

Elektra

1979

Friday, September 28, 1979 8:00 PM (Live broadcast)

Tuesday, October 2, 1979 8:00 PM

Sunday, October 7, 1979 2:00 PM

Thursday, October 11, 1979 7:30 PM

Saturday, October 13, 1979 8:00 PM

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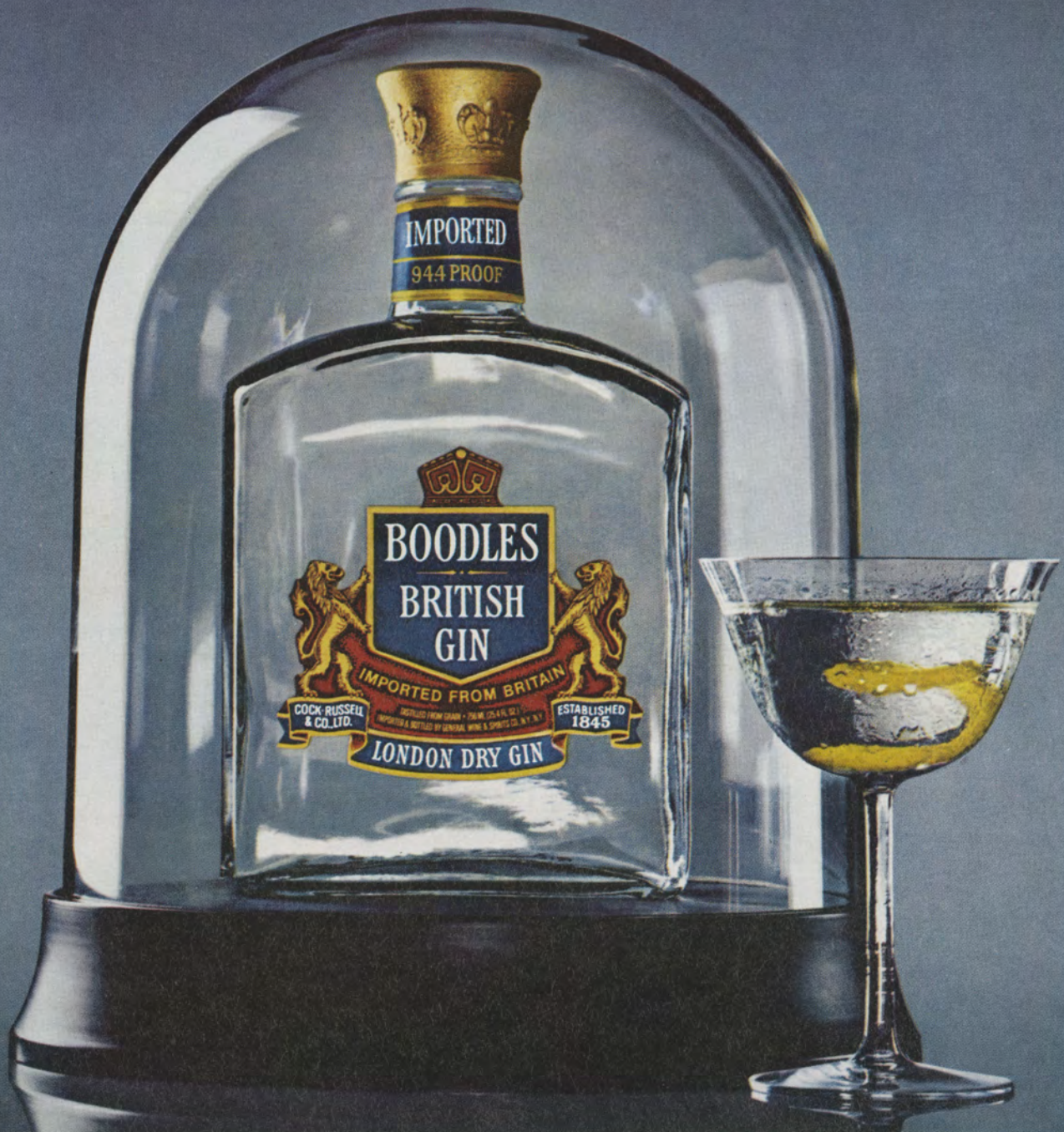
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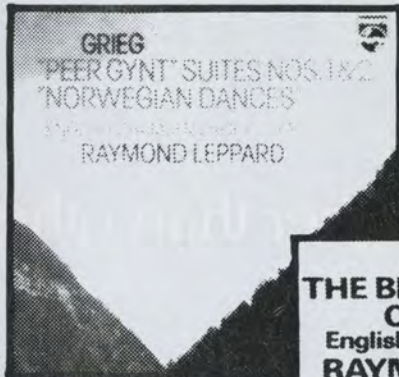
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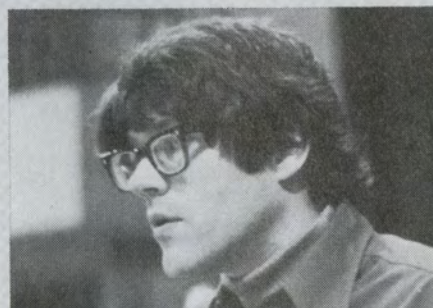
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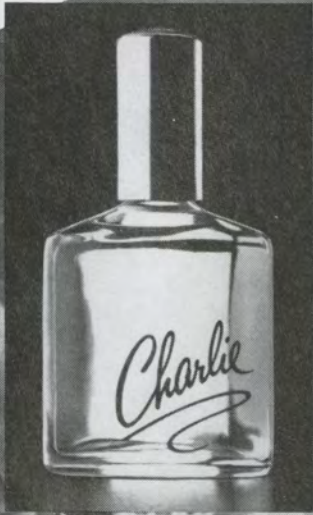
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Cover: View of the sally port of the heavily fortified extension of the acropolis at Mycenae in Greece, photographed by David Powers. Grateful acknowledgement for assistance in arrangements is made to Hal Haskell, secretary of the American School of Classical Studies, Athens, and to the Kolizeras brothers of Mycenae.



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# Elektra's Emotional Twin

*Chrysothemis May Not Sing as Long as Elektra nor as Arduously, but Her Music Is Overwhelming*

By SPEIGHT JENKINS

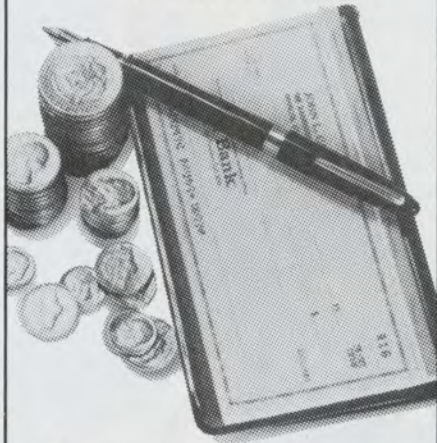
I remember the date well—March 25, 1961. It was a Saturday afternoon broadcast, and on it Leonie Rysanek sang her first American Chrysothemis in *Elektra*. I had seen the opera once or twice in Europe,

but it had not been given at the Met for nine years. Earlier that season Inge Borkh, a fine and thrilling Elektra, had scored a success with the title role, but it was this broadcast performance, which I saw



Chrysothemis turns away as Orestes murders Aegisthus. Picture on a Grecian vase dating to about 500 B.C.

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from the fourth level of the old Met, that made me really aware of Chrysothemis. She may not sing as long as Elektra or as arduously, but her music is overwhelming. Additionally, the hysterical nature of Rysanek’s interpretation made the character burn with life. She pounded the stage after her entrance aria, tore her hair when she announced to Elektra that “Orest is dead” and in the final duet sang with such abandon that her role seemed for those few moments the dominant one. It was a transfixing experience, as vivid now 18 years later as on leaving the opera house on that early spring afternoon. No questions about what she did were asked then, but as the years passed and Rysanek frequently sang her interpretation of Elektra’s “milder” sister, voices have been heard wondering if her Chrysothemis was too wild, too manic, too hysterical. Wasn’t Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s purpose to create a gentle, Elsa-like maiden who would serve as foil for the maenad Elektra? And the question became larger than just a criticism of Rysanek’s performance, because her frequent appearances in the role in the United States, France, Germany and Austria have influenced many who have followed her. I have seen two or three, Americans and Germans, and each has been a wild woman; the more docile sister-type, such as San Francisco’s Lisa della Casa in the late ‘50s, is no longer visible.

Such influence over a role’s interpretation is not unique in opera: certainly Maria Callas’ Norma and Tosca and Rysanek’s Senta made a deep imprint on many who have followed, while no one sings Isolde anywhere in the world without being conscious of Birgit Nilsson’s interpretation. Still, even with Rysanek enjoying performances of Chrysothemis all over the globe—more

now than even in the ‘60’s—the question must be explored, is all the carrying on justified?

The first place to look is the Hofmannsthal libretto and any markings about the character by Strauss in the score. And the answer is immediate. She may have been originally conceived as a foil for Elektra, but in Hofmannsthal’s text she is every bit as wild and woolly as her sister. Her long monologue, which follows Elektra’s more famous invocation of her father, culminates in a sensible statement, “I am a woman and want a woman’s destiny.” But she is obviously on the ragged edge of sanity and, even as she describes her state to Elektra, teeters more toward uncontrollable hysteria. She sings of rooms stripped of any appointments, of poverty and oppression, all of which she sees as their lot because of Elektra’s opposing Klytämnestra. She describes herself as “mad with fear” with her knees quaking “night and day” from what might be done to her by her angry mother and stepfather. At several places in the aria Strauss wrote into the score directions that suggest a woman in a frenzy.

Her second entrance, in which she tells the disbelieving Elektra that Orest is dead, is as wild; when servants confirm the bad news and Elektra decides that the two of them must avenge their father, she flips from wildness to sheer horror. For Elektra tries to seduce her into murder. A reader might take Elektra’s words to imply some kind of sexual relationship between the two women or at least sexual desire on Elektra’s part. But in the known thinking of Strauss or Hofmannsthal this was not considered. Elektra is trying her damndest to convince Chrysothemis, for whom she has barely disguised

continued on p. 16

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Amy Shuard (as Elektra), 1966.



Irene Jessner as Chrysothemis and Rose Pauly as Elektra, 1938.



Photo: Dennis Galloway

A sunny moment in the gloom! The San Francisco Opera presented *Elektra* in the University of California's outdoor Hearst Greek Theatre in 1966. Waiting "backstage" Regina Resnik as Klytemestra adjusts her camera while Dorothy Cole as the overseer (right) talks to the serving maids.



Christel Goltz (as Elektra), 1958.



Inge Borkh (as Elektra), 1953

# Earlier *Elektras*

*Scenes from Previous  
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Productions of the  
Strauss Masterpiece*



Rose Pauly  
as Elektra and  
Kerstin Thorborg  
as Klytemnestra,  
1938.



Rose Pauly in the title role, 1938.






  
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contempt, to join her in murder. So she plays to what she knows her sister cares about: a husband who will give her children. From Elektra's words, however, we do learn something about Chrysothemis. The younger sister is bigger, healthier and far more muscular than Elektra. From the maids' descriptions and Elektra's own self-portrait we can visualize her as haggard, worn and —though it has almost never proved possible to sing the role and look so —thin. On the other hand, she not only describes Chrysothemis as in the pink of health but even suggests that her strength could match that of Aegisthus though Elektra's could not. All through this scene Chrysothemis is in another stage of hysteria — frozen — and when she finally breaks loose and runs into the palace, one can imagine her collapsing into tears.

If then the text and the music suggest a woman as crazy in a different way as her sister, curiosity leads back to the source. Without exception the portrait by the Greeks of this youngest member of the house of Atreus differs radically from that of Hofmannsthal. Indeed, it can be argued that no one in the story was so altered by the Viennese dramatist.

The saga of Agamemnon-Klytämnestra-Elektra-Orest (all will be spelled in the German manner consistent with the characters in the opera though in English translation from the Greek the names are not spelled as they are in German by Hofmannsthal) inspired almost surely the largest number of Greek plays next to Oedipus. Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides all composed a drama on the subject as did many lesser Greek dramatists, and in modern days the story has found its way into the modern French theater of Jean Giraudoux and into America via Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* (which also became an opera by Marvin David Levy). Yet a look at *Greek Myths* by Robert Graves reveals, however, that the murder of Klytäm-



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nestra by Orest, crucial to all versions of the story, did not occur. Had it taken place, it would certainly have been recorded by Homer (assuming he didn't nod), and the blind poet tells only the tale of Agamemnon's murder by Klytämnestra and Aegisth and then Orest's murder of Aegisth.

According to Graves, the dramatists had a reason for changing the facts. The priests of their era were eager to raise the status of fathers and lower the veneration of the mother. All the plays detail the horror of Agamemnon's massacre (which strangely has a historical date, January 13), but do not dwell on the causes for Klytämnestra's rage at her husband. He had killed her first husband and first-born child, sacrificed one of her daughters by him, Iphigenie, as he prepared to go to Troy and was known to be living openly with Priam's daughter, Cassandra, whom he had brought with him home to Mycenae. The plays, however, are concerned with Elektra's having saved Orest—sending him off with the ever-present shepherd so that he could grow up to avenge his father's murder—and her implacable hatred for Klytämnestra and her lover, Aegisth. But Chrysothemis is amazingly unimportant. She is not mentioned at all in the first part of the story and in the years afterward is described as becoming subservient to Klytämnestra and Aegisth. While Elektra, depending on the version, is either banished to live with the dogs or with a peasant, Chrysothemis is allowed to stay in the palace though forbidden to marry and is apparently treated in a manner suitable to a royal daughter. She figures in the vengeance of Orest only in one version of the story, the one which Sophocles used for his play, and has little to do even there. But, according to Graves, her very insignificance fulfills the myth's purpose: her subservience to her mother even when her mother was a criminal was precisely what the whole story tried to discourage.

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The play most mentioned in theatrical studies — if rarely performed in the United States—is the trilogy of Aeschylus called *The Oresteia*. Naturally Orest is the most important character of the three plays, which have been described by W. B. Stanford as mankind's "right of passage from savagery to civilization," a development from the murder of Agamemnon to Orest's charming of the furies who tear at him for murdering his mother. It was crucial to Aeschylus to have Orest kill Klytämnestra because the poet saw it as a step in evolution, albeit exaggerated and extreme. The murder of Aegisth is treated casually by all the dramatists even though it may have been the only one to happen. For their purposes, even though Orest almost surely turned Klytämnestra over to the judges and avoided matricide, the son's murdering his mother was a symbolic way to show generation growth.

By the time Sophocles wrote his *Elektra* (all three plays were written in the period between 458 and 415 B.C.) the more important conflict was between mother and daughter, and this was the source of Hofmannsthal's libretto. For Sophocles, Chrysothemis was necessary both because she appeared to be a younger version of the mother and was therefore despised by Elektra and because her point of view dramatically balanced Elektra's. In his play she is completely different from her wild sister and really is a foil. When she enters, she is on her way to Agamemnon's grave with a propitiating libation from, of all people, Klytämnestra. The queen has had a dream in which Agamemnon had taken a sceptre from Aegisth and planted it in the ground from which a tree grew that shaded all of the land of Mycenae. To forestall what could only be a disaster to her, Klytämnestra sends her faithful daughter to attempt to conciliate Agamemnon's spirit.

Elektra forestalls her and with the help of the Chorus makes Chrysothemis see that she must not propitiate Agamemnon for the sake of her evil mother (another attack on the strength of motherhood).

Chrysothemis' whole attitude is calm, rational, almost laconic. One can imagine her boredly saying her opening lines to Elektra: "Won't you learn after all this time not to pamper a helpless anger?" And later after Elektra has worked over her a bit she says quite rationally, "I teach you to yield to the strong." Her way may not be admirable but it is eminently practical. There is no suggestion of terror of her mother (of whom she has no real reason to be afraid) or of desire for marriage or motherhood. Even what she decides to do—pour the libations for herself instead of Klytämnestra—is completely safe. The old queen is certainly not going to check on her or come anywhere near the grave of her murdered husband.

When Chrysothemis comes back on-stage in the Sophocles play, Elektra has already heard the news that Orest is dead, and that two of his friends have brought the word to her mother. Chrysothemis is eager to tell her sister that she has found at Agamemnon's tomb a wreath of flowers and two locks of hair of the color of Elektra's, which means to her that their brother has returned home. Elektra is not at all impressed and destroys Chrysothemis' confidence with her news, then coldly presents her with the scheme of killing both Klytämnestra and her paramour, Aegisth. She does so partly with the argument that only if they are killed can Chrysothemis marry, though Chrysothemis has never, unlike her operatic namesake, evinced great desire to do so. In response, Chrysothemis reiterates her advice to "yield to the strong" and decries the possibility of success. There is no seduction at

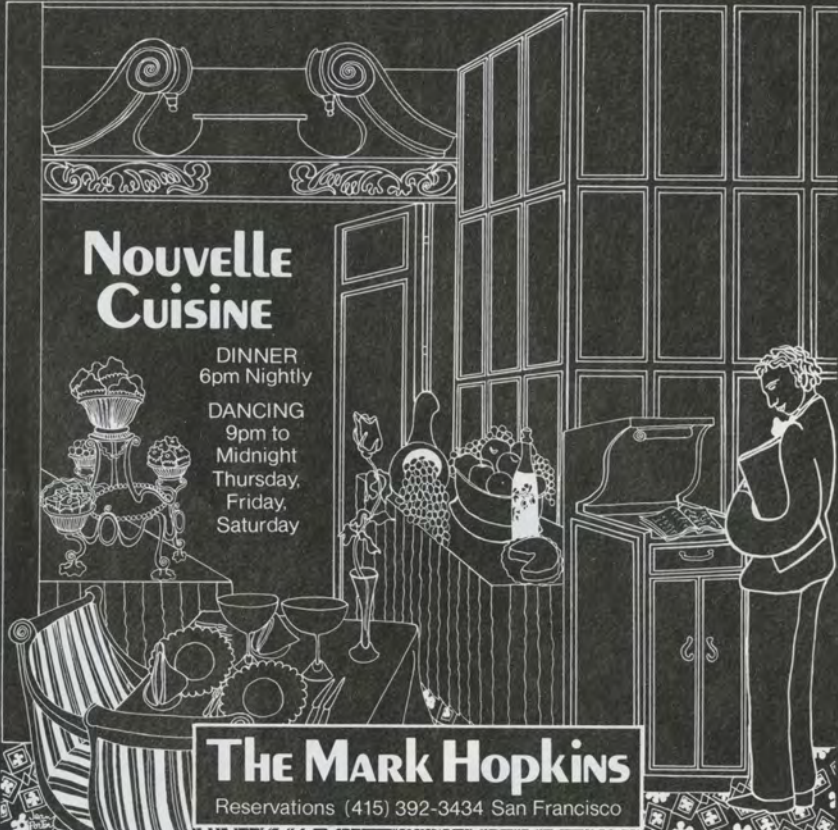
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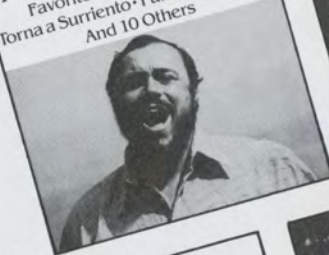
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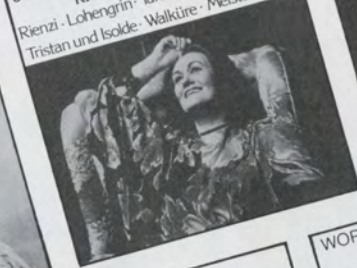


Thirty years ago the Vienna Staatsoper presented a gold ring to the great soprano Lotte Lehmann to honor her achievements in Austria's capital. Madame Lehmann passed away in 1976 and a letter found recently stipulated that the ring should be returned to the Opera and given to its reigning soprano, as determined by a vote of all the artists on the roster. The unanimous choice was Leonie Rysanek, who was presented with the ring on September 14 in a ceremony presided over by Kammersänger Hans Braun. Miss Rysanek will keep the ring for life and must then designate a successor in her own will. She is shown here wearing the ring during her rehearsals for *Elektra* in San Francisco. Photo: David Powers.

