

Samson et Dalila  
(Samson and Dalila)

1980

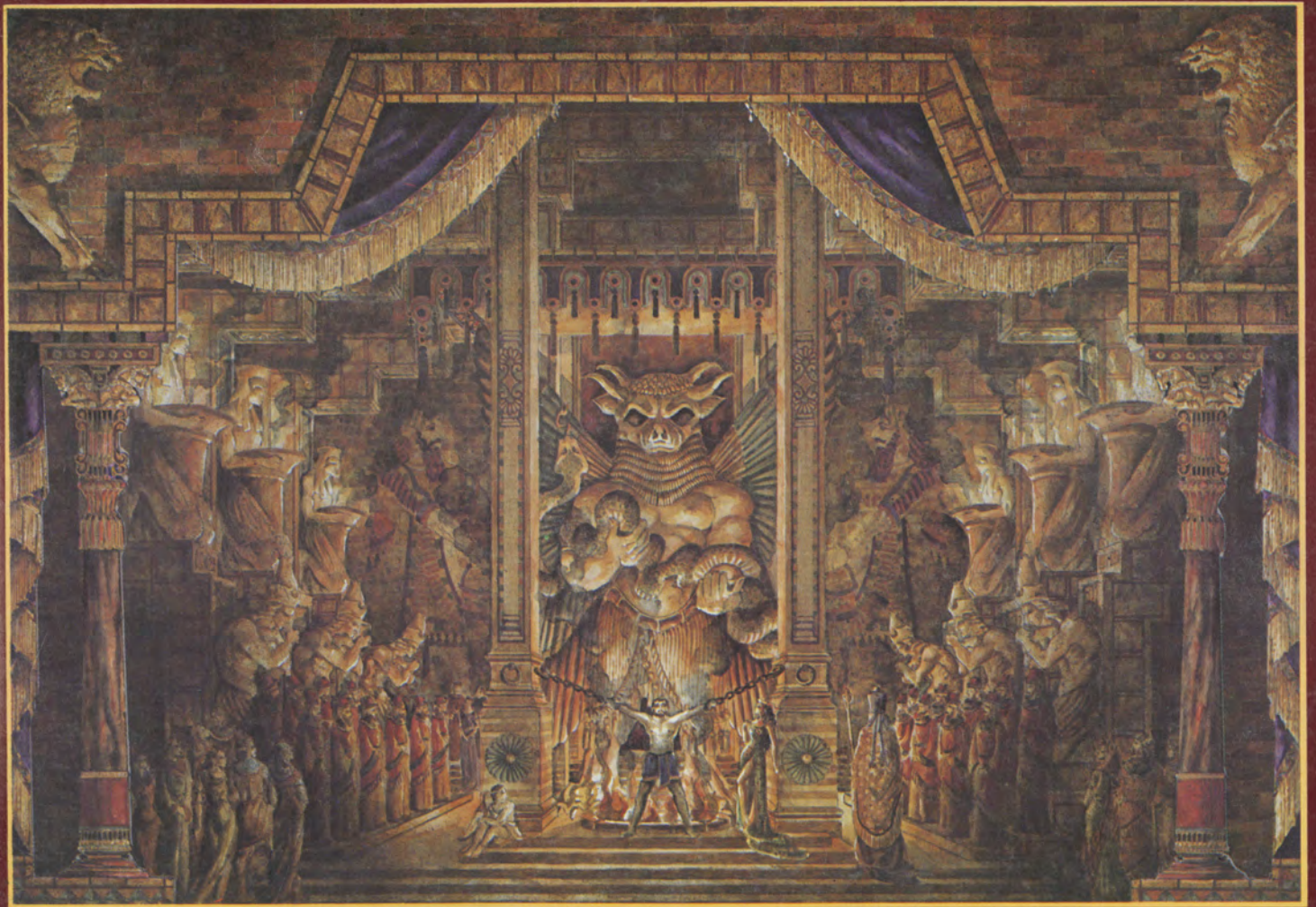
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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA



