9 <i>TOSCA</i>
September 11 <i>NORMA</i>	October 16 <i>WERTHER</i>
September 18 <i>BILLY BUDD</i>	October 23 <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i>
September 25 <i>LOHENGRIN</i>	October 30 <i>LA BOHÈME</i>
October 2 <i>DON GIOVANNI</i>	November 6 <i>FIDELIO</i>

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

All Junior League opera previews will be held at the Herbst Theatre (formerly Veterans' Auditorium), at the corner of Van Ness Ave. and McAllister St., San Francisco. Lectures begin at 11:00 a.m. There is no admission charge. For information, please call (415) 567-8600.

September 6 <i>OTELLO</i> Dr. Jan Popper	October 12 <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i> James Schwabacher
September 14 <i>BILLY BUDD</i> Dr. Dale Harris	November 8 <i>FIDELIO</i> Stephanie von Buchau
September 28 <i>LOHENGRIN</i> Michael Barclay	

OPERA EDUCATION WEST

East Bay Friends of the Opera

Previews will be presented by Michael Barclay at the Marketplace in Emeryville. Individual admission is \$3.00 with a discount series ticket of \$18 offering 8 lectures for the price of 6. All lectures begin at 8:00 p.m. For further information, please call (415) 526-5244.

September 4 <i>OTELLO</i>	September 25 <i>DON GIOVANNI</i>
September 7 <i>NORMA</i>	October 16 <i>WERTHER</i>
September 11 <i>BILLY BUDD</i>	October 19 <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i>
September 18 <i>LOHENGRIN</i>	October 30 <i>FIDELIO</i>

Friends of the Kensington Library

A general lecture on the operas of Puccini with a concentration on *La Bohème* and *Tosca* will be held by Michael Barclay on Thursday, October 12 at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington. The lecture will begin at 8 p.m. and admission is free.

CHABOT COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

A ten-week series of introductions to the 1978 San Francisco Opera season. Given as a Free Credit/No-Credit Course (Humanities 120-71) by Eugene Marker every Thursday evening, 7:00 to

9:30 p.m. Open to all and located at the Community Center (C.C.D. Building), Room #4, All Saints School, 22870 2nd and "E" Streets, Hayward. For further information, please call 786-6632.

September 7 <i>OTELLO</i>	October 12 <i>DON GIOVANNI</i>
September 14 <i>NORMA</i>	October 19 <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i>
September 21 <i>BILLY BUDD</i>	October 26 <i>WERTHER</i>
September 28 <i>TOSCA</i>	November 2 <i>LA BOHÈME</i>
October 5 <i>LOHENGRIN</i>	November 9 <i>SEASON REVIEW</i>

COGSWELL COLLEGE OPERA PREVIEW SERIES

Previews will be held at Cogswell College, 600 Stockton Street (between California and Pine), at 8:00 p.m. on one Tuesday and nine Thursday evenings. Lectures will be given by opera educator Michael Barclay and San Francisco Opera staff writer Arthur Kaplan. Series discount tickets for all ten lectures cost \$30; individual admission is \$3.50 a lecture. Continuing education credit offered. For further information, please call (415) 433-1994.

September 5 <i>OTELLO</i> Michael Barclay	October 5 <i>TOSCA</i> Arthur Kaplan
September 7 <i>NORMA</i> Arthur Kaplan	October 12 <i>WERTHER</i> Arthur Kaplan
September 14 <i>BILLY BUDD</i> Michael Barclay	October 26 <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i> Michael Barclay
September 21 <i>LOHENGRIN</i> Michael Barclay	November 2 <i>LA BOHÈME</i> Arthur Kaplan
September 28 <i>DON GIOVANNI</i> Arthur Kaplan	November 9 <i>FIDELIO</i> Michael Barclay

PIEDMONT ADULT EDUCATION OPERA PREVIEW SERIES

Previews will be held in the auditorium of Piedmont High School, 800 Magnolia Avenue, Piedmont, at 7:00 p.m. on consecutive Mondays, starting September 11. Lectures with slides will be given by San Francisco Opera staff writer Arthur Kaplan, and are set to precede the opera presented over live radio broadcast on Friday evenings. Series registration is \$30; pre-registration desirable. For further information, please call (415) 653-9454.

September 11 <i>NORMA</i>	October 2 <i>LOHENGRIN</i>
September 18 <i>OTELLO</i>	October 9 <i>DON GIOVANNI</i>
September 25 <i>BILLY BUDD</i>	October 16 <i>TOSCA</i>

October 23 November 6
DER ROSENKAVALIER *LA BOHÈME*
October 30 November 13
WERTHER *FIDELIO*

NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES

For the sixth year there will be a ten-week course called ADVENTURES IN OPERA in Napa. The course, which accompanies the Saturday and Sunday Series at San Francisco Opera, will be held on Wednesday nights from 7-9 p.m. (location to be determined). Ernest Fly will again teach. For further information, please call Mr. Fly at (707) 224-6162.

September 13 October 18
OTELLO *WERTHER*
September 20 October 25
NORMA *TOSCA*
September 27 November 1
BILLY BUDD *DER ROSENKAVALIER*
October 4 November 8
DON GIOVANNI *FIDELIO*
October 11 November 15
LOHENGRIN *LA BOHÈME*

WEST COAST OPERA SERVICE

WEST COAST OPERA SERVICE PREVIEWS

San Francisco Opera Fall 1978 season: Presented by West Coast Opera Service at the Parkside Playhouse, 2750 Parkside Circle, in Concord. The fee for the complete series is \$20.00; individual lectures are \$2.50. All lectures will be given by Ben Krywosz, and will include recordings, filmstrips, and printed material. They will be held from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm on the following dates:

September 5 October 9
OTELLO *TOSCA*
September 11 October 16
NORMA *WERTHER*
September 18 October 24
BILLY BUDD *DER ROSENKAVALIER*
September 25 October 30
LOHENGRIN *LA BOHÈME*
October 2 November 8
DON GIOVANNI *FIDELIO*

For further information, or to register, please call Ben Krywosz at 825-7825 evenings.

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Ticket Information

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA BOX OFFICE

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

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

Unused Tickets

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

Opera Museum

The 1978 exhibit in the opera museum, prepared by the Archives for the Performing Arts, pays tribute to Kurt Herbert Adler on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary as General Director of the San Francisco Opera. The history of the Company from 1923-1978 is illustrated by photographs and programs from each season.

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.

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.

Bus Service

Many Opera goers who live in the northern section of San Francisco are regular patrons of the Municipal Railway's special "Opera Bus".

This bus is added to Muni's northbound 47 Line following all evening performances of the Opera, Symphony, Ballet and other major events. The service is also provided for all Saturday and Sunday matinees.

Look for this bus, marked "47 Special", after each performance in the northbound bus zone at Van Ness Avenue and Grove Street — across Van Ness from the Opera House.

Its route is as follows:

North on Van Ness to Chestnut, then left to Divisadero where it turns left to Union. It continues on Union over Russian Hill to Columbus, then left to Powell—then right to the end of the line at North Point.