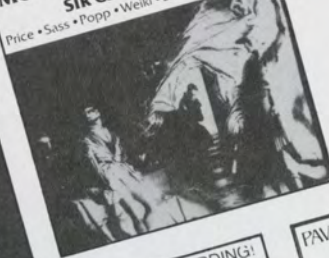
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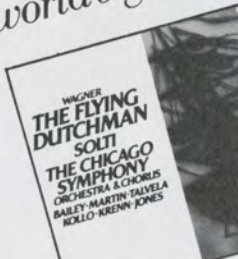
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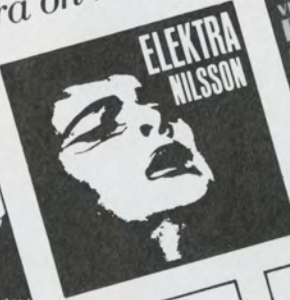
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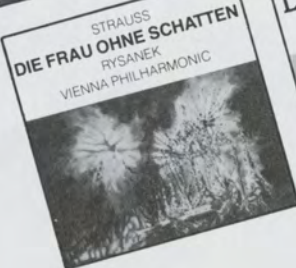
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# Museum Reception Honors Sayao, Miller



General director Kurt Herbert Adler joined Louise Renne, supervisor of the City of San Francisco (second from left), who presented Madame Sayao and Mrs. Miller with scrolls from the Mayor on behalf of the City.



Bidu Sayao and Mrs. Robert Watt Miller.



A special reception to inaugurate this year's exhibit in the Opera Museum was held last month. "The San Francisco Opera in the 1930's and 1940's" is the subject of the exhibit and two women who figured prominently in the life of the Company in those years were the guests of honor—soprano Bidu Sayao, who sang many roles in San Francisco, and Mrs. Robert Watt Miller, whose late husband was president of the San Francisco Opera Association. The reception was held under the sponsorship, and was a benefit for, the Merola Fund, James Schwabacher, president, and the Friends of the War Memorial, Mrs. Joseph D. Cuneo, president. Photographs displayed are from the opera archives and the personal collection of Mrs. Miller, and the exhibit was installed by Russell Hartley and Judith Solomon of the Archives for the Performing Arts.

Photos: Robert Messick

Bidu Sayao poses next to a display case which has the costume she wore so many years in San Francisco, as Mimi in *La Bohème*.

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"His soft, lyrical quality, measured grace and polished lustrous tone were ideal . . ." That was the assessment of *San Francisco Chronicle's* Robert Commanday, written following Murray Perahia's appearance with the San Francisco Symphony in December of 1978, at which time the pianist was heard in Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto. Reviews of his many concerts around the world reveal an embarrassment of compliments: "May well be the most eloquent lyric virtuoso since the days of Dinu Lipatti" (*TIME Magazine*), "Aristocratic musician" (*Records and Recordings*), "Endowed with sensibility, intelligence, taste and fluency" (*Boston Globe*), "Revival of the aristocracy of the piano" (*The Times, London*), ". . . a poet of the keyboard" (*The Guardian*), etcetera, etcetera.

All those who attended San Francisco Symphony's sold-out all-Beethoven concerts last December, or heard the broadcast on KKHI, will clearly remember the Perahia experience. For them and for those who are yet to be introduced to Murray Perahia—good news: he is returning for a recital that will take place on Sunday, November 4, at 3 pm in San Francisco's Masonic Auditorium. The artist has chosen a most interesting program: Beethoven's Sonata No. 11 in B flat, Op. 22; Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, Bartok's Suite Op. 14, and three pieces by Chopin: Fantasy in F minor, Berceuse, and Barcarolle. The event is part of San Francisco's Great Performers Series.

In 1972, after Perahia's London debut, the *Christian Science Monitor* recorded the audience reaction as ". . . the kind usually reserved for Rubinstein." Bay Area audiences, please note.

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Costume design by Alfred Siercke for Chrysothemis in *Elektra*.

where he will be killed by Orest, she quotes Chrysothemis ironically by saying, "I have learned this wisdom: yield to the strong."

In Euripides' play, also called *Elektra*, Chrysothemis and her desire for matrimony would be somewhat out of place. To my mind the best play of the three Greek studies (and the most "modern," dating from 415 B.C.), its drama is almost totally between Klytämnestra and Elektra. Euripides has Elektra married to a peasant to encourage the birth of low-class children who, according to the thinking of Klytämnestra and Aegisth would not have the courage to avenge their grandfather's death. The peasant, however, never consummates the marriage, partly because he knows someday Orest will return and would surely kill him and partly because he is a sensitive man and regards his mating with Elektra unseemly. In this play there is an undercurrent of humor and a grisly ending which seems somehow "modern." Orest loses his heroic image by killing Aegisth from behind as he is praying and slaughtering his mother as she bares her breast and seeks to raise filial thoughts in him. His hysterics afterward take something away from his forcefulness as the righteous hero as well. One remark in Euripides suggests a famous scene in the opera. After the death of Aegisth the Chorus says "Oh, Elektra, set your feet dancing. Dance like a light fawn!" This is the one suggestion in the Greek plays of the dance that Elektra so gruesomely performs at the conclusion of the opera.

Chrysothemis' unimportance to the legend can be found in her absence even from the dramatis personae of two of the more famous modern plays on the house of Atreus: O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Elektra* and Jean Giraudoux's *Elektra*. In the O'Neill it is conceivable that her place is filled by the sister of the boyfriend of Lavinia (Elektra) who is very interested in the Orest character,

all. Chrysothemis calmly exits after two speeches, "You will never endure the things I say, nor I the things you do" and later "If you think you have all justice with you, continue to think so. When you fall on evil times, you will accept my words." Elektra never curses her sister nor really is unduly surprised by her actions. The girl never reappears, except by inference. When Elektra lures Aegisth into the palace



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but her role has nothing to do with Chrysothemis in the myth.

If the hysterical Chrysothemis is an invention of Hofmannsthal, one would expect him to have discussed this with Strauss in their many interesting letters. But such does not seem to be the case. Hofmannsthal never explained why he changed her, and it makes sense that Strauss never challenged his creation. She was precisely what the composer liked best. A young woman, passionate, emotional, moral, who was made to be married and have children. In this sense there are two other Strauss characters who might have in part descended from Chrysothemis. One is the central figure in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, the Empress. No one in opera is any more eager for children or for discovering humanity than she. The Empress actually becomes a woman and develops the capacity to bear children when she gains compassion for exactly the kind of simple man whom Chrysothemis would welcome for a husband. It is curious, too, that the glorification of the maternal instinct which was very much a political goal in Wilhelmine Germany (the Kaiser was not bashful in his desire for as much cannon fodder as possible and advocated larger and larger families) found its way into *Elektra* six years before World War I.

The other recollection of Chrysothemis comes in the last collaboration of Strauss with his great librettist, Hofmannsthal, *Arabella*. Here one finds two sisters, Arabella and Zdenka, daughters of an impoverished aristocratic family. The comparison, however, comes because the mother, seeking to wed Arabella before she makes anyone aware of Zdenka, dresses the latter as a boy. And Arabella frustrates her mother's plans and Zdenka's urgings by turning down all her suitors. Arabella is waiting, as she tells us in the opera's most famous aria, for "the right one." Zdenka, who just like Chrysothemis is young, passionate and emotional, tells

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her sister that when she is able to act as a woman she will never be as cold, passionless and flirtatious as she is. And indeed she fulfills her emotional nature by luring one of Arabella's suitors into her bedroom under cover of darkness and causing plot complications that eventually allow her to be perceived as a woman.

Strauss indicated his pleasure in Chrysothemis by giving her that kind of vocal line that would later be seen as characteristic of his most memorable compositions. In her first aria, when she is frantically describing to Elektra her need for a husband and children, she sings in the low register as she describes the absence of any news from Orest (probably 20 or 25 years have passed since Agamemnon was murdered) and how the years are engraved on both their faces. As she begins to sing of the children her friends have, she rises in swoops above the staff, leaping at one point an octave from B flat to high B flat. Then in the crucial sentence, "I am a woman and want a woman's destiny," she rises from an F to a G and then to an A flat, falling again to an F before rising to a sustained high B flat. It is almost the definitive Straussian curve, and with a soprano whose glory is in the upper voice can be overwhelming in the theater—not only thrilling vocally but as a cry of longing from the deepest recesses of the artist's being.

Chrysothemis' hysterical recounting of the death of Orest, as the story was told to Klytämnestra, again pushes the soprano higher and higher, rising to a high C flat, which leaves her spent and in throes of despair. Her later entrance after Klytämnestra's murder screams have rent the air is one of the weakest moments in the opera. She runs on with the maids, makes an effort to get into the palace, then runs off when she hears Aegisth coming. She acts more like a child than a

continued on p. 116



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# Richard Strauss Also Was Famous as a Conductor

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as if They Were by  
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“It is not known in this country that the most accomplished conductor since Nikisch was Richard Strauss—when he was in the right mood.”

Sir Thomas Beecham  
“. . . it seems doubtful if Strauss ever had the big vision: the passion and the fervent belief, the sheer dedication to



Richard Strauss conducting in 1925.

art—the one-sidedness, if you will—that is the mark of the great interpreter.”

Harold C. Schonberg  
*(The Great Conductors)*

The truth, of course, must lie somewhere between those two statements. Yet this pair of judgments is not so disparate as to suggest that these gentlemen are talking about different people. They are, in fact, both describing Richard Strauss and they are both, in a curious fashion, saying the same thing:

Where conducting was concerned, Strauss was the ultimate professional. The conductor is not there to indulge his own ideas about a work, but to

transmit the composer's ideas to an audience. For Strauss, conducting was a craft before it was anything else, and a craft which had its own rules and procedures, many of which were capable of codification. To a certain extent, conducting was like baking or masonry. But, even with the help of formulas, conductors are not machines. They are subject to all manner of extra-musical considerations, ranging from the indisposition of an orchestra's first horn player to the damage induced by an improperly cooked roast pork. If the conductor did not yield to the emotion of the moment, even if the emotion were a lack of emotion, he would be truly soulless. That's what Beecham was





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Strauss conducting when he was nearly eighty.

saying and it was an evaluation that might have applied to Sir Thomas himself.

Schonberg, who provides no indication that he actually saw Strauss conduct, still subscribes to the quaint nineteenth century notion that the artist, even the performing artist, must suffer all manner of doubt and torment and must undergo all kinds of visible Promethean torments, in order to provide the sublime experience. It's basically a variation on the old perspiration vs. inspiration theory of art.

Yet Strauss clearly breaks the rules; no important composer or conductor ever sweated less in the line of duty. Certainly, no musician of his stature ever revealed less of an intense inner struggle and, as every reader of this magazine must know, Strauss was the progenitor of a voluminous correspondence.

That, in fact, Strauss was a great conductor can be gauged by an examination of his career, by his reputation as an interpreter of his own oeuvre and of the music of others and by a



Richard Strauss conducting a performance at the Vienna State Opera in 1920. The singers are Maria Jeritza and Leo Slezak. The unruly audience—many of whose members made their fortune on the post-World War I black market—was typical of those Strauss encountered at the time.

substantial body of recordings, which range over a large segment of his career. Aside from some early piano rolls and from the several occasions on which he was induced to accompany a singer in a selection of his *lieder*, Strauss's visits to the recording studio spanned over a quarter century, from the height of the acoustical era, in 1917, right through to the end of the second world war. There are also any number of extant acetate recordings, some of authentic provenance, some of dubious origin, which capture Strauss in live performance.

It is Strauss's own music which has been documented most fully in this manner. At one time or another, he recorded all of his important orchestral works, as well as orchestral excerpts from several of the operas. Alas, we have been left without a single studio session commemorating any of the vocal passages from those operas. Yet, by way of compensation, we can still listen to Strauss-led readings of major works by his favorite composers—symphonies by Mozart and Beethoven, overtures and preludes by Wagner.

The public attitude maintained by Strauss toward the conductor's art may

have been formulated early by the composer's first ascent to the podium. He was but twenty at the time, yet, thanks to his father, Germany's most esteemed horn player of the era, four compositions had already been published. In Strauss's own account of that fateful day, one will discern no mystical girding of the loins:

"In the winter of 1884, Bülow came to Munich and surprised me when I visited him, by informing me that he would give a matinée performance before an invited audience, after the third official concert, the program of which was to contain as the second item my Suite for Woodwind, which I was to conduct. I thanked him, overjoyed, but told him I had never had a baton in my hand before and asked him when I could rehearse. 'There will be no rehearsals, the orchestra has no time for such things on tour.' His order was so categorical that I had no time to ponder over my discomfiture. The morning of the day arrived, I went to fetch Bülow at his hotel; he was in a dreadful mood . . . the matinée took its course. I conducted my piece in a state of slight coma; I

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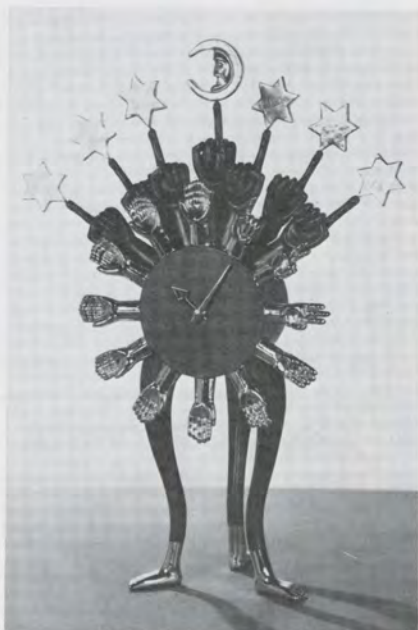
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can only remember today that I  
made no blunders."

Strauss was a full-blooded scion of the Bavarian middle class, sufficiently *bourgeois* to realize that one could not depend on composing for paying the bills. His university training had concentrated on the liberal arts, philosophy, aesthetics, art history, and literature. Conducting seemed a likely career opportunity. Thanks to Hans von Bülow, who had been duly impressed with his impromptu début, Strauss was appointed to conduct in Meiningen in 1885. A month later, Bülow resigned, leaving Strauss in sole charge of the Court Orchestra. His repertoire was virtually non-existent and this lack of expertise was revealed almost immediately.

When the Grand Duchess of Meiningen burst into the theatre one day, demanding to hear *The Flying Dutchman* Overture, Strauss could only smile sheepishly. With more than a touch of acidity, the Duchess suggested that, perhaps, he might oblige her, then, with the Overture to *Der Freischütz*, for surely everybody knew that.

If this incident did nothing to prolong the Strauss tenure in Meiningen, it worked wonders with the orchestra. Out of sympathy, they pulled him through the *Dutchman* Overture. It was to be the first of many occasions on which an orchestra would go out of its way to make him look as if he were in charge.

Strauss soon thirsted for a more prestigious orchestra. Two years later Munich beckoned. Wiser heads attempted to dissuade him from entering this bastion of conservatism, but even the third conductor's post at the Court Opera was too attractive a lure to decline. For a while, he led rehearsals and operas deemed unworthy of his superiors' talents. He made his debut leading Boieldieu's now forgotten *Johann van Paris* and soon followed it up with *Così fan tutte* and *Ballo in Maschera*. He found rehearsal conditions and per-

formance standards unutterably sloppy, while his tempi seriously discomfited his singers.

Little wonder that he made enemies; less wonder that when he conducted the premiere of his *Aus Italien* the following season, it was received with hostility. For three years Strauss endured the "dreary, beery bog" that was Munich. He might have remained longer, had he not been appointed as musical assistant at the 1889 Bayreuth festival. From his tender years, and over his father's protestations, he had adored Wagner's music, but only now did he come to know it with any degree of intimacy.

That summer marked a turning point in the Strauss conducting career. Liszt's retirement had left a vacancy at Weimar and Strauss became the Third Grand Ducal Kappelmeister that autumn. It was here that he conducted his initial Wagner opera, *Lohengrin*, during the first week of his appointment. It was here that he premiered his *Don Juan* to both official and audience approval. It was here, four years later, that he conducted the first performance of *Hänsel und Gretel* by Engelbert Humperdinck who had been Strauss's colleague at Bayreuth. It was here that he would introduce *Death and Transfiguration* and his first opera, *Guntram*. It was here that he would meet his future wife, the soprano Pauline de Ahna. And it was here that he would first codify his notions about the conductor's craft. The lanky young man did not, by all observers' accounts, lead an orchestra in precisely the manner in which he prescribes, but Strauss's strictures are nevertheless worth observing:

"It is decisive for the technique of conducting that the shorter the movements of the arm, and the more confined to the wrist, then the more precise is the execution. If the arm is allowed to be involved in conducting—which results in a kind of lever-action the effects of

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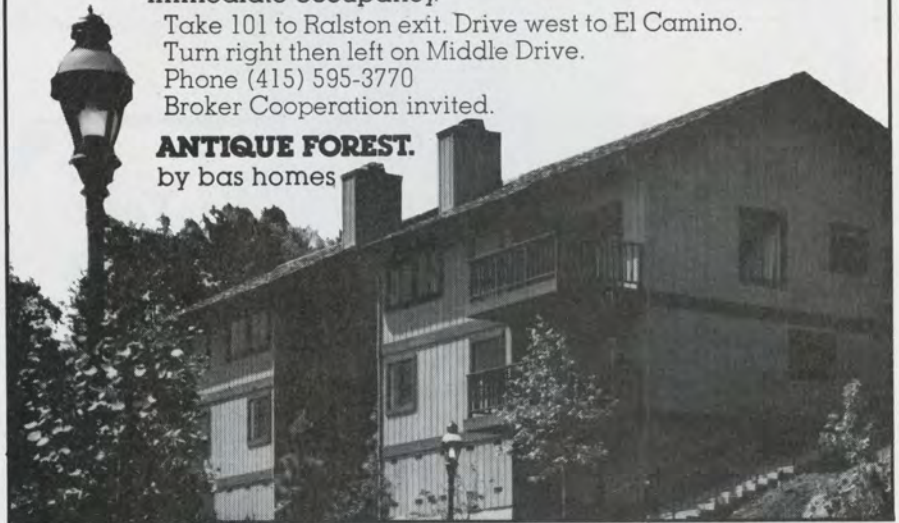
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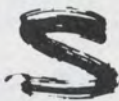
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which are incalculable — the orchestra is apt to be paralyzed and misdirected, unless it is determined from the start (and this is frequently the case with conductors whose downbeat is imprecise) to play according to its own judgment in tacit agreement, as it were, without paying too much attention to the antics of the conductor. The left hand has nothing to do with conducting. Its proper place is in the waistcoat pocket from which it should only emerge to restrain or to make some minor gesture for which in any case a scarcely perceptible glance would suffice. It is better to conduct with the ear instead of with the arm: the rest follows automatically."

And on controlling the beat:

"In fifty years of practice I have discovered how unimportant it is to mark each crotchet or quaver. What is decisive is that the up-beat, which contains the whole of the tempo which follows, should be rhythmically exact and that the down-beat should be extremely precise. The second half of the bar is immaterial . . . Second-rate conductors are frequently inclined to pay too much attention to the elaboration of rhythmic detail, thus overlooking the proper impressive rendering of the phrase as a whole, which should always be grasped, by the listener as a uniform structure. Any modification of tempo made necessary by the character of a phrase should be carried out imperceptibly so that the unity of tempo remains intact."

By this time, Strauss's reputation had grown so appreciably that he was invited to conduct a great orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic. Too great, perhaps, for the limited experience that the conductor could bring to the task. His first pit assignment in Bayreuth in 1894, *Tannhäuser*, elicited praise from Cosima Wagner herself. Strauss still felt a sentimental attachment to his native city and was re-engaged in

Munich on his own terms. He conducted the operas which he loved, Mozart and *Tristan*, and was even permitted to import the Weimar production of *Guntram*. Its critical reception was even more abysmal here and Strauss reacted violently. His rancor he saved for his next opera, *Feuersnot*, in which he directed some venomous barbs both at the Munich critics and audiences.