SAMSON ET DALILA/1980

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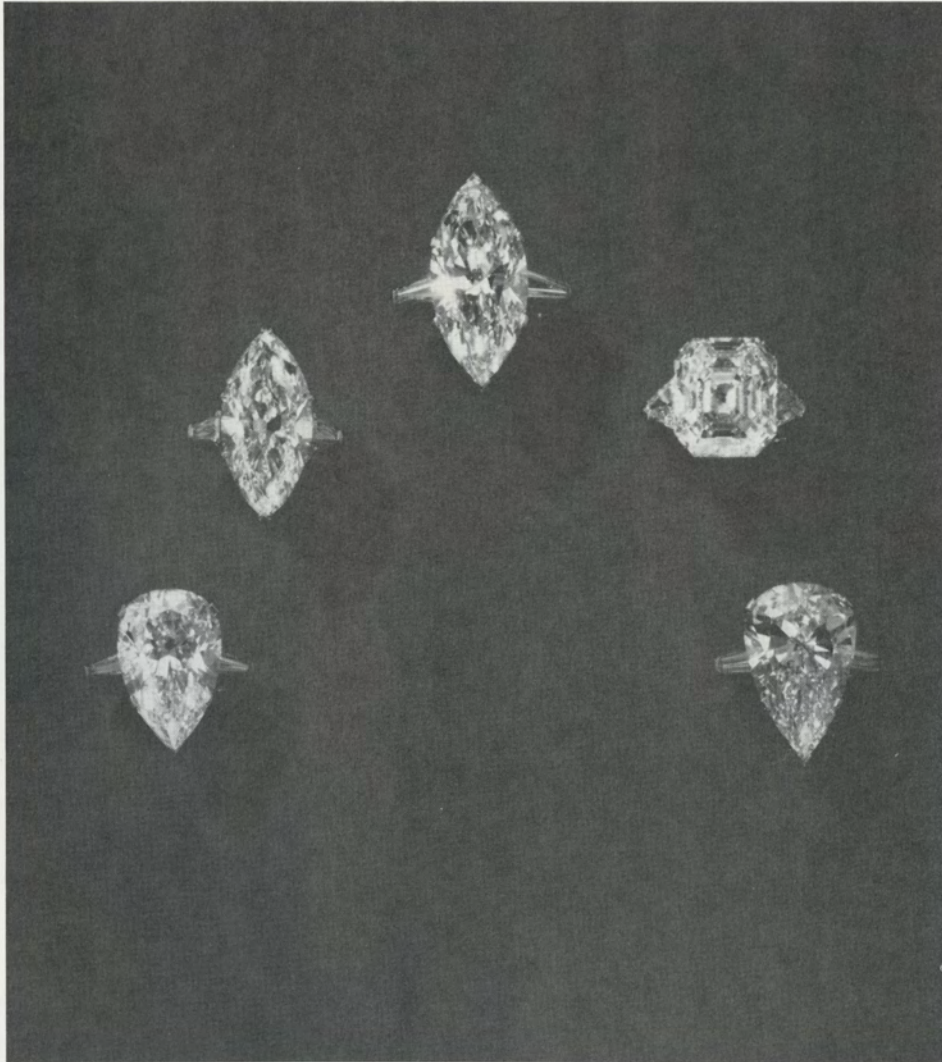


Welcome to our new season and to the beginning of the busiest period in San Francisco Opera history. We are proud to present for you our 58th fall season, the longest in the company's history. The extraordinary demand for opera by our audiences is what has made this growth necessary, and I hope we can now better accommodate the constantly growing numbers of opera lovers in the San Francisco area.

This fall we share the excitement and pride of our colleagues at the San Francisco Symphony over the opening of the Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall. With the expanded Opera House, the Herbst Theatre and the soon-to-be-completed rehearsal wing, San Francisco will now have a complex of performing arts facilities worthy of our city's exceptional cultural heritage and reputation. The Opera, too, has a proud first this season, the inauguration of our own San Francisco Opera Orchestra, made necessary by the Symphony's move from the Opera House and unavoidably conflicting performance schedules. The difficult task was accomplished through an intensive nationwide search for the finest operatic instrumentalists.

Our initial offering of the 1980 season is an ambitious new production of *Samson et Dalila*, which has been made possible thanks to the cooperation of the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa, and of our colleagues at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, who will share the production. *Samson* is being taped for a later national telecast.

Following our fall season, Spring Opera will return in 1981 with another season of innovative musical presentations. Then, in an exciting first, we will inaugurate in June a San Francisco Opera summer festival season with five international productions at the War Memorial Opera House. The next year will indeed be a period of unprecedented musical richness for our public, and we hope you will enjoy every moment with us.