FIRE NOTICE: There are sufficient exits in this building to accommodate the entire audience. The exit indicated by the lighted "Exit" sign nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In case of fire please do not run—walk through that exit.

For lost and found information inquire at check room No. 3 or call (415) 621-6600, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Opera Glasses

Opera glasses are available for rent in the lobby.

Please note that no cameras or tape recorders are permitted in the Opera House.

Children of any age attending a performance must have a ticket.

Opera management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

Taxi Service

Taxis will usually be available at the taxi entrance on the south side of the Opera House at the end of a performance. Anyone desiring a taxi at other times of the evening may use the direct telephone line at the taxi entrance to summon a cab.

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For the safety and comfort of our audience all parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at the Opera House cloakrooms.

Hot buffet service in lower level one hour prior to curtain time.

Refreshments in the box tier on mezzanine floor, grand tier and dress circle during all performances.

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 Monday, November 13, 1978, 1:00 p.m.
 Wednesday, November 15, 1978, 1:00 p.m.
 Wednesday, November 22, 1978, 1:00 p.m.

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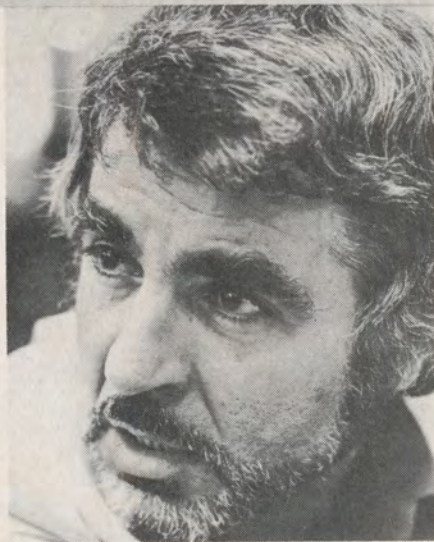
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Profiles

GÜNTHER WICH



FEDERIK MIRDITA



WOLFRAM SKALICKI



German conductor Günther Wich makes his American debut this season on the podium for *Fidelio*. As General Music Director of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf-Duisberg he has conducted in that house such works as *Salome*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, the Ring cycle, Schönberg's *Moses und Aron*, Berg's *Lulu*, Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten* and Dallapiccola's *Odysseus*, and he also presented a Mozart week, which included *Idomeneo* and *La Clemenza di Tito* in addition to the five Mozart works in the standard repertory. In seasons to come he will lead *Orfeo* and *Le Nozze di Figaro* there. Recent engagements outside of Germany have included performances of *Parsifal* in Vienna and *Medea* in Geneva, *The Magic Flute* in London, and *Die Soldaten* and *Moses und Aron* at the Holland festival. Wich has been a guest conductor with major orchestras of Europe, including the London Symphony, the New Philharmonia, the BBC Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic, and the radio orchestras of Luxembourg, Austria and France. He has also worked with many concert organizations throughout Asia, and in 1979 he will lead a series of concerts in Tokyo.

Albanian-born stage director Federik Mirdita has worked extensively in opera, theater, and television throughout Europe; this fall he makes his American debut directing *Fidelio*. Mirdita began his career as stage manager and assistant to Herbert von Karajan at the Vienna Staatsoper, and subsequently served as resident director at the Landestheater in Linz and the Staatstheater in Braunschweig. Additionally he has had assignments in Zurich, Wiesbaden, Vienna, Wuppertal, Darmstadt, Bonn, Teheran, Zagreb, Amsterdam, Rheims and Bordeaux. Among his major stagings are Monteverdi's *Ulisse* in Vienna, *Così fan tutte* in Graz, Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* in Zurich, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Bordeaux and *La Clemenza di Tito* in Vienna. The latter work he will stage next fall for the New York City Opera. Other engagements include Weber's *Drei Pintos* in Vienna, Handel's *Jephta*, and the world premiere of Eröd's *Orpheus ex machine* in Graz.

Associated with San Francisco Opera since 1962, Wolfram Skalicki has created the scenic designs here for such productions as *The Rake's Progress*, *Les Troyens*, *Boris Godunov*, *L'Africaine*, *Pique Dame*, *Andrea Chenier*, the Ring cycle, and this season's *Fidelio*. A native of Vienna, the stage designer launched his career with the creation of sets and costumes for a production of *Così fan tutte* at the Vienna Academy of Music, and subsequently became associated with the Vienna Burgtheater. With his wife, costume designer Amrei Skalicki, he has collaborated on productions in Vienna, Lyons, Marseilles, Strasbourg, Dortmund, Munich and Geneva, among other cities. His designs have been exhibited in Vienna, San Francisco and New York. Currently a professor of scenic design at the University of Graz, Skalicki has recently designed an *Elektra* in Dortmund, *Siegfried* in Marseilles and *Don Carlo* in Toronto. Among his numerous television credits are the settings for Massenet's *Manon* for French national television.

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GWYNETH JONES



SHERI GREENAWALD



Welsh soprano Gwyneth Jones this season portrays two heroines who go to extraordinary lengths to save the man they love—Floria Tosca and Leonore in *Fidelio*. It was in the latter role that she made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1969 and achieved one of her greatest successes in the 1970 Beethoven Centennial production of the work conducted by Leonard Bernstein in Vienna. She also sang *Aida* here in 1969 and returned in 1973 for *Elisabetta* in *Don Carlo*. An artist much in demand at the major opera houses and festivals of the world, Miss Jones' schedule has recently included the *Marschallin* in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Metropolitan Opera and in Munich, the title role in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Paris Opera in the Günther Rennert production created for San Francisco, *Salome* in Munich and Vienna and all three *Brünnhilde's* for the Ring cycles of Bayreuth and Covent Garden. Miss Jones made her debut at Covent Garden in 1964 as *Leonora* in *Il Trovatore*. She has since been heard in such diverse roles as *Donna Anna*, *Sieglinde*, *Desdemona*, *Tosca*, *Salome*, the *Marschallin* and *Chrysothemis*. Since her Bayreuth festival debut as *Sieglinde*, she has returned there to sing in new productions of *Die Meistersinger*, *Tannhäuser* (*Elisabeth* and *Venus*), and the *Ring*, as well as *Senta* and *Kundry*. In 1976 she was made *Kammersängerin* by the Bavarian government and in 1977 was granted that title by the President of Austria along with the title of *Commander of the British Empire* by Queen Elizabeth II.

Iowa-born Sheri Greenawald makes her first appearances with the San Francisco Opera this season as *Marzelline* in *Fidelio*. The young soprano has been heard in a number of world premieres, including Thomas Pasatieri's *Washington Square* with the Michigan Opera Theatre, the title role in Carlisle Floyd's *Bilby's Doll* with the Houston Grand Opera and John Eccles' *Semele* with the Brooklyn College Opera Theatre. She recently sang *Blonde* in Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* with the Omaha Opera. Other recent roles for Miss Greenawald include performances of *Adele* in *Die Fledermaus* with the Fort Worth Opera and the Shreveport Civic Opera and appearances in *Avery Fisher Hall* with the Pro Arte Chorale in Haydn's *Creation*. Miss Greenawald appeared with the Santa Fe Opera as *Susanna* in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 1976; she returned to Santa Fe during the summer of 1977 for performances of *Nanetta* in *Falstaff* and *Aaron Copland's "As It Fell Upon a Day"* with the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. In 1979 she will sing *Sophie* in the Houston Grand Opera production of *Werther*.