Yet the internal bruises did not disappear so easily. With the sole exception of the original version of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Strauss would never again conduct the premiere of one of his operas. The emotional strain had been too devastating. The task of leading the first performances would fall first to Ernst von Schuch (*Feuersnot*, *Salome*, *Elektra* and *Rosenkavalier*), then to Franz Schalk, Fritz Busch, Karl Böhm and finally Clemens Krauss. Only after a cordial reception had been granted an opera, would Strauss agree to conduct it; he wanted to perform and not to prove a point.

The late 1890s caught Strauss on the tour circuit; Switzerland, Russia and Hungary all engaged him; thanks to the young Willem Mengelberg, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw embraced his works, instituting a tradition of noble Strauss performances; *Don Quixote* was introduced in Cologne and Strauss proselytized for the music of Gustav Mahler. His touring programs adhered to a definite formula: some Mozart, some Beethoven, a bit of Wagner, maybe a Berlioz overture and always one of his own tone-poems.

Strauss the conductor was clearly biding his time. Berlin finally extended the invitation to become First Kappelmeister. The fee was hefty, the artistic freedom considerable. In his first season, 1898, Strauss would conduct twenty-five different works for the Royal Prussian opera, ranging from Wagner to Chabrier. At the same time, he became chief conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Concerts. He remained in



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Detroit Free Press

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San Francisco Examiner

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that post for almost twenty years, and when he left, there was only one European city that would not have been considered a come-down, Vienna.

Like Mahler, Strauss was afflicted with the Viennese cabals and intrigues that helped to foreshorten his colleague's existence.

The fact that he was a foreigner didn't help him; the fact that he frequently disagreed with the Opera's co-director was no advantage either. It was almost inevitable that he would resign his post, which he did in 1924. Early in his tenure, Strauss joined with Hofmannsthal, Schalk and the director Max Reinhardt to form the Salzburger Festspielhausgemeinde, guaranteeing a firm financial footing for a festival in Mozart's birthplace. Until then, summer festivities had been held on an intermittent basis. Thanks to Strauss and his colleagues, it became what it is today: the jewel of European festivals, a place where Mozart consistently nudges Strauss for the place of honors.

Vienna was the last official post held by Strauss. After that he would appear as guest conductor for whatever opera house or symphony orchestra could pay his fees. They were, by then contemporary standards, truly astronomic. A check would almost guarantee Strauss's appearance virtually anywhere, including department store lobbies. His lofty salary kept us from the potential delight of hearing Strauss conduct one of his own operas on disc. When HMV decided to record its abridged *Rosenkavalier* in 1933 (the one with Lotte Lehmann, Elisabeth Schumann and Richard Mayr), the composer was first approached, but he rejected the company's offer.

To the end of his days, Strauss would insist, with unaccustomed modesty, that the secret of his interpretations lay in his adherence to the score. Witness, for example, the introduction to his "Notes on the Interpretation of Beethoven's Symphonies":

# Special Events

"The interpretations of Beethoven by most of our younger conductors suffer from the lack of any genuine tradition (tradition being, according to Mahler, identical with slovenliness). Toscanini alone, with his strict adherence to the letter and the fanatical correctness of his readings, makes a praiseworthy exception, though he is somewhat rigid where the 'romantic' side of interpretation is concerned. Other conductors impose personal conceptions on their performances before—as Bülow put it—they are able to 'read the score properly.'"

Strauss's conducting, at least through the recorded evidence, reveals a mastery of textual clarity. Whether in the balances of the cello and oboe themes in the *Tristan* Prelude or in the prominence given the violin solo of *Ein Heldenleben*, the conductor reveals a sense of proportion that could have derived only from a musician who considered Mozart his spiritual father.

No account of Strauss on the podium would be complete without including his own witty *Ten Golden Rules (For the Album of a Young Conductor)*. They date from 1922 and may still be savored today, not least because of the kernel of truth embedded at their core.

- "1. Remember that you are making music not to amuse yourself but to delight your audience.
2. You should not perspire when conducting: only the audience should get warm.
3. Conduct *Salome* and *Elektra* as if they were by Mendelssohn: Fairy Music.
4. Never look encouragingly at the brass, except with a short glance to give an important cue.
5. But never let the horns and the woodwinds out of your sight: if you can hear them at all they are still too strong.
6. If you think that the brass is not

continued on p. 114

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS MARIN

Previews held at Del Mar School, 105 Avenida Mira Flores, Tiburon. Lectures begin at 8:00 p.m. Series registration is \$10.00 (\$8.00 for Guild members, students and seniors). Single tickets are \$2.50 (\$2.00 for Guild members, students and seniors). For information, please call (415) 388-2850.

October 18  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*  
Dale Harris

October 25  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX*  
James Schwabacher

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Rd., at 7:30 p.m. Series registration is \$12.00; single tickets are \$2.50. For further information, please call (415) 321-9875 or (415) 941-3890.

September 30  
*TRIPLE BILL*  
Gordon Engler

October 14  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX*  
Arthur Kaplan

October 21  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*  
Dale Harris

A gala "Evening of Opera"—highlights from the current season with Bay Area artists—will take place on October 7 at 7:30 p.m. The gala will be held at the Palo Alto Cultural Center and will have an entrance fee of \$3.50.

## SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

Previews will be held on Friday mornings, from 10:00-12 noon, at the Community Center of El Paseo de Saratoga Shopping Center, corner of Campbell and Saratoga Avenue, in San Jose. Series is open to the public, at a cost of \$2.00 per lecture (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild members). For information, please call (408) 867-0669.

October 5  
*TRIPLE BILL*  
Gordon Engler

October 12  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX*  
David Kest

October 19  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*  
Dale Harris

October 26  
*COSI' FAN TUTTE*  
Arthur Kaplan



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Previews will be given on one Tuesday and ten Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in Richardson auditorium, UC Extension Center, 55 Laguna St. (at Market St.), San Francisco. Series registration is \$45; single lectures are \$5, on a space available basis, payable at the door. For further information, please call (415) 642-4111.

- October 1  
TRIPLE BILL
- October 8  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER
- October 15  
LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST
- October 22  
ROBERTO DEVEREUX
- October 29  
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO
- November 5  
COSI' FAN TUTTE
- November 12  
TANCREDI

**JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS**

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

- October 1  
TRIPLE BILL  
Gordon Engler
- October 18  
LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST  
Dale Harris

**OPERA EDUCATION WEST**

East Bay Friends of the Opera Previews will be presented by Michael Barclay at St. Procopius Latin Rite Catholic Church, 926 Heart St. (corner of 8th St.) in Berkeley. Individual admission is \$3.50 with a discount series ticket of \$18 offering 6 lectures for the price of 5. All lectures are from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. For further information, please call (415) 848-9583.

- October 1  
TRIPLE BILL
- October 10  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER
- October 22  
ROBERTO DEVEREUX

Friends of the Kensington Library  
A lecture on Rossini's *Tancredi* will be held by Michael Barclay on Thursday, November 8 at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington. The lecture will begin at 8 p.m. and admission is free.

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A ten-week series of introductions to the 1979 San Francisco Opera season. Given as a FREE Credit/No-Credit Course (Humanities 121-71) by Eugene Marker every Thursday evening 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. beginning Thursday, September 6. Open to all and located at the City of San Leandro Community Library Center, 300 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro. For further information, please call (415) 786-6632.

October 4  
TRIPLE BILL

October 11  
LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

October 18  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER

October 25  
LA FORZA DEL DESTINO

November 1  
ROBERTO DEVEREUX

November 8  
TANCREDI

### COGSWELL COLLEGE OPERA PREVIEW SERIES

Previews will be held at Cogswell College, 600 Stockton (between California and Pine), at 8:00 p.m. Lectures will be given by opera educator Michael Barclay. Series discount tickets for all 6 lectures cost \$20; individual admission is \$4. Academic credit is available. For further information, please call (415) 433-1994.

October 4  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER

October 18  
LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

October 24  
ROBERTO DEVEREUX

### 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 one Tuesday and ten Monday evenings. Lectures with slides will be given by San Francisco Opera staff writer Arthur Kaplan. Series registration is \$35; pre-registration desirable. For further information, please call (415) 653-9454 or 658-3679.

October 1  
TRIPLE BILL

October 8  
DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER

October 15  
LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

October 22  
ROBERTO DEVEREUX

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October 29  
*LA FORZA DEL DESTINO*

November 5  
*COSI FAN TUTTE*

November 19  
*TANCREDI*

#### NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES

For the seventh year there will be an eleven-week course called ADVENTURES IN OPERA in Napa. The course, which accompanies the Saturday afternoon and Sunday series at the San Francisco Opera, will be held on Thursday nights from 7:30-9 p.m. at First Methodist Church, Fifth and Randolph in Napa. Ernest Fly will again teach. For further information, please call Mr. Fly at (707) 224-6162. Cost for the entire series will be \$15.00. Individual lectures will be \$2.00.

October 3  
*TRIPLE BILL*

October 10  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER*

October 17  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*

October 24  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX*

October 31  
*COSI FAN TUTTE*

November 7  
*TANCREDI*

November 14  
*LA FORZA DEL DESTINO*

#### WEST COAST OPERA SERVICE PREVIEWS

Presented by West Coast Opera Service from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. (location in Contra Costa County to be announced). The fee for the complete series is \$22.00; individual lectures are \$2.50. All previews will be given by Ben Krywosz, and will include recordings, filmstrips and printed material. For further information, or to register, please call (415) 825-7825 evenings.

October 1  
*TRIPLE BILL*

October 8  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER*

October 15  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*

October 22  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX*

October 29  
*LA FORZA DEL DESTINO*

November 5  
*COSI FAN TUTTE*

November 12  
*TANCREDI*

#### MILLS COLLEGE ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION OPERA PREVIEW SERIES

Previews will be held on the Mills College Campus in Oakland on one Wednesday and nine Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Lectures with slides will be given by San Francisco Opera staff writer Arthur Kaplan. Series registration is \$50. For brochure and registration information, please call (415) 632-2700, ext. 256.

October 4  
*TRIPLE BILL*

October 11  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER*

October 18  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*

October 25  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX/TANCREDI*

November 1  
*LA FORZA DEL DESTINO*

November 8  
*COSI FAN TUTTE*

#### SOUTH PENINSULA JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OPERA PREVIEW SERIES

Previews will be held in the auditorium of the South Peninsula Jewish Community Center, 830 E. Meadow Dr., Palo Alto, at 8:00 p.m. Lectures will be given by opera educator Michael Barclay. The admission for individual lectures is \$4.00 (\$3.00 for center members). Series discount tickets for \$22.00, 6 lectures for the price of 5, are available through the Community Center. For further information, please call (415) 494-2511.

October 8  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*

October 15  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX*

#### AN ADVENTURE IN OPERA

Radio Station KCSM-FM, 91.1 MHz, Saturdays at 2 p.m. Robert F. Finch, Commentator and Artist-in-Residence, College of San Mateo.

September 29  
*TRIPLE BILL*

October 6  
*DER FLIEGENDE HOLLANDER*

October 13  
*LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST*

October 20  
*ROBERTO DEVEREUX*

October 27  
*LA FORZA DEL DESTINO*

November 3  
*COSI FAN TUTTE*

November 10  
*TANCREDI*



When the curtain rang down at the end of the 1978 season, I wondered what we could do for an encore in 1979. But I believe our general director, Kurt Herbert Adler, and his excellent staff have done it again—1979, our 57th consecutive fall season, augurs to be another vintage year with some interesting innovations.

The season opens with Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* starring Renata Scotto and Luciano Pavarotti. This is the first time in twelve years that *Gioconda* has been performed by our company and we are most grateful to a friend of San Francisco Opera and to the San Francisco Opera Guild who have financed the new production. On Sunday, September 16, 1979, *La Gioconda* will be telecast live to audiences throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico and, by satellite, to Britain and Europe. This ambitious project, our first telecast, is being made possible by a most generous grant from BankAmerica Corporation. Not only will the telecast be available to millions of opera lovers now, but a mini-series made of the opera will be shown next spring and portions of the opera with appropriate educational commentary will be made available to schools throughout the State of California.

Another first for 1979 will be the performance of a stylized concert version of Rossini's *Tancredi* starring Marilyn Horne. This permits us to hear an opera not in the usual repertoire and not likely to be repeated for many years, without the huge costs of mounting a new production. A performance of three one-act operas will bring us two San Francisco Opera premieres—Dallapiccola's *Il Prigioniero* and Poulenc's *La Voix humaine*—followed by our

old friend *Gianni Schicchi*. The two new productions were financed by a grant from the San Francisco Foundation. We will also enjoy a new production of *La Fanciulla del West* thanks to the generosity of the Bernard Osher Foundation. This production was given last year to the Lyric Opera of Chicago by the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa.

Again, as has been the case for several years, we will broadcast a live performance of each opera over radio stations up and down the Pacific Coast and by delayed Public Radio throughout the nation. This important public service is made possible by grants from Chevron U.S.A., Inc., the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, Oakland, California, and National Public Radio. Financially, San Francisco Opera Association is currently in reasonably good shape but it seems as if we must constantly increase our speed to stay even. Thanks to sold-out houses for most of our performances and modest ticket price increases, revenues from ticket sales continue to cover about 60 percent of our costs. We are a labor-intensive endeavor and, despite the economies effected by Maestro Adler and his staff, our costs continually increase because of the ravages of inflation; thus, raising the remaining 40 percent is a constantly increasing challenge. I am happy to report that in the last two years we have increased the number of donors to our annual operating fund by several thousand; without them, we would have incurred significant deficits. We must continually seek new and increased gifts from our supporters. If you are not presently included among our contributors, won't you please join us now?

Another noteworthy event in the past year, announced at the annual meeting of members held on June 7, 1979, was the appointment of Terry McEwen as successor to Kurt Herbert Adler as general director of San Francisco Opera upon Maestro Adler's retirement in 1982. Mr. McEwen, presently executive vice president of London Records, New York, is well known to millions for his vast knowledge of opera from his appearances for many years on the Saturday radio broadcasts from the

Met. We look forward to his arrival in the summer of 1980 and to his success in the future upon assuming the duties of general director.

Last year, I expressed the hope that the proposed new garage, replacing the parking lot across the street, would be ready for this year's season. Legal delays prevented this but I am hopeful it will be ready for the 1980 season. I am sure you are aware that construction of the new Symphony Hall on the old parking lot space is well under way and we are hopeful that construction of the rehearsal facility, on the same block and so important to San Francisco Opera, will commence soon. We look forward with anticipation to the completion of the Performing Arts Center; it will add so much to the cultural life of San Francisco. Funding for the Center is still about two and a half million dollars short. If you have not joined the thousands of contributors who have made this project possible, I urge you to do so as soon as possible.

We continue to be grateful for the financial and moral support from various sides, without which help we would find it almost impossible to continue — National Endowment for the Arts, National Opera Institute, Mayor Dianne Feinstein, 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 for its sponsorship of four student matinees, for its many other helpful activities, and for its sponsorship this year for the first time of a senior citizens matinee which has been largely financed by a gift from Bay View Federal Savings & Loan Association.

By the time the final curtain falls on November 25, I am confident the 1979 season will have proved that our reputation as one of the outstanding opera companies in the world is well deserved.

Enjoy the season.

WALTER M. BAIRD  
President,  
San Francisco Opera Association

# Supporting San Francisco Opera

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 1978 through August 15, 1979. 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.

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William E. Jarvis  
Mr. & Mrs. Philip M. Jelley  
Bruce M. Jewett  
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Mary Johnson  
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Lakeside Foundation  
Mr. & Mrs. Scott C. Lambert  
Harold A. Leader, Jr.  
General & Mrs. O. A. Leahy  
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald D. Leineke

## Chorus

Kathy Anderson  
Candida Arias Duazo  
Doris Baltzo  
Roberta Bowman  
Norma Bruzzone  
Hilda Chavez  
Louise Corsale  
Beverley Finn  
Lisa Louise Hill  
Anne Huffington  
Gail MacGowan  
Cecilia McLaren  
Tamaki McCracken  
Iris Miller  
Irene Moreci  
Rose Parker  
Penelope Rains  
Mimi Ravetti  
Laurel Rice  
Anna Marie Riesgo  
Shelley Seitz

## Extra Chorus

Darlene Brock  
Anne Buelteman  
Teresa Colyer  
Marcia Gronewold  
Margaret Hamilton  
Marena Lane  
Maria Meyer  
Linda Moody

Barbara Smith  
Jennifer Sullivan  
  
M.W.B. Adamson  
Manfred Behrens  
Michael Bloch  
Gerald Chappell  
Joseph Ciampi

Dale Emde  
Henry Metlenko  
Stephen Ostrow  
Monte Pederson  
Mitchell Sandler  
James Tipton  
Lee Velta

continued on p. 71

# 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  
Gerard Svazlian†

## 2ND VIOLIN

Herbert Holtman  
*Acting Principal*  
Virginia Price  
Felix Khuner  
Barbara Riccardi  
Robert Galbraith  
Gail Schwarzbart  
Carol Winters  
Eva Karasik  
Laurence Gilbert  
Linda Deutsch†

## VIOLA

Rolf Persinger *Principal*  
Detlev Olshausen  
Lucien Mitchell  
Asbjorn Finess  
Jonna Hervig  
Ellen Smith  
Harry Rumpler  
Thomas Elliott†

## CELLO

David Kadarach  
*Principal*  
Doug Ischar  
Judyaba  
Lawrence Granger  
Barbara Wirth  
Burke Schuchman

## BASS

S. Charles Siani  
*Acting Principal*  
Jon Lancelle  
Carl H. Modell  
Donald Prell  
Philip Karp  
Douglas Tramontozzi†

## FLUTE

Paul Renzi  
*Acting Principal*

## Lloyd Gowen

Gary Gray  
Rebecca Friedman†

## PICCOLO

Lloyd Gowen

## OBOE

James Matheson  
*Principal*  
Raymond Dusté  
Deborah Henry

## ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Dusté

## CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*  
Donald Carroll  
David Breeden

Gregory Dufford†

## BASS CLARINET

Donald Carroll

## BASSETT HORN

James Russell†

## BASSOON

Walter Green *Principal*  
Jerry Dagg

## Robin Elliott

Carla Wilson†

## CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

## FRENCH HORN/

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

Carlberg Jones†

Glen Swarts†

Gail Sprung†

## FRENCH HORN/

## WAGNER TUBA

David Sprung  
James Callahan

Carlberg Jones†

Gail Sprung†

## TRUMPET

Donald Reinberg  
*Principal*  
Edward Haug  
Chris Bogios  
Carole Klein†  
Timothy Wilson†

## BASS TRUMPET

Mitchell Rosst

## TROMBONE

Ned Meredith *Principal*  
McDowell Kenley  
John Bischof  
Mitchell Rosst†

## CONTRA BASS

## TROMBONE

John E. Williams†

## TUBA

Robert Z. A. Spellman

## TIMPANI

Elayne Jones

## PERCUSSION

Lloyd Davis  
Peggy Lucchesi  
Richard Kvistad†

## HARP

Anne Adams *Principal*  
Marcella de Cray

## PERSONNEL MANAGER

Thomas B. Heimberg

## LIBRARIAN

Lauré Campbell

†Additional players

## Dancers

Danna Cordova  
Carolyn Houser  
Janne Jackson

Lesia Martin  
Cathy Pruzan  
Kathryn Roszak

Nell Stewart  
Katherine Warner

Charles Butts  
James Fitzgerald  
Peter Gambito  
Dan Gardner

Jay Lehman  
William S. Ramsdell  
John Sullivan  
Sulpicio Wagner

## Boys Chorus

John Aalberg  
Lawson Bader  
Sean Barry  
Mark Burford  
Anthony Chu

Alex Clemens  
Victor Fernandez  
Robyn Fladen-Kamm  
Timothy Genis  
Lionel Godolphin