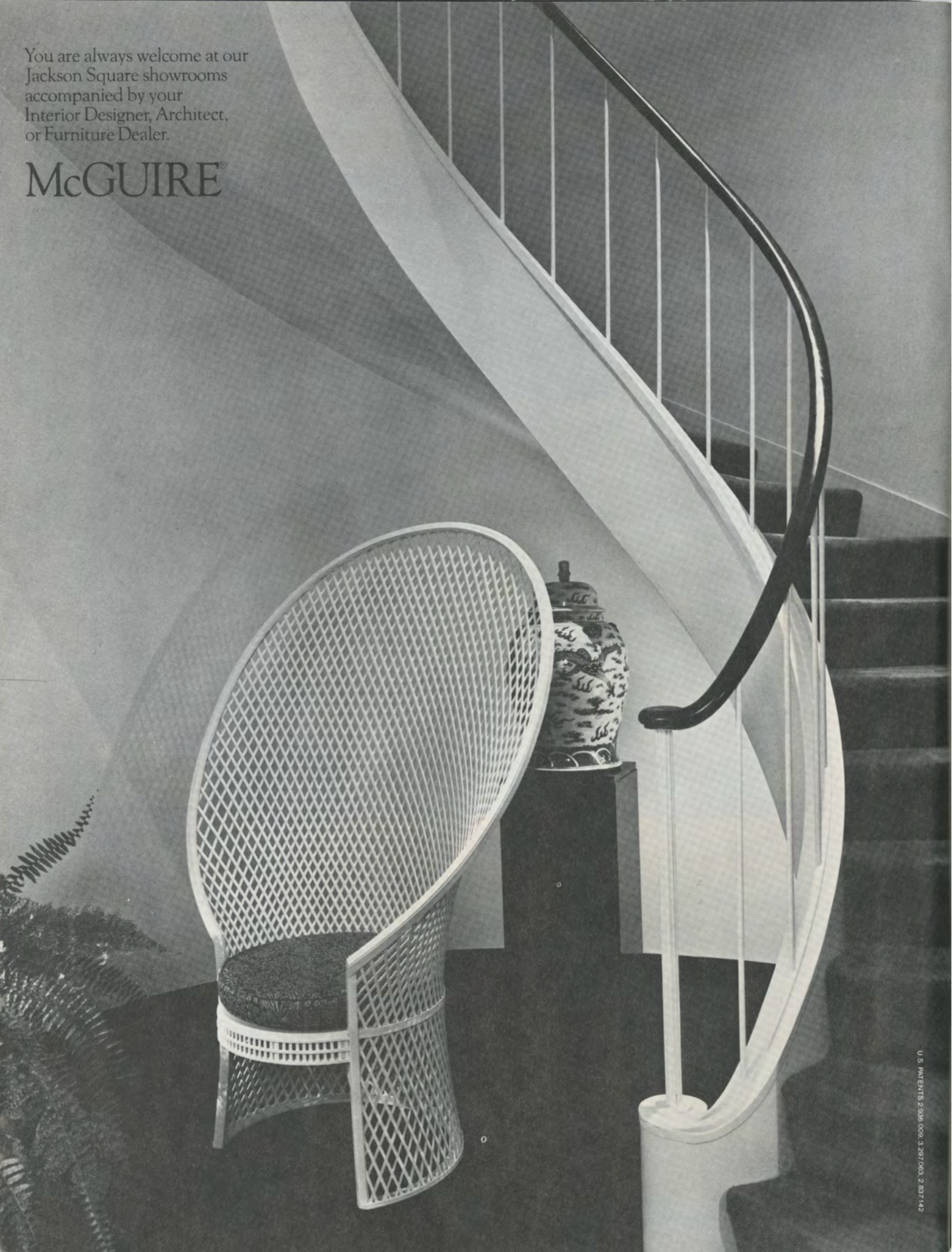
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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

Editors: Thomas O'Connor, Arthur Kaplan • Art Director: Richard High • Editorial Assistant: Robert M. Robb

Cover: Designer Douglas Schmidt's rendering for the Temple scene of the San Francisco Opera's new production of *Samson et Dalila*.