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SPAS WENKOFF



Bulgarian heldentenor Spas Wenkoff has had a remarkable career in the last few years, acclaimed in the major opera houses of Europe, particularly for his Wagner portrayals. A leading artist at the Berlin and Dresden State Operas, he is in great demand for such roles as Tristan, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, Parsifal and Walther in *Die Meistersinger*. In 1976/77 Wenkoff sang Tannhäuser and Parsifal in Berlin, Otello in Karlsruhe and Tristan in Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg and Frankfurt, and in the summer of 1976 he made a highly acclaimed debut as Tristan at the Bayreuth festival, a role for which he returned the following year. This spring he sang Tristan under the baton of Carlos Kleiber at La Scala and at Covent Garden under Colin Davis and subsequently appeared in a concert version of the opera at the Cincinnati May festival. These performances of Florestan mark the tenor's operatic stage debut in the United States. Engagements for the 1979/80 season include performances of *Tristan und Isolde* in Rome, Amsterdam, Hamburg, West Berlin, Vienna and Washington, D.C., *Tannhäuser* in Munich, Vienna and Stuttgart, and *Siegfried* in East Berlin. Next fall Wenkoff will tour Russia with the East Berlin Staatsoper.

JEROME PRUETT



Young American tenor Jerome Pruett makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season as the Italian singer in *Der Rosenkavalier* and as Jaquino in *Fidelio*. Currently leading lyric tenor at the Vienna Volksoper, Pruett was discovered in 1973 by Nicolai Gedda while teaching at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. He made his professional debut one year later opposite Montserrat Caballé in Carnegie Hall with the New York Opera Orchestra in Donizetti's "Parisina d'Este," which he has since recorded. Following his debut at Carnegie Hall, Pruett has appeared as a guest artist with the National Symphonie du Québec, the Welsh National Opera Company, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, the Lake George Festival Opera, the National Symphony Orchestra, the National Cathedral Choral Society and the Denver Lyric Opera. In 1977 he sang the role of Henry in Strauss' *Die schweigsame Frau* at the Glyndebourne festival and has been invited to repeat that portrayal in the summer of 1979.

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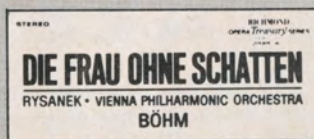
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SIEGMUND NIMSGERN



German baritone Siegmund Nimsgern, in his second appearance on the San Francisco Opera stage, sings Pizarro in *Fidelio*, a role he portrays this year in Munich, Salzburg, and at the Metropolitan Opera. Other of his engagements for 1978 have included Busoni's *Faust* with French National Radio and Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde* at La Scala. Known for his interpretations of Wagner roles, Nimsgern has been heard as Amfortas in *Parsifal*, Günther in *Götterdämmerung* and Telramund in *Lohengrin* in the opera houses of Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Vienna, Paris and London. Recent credits include appearances as Orest in *Elektra* and Jochanaan in *Salome* in Munich under the batons of Maestros Sawallisch and Hollreiser respectively, Jochanaan and Pizarro in Frankfurt with von Dohnanyi, Nabucco in Florence with Muti, and *Bluebeard's Castle* at the Paris Opera, led by Pierre Boulez. Among the recordings on which the baritone is heard are the von Karajan *Lohengrin* (EMI), *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* by Ullmann (EMI) and *Bluebeard's Castle* (CBS). Nimsgern debuted with the San Francisco Opera in 1974 in the role of Jochanaan.

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MARIUS RINTZLER



Bass Marius Rintzler made his American debut with the San Francisco Opera in 1972 as Alberich in the *Ring* cycle, returning in 1975 to portray Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*. This season he sings Rocco in *Fidelio*. The Romanian artist is currently a permanent member of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf, where he has appeared as Leporello, Osmin, Alberich, Bartolo, and Bluebeard, among other roles. Equally at home in opera and oratorio, Rintzler has been heard at Covent Garden as Alberich, at the Glyndebourne festival in *Anna Bolena* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, at the Edinburgh festival in Verdi's *Requiem*, which he subsequently performed with the London Royal Philharmonic, and at the Tanglewood festival with the Boston Symphony in the *Missa Solemnis*. Rintzler made his Metropolitan Opera debut in *Götterdämmerung* in 1973/74 and was heard in the *Ring* cycle there the following year. Last season at the Metropolitan he sang Varlaam in *Boris Godunov* and Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Recordings for the artist include Busoni's *Dr. Faust*, Beethoven's *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, Bach's *Cantata No. 10*, and Handel's *Orlando*, *Ariodante* and *Tamerlano*.

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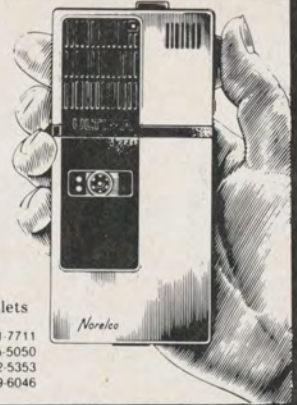
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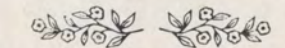
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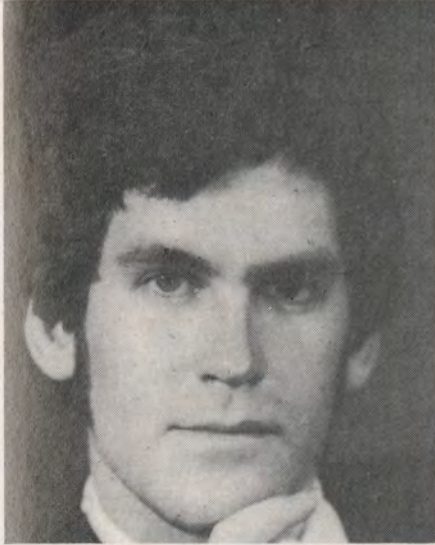
Alexander Malta returns to the San Francisco Opera in 1978 for his third season to sing Don Fernando in *Fidelio* and the Police Commissioner in *Der Rosenkavalier*. The Swiss-born bass made his American debut with the Company in 1976, appearing in *Thaïs*, *La Forza del Destino* and *Peter Grimes*; in 1977 he portrayed Fasolt in *Das Rheingold* and Truffaldino in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. A frequent guest artist in opera houses throughout Europe, Malta has appeared in opera and concert where his roles include Raimondo in Berlin, Vienna, Paris, and Munich, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the title role in *Don Pasquale* and the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte*. In 1977 he sang Colline in the new Ponnelle production of *La Bohème* in Strasbourg, where he returned this year to sing Golaud in the Ponnelle staging of *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Also in 1977 he had the role of Death in the television filming of Viktor Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* and appeared on German television in Otto Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. In the spring of this year Malta made his American orchestral debut as a soloist in Beethoven's ninth symphony with the Houston Symphony Orchestra.