Daniel Howard  
Andrew Johnson  
David Kersnar  
Christopher Kula  
Stephen Martin

Gregory Naeger  
Ronald Ponce  
Daniel Potasz  
David Roberts  
Steven Rothblatt

Eric Savant  
Jordan Silber  
Mark Swope  
Eric Van Genderen  
Pierre-Guy White

## Supernumeraries

Patricia Angell  
Joan Bacharach  
Dorothy Baune  
Dottie Brown  
Barbara Bruser  
Barbara Clifford  
Janet Dahlsten  
Renee De Jarnatt  
Mary Joyce  
Hedi Langford  
Francesca Leo  
Gindy Milina  
Edith Modie  
Ellen Nelson

Virginia Persson  
Miriam Preece  
Louise Russo  
Ellen Sanchez  
Sally Scott  
Carolyn Waugh

Steve Bauman  
Jack Barnich  
Douglas Beardslee  
Allerton Blake  
William Burns  
Thomas Carlisle  
Roy Castellini

Bruce Cates  
Rudy Cook  
Don Crawford  
Tom Curran  
Dick Duker  
Everett Evans  
Jimmy Exon  
George Freiday  
Albert Frettoloso  
Cliff Gold  
Mark Huelsmann  
Stephen Jacobs  
Ken Jakobs  
David James

Janusz  
Paul Jenkins  
Andrew Jones  
Bill Joyce  
Julius Karoblis  
John Kovacs  
Terrance J. Kyle  
Jay Lenahan  
Rodney McCoy  
Francisco Medina  
Lawrence Milner  
James Muth  
Neil Nevesny  
Paul Newman

Nick Pliam  
Steven Polen  
Paul Ricks  
Gil Rieben  
Robert Schmidt  
Thomas Simrock  
Kent Speirs  
Jon Spieler  
David Watts  
Richard Weil  
Frank Willis  
Sam Ziegler

# 1979 Season Repertoire

New Production

LA GIOCONDA

*Ponchielli*

IN ITALIAN

Scotto, Toczyska\*\*, Lilova/Pavarotti,  
Mittelmann, Furlanetto\*, Del Carlo,  
Di Paolo\*, Koch\*, Haile\*, Martinovich\*/  
Van Hamel\*, Chryst\*, Holder\*

Conductor: Bartoletti  
Production: Mansouri

Designer: Brown\*  
Choreographer: Sappington\*  
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Friday, Sept. 7, 7 PM  
Gala Opening Night  
Wednesday, Sept. 12, 7:30PM  
Sunday, Sept. 16, 12:30PM  
Friday, Sept. 21, 8PM  
Tuesday, Sept. 25, 8PM  
Saturday, Sept. 29, 8PM

PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE

*Debussy*

IN FRENCH

Ewing, Jones, Lane\*/ Duesing, Devlin\*,  
Macurdy, Cumberland\*, Martinovich

Conductor: Rudel\*  
Stage Director: Karpo

Designer: Munn  
Saturday, Sept. 8, 8PM  
Tuesday, Sept. 11, 8PM  
Friday, Sept. 14, 8PM  
Wednesday, Sept. 19, 7:30PM  
Sunday, Sept. 23, 2 PM

New Production

DON CARLO

*Verdi*

IN ITALIAN

Tomowa-Sintow, Budai\*\*, de la Rosa\*,  
Knighton/Aragall, Brendel\*,  
Nesterenko\*, Elenkov\*\*, Cumberland,  
Di Paolo, Del Carlo, Haile, Mallory\*,  
Martinovich, Miller, Rohrbaugh

Conductor: Varviso  
Stage Director: Frisell  
Designer: Skalicki  
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Sept. 15, 8 PM  
Tuesday, Sept. 18, 8PM  
Saturday, Sept. 22, 1:30PM  
Wednesday, Sept. 26, 7:30PM  
Sunday, Sept. 30, 2 PM  
Friday, Oct. 5, 8PM

ELEKTRA

*Strauss*

IN GERMAN

Mastilovic\*, Rysanek, Schlemm\*\*,  
Siefer, Hinson, Jaqua, Jones,  
Montgomery\*, Cook\*, Beckstrom\*,  
Kerrigan\*/Neill, Mazura, Cumberland,  
Ballam\*, Del Carlo

Conductor: Klobucar\*  
Stage Director: Weber  
Designer: Siercke

Friday, Sept. 28, 8PM  
Tuesday, Oct. 2, 8PM  
Sunday, Oct. 7, 2PM  
Thursday, Oct. 11, 7:30PM  
Saturday, Oct. 13, 8PM

San Francisco Opera Premiere

New Production

IL PRIGIONIERO

*Dallapiccola*

IN ENGLISH

Martin/Devlin, Götz\*\*, Egerton, Koch

Conductor: Giovaninetti  
Production: Ponnelle  
Designer: Halmen  
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

followed by

San Francisco Opera Premiere

New Production

LA VOIX HUMAINE

*Poulenc*

IN FRENCH

Olivero

Conductor: Giovaninetti

Production: Joël

Designer: Halmen

followed by

GIANNI SCHICCHI

*Puccini*

IN ITALIAN

Greenawald, Barbieri, South,  
Quittmeyer\*/Taddei, Ramiro\*\*,  
Egerton, Davià, Massey\*, Koch,  
Mallory, Miller, Harvey, Haile

Conductor: Giovaninetti

Production: Ponnelle

Designer: Ponnelle

Wednesday, Oct. 3, 7:30PM  
Saturday, Oct. 6, 8PM  
Tuesday, Oct. 9, 8PM  
Sunday, Oct. 14, 2 PM  
Friday, Oct. 19, 8PM

DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

*Wagner*

IN GERMAN

Napier, Petersen/Estes, Lewis, Rintzler

Conductor: Perick\*\*  
Production: Ponnelle  
Set Designer: Ponnelle  
Costume Designer: Halmen  
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Friday, Oct. 12, 8PM  
Tuesday, Oct. 16, 8PM  
Sunday, Oct. 21, 2PM  
Thursday, Oct. 25, 7:30PM  
Saturday, Oct. 27, 8PM  
Saturday, Nov. 3, 1:30PM

New Production

LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST

*Puccini*

IN ITALIAN

Neblett, Jones/Domingo, Di Bella\*\*,  
Egerton, Gardner\*, Cumberland, Miller,  
Martinovich, Mallory, Ballam, Di Paolo,  
Koch, Del Carlo, Massey, Fisher\*, Albin,  
Haile

Conductor: Patanè  
Production: Prince\*  
Designers: Lee\*, Lee\*  
Lighting Designer: Billington\*  
Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Wednesday, Oct. 17, 7:30PM  
Saturday, Oct. 20, 8PM  
Tuesday, Oct. 23, 8PM  
Saturday, Oct. 27, 1:30PM  
Wednesday, Oct. 31, 7:30PM  
Friday, Nov. 2, 8PM

San Francisco Opera Premiere

New Production

ROBERTO DEVEREUX

*Donizetti*

IN ITALIAN

Caballé, Toczyska/Bini\*, Pons\*, Ballam,  
Del Carlo, Martinovich, Haile

Conductor: Masini\*

Production: Karpo

Designer: Munn

Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Friday, Oct. 26, 8PM  
Tuesday, Oct. 30, 8PM  
Sunday, Nov. 4, 2PM  
Wednesday, Nov. 7, 7:30PM  
Saturday, Nov. 10, 8PM  
Thursday, Nov. 15, 7:30PM

LA FORZA DEL DESTINO

*Verdi*

IN ITALIAN

Price, Forst, Jones/Luchetti\*, Sarabia,  
Talvela, Taddei, Egerton, Cumberland,  
Del Carlo, Koch

Conductor: Adler

Stage Director: Hager

Designer: Samaritani

Choreographer: Sappington

Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Nov. 3, 8PM  
Tuesday, Nov. 6, 8PM  
Friday, Nov. 9, 8PM  
Wednesday, Nov. 14, 7:30PM  
Saturday, Nov. 17, 1:30PM  
†Thursday, Nov. 22, 8PM  
Sunday, Nov. 25, 2PM

COSÌ FAN TUTTE

*Mozart*

IN ITALIAN

Lorengar, Howells\*, Perriers\*/Cousins\*,  
Duesing, Stewart

Conductor: Pritchard

Stage Director: Joël

Designer: Ponnelle

Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Nov. 10, 1:30PM  
Tuesday, Nov. 13, 8PM  
Friday, Nov. 16, 8PM  
Sunday, Nov. 18, 2PM  
Wednesday, Nov. 21, 8PM  
Saturday, Nov. 24, 8PM

Special Family-Priced Matinee

Cook, Quittmeyer, South/Hoback,  
Gardner, Turnage

Conductor: Agler\*

Stage Director: Joël

Designer: Ponnelle

Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Nov. 24, 1:30PM

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Stylized Concert Version

TANCREDI

*Rossini*

IN ITALIAN

Horne, Rinaldi, Balthrop\*, Paunova\*/  
Gonzalez\*, Zaccaria\*

Conductor: Lewis\*

Stage Director: Hager

Chorus Director: Bradshaw

Saturday, Nov. 17, 8PM  
Tuesday, Nov. 20, 8PM  
Friday, Nov. 23, 8PM

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

\*San Francisco Opera debut

\*\*American opera debut

REPERTOIRE, CASTS AND DATES  
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

# ELEKTRA



Danica Mastilovic as Elektra

Photos by Ira Nowinski

ARTIST



Leonie Rysanek as Chrysothemis



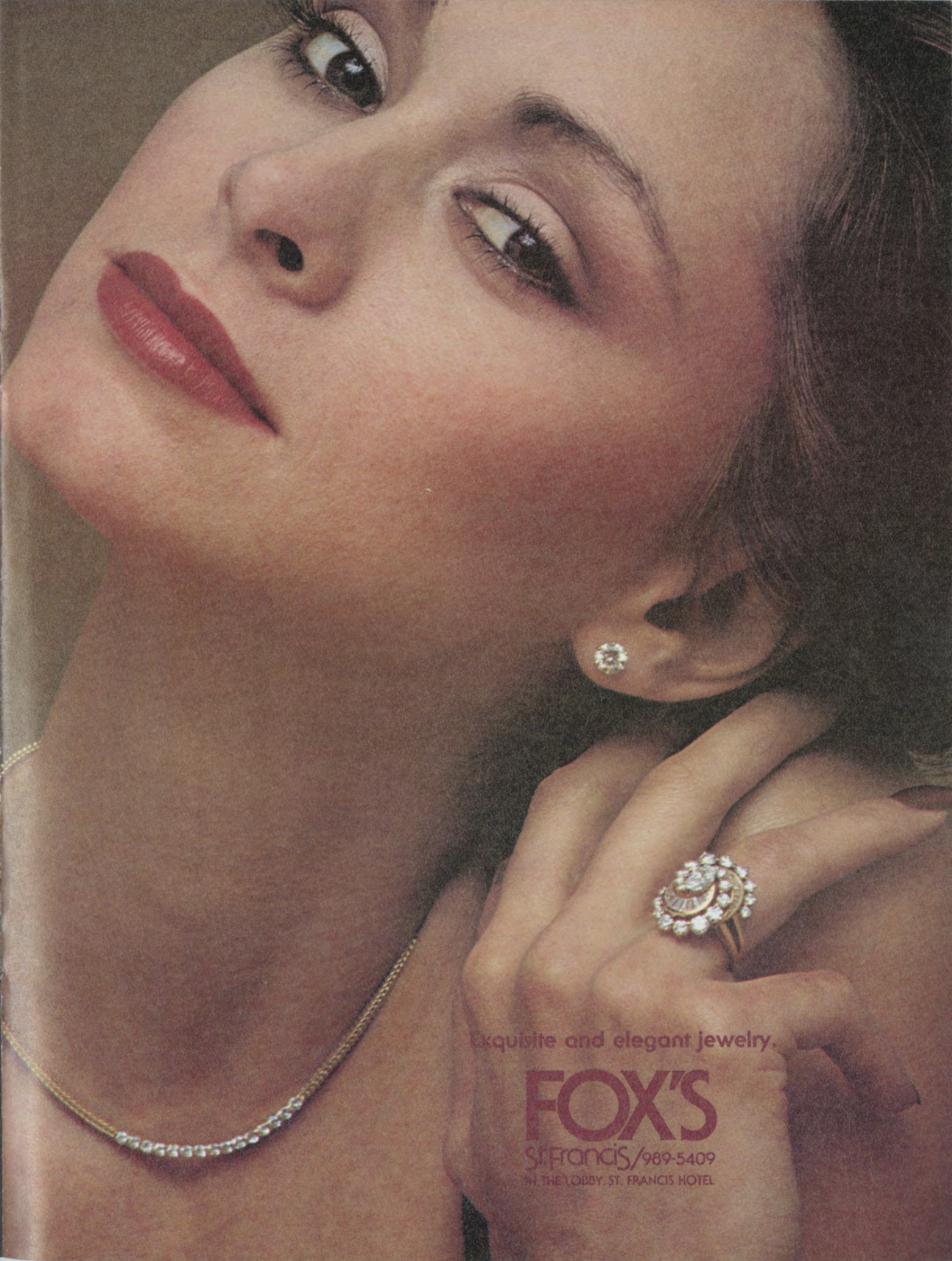
Anny Schlemm as Klytemnestra.



Franz Mazura as Oreste



William Neill as Aegisth



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# THE BANK THAT LOOKS SHOULD ALSO LOOK



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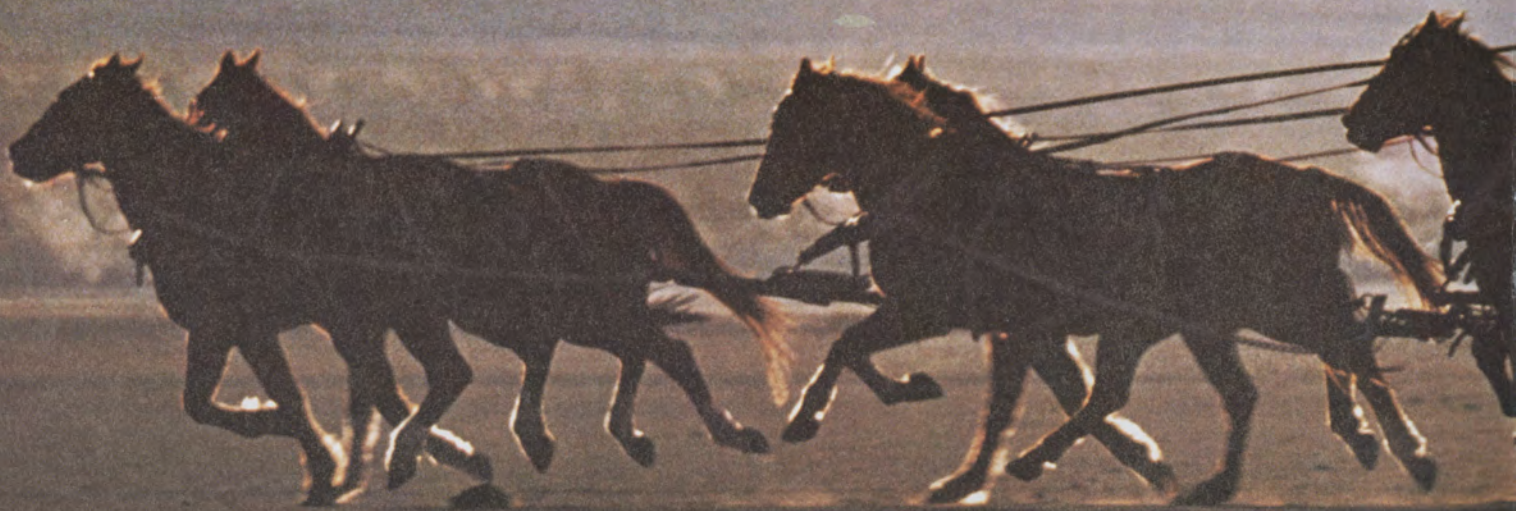
555-7273



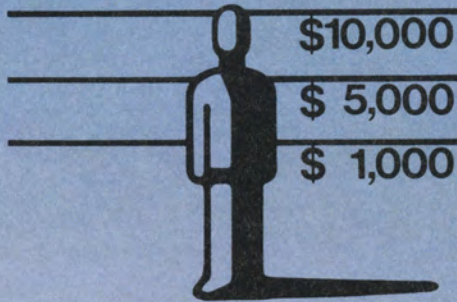
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The augmented orchestra for *Elektra* was underwritten by a much-appreciated gift from Mr. and Mrs. Robert G. Holmes

Opera in one act by RICHARD STRAUSS

Text by HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL

Based on a play by SOPHOCLES

(By arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner)

# Elektra

ELEKTRA  
(IN GERMAN)

*Conductor*  
Berislav Klobucar\*

*Stage Director*  
Wolfgang Weber

*Designer*  
Alfred Siercke

*Lighting Director*  
Christine Wopat

*Musical Preparation  
and Prompter*  
Philip Eisenberg

CAST  
*Five maid-servants*

Nina Hinson  
Christina Jaqua  
Gwendolyn Jones  
Kathryn Montgomery\*  
Rebecca Cook\*

*Overseer of the servants*

Claudia Siefer

*Elektra*

Danica Mastilovic\*

*Chrysothemis*

Leonie Rysanek

*Klytemnestra*

Anny Schlemm\*\*

*Her confidante*

Lynn Beckstrom\*

*Her trainbearer*

Ellen Kerrigan\*

*A young servant*

Michael Ballam\*

*An old servant*

John Del Carlo

*Orest*

Franz Mazura

*His guardian*

David Cumberland

*Aegisth*

William Neill

\*San Francisco Opera debut  
\*\*American debut

*First performance: Dresden, January 25, 1909*

PLACE AND TIME: Greece after the Trojan war.

*First San Francisco Opera performance:  
October 25, 1938*

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 AT 8:00 (Live broadcast)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7 AT 2:00

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13 AT 8:00

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

*Please do not interrupt the music with  
applause*

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

*The performance will last approximately  
one hour and forty minutes*

## SYNOPSIS/ ELEKTRA

Mycenae-Klytemnestra and Aegisth have murdered Klytemnestra's husband King Agamemnon, after his return from the Trojan War. The queen has sent her son Orest into exile, and has moved her two daughters Elektra and Chrysothemis to the servants' quarters. Elektra, obsessed with the thought of vengeance for the death of her father, waits for the return of her brother who will be the instrument of her revenge.

Maids discuss the strange behavior of Elektra; the fifth maid, who expresses love for her, is taken away on the overseer's orders and beaten to death. Elektra mourns the death of her father Agamemnon and swears that she and her brother will avenge his murder.

Chrysothemis tries to persuade Elektra to change her hostile attitude, which has caused Klytemnestra to keep them confined. She fears growing old, unmarried and childless.

Klytemnestra, though afraid of her daughter, tells Elektra about her tormented dreams and asks for help. She is told that the nightmares will vanish when the gods are placated by the shedding of blood of someone near to her. Elektra then describes the coming

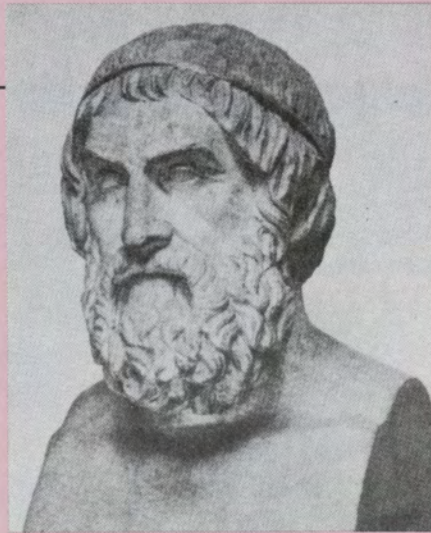
death of Klytemnestra. A confidante whispers some news to Klytemnestra, who returns to the palace with a triumphant and demonic laugh.