Edited by the San Francisco Opera Marketing and Public Relations Department, Thomas O'Connor/Roberta Pilk, Co-Directors.  
Editorial Offices: San Francisco Opera, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, CA 94102. Phone (415) 861-4008.

## SAMSON ET DALILA/1980 FEATURES

### A Spectacular New 'Samson' Launches 36 58th Season

Arthur Kaplan & Thomas O'Connor

Destroying the Temple of Dagon is but one of the delights of San Francisco's spectacular new *Samson et Dalila*, a production rooted in a visually lush, Victorian sensibility.

### 'Samson': A Glorious Finale 44 for Parisian Grand Opera

Robert Lawrence

*Samson et Dalila* belongs to the final glory of 19th-century Parisian grand opera, demanding two phenomenal singers for its commanding vocal line.

### Camille Saint-Saëns: "In Youth, 58 Mozart; In Age, Titian"

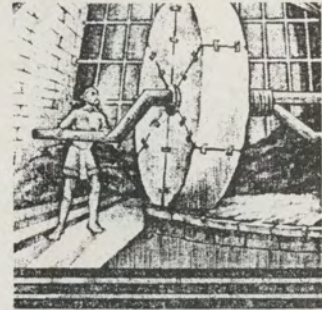
Barbara Fischer-Williams

He wrote his first piano piece at age three and his sole interest from infancy on was music. Yet Camille Saint-Saëns might not be remembered as an operatic composer were it not for Franz Liszt.

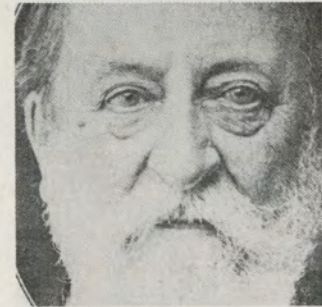
### Legend's Reluctant Hero 72

Barry Hyams

His story runs less than 100 biblical verses and has inspired little drama or music. Yet Samson's legend is a universal one that fired both poet John Milton and librettist Ferdinand Lemaire.



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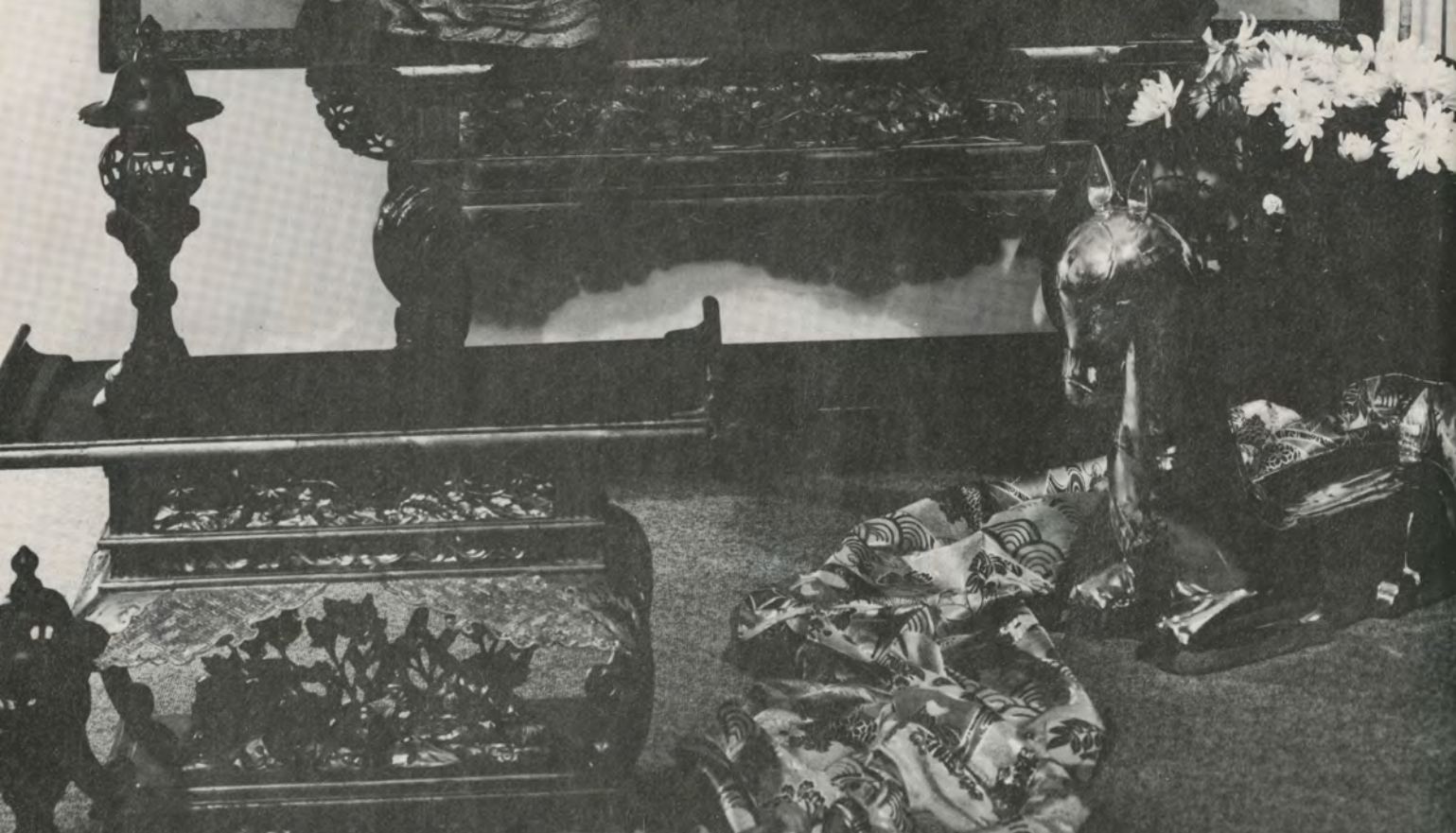
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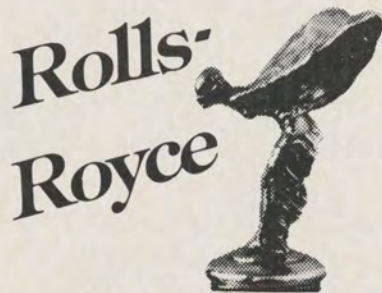
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The San Francisco Opera is supported by much appreciated grants from the City and County of San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal Agency.