BARRY BUSSE



Young American tenor Barry Busse, who has specialized in contemporary opera, makes his San Francisco debut this fall. His first appearance in opera was to create the part of the Shoe Salesman in the world premiere of Dominick Argento's *Postcard from Morocco* with the Minnesota Opera Company, a role he repeated in his Spring Opera Theater debut in 1973 and also sang in Lake George and Houston. He also created the role of Iron Hans for the world premiere of Conrad Susa's *Transformations* and has since appeared in such works as *The Good Soldier Schweik*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Four Saints in Three Acts* and *The Threepenny Opera*, as well as more unusual pieces such as *The Business of Good Government* and *Faust Counter Faust*. Busse's most recent success was in the American premiere of Thea Musgrave's *Mary Queen of Scots* with the Virginia Opera. Other 1977/78 engagements included the Houston Grand Opera production of Floyd's *Of Mice and Men* in Houston and Washington, D.C., and performances of *Arabella* with the same company. He also appeared with the Grand Rapids Symphony as Don José in *Carmen*. His roles in San Francisco this season are Roderigo in *Otello*, Flavio in *Norma*, Maintop in *Billy Budd* and the Marschallin's major-domo in *Der Rosenkavalier*.

JOHN MILLER



Basso John Miller will perform five roles with the San Francisco Opera this fall: Lieutenant Ratcliffe in *Billy Budd*, a noble of Brabant in *Lohengrin*, the Jailer in *Tosca*, one of the Marschallin's footmen in *Der Rosenkavalier* and the Second Prisoner in *Fidelio*. In 1971, as a finalist in the San Francisco Opera Auditions, he appeared in various productions with the Merola Opera Program. A former member of the San Francisco Opera chorus, he was heard in five solo roles during the 1973 season and with Spring Opera Theater sang in Cavalli's *L'Ormino* and the Bach *Passion According to St. Matthew*. Recently, Miller was featured in *Carmen* with the San Jose Symphony and in *The Elixir of Love* at the Bear Valley Music festival. As a result of placing in the finals of the Western Regional Metropolitan Opera Auditions this year, he was heard in a special broadcast performance of the Verdi *Requiem*. Miller's concert career has included appearances with the Oakland Symphony in Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* and with the San Francisco Symphony in *St. Matthew Passion*. In the spring he will be a soloist in the San Francisco Symphony premiere of Prokofiev's *Ivan the Terrible*.

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Dramatic Appeal
continued from p. 12

She had first come to *Fidelio* on 3 November, 1822, the work having suffered several seasons' neglect in Vienna. Over two decades later, Schröder-Devrient was asked by a Stuttgart publisher to contribute some reminiscences about the occasion to a Beethoven memorial anthology. Her candor was quite disarming:

"Under the guidance of my talented mother many of the traits in Leonore's character became clear to me; however, I was still too young, too little developed within to have a full understanding of what took place in Leonore's soul, emotions for which Beethoven had conceived his immortal harmonies. At the rehearsals which were led by Umlauf who was then kapellmeister, the limits of my underdeveloped young voice soon became known and many details of my part were changed for me so that the effect did not suffer too much."

The diva's position was not made easier by the composer's last-minute decision to conduct the opera himself, not out of any self-serving motivations, but simply out of a desire to honor the Empress on whose name-day the revival was slated to occur. It fell upon Schröder-Devrient to witness Beethoven in one of his more pathetic moments:

"At that time the master's physical ear was already closed to all sounds. With a bewildered face and unearthly inspired eyes, waving his baton back and forth with violent motions, he stood in the midst of the performing musicians and didn't hit a note. If he thought it should be *piano* he crouched down almost under the conductor's desk and if he wanted *forte* he jumped up with the strangest gestures, uttering the weirdest sounds. With each piece our courage dwindled further and I felt as though I were watching one of Hoffmann's fantastic figures appear before me. The inevitable happened: the deaf master threw the singers and

orchestra completely off the beat and into the greatest confusion, and no one knew any longer where they were. Beethoven, however, knew nothing of all this, and so with difficulty our rehearsal came to an end, with which he seemed to be well satisfied, for he laid down his baton with a cheery smile."

Umlauf replaced him at the performance, yet, even with his impairment, he was capable of acknowledging his soprano's contribution:

"Even then they used to call me a little genius; and indeed on that evening a more mature spirit seemed to have come over me, for several touches of sheer genius shone forth from my performance which must not have escaped Beethoven, for the next day he came himself, the great master, to bring me his thanks and his congratulations. With hot tears I moistened the hand that he offered me, and in my joy, I would not have exchanged anything in the world for this praise from Beethoven's lips! He promised at that time to write an opera for me, but unfortunately it remained nothing but a promise."

Wagner did more than promise. No doubt he felt, as did London's Henry Chorley, that Schröder-Devrient's Leonore, while inferior, vocally, to Malibran's, opened dramatic vistas previously unimagined. He would create a trio of great parts for her, Adriano in *Rienzi*, Senta and Venus. She, in turn, noticed the young conductor very early—years after the fact, she could quote to him *verbatim* a note he had sent her in 1829; and she thought enough of his talents to contribute her considerable allure to a benefit concert in his honor in Magdeburg in 1835.

Their relationship was a curious one. She would alternately regale him with the most intimate details of her sex life (she was later to remarry twice) and to criticize his scores in outrageously frank terms. During the

Rienzi rehearsals, she is reputed to have thrust a pile of manuscript pages back into his face, exclaiming, "I can't sing this nonsense; here, sing it yourself!"

Displays of temperament notwithstanding, Schröder-Devrient appears to have been one of the first singers to intuit a role psychologically. During the rehearsals of *The Flying Dutchman* she wrote that "the scenery is only painted cloth and canvas but to me it becomes what I wish. When I sing, it is all real—the trees stir in the wind, the flowers are blooming and fragrant, the fountains play, the stars quiver, the storms are terrible in their noise and violence."

For commitment like this, and for the fact that she would lend him considerable sums of money, Wagner compromised. They finally did fall out, after the composer had engaged his niece, Johanna, for Dresden. Schröder-Devrient felt envious of the younger singer and demanded payment on the debt. In truth, she was reaching the end of her operatic career and she knew it. The curtain fell finally in Riga in 1847 after a performance of *Iphigénie en Aulide*. Thenceforth, she devoted her time to recitals, which included *lieder* of Schumann and Schubert, and here, too, she conquered by the dramatic fervor of her interpretations.

Uncharacteristically of him, Wagner did not continue to bear a grudge. After her death in Coburg in 1860, he continued to extol her praises in his voluminous writings, and perhaps, he granted her the ultimate accolade. When he took possession of his new and final home, Wahnfried, in 1874, it was her likeness that he ordered carved over the portal. She was one of only two singers to be so honored. Wagner felt that she should represent antique tragedy, and, to this day the likeness of Schröder-Devrient remains there, a permanent memento of her unique gifts.