Chrysothemis brings the news of Orest's death, which prompts Elektra to attempt to cajole her sister into helping her kill Klytemnestra and Aegisth. Chrysothemis refuses and runs away from the courtyard.

Elektra tries to excavate the concealed axe that had killed Agamemnon, but is interrupted by the arrival of a stranger asking to see Klytemnestra with news of Orest's death. Elektra tells her name to the stranger, who then reveals that Orest is not dead. She asks who he is; he answers that all have recognized him except his own sister.

In the recognition scene between sister and brother, Elektra and Orest plan to avenge their father's murder.

Elektra waits in the courtyard while Orest slays Klytemnestra. When Aegisth appears, Elektra joyfully lights his way into the palace, where he too is slain. After Aegisth's death, Elektra begins a triumphal dance. Chrysothemis watches in horror as the ecstatic Elektra collapses and dies.



Sophocles

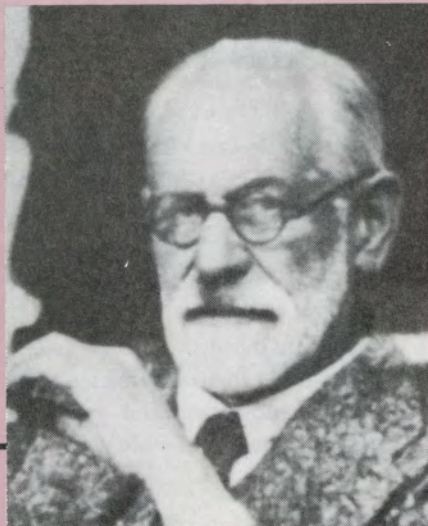
# *Elektra* Has Been Called a "Graeco-Freudian" Myth

*There Is Certainly No Doubt That It Is a  
'Study in Hysteria,' but Hofmannsthal Had a Subtle  
Intellect and There Are Other Ways  
of Viewing the Opera*

By STEPHANIE VON BUCHAU

In 1903 the composer Richard Strauss saw a performance of Hugo van Hofmannsthal's *Elektra* in Berlin and immediately recognized that it was an ideal subject for an opera libretto. He and Hofmannsthal had first met in 1900 when the young Austrian poet had tried to interest Strauss in composing the music for a ballet, *Der Triumph der Zeit*. The composer had regretfully returned the poet's manuscript. In 1906 a tentative correspondence be-

gan in which Strauss argued that *Elektra*, attractive as it was, seemed too similar to his just-performed *Salome*. Hofmannsthal overrode these objections by stating ingenuously that the similarities were merely that they were both works in one act, with a woman's name for a title, took place in classical antiquity and had first been performed by Gertrud Eysoldt at Max Reinhardt's Kleines Theater in Berlin. Strauss skittishly countered with requests for other subjects: *Semiramis*,



Sigmund Freud



The world premiere of *Elektra* had Ernestine Schumann-Heink (left) as Klytemnestra and Annie Krull in the title role.

gelo Neumann wired to Prague that it was a "failure." After the work was played in England, an acrimonious exchange between Ernest Newman (who hated it) and G. B. Shaw (who loved it) in the columns of *The Nation* ended with Shaw crowing, "Triff noch einmal, Ernest!" a sly reference to that place in the opera where Elektra commands Orest to "Strike yet again!" German critics, who had admired *Salome*, were horrified by *Elektra*. One paper remarked acidly: "Wie schön war die Prinzessin Salome," and another suggested as further subjects for the composer, "Incest," "Lynch Justice" and "The Bloodthirsty Gorilla." Yet gradually the opera came to be considered Strauss' most advanced score, and a theatrical experience of frightening intensity.

*Elektra* represents the fashioning of an historical subject from a modern point of view. The discoveries of Heinrich Schliemann had fired all of Europe with enthusiasm for Greek subjects, and though neither Hofmannsthal nor Strauss ever visited Mycenae, they were able theatrically to reproduce its aura. It was Nietzsche who referred to the "good, strong inclination of the ancient Greeks toward pessimism, tragic myths, and the concept that everything was dreadful, evil, mysterious, destructive and ominous. . . ."

The *Elektra* story is central to Greek mythology where it is part of the "fall of the house of Atreus," a series of tales involving every crime imaginable against nature, and ending with the eclipse of the once proud royal family of Argos. There are many differing versions of the story, but the basic narrative involves the king Agamemnon who murders Tantalus and forcibly marries his wife, Clytaemnestra. She bears Agamemnon four children, a son Orestes and three daughters Elektra, Iphigenia and Chrysothemis. (The characters of the Greek myth are given their English

*Cesare Borgia, Savonarola, Saul and David, Dantons Tod, and Sardou's 9 Thermidor*. But even while venturing these wild pipe dreams, he was at work on the first scene of *Elektra*, as he mentions casually in a letter of June 1906. He remarks that he is "making heavy weather of it," a comment hard to believe given the opera's white heat opening pages.

Composer and poet continued their cordial correspondence, Strauss suggesting cuts or additions which Hofmannsthal readily agreed to. By the end of 1907 they were still discussing *Semiramis*, but work on *Elektra* was proceeding apace. Hofmannsthal, in his eagerness to contribute, had even suggested cutting out the character of Aegisth but Strauss overruled him. Finally, by mid-1908, Strauss was asking the poet for extra lines to expand the

recognition scene between Elektra and her brother. "I shall fit in a delicately vibrant orchestral interlude while Elektra gazes upon Orest."

The *Elektra* correspondence ends with letters containing an additional duet for the sisters at the opera's end, and these heartfelt words from the poet: "I am quite certain that as long as we live we two shall reach rapid and easy agreement on every issue." This sanguine hope was not fulfilled in the collaborations which followed (*Der Rosenkavalier* through *Arabella*), but it does show how easily *Elektra* flowed from Strauss' pen. Yet the premiere in Dresden (January 25, 1909) under Ernst von Schuch was coolly received.

Strauss thought it only a *succès d'estime* though he found the performance to be "one of the most beautiful and pure artistic experiences of my life," and An-

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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

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. It is headed by Russell Hartley, with Judith Solomon as 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.

# The War Memorial Opera House

*Owned and operated by the City and County of San Francisco through the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial*

Honorable DIANNE FEINSTEIN  
*Mayor, City and County of San Francisco*

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## 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 north-bound 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 north-bound 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.

Management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

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

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## Taxi Service

Patrons needing a cab at the end of the performance should reserve one with the doorman at the Taxi Entrance before the end of the final intermission. Anyone desiring a taxi at other times of the evening may use the direct telephone line at the Taxi Entrance to summon a cab.

## Emergency Telephone

The telephone number 431-4370 may be used by patrons for emergency contact during performances. Before the performance, patrons anticipating pos-

sible contact should leave their seat number at the Nurse's Station in the lower lounge where the emergency telephone is located.

## Food Service

The lower lounge in the Opera House is now open one and one-half hours prior to curtain time for hot buffet service. Patrons arriving before the front doors open will be admitted at the Carriage entrance.

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

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Mozart  
IN ITALIAN

Wednesday, November 7, 1979, 1:30 p.m.  
Friday, November 9, 1979, 1:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, November 14, 1979, 1:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 20, 1979, 1:30 p.m.

Special Matinee for Senior Citizens  
Friday, November 23, 1979, 1:30 p.m.  
(Sponsored by Bay View Federal  
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# Profiles

DANICA MASTILOVIC



LEONIE RYSANEK



ANNY SCHLEMM



Since her 1959 debut at the Frankfurt Opera as Tosca and Aida under the baton of Georg Solti, Yugoslavian soprano Danica Mastilovic has moved gradually into the most demanding dramatic soprano repertoire. She makes her San Francisco Opera debut in the title role of Strauss' *Elektra*, which she has already performed to critical acclaim at the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden (two productions), the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, La Scala, the Vienna, Munich and Hamburg State Operas, the Paris Opera and the opera houses of Barcelona, Stockholm and Geneva. Another role for which she is especially noted is the title part in Puccini's *Turandot* in which she has been heard in Milan, Vienna, Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, Zurich, Leipzig, Geneva, Monte Carlo, Paris and various other theaters in Italy, including the festivals of Verona and Torre del Lago, Puccini's residence. Miss Mastilovic's Wagnerian repertoire encompasses Kundry in *Parsifal*, Ortrud in *Lohengrin*, both of which she recently sang at the Hamburg Staatsoper, and the *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* Brünnhildes. The soprano has also performed the Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and Abigaille in *Nabucco* at the Teatro Colon. Her festival credits include appearances at Bayreuth, Munich, Berlin, Vienna, Zurich and Dubrovnik.

Strauss specialist Leonie Rysanek returns to the San Francisco Opera to sing a role for which she whetted appetites with one performance during the 1973 season, Chrysothemis in *Elektra*. Since her 1956 American debut in San Francisco, the world-celebrated soprano from Vienna has sung many of her signature roles here: Senta (1956), Sieglinde (1956 and 1976), Ariadne (1957), Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* (1958 and 1973), the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (1960 and 1976), Salome (1974) and the Marschallin (1978). In 1976 Miss Rysanek was presented with the San Francisco Opera medal upon the occasion of her twentieth anniversary with the Company. Following her selection by Wieland Wagner to open the first post-war Bayreuth festival in 1951, the soprano's international career began to flourish. She sang the first Lady Macbeth in the history of the Metropolitan Opera in 1959, and has since appeared regularly at the Metropolitan and at such other major opera houses as those in London, Paris, Milan, Munich, Berlin, Hamburg, Vienna and Salzburg. Recent additions to her repertoire have been the title role in *La Gioconda* with the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, Medea at the Vienna State Opera, Kundry in *Parsifal* at the Hamburg State Opera and Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Munich State Opera. Engagements this year have included Kundry in Vienna and at the Orange festival, and the title role in *Tosca* at the Metropolitan and at the opening of the 1979/80 season in Vienna. Miss Rysanek has been granted the prestigious title of Kammersängerin by both the Bavarian and Austrian governments.

Acclaimed German mezzo-soprano Anny Schlemm makes her American debut with the San Francisco Opera portraying Klytemnestra in *Elektra*. It is a role for which she is famous throughout Europe, having performed it recently in Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Amsterdam, among other places. She is heard regularly at the major German opera houses and has made guest appearances in Paris, Milan, Lisbon, Brussels, Geneva and at the Glyndebourne and Edinburgh festivals. Miss Schlemm began her career as a lyric soprano singing such roles as Micaëla in *Carmen*, Oscar in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Despina in *Così fan tutte*. She then assumed more dramatic soprano parts—Aida, Desdemona, Agathe, Jenufa, Arabella, the Marschallin—before embarking on a second career as mezzo-soprano in 1968. Among the roles in her current repertoire are Herodias in *Salome*, the Nurse in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Carmen, the Countess in *Pique Dame*, Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, Countess Geschwitz in *Lulu* and Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. Miss Schlemm is one of a handful of artists to have performed all three leading female roles in both *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Der Rosenkavalier*. For the past two summers she has appeared as Mary in *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Bayreuth festival.





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CLAUDIA SIEFER



A member of the San Francisco Opera and Spring Opera Theater choruses from 1975 to 1978, mezzo-soprano Claudia Siefer made her solo debut with the Company in the 1977 production of Janáček's *Katya Kabanova*. Last season she was seen as the drunken woman in the Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of *La Bohème*. With SPOT she has sung roles in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in 1976 and in Britten's *Death in Venice* this spring. She was co-recipient of the Fred Pavlow award in the 1979 San Francisco Opera regional auditions. Miss Siefer has appeared with Brown Bag Opera in such roles as the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* and has also been heard locally with the San Francisco Talent Bank and the San Francisco Chamber Opera Ensemble. During the 1979 fall season she portrays the overseer in Strauss' *Elektra*.

NINA HINSON



Mezzo-soprano Nina Hinson returns to the San Francisco Opera to perform the first maidservant in *Elektra*. Winner of the 1967 San Francisco Opera Auditions and the Metropolitan Opera West Coast Regional Auditions the following year, she began her professional career in Kaiserslautern, Germany. She then spent three years as a member of the Staatstheater in Kassel, specializing in Verdi, Wagner and contemporary roles. During her five years in Germany she appeared as guest artist in Zurich, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt and Nuremberg, among other cities. Since her return to the United States in 1974, Miss Hinson has appeared with the Dallas, Houston and Seattle opera companies. Her San Francisco Opera debut occurred in the 1975 production of *Andrea Chenier* as the Countess de Coigny, a role she repeated with the Houston Grand Opera in 1977 in both the Italian and English language versions. In 1976 she was heard here as Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. A frequent Beethoven recitalist and veteran of many performances of the Ninth Symphony, she sang Leonora in *Fidelio* with the Flagstaff (Arizona) Symphony during the 1977/78 season and will perform in the *Missa Solemnis* during the current season in Washington.

CHRISTINA JAQUA



KATHRYN MONTGOMERY



Mezzo-soprano Christina Jaqua first appeared with the San Francisco Opera in the 1977 production of Mozart's *Idomeneo* and was heard last season as a noble orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier*. For her third season with the Company she portrays a maidservant in *Elektra*. Miss Jaqua made her debut with Spring Opera Theater in Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice* (1975) and has since sung Bianca in *La Rondine* (1978) and Flora in *La Traviata* (1979). She has performed a number of times with Brown Bag Opera and last year had the role of Amahl in the holiday performances of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. In February she sang Siebel in the Nevada Opera production of *Faust* and was most recently heard as Meg Page in *Falstaff* at the Chautauqua summer festival. Local credits include engagements with the Inverness music festival, the Lamplighters, the San Francisco Talent Bank and the Community Music Center. In 1978 Miss Jaqua was awarded a Sullivan Foundation Grant.

A recent member of Western Opera Theater, with which she toured in the roles of Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* and Mimi in *La Bohème*, soprano Kathryn Montgomery bows with the San Francisco Opera as a maidservant in *Elektra*. A native of Terre Haute, Indiana, she attended Indiana university where she received bachelor and master of music degrees. As a member of the Minnesota Opera Studio, Miss Montgomery appeared in productions of Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* and Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*. She also won the 1978 Metropolitan Opera regional auditions in Minnesota. The soprano made her debut with the Virginia Opera Association as Frasquita in *Carmen* and will sing the role of Belle in the world premiere of Thea Musgrave's *A Christmas Carol* with that company in December. Next spring she is slated to appear there as Giulietta in *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

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REBECCA COOK



Soprano Rebecca Cook, first place winner in the Grand Finals of the San Francisco Opera Auditions in 1978, makes her debut with the Company as the fifth maid servant in *Elektra* and as Fiordiligi in the student matinees and special family-priced performance of *Così fan tutte*. Last summer she sang the title role in *Madama Butterfly* in Sigmund Stern Grove as a member of the Merola Opera Program and subsequently debuted with Spring Opera Theater as a member of the ensemble in Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice* and as Mary Seaton in Thea Musgrave's *Mary, Queen of Scots*. A native of Tennessee, the soprano studied with Margaret Harshaw at Indiana university. In 1977 she made her professional debut as Cio-Cio-San with Hidden Valley Opera. As a recitalist she has appeared with the Indiana Symphony in Samuel Adler's *The Binding*, with the St. Louis Symphony in Beethoven's choral fantasy, with the Omaha Symphony in Handel's *Messiah* and with the Fort Wayne Philharmonic in Beethoven's ninth symphony. Miss Cook was recently named the Sears Roebuck Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artist-Opera Program.

GWENDOLYN JONES



Now in her eighth season with the San Francisco Opera, mezzo-soprano Gwendolyn Jones appears as Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, a maid-servant in *Elektra*, Wowkle in *La Fanciulla del West* and Curra in *La Forza del Destino*. Last season she sang Emilia in *Otello* and Clotilde in *Norma*. A five-year veteran of Spring Opera Theater, she performed the role of Sextus in the 1978 production of *Julius Caesar*. A frequent concert soloist, Miss Jones performed in the Verdi Requiem with the Fresno Symphony in 1978 and in Bach's B Minor Mass at Hartnell College this spring. For the past three years she has been the soloist in Michael Smuin's *Songs of Mahler* with the San Francisco Ballet. In 1977 she sang in De Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat* with the San Francisco Symphony under the baton of Seiji Ozawa and in 1975 in *Götterdämmerung* with the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti. The mezzo has portrayed Tisbe in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* with the opera companies of Portland and Seattle, and the title role in the same opera in Tucson. In March of this year she appeared as the secretary in Menotti's *The Consul* with Minnesota Opera and this summer was heard singing five Tchaikovsky songs with "New Sounds of San Jose," in Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* at the Midsummer Mozart festival, in "An Evening with Lerner and Loewe" with the San Francisco Pops and in the world premiere of Harbison's *Winter's Tale* at Herbst Theatre. Miss Jones recently completed a two-year term as Sears Roebuck Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artist-Opera Program.

LYNN BECKSTROM



Following her debut with Spring Opera Theater in Benjamin Britten's *Death in Venice*, mezzo-soprano Lynn Beckstrom sings the role of Klytemnestra's confidante in *Elektra* in her first appearance with the San Francisco Opera. In the Bay Area she has also performed with Brown Bag Opera and, most recently, with the University of California Orchestra in Berlioz' *La Mort de Cléopâtre*. A former resident of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, she was very active in the musical life of that city. With the Pittsburgh Opera she sang Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* and Esmeralda in *The Bartered Bride* in addition to other local performances there as Nancy in *Albert Herring*, Frugola in *Il Tabarro*, Maddalena in *Rigoletto* and the second lady in *The Magic Flute*. She was a soloist in Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Pittsburgh Symphony under André Previn and was heard in *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well . . .* She also helped organize a young audiences group in Pittsburgh, scripting a reduction of *Così fan tutte* for children. As an award recipient from the Minna Kaufmann-Ruud Foundation, Miss Beckstrom was presented in recital at Lincoln Center under the sponsorship of the Metropolitan Opera. She was also awarded a Fulbright grant to study in London.



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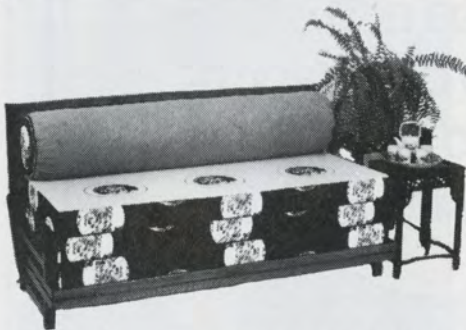
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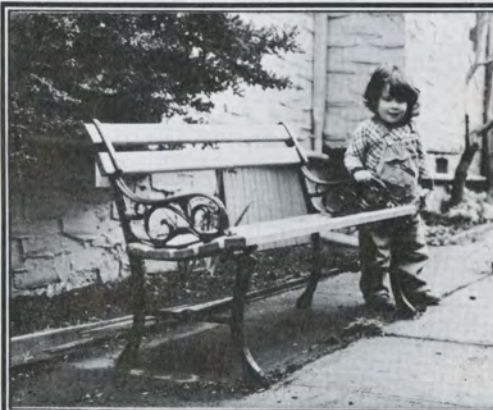
Soprano Ellen Kerrigan makes her debut with the San Francisco Opera in her native city as Klytemnestra's train-bearer in *Elektra*. As a member of the 1978 Merola Opera Program she sang the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler, in Sigmund Stern Grove and won third place in the Grand Finals of the San Francisco Opera Auditions. During the 1979 Spring Opera Theater season she bowed as Estrella in *La Perichole*. Familiar to Bay Area audiences for performances of all the soprano roles in the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas with the Lamplighters since 1970, she has also appeared with Scholar Opera, West Bay Opera, Opera Piccola, Brown Bag Opera, the East Bay Opera League and the Community Music Center. This past summer she was heard as the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute* at the Carmel Bach festival and as Perdita in the world premiere of John Harbison's *Winter's Tale* at the Herbst theatre. Miss Kerrigan was recently named Combustion Engineering Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artist-Opera Program.

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WILLIAM NEILL



Texas-born tenor William Neill, who scored a personal success in the title role in *Lohengrin* with the San Francisco Opera last season, appears as Aegisth in *Elektra*. Neill's association with the Company dates back to 1967 when he won the Gropper award as a member of the Merola Opera Program. After singing with the companies of Essen and Hagen in West Germany for a few seasons, he returned to the United States where he debuted with the Portland Opera as Tamino in *The Magic Flute* in 1970. The following year he sang Henri Faust in the Spring Opera Theater production of Gessner-Balk's *Faust Counter Faust*. In 1974 he gave a memorable performance of Lennie in Floyd's *Of Mice and Men* with SPOT, a role he repeated last year with the Netherlands Opera. His San Francisco Opera debut had taken place in 1973 as Walther von der Vogelweide in *Tannhäuser* and Bob Boles in *Peter Grimes*, and during the following season he sang Narraboth in *Salome* and Melot in *Tristan und Isolde*. In 1975 Neill made his New York City Opera debut as Herod in *Salome*, a role he has since performed in Washington, Houston, Baltimore and, this past spring, in Caracas, Venezuela. Within the last few years he has had increasing success in the dramatic tenor and heldentenor repertoire in such roles as Siegmund in *Die Walküre* (Cincinnati), Erik in *Der Fliegende Holländer* (Louisville and Charlotte), Canio in *I Pagliacci* (Louisville), the title role in *Peter Grimes* (Houston and Louisville) and Samson in *Samson et Dalila* (Miami).

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FRANZ MAZURA



DAVID CUMBERLAND



Following his huge success as Dr. Schön in the complete three-act version of Berg's *Lulu* at the Paris Opera and at La Scala conducted by Pierre Boulez, Austrian bass-baritone Franz Mazura performs Orest in *Elektra* with the San Francisco Opera. He made his American debut here as Jochanaan in the 1968 production of *Salome* and also sang the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* that season. The following year he appeared as Pizarro in *Fidelio*, Günther in *Götterdämmerung* and the Speaker in *The Magic Flute*. Mazura has been heard at the Bayreuth festival since 1970 in such roles as Gurnemanz and Klingsor in *Parsifal*, King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*, Biterolf in *Tannhäuser* and Alberich and Günther in the Ring cycle. In Hamburg, in addition to those roles, he has performed Kaspar in *Der Freischütz*, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Pizarro, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, La Roche in *Capriccio*, Orest, Jochanaan and Moses in *Moses und Aron*. Mazura is a member of the opera houses of Kassel, Mainz, Braunschweig and Mannheim and appears as a frequent guest artist in Berlin, Hamburg and Cologne. Outside of Germany he has performed in Geneva, Brussels, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Vienna, Paris and various other French cities.

Appearing for the first time with the San Francisco Opera, American bass David Cumberland sings five roles this season: a physician in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, a friar in *Don Carlo*, Orest's guardian in *Elektra*, Ashby in *La Fanciulla del West* and the Marchese di Calatrava in *La Forza del Destino*. In 1969 he became a member of the newly-created American Opera Center of the Juilliard School of Music and performed in their premiere production, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, under the baton of Leonard Bernstein. After a season with the Metropolitan Opera Studio, he sang Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* with Western Opera Theater in 1972. He then went to Germany, debuting there in the title role of Cornelius' *Barber of Baghdad*. Under contract with the Kiel Opera, the bass sang Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra* and the Hermit in *Der Freischütz* and won the Orpheus Award for "... best performance of the season by a young male singer." Currently a member of the Gelsenkirchen Opera, he has been heard there as King Dodon in *Le Coq d'Or*, Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Hunding in *Die Walküre*, Orest in *Elektra*, Pogner in *Die Meistersinger* and Seneca in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. His roles in Gelsenkirchen this year include Sarastro, King Philip in *Don Carlo*, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, Pogner, Baldassare in *La Favorita* and Neptune in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. He is also scheduled to sing Zaccaria in *Nabucco* in Hamburg. In March of this year Cumberland made his Philadelphia Opera Company debut as Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*.

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American tenor Michael Ballam bows with the San Francisco Opera as a young servant in *Elektra*, Harry in *La Fanciulla del West* and Lord Cecil in *Roberto Devereux*. During the 1978 season of the Chicago Lyric Opera he performed the Puccini role in addition to Schmidt in *Werther* and Beelzebub in the world premiere of Penderecki's *Paradise Lost*. A graduate of Indiana university with a doctor of Music with Distinction degree, he has been heard there in such roles as Mephistopheles in *Doktor Faust*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Andres in *Wozzeck*, Lt. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Anatol in *Vanessa*, the title roles in *Parsifal*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *Pelléas et Mélisande* and Danton in the world premiere of John Eaton's *Danton and Robespierre* in 1978. The young tenor has appeared as concert soloist in Carnegie Hall, Town Hall, the Kennedy Center, Notre Dame in Paris, the Royal Albert Hall and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in London, among others. This year Ballam has sung the title roles in Cavalli's *L'Ormindo* with Pennsylvania Opera Theater, Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* with the Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra and *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Santa Barbara.

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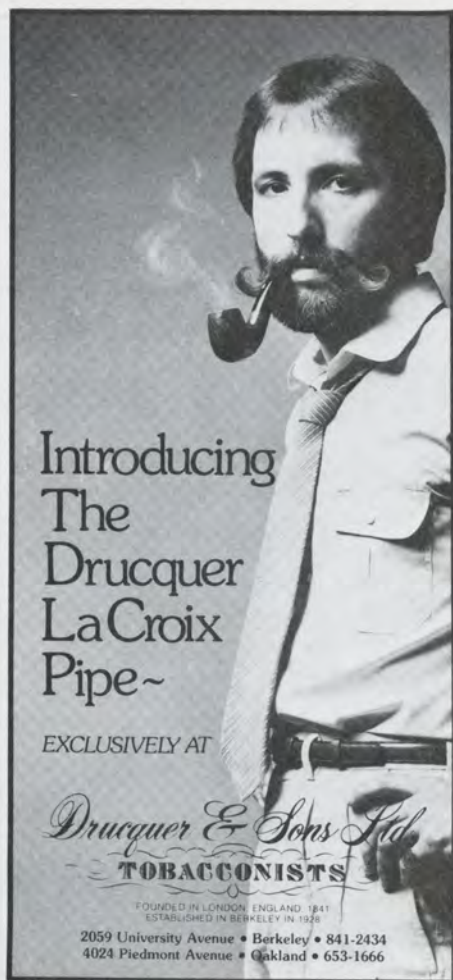
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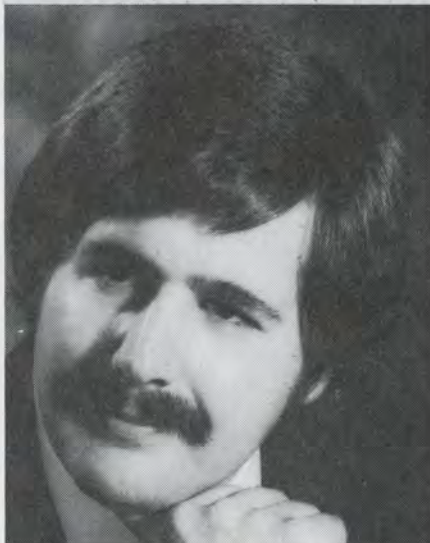
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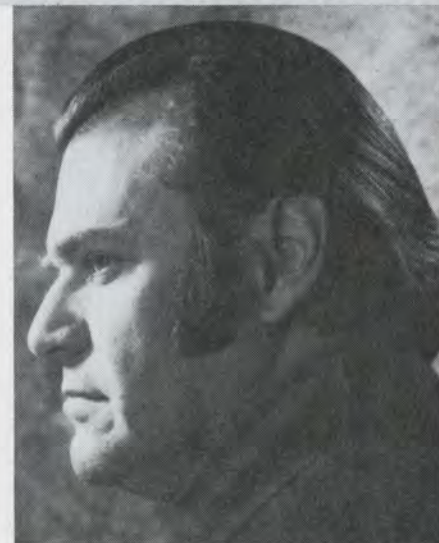
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JOHN DEL CARLO



A member of the San Francisco Opera chorus from 1973 to 1976 and now in his second season as soloist with the Company, baritone John Del Carlo was co-winner of the first-place James H. Schwabacher Memorial Award in the 1977 San Francisco Opera Auditions Grand Finals, following performances as Marcello in *La Bohème* and Biagio in Gazzaniga's *Il Convitato di pietra* with the Merola Opera Program. In 1978 he debuted with Spring Opera Theater as Achilles in Handel's *Julius Caesar* and appeared in five different productions with the San Francisco Opera in the fall. During the 1979 SPOT season he portrayed Don Pedro, the Governor of Peru, in Offenbach's *La Perichole*. The baritone won the Giacomo Puccini Award in the San Diego Opera Center Program and was heard there as Dandini in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and Pantalone in Prokofiev's *Love for Three Oranges*. He sang Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with the San Diego Opera in Palm Springs in 1978 and this May appeared in that company's production of *I Pagliacci* in the role of Silvio. A native of California and a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Del Carlo has performed with Brown Bag Opera, the Oakland Symphony and the California Bach Society. During the 1979 San Francisco Opera season he appears as Zuane in *La Gioconda*, a Flemish deputy in *Don Carlo*, an old servant in *Elektra*, Billy Jackrabbit in *La Fanciulla del West*, a page in *Roberto Devereux* and the Alcalde in *La Forza del Destino*.

BERISLAV KLOBUCAR



A native of Yugoslavia, conductor Berislav Klobucar makes his San Francisco Opera debut with Strauss' *Elektra*. He has been a regular conductor at the Vienna Staatsoper since 1953 and in recent years has led performances of *Die Meistersinger*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Tosca*, *Don Carlo* and *Salome* with that company. A guest conductor at the Stockholm Opera since 1968 when he was engaged at the request of Birgit Nilsson for her first appearance in *Elektra*, he has been a principal conductor of that theater since 1972. Klobucar presided over performances of Wagner's Ring cycle at Moscow's Bolshoi Theater and has been heard at the Edinburgh festival conducting *Elektra* and Janáček's *Jenufa*. As general director of the Graz Opera from 1960 to 1971, he led such important premieres as Milhaud's *Christophe Colomb*, Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudon*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Kitezh*, Strauss' *Die Liebe der Danae* and Wagner's *Rienzi*. A guest conductor in opera houses throughout the world, Maestro Klobucar has performed in Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, Barcelona, Geneva, Palermo, Turin, Naples, Milan, Warsaw and Copenhagen. At the Bayreuth festival he has led performances of the Ring cycle, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Tannhäuser*, *Der Fliegende Holländer* and *Die Meistersinger*. He made his American debut conducting Wagner at the Metropolitan Opera in 1968 and has led *Elektra* (1975) and *Salome* (1978) at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. With a repertoire of nearly 100 operas, he is an honorary member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and an honorary Professor of the Austrian Republic.



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WOLFGANG WEBER



ALFRED SIERCKE



Wolfgang Weber, who previously directed *Boris Godunov* here in 1973 and *Lohengrin* last season, returns to the San Francisco Opera for *Elektra*, a work he staged at the Metropolitan Opera in 1978. From 1960 through 1976 he worked with Herbert von Karajan at both the Vienna State Opera and the Salzburg Easter and summer festivals. In 1972 he staged new productions of *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* at the Metropolitan Opera, based on conceptions by von Karajan, and completed the Ring cycle with *Götterdämmerung* in 1973. The director has staged operas in his native Germany in Nürnberg, Lübeck, Bielefeld, Krefeld and Dortmund, and throughout Austria. In 1962 he debuted as stage director with *Norma* for the Graz Opera. That same year he made his American debut in Chicago with *Don Giovanni*. Since 1973 he has been the leading stage director of the Vienna Volksoper, where recent successes include Mozart's *La Finta semplice*, Schmidt's *Notre Dame* and the Austrian premiere of Blacher's ballet-opera *Preussisches Märchen*. During his career Weber has directed many contemporary operas, including the world premiere of Isan Yun's *Das Witwe des Schmetterlings* and Hans Werner Henze's *Das Floss des Medusa*. He staged the first German version of *West Side Story* in Vienna in 1968. During the 1978/79 season he directed *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Portland and *Das Rheingold* in Naples, Italy. He is responsible for this season's *Die Walküre* there and in the next two years Weber will again stage the Ring cycle at the Metropolitan Opera.

In close to fifty years of a career in the theater, Alfred Siercke has created set and costume designs for more than 1,000 operatic productions in Europe, and North and South America, including the San Francisco Opera productions of *Elektra* and the internationally celebrated three-story house for *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, last seen here in 1976. Born in Hanover, Siercke received his early schooling in Hamburg and studied history and art history in Frankfurt. After graduation he became the assistant to the designer Gowa, and in 1930 created his first opera designs for *Die Walküre*. In 1946 at the Hamburg Opera he began a long association with the late Günther Rennert. The designer's work has been seen at La Scala and in Dusseldorf, Stuttgart, Berlin, Florence and Rio de Janeiro, among other cities. In addition to designing productions for works in the standard repertoire, Siercke has been associated with world premieres of operas by Henze, Dallapiccola and Orff.

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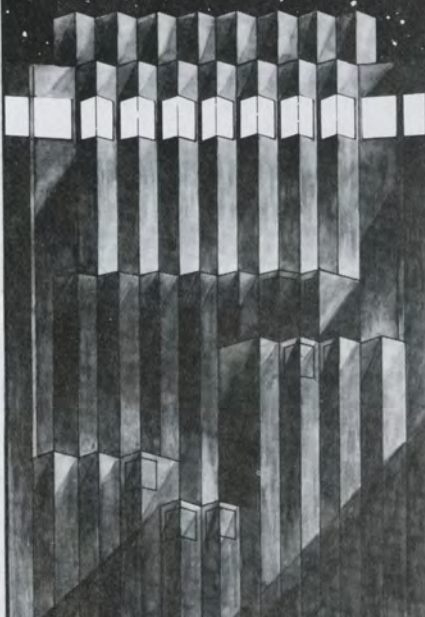
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# On-Stage Party After Honors Cast and Bank



Photos by Ira Nowinski

General director Kurt Herbert Adler introduced soprano Renata Scotto to Tom W. Clausen (right) president of the Bank of America at a party held on-stage following the September 16 performance of *La Gioconda* which was telecast live throughout the United States and via satellite to Europe through a grant from the Bank of America.



Kyhl S. Smeby, senior vice-president of the Bank of America takes a close-up look at the *Gioconda* with Mrs. Kurt Herbert Adler. Behind Mrs. Adler to the right is ballerina Martine van Hamel.

# Gioconda Telecast of America Executives



Their backs to the empty auditorium, Adler and San Francisco Opera president Walter M. Baird address the guests after the telecast, which was produced through the facilities of station KCET in Los Angeles.



Tenor Luciano Pavarotti, having just sung Enzo Grimaldo, is surrounded by a happy Adler and Clausen. As an indication of the telecast's success, the offering over the air of a San Francisco Opera souvenir book resulted in more than 40,000 pieces of mail within the first week after the offer was made.

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Myth  
continued from p. 68



The *Elektra* legend has taken many forms, one of which was a movie version of the play *Mourning Becomes Electra* by Eugene O'Neill with Rosalind Russell and Michael Redgrave as the Elektra and Orest characters, planning the murder of Aegisth.

spellings, while the characters of the opera are spelled in German.)

When Clytaemnestra's sister, Helen, runs away to Troy with Paris, precipitating the Trojan War, Agamemnon is put in command of the Greek army. Waiting vainly at Aulis for wind to sail his ships to the Asia Minor where Troy is located, he is ordered by the goddess Artemis to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia. This accomplished, the winds rise and the Greek army sails for Troy. Left behind is Clytaemnestra, already fuming because of her forced marriage, but now beside herself with grief over the loss of her child. (To make matters worse, Agamemnon had also murdered her child by Tantalus.) She takes a lover, Aegisthus, and the two plot revenge upon Agamemnon's return.

Ten years later, the war won, the victorious Greeks return to Argos. Agamemnon adds fuel to Clytaemnestra's fury by bringing with him a concubine, Paris' sister, the seeress Cassandra. Clytaemnestra pretends to greet her husband with joy, but as soon as he has retired to the bath she throws a net over him and Aegisthus murders him with a two-edged axe. Knowing that the small son Orestes will be expected to revenge his father's murder, Aegisthus tries to kill him too, but an old retainer spirits the boy away. The distraught Electra and Chrysothemis are left living with their mother and her hated consort.

It is at this point that Hofmannsthal's play begins. The poet, who was born

in Vienna in 1874, had been a child prodigy, writing exquisitely lyrical poetry at age seventeen which he published under the pen-name "Loris." The playwright Arthur Schnitzler was inspired to call Hofmannsthal's poetry, "verses of such perfection, of such faultless cast, suffused with so much musical glow we had never yet heard from a living poet . . . I felt for the first time in my life I was in the presence of genius. . . ."

Yet by the turn of the century, Hofmannsthal's lyric muse had deserted him. As so often happens, his poetic intuition had warned him of the coming fall of the old order; he felt that verbal communication was impossible in a world gone mad. The brilliance of the Austro-Hungarian empire was a façade, soon to be swept away by war. Art could not be separated from life. Despite his sensitive, almost neurasthenic image, Hofmannsthal was not made for the ivory tower. He saw himself as a conservator, keeping alive the legacy of earlier generations; he believed that each work of art must be based on foundations laid in the classical past, and now he chose to "reinterpret" Sophocles' famous drama, *Elektra*.

There are actually three classical Greek plays on the same subject: Aeschylus' *The Libation Bearers*; Euripides' *Elektra* (which Michael Cacoyannis used for his thrilling film starring Irene Pappas, and which Shaw mistakenly thought was the original of Hofmannsthal's play); and the Sophocles *Elektra*. It is in Sophocles that the heroine first takes a central part, for the other plays concentrate on Orestes' revenge. Hofmannsthal not only increased the focus on the distraught Elektra, but added a new ending in which the crazed princess, having attained her bloody goal, triumphantly dances herself to death. This dance was extremely important to Hofmannsthal who, realizing that language was at a crisis point, increasingly relied on gesture, music and dance as a means of expressing the inexpressible.

Hofmannsthal also did away with the traditional Greek chorus which had the effect of distancing the viewer from the drama.

Though Hofmannsthal had given up lyric poetry, his hunger for the music of words and for music itself continued. He insisted that he was not a musical man, although his taste was independent enough so that he preferred Beethoven to Richard Strauss. His libretti sing, none more so than *Elektra* which is written in free verse, a stylistic advance over the blank verse of Hofmannsthal's previous poetic dramas. This style, which he used in all his libretti, is capable of both tragic declamation and colloquial conversation, as we see so startlingly in the first act of *Rosenkavalier*. It is a verse perfectly suited to musical setting, and Strauss seldom changed the metre of the poet's lines to suit his music.

It has been suggested that Hofmannsthal's *Elektra* is a "Graeco-Freudian myth," for it is known that the poet's library included such volumes as Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* and *Studies in Hysteria*. There is certainly no doubt in the mind of anyone who has heard the opera that *Elektra* is a "study in hysteria." But Hofmannsthal had a subtle intellect, and the standard Freudian explanation of Elektra's behavior—that her desire for revenge is created by her unnatural, incestuous love for her father, an explanation which has given rise to the psychiatric term "Electra complex"—is too bald an analysis, which in any case does not take into account the final mad dance.