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continued from p. 20

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the dungeon, leading the Minister and the crowd, and performs the rescue before our very eyes. (He also makes a big thing of throwing the bribe-money back in Pizarro's face; not for him, a free man, to accept purses from tyrants.) So the happy ending proceeds as in *Fidelio*/1814, except that it all takes place in the dungeon, not in the courtyard above. But in 1805 Leonore and Florestan have had to suffer through considerably more than what is left to their lot in 1814. Not only that, the 1805 rescue, though stagey, is clear and even moderately exciting. In 1814 it is vitiated; the principals seem to take the symbol for the actuality and make up their minds that they are safe as soon as they hear the trumpet call. *Fidelio*/1814 is a rescue opera with a strangely disembodied rescue.

Point 4 concerns the final scene. We have already said that in 1805 this takes place down in the prison; it is only in the revision that there is a progression in the *mise en scène* from the darkness of the dungeon to the sunlight of the courtyard above, symbolic of the movement of Florestan from incarceration to freedom. And this finale has two other new features of even greater significance. When the Minister arrives, he delivers a succinct but impressive political address of which there was no trace in 1805. Tyranny is to be overturned, shackles will all be struck off, and brother is enjoined to embrace brother: he might as well be on the stump, because all this is said *before* there is any pretext for it in the drama—that is, *before* Leonore and Florestan are led in to offer an object lesson in these various political categories.

The other new feature is the presence of the Prisoners. Although they do not get to sing anything very distinctive, they play an all-important new role in the culmination of the total action. For not only Florestan, but all the other

prisoners are freed, too — including at least a small contingent of highwaymen, cut-throats, and laudanum pushers, we must suppose, along with the customary Gulag types. The rescue of Florestan becomes a rehearsal for the liberation of humanity at large, a consummation that has just been dilated upon in the Minister's homily.

What all these four points add up to is easy enough to see. Each one of the main roles has been reduced in extent, and what is more reduced in texture—in richness of characterization, motivation and action. On the other hand the Minister, who is no more than the personified voice of the French Revolution, and the Prisoners have been given greater prominence. As compared to *Leonore*/1805, *Fidelio*/1814 is much less a drama of human action and interaction. It is much more a drama of ideas.

One could say, of course, that what Beethoven and his new librettist of 1814 were doing was making explicit certain symbolic ramifications of the action that had always been latent in the story, even in 1805. There is some truth to this, and it is also true that Beethoven and his *original* librettist paid some attention to the symbolism. Two rather interesting bits of evidence make this plain. First, for the music to accompany the prayer "O welch' ein Augenblick!" when Leonore frees Florestan (and the Minister frees all the prisoners), Beethoven reached back to an old cantata in which he had celebrated the ideals of human nobility and liberalism.

"Thus mankind mounts toward the light" was the original text for this music, a beautiful sample of what the Germans call Beethoven's *Humanitäts-melodik*. Second, the long stretch of hectic rejoicing at the very end of the opera—and in 1805 this was even longer and even more hectic—includes

two significant lines of poetry,

Wer ein holdes Weib errungen
Stimm' in unsern Jubel ein
(He who has found a noble wife,
Let him join in our rejoicing)

—lines which may not seem all that striking in themselves, perhaps, but which had ample resonance for a German-speaking audience of the time. They were quoted from Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, a celebrated paean to the revolutionary ideals of brotherhood and freedom—the same *Ode to Joy* that Beethoven turned to for the choral Finale of his Ninth Symphony, some twenty years later.

No question, then, that Beethoven in 1805 was already on to the possibilities of universal symbolism inherent in *Leonore's* straightforward tale of a woman's heroism. It is still ironic that the ideological aspects of the action should have been so heavily underscored in 1814 — ironic, because Beethoven's own commitment to the conventional liberalism of his day had diluted considerably by that time. The well-known story of his tearing up the title page of the *Eroica* Symphony with its dedication to Napoleon is evidence of that. And it is ironic, too, that this opera with its stepped-up revolutionary message should have appeared in Vienna on the eve of the Congress of Vienna, convened to entrench the conservative order. Beethoven, indeed, was quite happy to write several rather gaudy compositions in celebration of that infamous gathering. People who know *Leonore/1805*—and it is now available on records for all to know—often express more than a tinge of regret at its transmogrification in 1814. (Opera critics are in truth notorious softies as far as the early versions of all operas are concerned.) Beethoven "drains his characters of individuality and smudges the portrait of the hero and heroine so movingly drawn



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in 1805," writes Winton Dean in his *Beethoven Reader* essay. "Humanity was of more importance to Beethoven than the individual. . . . It is impossible to imagine Mozart or Verdi sacrificing their characters to the expediency of a moral, however elevated." Dean is too fine a critic to let his predilections intrude, but it is impossible to overlook his implied valuation of a dramatic ideal based on human interaction over one based on abstract ideas and ideology. And impossible, for some of us, not to agree with him.

Still, I think we have to recognize that this scale of values is a matter of taste or temperament, perhaps even of national temperament. Nineteenth-century German audiences relished operas in which the action could be viewed symbolically; Italian audiences preferred the clash of human passions. Modern audiences seem to be drawn equally to operas of both kinds, or what is perhaps more likely, indifferent to the dramatic issues in both. Plenty of operas thrive today on plots which are essentially symbolic. We do not need a very long memory to think of some: *Lohengrin*, *Billy Budd*, *Turandot*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

I cannot help feeling, too, that Beethoven was playing his cards correctly in 1814. "Everything I do outside my music is done badly," he wrote in one particularly miserable letter. Certainly he was a man with painfully little insight into his own motives and emotions, and one whose uncomprehending forays into the field of human relationships led again and again to disaster—sometimes literally so. He entirely lacked Mozart's sensitive estimation of people's slightest moves and moods, or Verdi's profound identification with the sources of human passion. The depiction of human character was not something that Beethoven was cut out

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to do well. After *Fidelio* he never wrote another opera.

What he could do extremely well was project ideas and ideals in his music. He did this with a force that shook the whole nineteenth century in the Ninth Symphony, with its setting of the *Ode to Joy*—a poem which had already supplied a couple of clinching lines to *Leonore/1805*, as has been mentioned. He had done the same sort of thing with the solitary Prisoners' Chorus of 1805, the moving "O welche Lust!" and he simply glorified the effect when he added the second Prisoners' Chorus in 1814. And in another way, without words, he had done the same in the *Eroica* Symphony and in the great masterpieces of instrumental music that followed after it.

In revising his opera in the direction of greater idealization and universality, then, Beethoven was leading from strength. To be sure, it was not this basic conceptual change that made the piece stageworthy; what did that was the nuts and bolts of theatrical emergency plumbing and tinkering. But it is one thing to make an opera stageworthy, another to make sure that it actually holds the stage. *Leonore/1805* ekes out at best a marginal existence, up in the Rare Books section of the UC Music Library and on the *Odyssey* and *Tower* import shelves. It is probable that *Fidelio/1814* would suffer much the same fate today, or so I would guess, if the symbolic aspects of its action had not been made so much more frank and emphatic.

Joseph Kerman, Professor of Music at Berkeley, is the author of Opera as Drama, The Beethoven Quartets and several other books. He is the co-editor of a new journal published by the University of California Press, 19th-Century Music.