Hofmannsthal believed in "the way to life and to men through sacrifice . . . to act is to give oneself up . . . in *Elektra* the individual is dissolved . . . Elektra is no longer Elektra, just because she has dedicated herself entirely to being Elektra." In other words, Elektra sacrifices her reason and her humanity in order to fulfill herself; that she may be driven by subconscious desires for this

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Irene Papas was the Elektra in the movie of the same name, directed by Michael Cacoyannis.

fulfillment doesn't detract from the mysticism of her sacrifice.

The interesting thing is that it is virtually certain that Strauss understood none of this complexity; yet his music intensifies its resonances beyond even Hofmannsthal's imaginings. The composer was forty-two in 1906 when he began work on the opera. He had been enormously successful as both a composer of gigantic orchestral tone poems and as a conductor of opera and symphonic concerts. He was Hofkapellmeister at the Imperial Opera House in Berlin, shortly to be appointed Generalmusikdirektor, a post he held until 1917. In December of 1905 his first successful opera, *Salome*, had its sensational premiere in Dresden. The work was quickly acclaimed by press and public, though the Kaiser, who hated modern music, was heard to mutter that he had "nurtured a viper in his bosom." (Strauss privately became known as the "Royal Bosom-Viper.")

*Salome* had stretched the modern operatic orchestra to its full limits most critics thought, until they heard *Elektra*. Its score calls for 111 players, including strings each part *divisi* in 3, forty wind

instruments with such arcana as eight different kinds of clarinets, basset horns, heckelphone and Wagner tubas, and the usual exotic battery of percussion, including Klytämnestra's whips. It is an extremely nervous, loud score and during rehearsals for the premiere, the composer was upset to find conductor Schuch toning down its more raucous interludes in deference to his straining singers. When Strauss complained, Schuch obligingly let the orchestra full out so that the composer couldn't hear the singers at all. By the night of the premiere, he reports, "everything was in perfect balance."

The main musical advance of *Elektra*—leaving aside its psychological pioneering—is its insistent bitonality, a device Strauss explored to the maximum and then dropped for the rest of his career, much to the chagrin of those critics who think that music is a progressive rather than cumulative art. Strauss tells the story of the cleaning woman who wandered into a rehearsal and, when asked by the annoyed Schuch what she was looking for, was anticipated from the orchestra stalls by the composer

continued on p. 110

## *Sweeney Todd* and Books in Gift Shop

Books and *Sweeney Todd* aprons are among the fastest-selling items in the San Francisco Opera's Gift Shop, located on the south mezzanine level of the Opera House and open before every performance and at each intermission during the current opera season.

Choices of books are fairly eclectic, ranging from the new and rare hard-bound second volume of Julian Budden's *The Operas of Verdi* to paperback biographies of Fats Waller, George Gershwin and Cole Porter. For those interested in starting a basic library, the shop stocks both *Milton Cross Complete Stories of the Opera* and its sequel *More Stories of the Complete Operas*. There are also paperback art book editions of *French Opera Posters* and *Old Opera Stars in Historic Photographs*.

The *Sweeney Todd* aprons are based on the new Broadway show of the same name which tells the rather grisly tale of a London barber who butchers his customers and turns them over to his lady-friend Mrs. Lovett who, in turn, makes meat pies out of them in her kitchen!

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Civic Light Opera's "run" at Ghirardelli Square was one example of the organization's long community involvement. Another one occurred in September when "42 Hours of Dancin'" was presented on an open air stage outside of the Hyatt on Union Square to note the arrival of Bob Fosse's production of "Dancin'" at the Orpheum Theatre.

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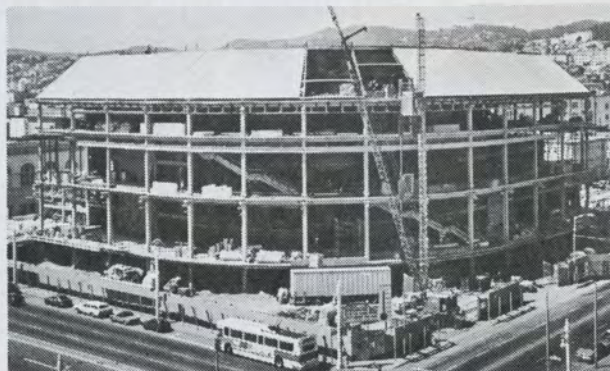
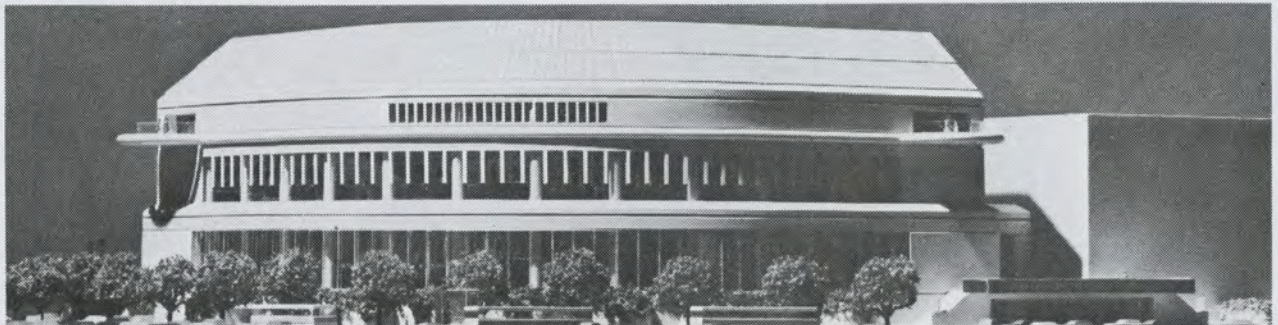
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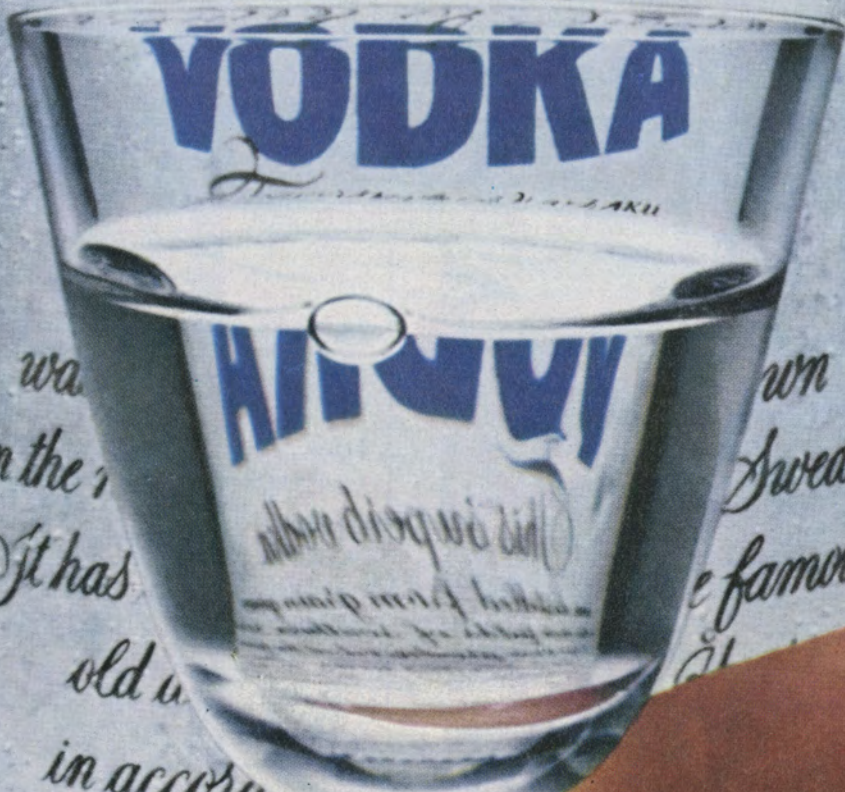
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# An Extra Set of Ears

*Conductor David Agler, Following His Successes with Spring Opera, Joins the Staff as Musical Supervisor—an Extra Set of Highly Trained and Very Sensitive Ears for the General Director*



Photo: Robert Messick.

The San Francisco Opera's new Exxon/Arts Endowment Conductor and Musical Supervisor, David Agler.

by ARTHUR KAPLAN

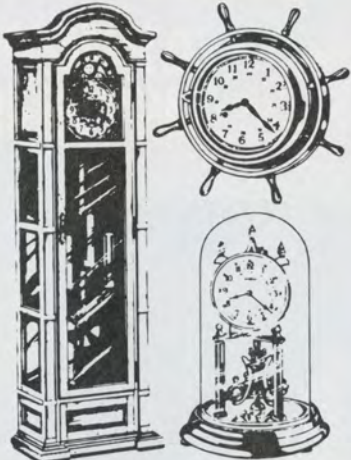
David Agler, the young conductor known primarily to San Francisco audiences for his remarkable readings of Henze's *Elegy for Young Lovers* and Britten's *Death in Venice* during the last two Spring Opera seasons, was named to the position of musical supervisor of the San Francisco Opera earlier this year, following the untimely death of his predecessor Otto Guth in January.

As general director Kurt Herbert Adler said in tribute "Otto's contribution to this Company is almost impossible to calculate. His musical acumen and devotion to his art have left an indelible mark on more than two decades of productions at the San Francisco Opera." It was undoubtedly because Agler possesses just such "musical acumen and devotion to his art" that he was chosen as Guth's successor. "I'm honored to have inherited the title that Otto Guth had," stated the boyishly handsome musician, "but I could never, ever follow in his footsteps. First of all, he had the

extraordinary culture of those Europeans of his generation who came to America, which I'm afraid my generation will never have. He was a very great figure in this theater. I knew him only in New York, but he was always very supportive and encouraging to me. He seemed to know a great deal about me, although to my knowledge he never heard me play, he never heard me coach and he never heard me conduct. I didn't meet him until the day I met Mr. Adler for the first time and was offered a conducting job with Spring Opera for 1978." Agler didn't say so in as many words, but the implication was that Otto Guth had been instrumental in his coming to San Francisco.

Agler's background and musical training indicate that his services to the San Francisco Opera will be somewhat different from those of his predecessor. Indeed, his title—musical supervisor and resident conductor—reflects the difference between the two men. "I'm primarily a conductor and want to follow that career," he asserts, and he was recently named Exxon/Arts Endowment conductor with the San Francisco Opera. "Otto was not really a conductor. The fact that I'm younger and can run around more will also mean

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Agler (left) with choreographer Margo Sappington and stage director Robert Breuer during rehearsals for last April's Spring Opera production of *Death in Venice*.



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that I will do certain things that Willie [W. Anthony Waters, Adler's former musical assistant] used to do. Also, I'm not sure that being a coach, and Otto was a great one, and being a conductor are totally compatible in the sense that one can do both full time equally well. There's a certain point at which the conductor ceases to be concerned about the singer's problems in the same way as a coach.

"The problem with defining my job, in all its parameters is that I've been here such a short while, I don't know exactly what I do yet. It will be interesting to see how it evolves. I see myself taking my own way as musical supervisor because I'm a different person from Otto. I'm very aware of the affection and esteem that he had in this Company and realize that, in a sense, he can't be followed. By seeking my own way, I think that I am, in fact, honoring him more.

In one respect, at least, Agler will serve the same function as his predecessor. The musical supervisor acts as an extra set of ears—highly trained and very sensitive ears—for the general director. "I keep Mr. Adler informed on how the musical preparation for the various operas is proceeding. Every day I spend most of my hours at rehearsals because

it's my job to know what shape things are in. I'm a terrific lurker and keep my ear to the ground. If something is wrong—a singer coming unprepared or in bad vocal shape, or needing extra musical or diction coaching—I speak to the person in charge of the musical preparation or the prompter and say, 'Is this a problem we can fix on our own, or is it a matter of more coaching time, etc.?' I try to make sure that there is enough coaching for each show, that people are sent to the right coaches, that special problems are taken care of. I try to stop people from throwing their hands up in the air and saying, 'Oh, this is impossible!' There are almost always solutions to every problem.

"We have a very strong musical staff this year and my job is to make sure that for all of our companies the musical preparation is used in the most efficient way possible. I also want to make sure that the musical staff is aware that the management is concerned—and concerned in the right, positive way—that they are thriving and content in their work. All of that is good for the general morale.

"I listen very, very carefully to all the orchestra rehearsals and offer myself as a second pair of ears to the conductors,

if that's their style of work. If not, I keep my mouth good and shut. Personally, when I'm conducting, I always like to rehearse with somebody else in the room with a good pair of ears because balances where the conductor stands are not what they are in the rest of the house. Furthermore, many wrong notes escape you in the general din."

An important part of Agler's job will involve putting together the new opera orchestra. With the Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall of the Performing Arts Center dated for completion in 1980, the San Francisco Symphony will vacate the Opera House and open their own season next fall. The symphony players, many of whom double as members of the opera orchestra during the fall season, will now have to decide which of the two orchestras they wish to play for. "There may be as many as 30 to 40 new positions open," states Agler. "This country is full of brilliant young players and I hope that many of them will want to come here. On the other hand, there are older, more experienced players who might not want the drudgery of a 52-week-a-year contract and might prefer to come here and play in an orchestra which has slightly less work. We might, for that reason, be able to attract some very fine players from very fine orchestras, including the San Francisco Symphony. Our repertoire is more interesting than that of most other opera houses. Relatively speaking, there is more German music here than elsewhere and the fare changes every year. At the Met, for example, they repeat many of the standard Italian works from season to season."

As associate conductor and general manager for the Spoleto festival he traveled all over the United States to put together the festival orchestra several years ago. "We came to San Francisco on a lark," he recalls, "and found wonderful cellos and basses. The San Francisco Opera orchestra now has members that I found here for the Spoleto orchestra: Judiyaba, a cellist, and Jon

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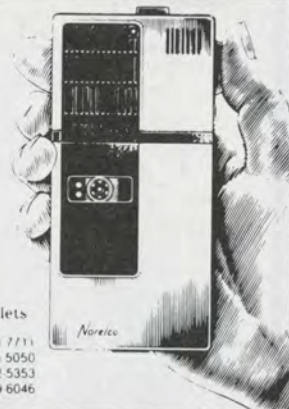
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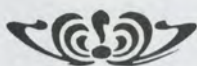
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Lancelle, who is joining the bass section this year."

Agler will be involved in every single orchestra audition and will hear many of the regional auditions for the Merola Opera Program as well. In his capacity as musical supervisor, he works not only with San Francisco Opera's fall season, but also with the auxiliary companies as advisor and general musical resource. This offers a unique familiarity with the young singers and the musical staff in the various programs that is extremely important to the Company. "I listen in such a way as to determine how certain people might be useful in the future."

An area of primary responsibility for Agler is the San Francisco/Affiliate Artists-Opera Program, for which he serves as musical director. "We are the first opera company to have this type of program. It's rather like a high-class finishing school for six singers who are theoretically on the brink of major careers in opera. The operations of the San Francisco Opera are wide enough to provide these young singers with many different kinds of performing experiences—lesser roles in the fall season, plus Spring Opera, Brown Bag Opera, the new American Opera Project, and recital appearances. In addition, we work on areas of their education which still need improving—language and diction, stage deportment, vocal coaching, etc.

"I act as their counselor on matters of repertoire, seeing them at least once, often twice a week. In my sessions with them, as a challenge, I may ask them to sing a given phrase or aria in a different manner, as a conductor might. I feel that coaching should teach them how to be efficient about learning their music and help them realize that they will be asked to sing a piece in a number of different ways by different conductors. I help them to cope with that—adapting to a conductor's demands and still being true to their own way of singing and expressing themselves. I like that kind of relationship with

young singers, being of assistance in that way. They also work with such fine coaches as Margaret Singer and Susan Webb."

For Brown Bag Opera, which Agler considers "a very important part of this Company," he hopes to keep improving the level of singing while introducing even more imaginative programming.

Imagination and the ability to assess the musical and theatrical viability of new pieces will be necessary in his work with the recently formed American Opera Project, the newest arm of the San Francisco Opera. As conductor of John Harbison's *Winter's Tale* which inaugurated the Project at Herbst Theatre in August, Agler has already played an important role in its early stages. "I am constantly looking for new scores for the Project. With *Winter's Tale*, it got off to a very auspicious start, I thought. The response of the public was fabulous."

Agler has an especially strong feeling for Spring Opera Theater. "I have an extraordinary affection for Spring Opera since, first of all, I've had such wonderful experiences there. Secondly, many friends of mine had first chances with Spring Opera and I think everyone in San Francisco should know what an important institution it has been nationally." Next year he will conduct one of the works in the SPOT repertoire for the third consecutive year.

Opera audiences in the Bay Area who are familiar with Agler's work in contemporary opera will have the opportunity to hear him conduct a piece from the standard repertoire when he wields the baton for the special family-priced matinee of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, one of his favorite operas, on November 24. "I conducted it in graduate school in Philadelphia," he says. "It's a piece I love, but it will be a new challenge in the fact that it's given in a large theater. Because it's an existing production, we'll basically follow what the international cast has done, and

that's between Pritchard and Joël. In Mozart, the conductor's responsibility is very great in establishing a point of view about how the piece is going to be done. When its done in English, the tempos tend to be slightly slower because the singers have more consonants to deal with. It will be a challenge to keep the wonderfully graceful Mozart line and at the same time enunciate clearly enough in our own language so that the audience can understand the text."

Although Agler admits to a somewhat conservative, classical approach to music, he enthusiastically avows, "I love modern music. I have a strong conviction that young musicians ought to inquire into as much music of their time as they can. Some of it may be good; some of it may be bad. We don't know what history will say about it. If my reviews in contemporary music have been favorable, it's that I have always planned my life so that I don't perform unless I've had fair rehearsal time. Ultimately the conductor bears the brunt of the criticism if a performance is sloppy. My greatest satisfaction is to hear the comment 'well-prepared'."

Agler's musical background is remarkably varied for a musician still in his early thirties. Coming from a musical family ("my father worked his way through college playing clarinet and saxophone in a jazz band; one brother is a bassoonist; another a horn player and pianist; my sister was a singer and played the clarinet"), he is the only one to pursue a career in music. He went to the Westminster Choir school in Princeton, majoring in piano and organ, and later taught there as well.

"I thought I was going to have a career in church music. I thought I was going to train choir boys for the rest of my life. One summer I went to Italy to play with the Westminster Choir at the Spoleto festival. I was asked back year after year to play opera and ballet rehearsals. Then one of those things happened. There was some disagreement, and on a day's notice I had to

conduct Menotti's new opera *Tamu Tamu*. Then I conducted there for several years—a very well regarded *Rape of Lucretia*, the world premiere of Bruni-Tedeschi's *Paolino, la Giusta Causa e una Buona Ragione*, and I was involved in the Polanski version of *Lulu*, which I helped prepare."

Agler left the Spoleto festival to become musical director of Syracuse Opera, which also performs in Buffalo. "I was able to do many of the standard repertoire pieces for the first time—*Tosca, Rigoletto, Aida, Figaro, Fledermaus*. It's a wonderful place to try them out, out of the public eye of the big centers.

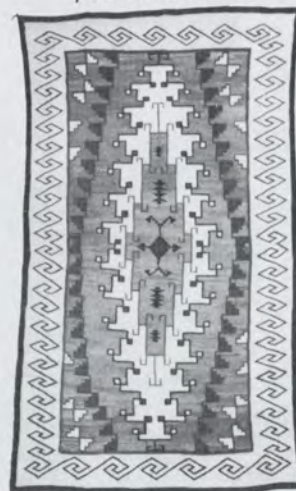
"At the same time," he continues, "I was playing a lot of song recitals, something I still love to do. Until recently I had a professional choir in Princeton, which I somehow worked into my schedule. We did concert series of things like the Bach cantatas, magnificats and passions, the Haydn and Mozart masses, etc. So, in a sense, I come to opera from church music. I didn't grow up with opera; it was not my first passion. Now every time I pick up a repertoire piece, it's a fascinating new experience. I don't disrespect the traditions. In fact, I try to learn them immediately. But when you're learning them at my point in life, I do think you question them a great deal more than people who just inherited them.