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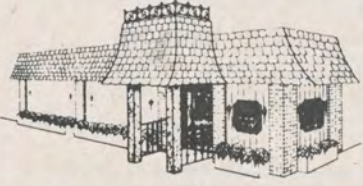
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Gwyneth Jones
 continued from p. 40

start with the most difficult one. Since I was planning to do all three Brunnhildes anyway, it was immaterial to me which I did first.

"Interpreting Brunnhilde is particularly interesting and rewarding because of her psychological development throughout the Ring—her growth from Wotan's naïve teen-age daughter, who then goes through all this suffering and awakening into womanhood. Through her love for Siegfried and her additional suffering in *Götterdämmerung*, she becomes a kind of supergoddess in the final scene, fantastically offering her life to save the world and be united with Siegfried."

Rave reviews for her *Götterdämmerung* Brunnhilde poured in from the Bayreuth festival and Miss Jones has been the reigning Brunnhilde of the Ring cycle there ever since. This past summer she accomplished the incredible feat of sandwiching in a performance of the Marschallin at the Munich festival at the adamant insistence of conductor Carlos Kleiber between the *Walküre* and *Siegfried* Brunnhildes at Bayreuth, singing three nights in a row.

Where to go from here? There are three new roles in the *hochdramatisches Fach* coming up in the near future: first the Dyer's Wife in a new Ponnelle production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in Cologne, which she then will portray in Hamburg and Paris—the latter for the opening of the Bernard Lefort régime in 1980. Soon afterwards will come her first Turandot and her first Isolde. "I'm longing to do Isolde," she confesses. "It's such a fabulous role. I've studied it already and it feels so good in the voice that I just can't wait. The *Götterdämmerung* Brunnhilde is much more demanding, both vocally and dramatically, Brunnhilde is more revenge and *Rache*; she's

sort of biting at the floorboards, and one uses a lot more physical energy. Isolde has a far more lyric line, especially in Act II. I've already sung the *Liebestod* in concert, so I know there's no problem there.

"After Isolde, Elektra is a must. I feel it's a role one shouldn't do too early in one's career. I sense inside that I will do it and I'll know when the time is right. I'd love to sing more Mozart, especially the Countess, but people don't think of me for these roles because they want me for Salomes and Brunnhildes. And then I'd like to do some comic roles, something like *Fledermaus*, just for fun. You know, I really enjoy laughing."

It becomes abundantly clear both in talking with the vivacious soprano and watching her rehearse and perform on stage, that the theater is her lifeblood. She draws energy from that mysterious electric current which runs between audience and artist and gives that energy back in full. Rather than the one or two lengthy holidays a year that most singers take, Miss Jones takes four short holidays a year because "I can't be away from the theater for more than two weeks. I begin to get nervous and uncomfortable; I begin to feel as if something is missing if I lose contact with the public for too long. You know, one feels the atmosphere of a performance, the mood one creates with the audience. It's as if you have enormous arms, embracing the public and holding them close to you, even if it's four or five thousand people. It's as if a wonderful warm cloud descends and we're all caught up in it together. It's the most fabulous sensation. You feel so close, almost as if you were united, lifted and carried away into a world of make-believe."



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An exhibition from the collection of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden GDR, organized jointly by the National Gallery of Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. It is made possible through a grant from the IBM Corporation, with additional funding from the Robert Wood Johnson, Jr. Charitable Trust, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and The Museum Society.

They Came to the Fair



photo by Ron Scherl.

The second annual San Francisco Opera Fair, held last month all over the Opera House, proved even more successful than that of the previous year, according to Fair chairman Mrs. Jean Donnell. More than \$50,000 was made for the San Francisco Opera, which will be used by the Company to help match the new Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Members of all departments of the Company, all the Affiliate groups and more than two hundred volunteers worked to insure the success of the occasion and to serve the thousands of people who attended. A generous grant from Eureka Federal Savings and Loan helped make the Fair possible.

Luciano Pavarotti joined Kurt Herbert Adler in signing autographs for Fair-goers. They had both presented a concert in the Hearst Greek Theater in Berkeley earlier that afternoon, were whisked back to the Opera House by a police escort to take part in the Fair.

The action spilled over into the courtyard on a sunny Sunday afternoon at the San Francisco Opera Fair last month.



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"It is still Relevant

Believing that "the idea behind the opera is still relevant,"
Federik Mirdita talks about *Fidelio*

by Arthur Kaplan



Federik Mirdita works on staging *Fidelio* with Gwyneth Jones and, in the background, Alexander Malta.

Making his American debut with the 1978 production of *Fidelio*, stage director Federik Mirdita comes to San Francisco with a varied background in theatre and music. In addition to specializing in theatre arts, psychology and art history at the University of Vienna, he had musical training, including study of the violin at the Gymnasium in

Graz, Austria. "In directing opera," states Mirdita, "understanding of music and theatre are of equal importance. Of course it's essential to have the theatrical, the actor's viewpoint. But it's just as important to know the musical end of things, to feel the spirit of the music and to be able to read between the lines."

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Photo by Robert Messick.

The Albanian-born director, who was raised in Austria, has been reading between the lines since his university days. It was then that he began working in small, student-type theatre groups in and around Vienna. A few years later he became a theatrical assistant at the Salzburg Festspiele, and in that atmosphere getting into opera was a "logical



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progression." He actually began his operatic career as stage manager of the newly reopened Vienna Staatsoper in 1955 and became an assistant to Herbert von Karajan when the famed conductor/director began his stint at the opera house there.

"Although I worked with Karajan for five years, I can't say that was the most important part of my early opera training. As an assistant I worked with many, many people on a large repertoire. I had to learn about 50 operas and that learning experience, building my repertoire, was the crux of those years for me."

After that period, Mirdita decided to free lance. Although he has staged a wide variety of operas from Monteverdi's *Ulisse* to contemporary works (he will soon direct both Penderecki's *Paradise Lost* and Eröd's *Kolander und Eurydike*, the latter a world premiere, for the opera house in Graz), he acknowledges that Mozart is the god of his opera firmament and that the composer's works have furnished the focal point of his career to date. "Each director has his specialty," avows Mirdita, "although one tries to be as broad as possible—not to fit into a slot. Mozart, for me, is to opera what Shakespeare is to the legitimate theatre. Ultimately Mozart brings the greatest fulfillment because it offers the greatest challenge. He provides the richest combination of musical and theatrical content."

Mirdita admits Mozart's influence on Beethoven and *Fidelio*, but more from a spiritual kinship than a purely musical influence. "As you know, Beethoven went to Vienna to become Mozart's pupil, but his master-to-be died at that point. Mozart, Haydn and Bee-

thoven are considered the Viennese classical composers, but none of them were from Vienna. What joined them together was an idea—a very strong humanitarian ethos, which is clearly expressed in *Fidelio*.

“Though the characters all have Spanish names and the action takes place in eighteenth-century Spain, the time and place are unimportant. The idea behind the opera is universal; it is still relevant today. But it wouldn’t bring it any closer to us or make it more meaningful to play it in modern dress. In fact, it probably affects us more in its historical context. Modern costumes go with modern music, not with Beethoven’s musical style.”

The keen-minded and incisive director is not categorically opposed to updating opera settings. “It depends in large part on the work. I feel very strongly about *Fidelio*. The language of the libretto is so strongly rooted in its time, that it would have to be modernized as well. And then where do you stop? It makes more sense to take the work of art as its creator conceived it.”

Mirdita admits that there are some problems to making the story of *Fidelio* credible for theatrically demanding contemporary audiences. “First, I would list the major weakness of the libretto. It begins as a minor theatrical genre—a small type of theatre piece—and develops and grows throughout the work to a story concerning humanity in the largest sense, thereby overwhelming the initial plot premise and the individual characters. By the final freedom chorus the opera really becomes an oratorio. The bridge between the 18th and 19th century opera seems to go straight through the middle of *Fidelio*. From the very formal 18th cent-



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ury music to the very individual 19th century romantic treatment—the break is very visible.

"I've never really seen anyone try to bridge that gap—to bring the opera under a single roof, so to speak. It just has to be accepted. What also must be accepted, although it's far less of a problem today than it was 30 or 40 years ago when the sopranos singing the role were of more ample dimensions, is the believability of Leonore's disguise. With someone like Gwyneth Jones in the role, this is no problem. Today's singers put so much more emphasis on the acting, on the total performance, so it becomes more believable. Fundamentally, it's one of those operatic conventions that one simply accepts, just like such trouser roles as Cherubino or Octavian."

What does he think of the criticism that the characters in *Fidelio* are one-dimensional, cardboard creations who do not develop and are of no intrinsic interest in themselves without Beethoven's music? In Mirdita's response, at once immediate and strong, one senses the firm sense of purpose of a director with knowledge of theatre—its inner resources and exterior trappings. "That's true of Jacquino, Marzelline and Rocco, yes, but not of the main characters. Through the psychological theatre one can definitely make something interesting of these roles. The situations the characters have to undergo are psychologically interesting in themselves. In the second act, for example, when Rocco and Leonore go down into the vault of the prison, the evolving melodrama—that is the drama with the music—creates a tension which arouses our interest."

It is clear that the director firmly believes in *Fidelio* as a total work of art, despite its flaws. The current staging represents a double challenge to him: unifying an admittedly dichotomous drama and working in a physical production which he inherited. "It's both a challenge and a handicap," he concedes. "It is a new situation for me. I have always worked with a design well ahead of time, from the beginning. It's the way things are usually done in Europe. The design should aid the director in realizing his ideas. This production dates from 1964 and, in a certain way, is a stylistic leftover from the late 1950s. So there's a 20-year gap I will try to fill. In 20 years there have been a great number of changes in acting and directing; I hope the problems will not be overwhelming, but we must resolve the conflict between the style of the set and a late 1970s playing style. I've directed *Fidelio* before and the ideas are so inherently strong in the work itself that my basic conception remains the same."

Mirdita is somewhat concerned by the current era of the stage director where the critics and public begin to speak of Director X's *Don Giovanni* and not the Mozart/Da Ponte *Don Giovanni*. "Every staging has to go through the mind of the director," says Mirdita. "Sometimes this puts a strong personal slant on the work. That's why I like to direct the masterpieces of the repertoire—like Mozart for example, where the ideas are so clearly expressed that one does not have to attempt to dominate them with a personal interpretation. Toscanini once said that the classic masters hit back—they can defend themselves."

aristocrats, the cognoscenti, all had fled the city or, like Prince Joseph Lobkowitz, were serving with the Austrian forces; the Lobkowitz palace was commandeered as headquarters of the French general and his staff. Of Beethoven's friends only Prince Lichnowsky and his wife, Collin, the poet, and Sonnleithner, the librettist, attended the opening night. Short, dark, young-looking and bespectacled, Beethoven conducted the performance from his seat at the pianoforte, his back to a theater only half-full with French officers and soldiers. The opera's reception was considerably less than enthusiastic. Someone suggested that the public's judgment was the true one, and quoted Beethoven the proverb: *Vox populi, vox Dei* (The voice of the people is the voice of God). The populist composer thought a moment and replied curtly, "I don't believe it."

Six months later, *Fidelio's* first revival fared no better. However, this time, Beethoven could not attribute the failure to an unfamiliar audience.

Vienna had returned to its former ways. Following the Battle of Three Emperors at Austerlitz and Napoleon's smashing victory, peace had been declared, and by January the city was almost free of French troops. The nobility came out of hiding. Their equipages and running footmen clattered in the streets again, and the theatres were crowded. A Doctor Reeve left the comment that "the people are indifferent upon every topic but amusement, the new ballet or play, the dress of the bourgeois, the parade of the Emperor's return more eagerly talked about than the miserable treaty of peace, the loss of an army, or the overthrow of an emperor. (Franz II had been made to step down from the throne of the Holy Roman Empire to that of merely Emperor of Austria.) The subject is *traurig*, they say, and in this world we ought to amuse ourselves."

The climate was changing. Beethoven's music was beginning to be less in general demand. "He was always marvelled at," Czerny wrote, "and respected as an extraordinary being, and his greatness was suspected even by those who did not understand him."

But the government felt a chill in the slightest breeze of rebelliousness, and, according to young Stendahl, favored music "more suitable to the taste of the age which diverted the mind from politics . . . pleasures of a more sensual kind which are less troublesome to a government." Security agents were everywhere, censorship tight.

Beethoven, too, changed. From a staunch republican he became a confirmed patriot of his adopted country. At the same time he could post a letter to Johann Kanka in Prague raging at "this anarchical, monarchical Austria!!!!!!!" He considered Napoleon an imperialist marauder and betrayer of revolutionary ideals.

Summering at the Silesian estate of Prince Lichnowsky who was entertaining a number of Frenchmen for the evening, Beethoven was requested by his host to play for the guests. The composer flatly refused. Jokingly, the Prince warned him that he could be arrested. Beethoven took the Prince at his word. He hastened from the estate, walked to Troppeau and by post back to Vienna. Arriving home, he released his pent-up anger. He seized the bust of his patron and dashed it to the floor where it shattered.

That fall, learning of Napoleon's decisive triumph at Jena, Beethoven wrathfully declared to his friend, Krumpholz, "It's a pity I don't understand the art of war as well as I do the art of music, I would conquer him!"

Goethe met Napoleon at Erfurt. Flattered by the Emperor saying he could write a better play than Shakespeare, the poet pronounced him "the greatest mind the world has ever known" and pledged Napoleon his "complete devotion." It infuriated Beethoven who considered "a great poet the most precious jewel of any nation."