"Opera is one of my more recent passions. I think there's a great deal of truth in the statement that real conductors are made in the opera pit. The matters of control you have to learn—how to manipulate large forces spread over large distances, where basically the pit is one room, the stage is another room, and you're trying to entertain people in yet a third room. To be in communication and to coordinate things with all the various assistants—the prompter, the back-stage people, the television monitors, etc.—it's an extraordinary mental effort.

continued on p. 115

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	Monday	Tuesday
September		
		Pelléas et Mélisande 8 pm, A,B
	10	11
	17	18 Don Carlo 8 pm, A,C
		La Gioconda 8 pm, B
	24	25
October		Elektra 8 pm, A,B
	1	2
		Triple Bill 8 pm, A,C
	8	9
		Fliegende Holländer 8 pm, A,C
	15	16
		La Fanciulla del West 8 pm, A,C
	22	23
November		Roberto Devereux 8 pm, A,C
	29	30
		La Forza del Destino 8 pm, A,B
	5	6
		Così fan tutte 8 pm, A,B
		13
	12 Fol de Rol Civic Auditorium 8 pm	
		Tancredi 8 pm, A
	19	20

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		Opening Night La Gioconda 7 pm, A	Pelléas et Mélisande 8 pm, J,K	Park Concert 2 pm
La Gioconda 7:30 pm, D,E		Pelléas et Mélisande 8 pm, G,H	Don Carlo 8 pm, J,L	La Gioconda 12:30 pm, M,N
Pelléas et Mélisande 7:30 pm, D,F		La Gioconda 8 pm, G,H	Don Carlo 1:30 pm, X	Pelléas et Mélisande 2 pm, M,N
Don Carlo 7:30 pm, D,F		Elektra 8 pm, G,I	La Gioconda 8 pm, J,L	Don Carlo 2 pm, M,O
Triple Bill 7:30 pm, D,E		Don Carlo 8 pm, G,I	Triple Bill 8 pm, J,L	Elektra 2 pm, M,N Carreras Recital, 8 pm
	Elektra 7:30 pm, D,F	Fliegende Holländer 8 pm, G,H	Elektra 8 pm, J,K	Triple Bill 2 pm, M,O
La Fanciulla del West 7:30 pm, D,F		Triple Bill 8 pm, G,I	La Fanciulla del West 8 pm, J,K	Fliegende Holländer 2 pm, M,N
	Fliegende Holländer 7:30 pm, D,E	Roberto Devereux 8 pm, G,I	La Fanciulla del West 1:30 pm, M,O Fliegende Holländer 8 pm, J,L	Opera Fair 12 pm, to 6 pm
La Fanciulla del West 7:30 pm, E		La Fanciulla del West 8 pm, G,I	Fliegende Holländer 1:30 pm, X La Forza del Destino 8 pm, J,K	Roberto Devereux 2 pm, M,O
Roberto Devereux 7:30 pm, D,F		La Forza del Destino 8 pm, G,H	Così fan tutte 1:30 pm, X Roberto Devereux 8 pm, J,L	
La Forza del Destino 7:30 pm, D,F	Roberto Devereux 7:30 pm, E	Così fan tutte 8 pm, G, H	La Forza del Destino 1:30 pm, X Tancredi 8 pm, J	Così fan tutte 2 pm, M,O Nilsson/Adler Concert, 8 pm
Così fan tutte 7:30 pm, D,E	La Forza del Destino 8 pm Thanksgiving	Tancredi 8 pm, G	Così fan tutte 1:30 pm** Così fan tutte 8 pm, J,K	La Forza del Destino 2 pm, M,N

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himself who cracked: "A triad." Thomas Beecham, who conducted the English premiere in 1910, recalls that after the first performance a noted composer walked away grumbling that he was going to go home and play a C-major chord over and over again on his piano. The joke is on the disgruntled composer, for *Elektra*, that monument to dissonance, ends with four massive C-major chords.

Yet the bitonal harmonies of *Elektra* are rooted in diatonicism. Unlike *Salome*, which slithers chromatically in a manner appropriate to the heavy romanticism of its exotic Near Eastern locale, *Elektra* exudes classical dignity and uprightness, no matter how lurid its story. Hofmannsthal was aware of this coloration when he was trying to persuade Strauss that the play was dif-

ferent from *Salome*: "The blend of color in the two subjects strikes me as quite different in all essentials; in *Salome* much is purple and violet, the atmosphere is torrid; in *Elektra* it is a mixture of light and night, or black and bright." Strauss may not have been able to recognize all of Hofmannsthal's subtleties, but he was perfectly capable of grasping the tone of a play, and he set *Elektra* accordingly. As William Mann puts it, the subject is "vengeance, not voluptuousness."

The title role of *Elektra*, with its stone-cold opening monologue (shades of "Celeste Aida" except five times as difficult), its strenuous declamation and its long-held high C's, is arguably the most difficult part ever written for soprano voice. Strauss had asked Schuch for "the highest, most dramatic

soprano you can lay hands on." The original Elektra was Anny Krull who probably had a much lighter voice than the sort of flamethrower we associate with the role today. (Nor was the Dresden Court Opera as big as massive modern opera houses such as the Metropolitan and the War Memorial.) But the role was also sung in New York (in French!) by Mary Garden, proving that musicality and incisiveness can get one by where sheer vocal strength is lacking.

The argument over the quality of Strauss' music for *Elektra* has long been silenced; most critics think it is his most important work. But there are still groans, mainly from fastidious British writers, about the opera's "lurid" subject. Even such Strauss experts as William Mann and Alan Jefferson can scarcely restrain their shudders when discussing it. The redoubtable Newman enraged Shaw with "the trick that makes English criticism so insolvent . . . the trick of asserting that everything that does not please is wrong, not only technically but ethically. . . . I can stand almost anything from Mr. Newman except his posing as Strauss' governess." Today, when we eagerly line up to watch horror movies about monster aliens and ecological mutations, a little matricide is hardly that shocking. The astonishing thing about *Elektra* is that the more we are able to accept the horrors that take place in that palace courtyard, the more we also realize what a superbly crafted score it is; how skillfully, how objectively Strauss has orchestrated and molded the Argives' hysteria.

When the psychological penetration of Hofmannsthal joined the musical perspicacity of Strauss, operatic history was made. The gratuitous concern of some writers about why the partners didn't follow *Elektra* with more of the same shows itself to be idle pretension. Having eaten prime rib for dinner, one does not also eat it for dessert.

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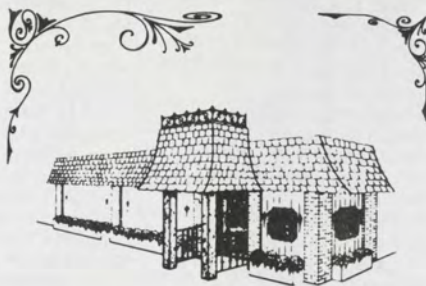
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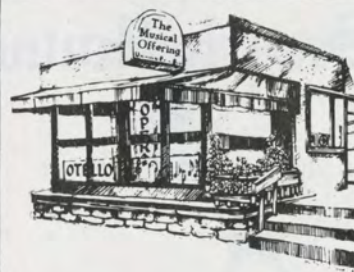
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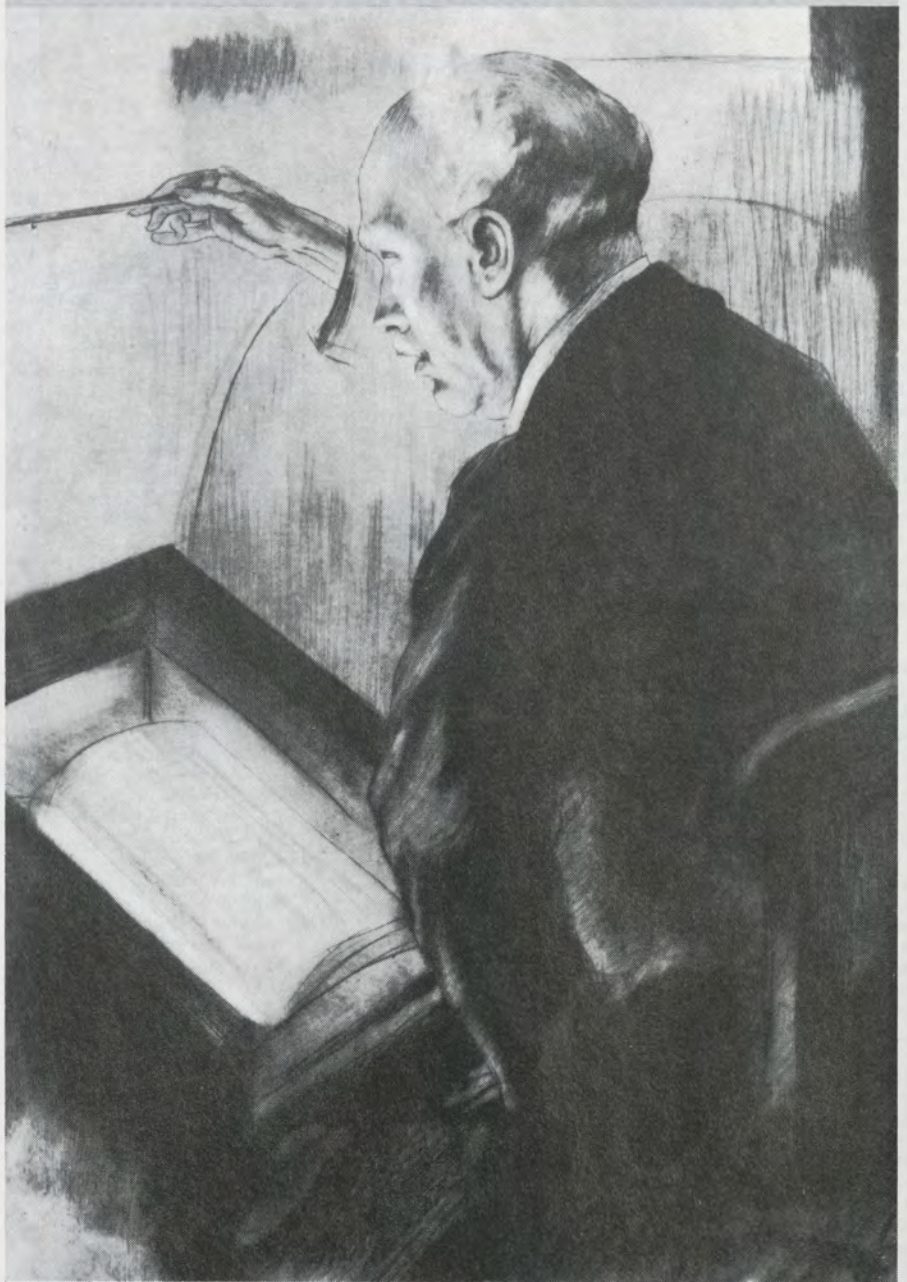
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Richard Strauss  
continued from p. 39



Strauss as conductor—etching by Alois Kolb.

- blowing hard enough, tone it down another shade or two.
7. It is not enough that you yourself should hear every word the soloist sings—you know it by heart anyway: the audience must be able to follow without effort. If they do not understand the words they will go to sleep.
  8. Always accompany a singer in such a way that he can sing without effort.
  9. When you think you have reached the limits of *prestissimo*, double the pace. (In 1948, Strauss wrote: 'I should like now to amend this as follows: Go twice as slowly (addressed to conductors of Mozart).')
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David Agler  
 continued from p. 107

"And then, what do you do in a mess? When something really goes wrong, how do you pick up the pieces? It's sink or swim. It's a whole different ball game from the concert platform. The opera house with its changes of cast and changes in the singers' voices from night to night—it's different from carefully rehearsing the same program three or four times the same way.

"In opera you're constantly dealing with music in a very direct, dramatic way," he continues. "I don't mean that symphonic music is not dramatic. But I think that my opera education—trying to coordinate all the different elements in opera—has certainly changed the way I look at symphonic music. Being involved in the opera house has tempered my four-square, George Szell approach to music.

"One of the reasons I'm happy to be here is that I've never been involved on a day-to-day basis in a large opera house. Spoleto is big and in some way even more complicated than the San Francisco Opera because we did opera, ballet, plays, concerts and chamber music in seven different theaters with sometimes eight or nine performances a day. I thrive on the challenges and pressures of a large organization where performances must be churned out at a high level, so to speak.

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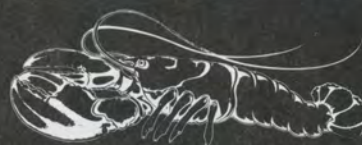


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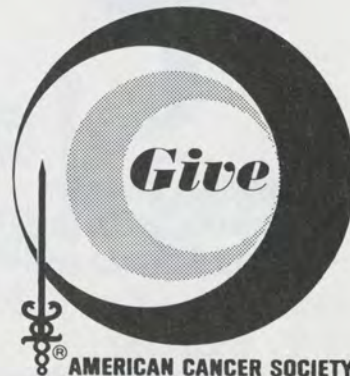
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Emotional Twin  
continued from p. 29

woman, and there seems little reason for what happens except as a chance for Strauss (who basically did not like the scene) to vary the musical texture and give the Chrysothemis more high notes.

Her next big scene is one invented by Hofmannsthal. He has her tell Elektra of the triumph of Orest. Here her hysteria has turned to rapture, but it is no less manic. Though the passage is not in waltz time, the sense of the music is of a manic waltz and her gaiety as she sees her brother in command carries with it no fear that he might censure her for accepting Klytämnestra and Aegisth in a difficult passage over the women's chorus Strauss has her leaping above the staff again and again, ecstatically proclaiming the happy era dawning, totally oblivious to the state of her sister. In a fascinating duet Chrysothemis is given the top line and the higher notes as she proclaims the victory of their family, the good of the gods and the personal glory that the three children will share. Finally she rushes out to Orest after another one of those rising Strauss lines that takes her up to a brilliant, sustained B natural.

Chrysothemis does not watch Elektra's dance of death. She returns only to watch her sister drop dead. When she then rushes to call their brother, there is silence. In that awful quiet she may see the beginning of the attack on Orest by the Furies, a punishment for matricide. We know, according to the myth, that through the intervention of Apollo and Athena Orest converts the Furies to his interest, but at the beginning it looks very unlikely. So Chrysothemis, as the music thunders out the theme of Agamemnon, may well see her brother, her last surviving kinsman, attacked by the serpent-haired, dog-headed, bat-winged creatures. That's the way Hofmannsthal and Strauss leave her, crying out her agony, always at the last limit of her reserves, a fascinating hysteric from first to last.

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## S.F. Ballet Returns to Opera House in December

The San Francisco Ballet will return to the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House this December upon completion of their current tour of four Pacific Rim cities—Pasadena, Seattle, Portland and Honolulu.

Opening the 1979-80 Opera House season on December 13 will be Lew Christensen's spectacular production of *Nutcracker*. There will be 29 performances of *Nutcracker* running through December 30.

On January 15, 1980, the San Francisco Ballet will begin its 1980 Repertory Season, presenting five months of exciting dance—from classic to contemporary—in the dazzling style which is unique to the San Francisco Ballet.

Highlighting the 1980 Repertory Season will be four World Premieres of ballets choreographed by the Company's resident choreographers: Michael Smuin's full-length ballet *The Tempest*, and new works by Robert Gladstein, John McFall and Tomm Ruud.

*The Tempest* is San Francisco Ballet Co-Director Michael Smuin's third full-length ballet after *Cinderella*, choreographed in 1974 with Co-Director Lew Christensen, and *Romeo and Juliet*, choreographer in 1976. This new ballet follows William Shakespeare's serene fantasy of romance and intrigue from the spectacular opening shipwreck to its magical conclusion. The island paradise of Shakespeare's imagination provides the setting and a cast of dukes and lords, spirits and mythological deities adrift in a world of romantic allusion and remarkable natural beauty.

The three additional World Premieres will consist of Robert Gladstein's new work set to the music of Leonard Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms"; John McFall's new contemporary ballet set to Henri Lazarof's "Canti," an a cappella choral work in five languages; and

Tomm Ruud's new neoclassical ballet for 14 dancers set to Sir Edward Elgar's Introduction and Allegro, Opus 47, for quartet and string orchestra.

The 1980 Repertory Season will also feature revivals of Lew Christensen's *Don Juan* and Willam Christensen's *Nothin' Doin' Bar. Nothin' Doin' Bar*, choreographed in 1950 to a score by Darius Milhaud, will be presented as part of a Bay Area celebration in honor of Milhaud, sponsored by Mills College.

Three works by George Balanchine will also be in the repertory schedule. *Divertimento No. 15* will be given its San Francisco premiere; and that choreographer's *Allegro Brillante*, given its San Francisco Ballet premiere during the 1979 Summer Season, and *Symphony in C* are included.

Other scheduled works from repertory include: Sir Frederick Ashton's full-length *La Fille Mal Gardée*; Lew Christensen's *Scarlatti Portfolio* and *Sinfonia*; Michael Smuin's *A Song for Dead Warriors*, *Q.aV.*, *Scherzo*, *Mozart's C Minor Mass*, *Harp Concerto Pas de Deux* and *Duettino*, a 1979 Summer Season premiere; Robert Gladstein's *The Mistletoe Bride*; and John McFall's *Le Rêve de Cyrano*.

In addition to the 1980 Repertory Season at the Opera House, the San Francisco Ballet will present four different programs at Zellerbach Auditorium on the U.C. Berkeley campus and at the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts in San Jose.

People interested in *Nutcracker*, the 1980 Repertory Season at the Opera House, or in the Zellerbach or San Jose performances are urged to check local newspapers for upcoming announcements of performance schedules, or to call the San Francisco Ballet at (415) 751-2141 for information.

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## THE OPERA FAIR

Sunday, October 28, noon to 6pm

**TICKETS:** Available daily at the Opera Box Office,  
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We gratefully acknowledge a generous grant from Eureka Federal  
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# Bigger Raffle At Opera Fair

Highlighting the third annual San Francisco Opera Fair on Sunday, October 28, will be the "Bigger Than Ever Raffle", offering more than one hundred prizes. The Fair itself will be held throughout the Opera House from noon to 6 p.m. and is supported by a grant from Eureka Federal Savings and Loan. Admission tickets to the Fair at the nominal cost of \$3.50 for adults and \$1.50 for children and senior citizens are available now at the Opera Box Office.

Prizes in the giant raffle include two hundred shares of Marathon Oil common stock; round-trip San Francisco-Paris Apex airfare for two people plus accommodations for two weeks (not to exceed \$2,600) from Siemer & Hand Travel; a \$2,500 gift certificate from Statements; a one-week coastal cruise for two to Canada from Delta Cruise Lines; and a \$2,000 gift from Narsai Catering.

Other prizes range from a color television set (Payless Drug Store) to a sterling silver mesh necklace designed by Elsa Peretti (Tiffany & Company) to a week-end for two at the Hotel St. Francis.

Raffle tickets at \$5 each or six for \$25 are available now in the basement bar area of the Opera House during intermissions at every performance and may also be purchased at the Opera Box Office and through the mail. By purchasing raffle tickets you are making a contribution to benefit the San Francisco Opera. Drawing for all prizes will be held at 5 p.m. at the Fair, although winners need not be present at the drawing.

The 1979 Fair will also feature free musical entertainment throughout the Opera House by artists of the San Francisco Opera, Brown Bag Opera and the Affiliate Artists. New this year are "How Did They Do That!?", an exciting staged demonstration of special effects, combat techniques and pyrotechnic magic from the Opera tech shop, and "Spotlight on *Forza*", a rare opportunity to observe from the dress circle a technical preparatory rehearsal for *La Forza del Destino*.

Photo: Neil Starr



Maximiano Javier "El Magnate" Lithograph 1979 28 3/4" x 23 3/4"

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