"Goethe," said Beethoven severely, "delights far too much in the court atmosphere—far more than befits a poet." Offended by distinctions of class, somewhat defensively he asked, "Why laugh at the absurdities of virtuosi when poets, who ought to be the first teachers of a nation, forget all else for the sake of this glitter?"

continued on p. 101

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Otello 7:30 pm D,E		Norma 8 pm G,H	Billy Budd 8 pm J,L	Otello 2 pm M,N
13	14	15	16	17
Norma 7:30 pm D,F		Otello 8 pm J,L	Billy Budd 8 pm G,I	Norma 2 pm M,O
20	21	22	23	24
	Billy Budd 7:30 pm D,F	Lohengrin 7:30 pm J,K	Norma 1:30 pm X Otello 8 pm G,H	Billy Budd 2 pm M,O
27	28	29	30	1
Don Giovanni 7:30 pm D,E		Lohengrin 7:30 pm G,I	Don Giovanni 8 pm J,L	Opera Fair Noon to 8 pm
4	5	6	7	8
Lohengrin 7:30 pm D,F		Don Giovanni 8 pm G,I	Lohengrin 1 pm X Tosca 8 pm J,L	Don Giovanni 2 pm M,N
11	12	13	14	15
Werther 7:30 pm D,E		Tosca 8 pm G,I	Don Giovanni 1:30 pm X Werther 8 pm J,K	Lohengrin 1:30 pm M,N
18	19	20	21	22
Tosca 7:30 pm D,F		Der Rosenkavalier 8 pm G,H	Werther 8 pm L	Tosca 2 pm M,O
25	26	27	28	29
La Bohème 7:30 pm D,F		Werther 8 pm G,I	La Bohème 1:30 pm X Der Rosenkavalier 8 pm J,K	Werther 2 pm M,N
1	2	3	4	5
		La Bohème 8 pm G,H	Fidelio 8 pm J,L	Der Rosenkavalier 2 pm M,O
8	9	10	11	12
Fidelio 7:30 pm D,F		Der Rosenkavalier 8 pm I	Fidelio 2 pm M,O La Bohème 8 pm J,K	The Anniversary Gala, 7 pm
15	16	17	18	19
Tosca 7:30 pm E	La Bohème** 8 pm	Fidelio 8 pm G,H	La Bohème*** 1:30 pm Tosca, 8 pm K	La Bohème 2 pm M,N
22	23	24	25	26

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Ever the courtier, Goethe, when he encountered the composer in Teplitz, found Beethoven's talent amazing but "unfortunately an utterly untamed personality who is not altogether in the wrong in holding the world to be detestable, but surely does not make it any the more enjoyable either for himself or others by his attitude."

Walking together, poet and composer met the royal family on an outing. Goethe stood aside and bowed respectfully. Beethoven pulled his hat firmly down on his head and marched on, disdaining that kind of etiquette. And when Goethe became annoyed at passersby constantly saluting them, Beethoven twitted him: "Don't let that trouble you, Your Excellency; perhaps the greetings are intended for me."

Though it irked his pride and violated his egalitarianism, Beethoven, because of personal encumbrances, continued his dependency on the largesse of aristocrats. The grandees who governed the court theater, among them Lobkowitz and Esterhazy, constituted a maddening bureaucracy which drove him to refer to them as "the princely rabble."

"I have become accustomed," he said, "to the basest, vilest treatment in Vienna—Away with all consideration for those vandals of art."

He contemplated accepting the invitation of Jerome Bonaparte, youngest brother of Napoleon and King of Westphalia, to act as kapellmeister. To Breitkopf, his publisher, Beethoven wrote, "I am forced by intrigues and cabals and low tricks to leave the only remaining German fatherland. . . . I am only waiting for my decree to make arrangement for my journey."

Realizing what a disaster his departure would be to Vienna, Countess Erdody drew up a contract to match the Westphalian offer and the "conditions" under which Beethoven was to remain: A life-salary of 4,000 florins a year, freedom to tour, the use of the Theater-an-der-Wien for an annual benefit concert, and to conduct a charity concert annually or compose a new work for one.

The agreement was signed but it soon proved ineffective. "This accursed war!" Beethoven informed Breitkopf. "We are short of money in Vienna for

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we need twice as much as formerly. Curse this war!" With the arrival of the French his gulden, which previously "were worth something," had depreciated so that his 4,000 were equal only to 1,000. He could not summer in the countryside. He managed only a day or two in Baden.

The fortunes of *Fidelio* appeared linked to those of Napoleon. Its failure had occurred when the Emperor was at his zenith. With his fall, the opera was destined to rise. At the close of 1813, the Battle of Leipzig signalled Napoleon's collapse. Early in 1814, Paris capitulated and he abdicated, and on May 23rd, revived at the Karthnerthor Theater, *Fidelio*, altered in form and content, met with unqualified success.

As the congress of nations convened in September and Vienna transformed itself into a festival, *Fidelio* was staged about twenty times. At one performance, the four victorious monarchs listened to Beethoven's apostrophes to freedom and love while their ministers, dominated by Prince Metternich, prepared to carve up the body of Europe and to set the rivalries, like time bombs, for a century of wars.

Nationalism shot up like a blazing torch. Caustically, Heinrich Heine wrote: "We were ordered to be patriotic and we became patriots, for we do all that our rulers bid us. . . . When Providence, snow and the Cossacks had destroyed Napoleon's best forces, we Germans got our orders from the highest quarters to free ourselves from the foreign yoke, and we flared up with manly indignation at the servitude we had borne too long, and inspired ourselves with the good tunes and bad poetry of Koerner's songs, and fought and won our freedom; for we do all that our rulers bid us."

Beethoven replaced the Italian musical expressions on his scores with terms in German. Upon Napoleon's escape from Elba and the Tsar's support of the allies bringing the final convulsion of the One Hundred Days to an end at Waterloo, Beethoven turned openly pro-Russian. Earlier, in the Rasoumovsky quartets commissioned by the Tsar's ambassador, "he pledged himself," said Czerny, "to weave Russian

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melody into every quartet," and did so in two of the three.

Feelings ran high. Victory over the French invader reverberated as right vanquishing wrong, echoing the liberation hymned in *Fidelio*. The so-called Holy Alliance was drawn up by Tsar Alexander I and signed by all of Europe's rulers, and everyone looked to an era of peace and liberty.

"Nothing," wrote Thayer in his *Life of Beethoven*, "presaged the thirty years' sway of Metternichism." Barely six years would pass before these same kings "would solemnly declare all popular and constitutional rights to be held not otherwise than as grants and indulgences . . . that they would snuff treason in every effort of the people to hold princes to their pledged words."

The black reaction of those three decades were to culminate in the revolutions of 1848. Liberalism became anathema. Heine was forced into exile in France.

"If national unity ever comes to Germany," he prophesied, "it will be maintained only by force and violence, never in the name of reason."

When Napoleon was interned on St. Helena, Goethe greeted the news, saying, "They have chained down another Prometheus." Hearing of Bonaparte's death in May 1821, Beethoven remarked, "I have already written the music for that catastrophe."

Fidelio bore testimony to Beethoven's unflagging will. It defied tyrants; Leonore stood as his symbol of liberation and love. Notwithstanding his disappointments, the treachery and regressions he witnessed in the unfolding political tragedy of Europe, his spirit remained indomitable. With steadfast faith he transcended his own contradictions and his deafness, ill-health and loneliness.

The year after Napoleon died, Beethoven saw the last revival of *Fidelio* in his lifetime. Two years later, in 1824, his "Ode to Freedom" was joined by his "Ode to Joy."

Barry Hyams has written the biography of art collector Joseph H. Hirshhorn which is to be published by E. P. Dutton in the spring of next year.

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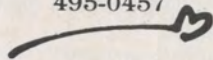
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