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**San Francisco Symphony Hall Inaugural Concert**—Live from Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall. Edo de Waart conducts.\* (9/16)

**Here To Make Music**—Schubert's "Trout" with Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zuckerman and others (9/2)

**Jazz At The Maintenance Shop**—Bill Evans Trio (9/6), Toots Thielemans (9/7), jazz violinist Stephane Grappelli (9/9), Burgess Meredith and R2D2 and C3PO with music from *Star Wars* (9/21)

**Renata Scotto: Prima Donna**—her private life (9/20)

Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro"—Karl Bohm conducting the Vienna Philharmonic\* (9/20)

**Live From Lincoln Center**—Zubin Mehta leads the New York Philharmonic (9/24)

**Live From The Met:** "Manon Lescaut" with Renata Scotto\* (9/27)

**Beaux Arts Trio Plays Ravel** (9/1)

**Great Performances**—"Macbeth," the opera\* (9/10)

## ART

**Running Fence**—film on Christo's 24-mile Marin/Sonoma work of art (9/1)

## DANCE

**Great Performances**—Sir Frederick Ashton's Royal Ballet dances "The Dream" (9/7)

## THEATER

**Great Performances**—"A Life In The Theater" (9/3)

**Shakespeare:** "The Tempest" (9/17) "Twelfth Night" (9/18)

**Gerty, Gerty, Gerty Stein Is Back Back Back**—a humorous recreation of the life and times of the fascinating author (9/21)

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Felix Khüner  
Lev Rankov  
Eva Karasik  
Leonid Igudesman  
Gerard Svazlian  
Lani King  
Linda Deutsch

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Asbjorn Finess  
Jonna Hervig  
Ellen Smith  
Harry Rumppler

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Jonathan Kramer  
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Helen Stross

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Steven D'Amico  
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Alice F. Miller  
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Lloyd Gowen

## OBOE

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Raymond Dusté

## ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Dusté

## CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*  
Laurel Hall  
Gregory Dufford

## BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

## BASSOON

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Robin Elliott

## CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

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Carlberg Jones  
Brian McCarty  
Paul McNutt

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Timothy Wilson

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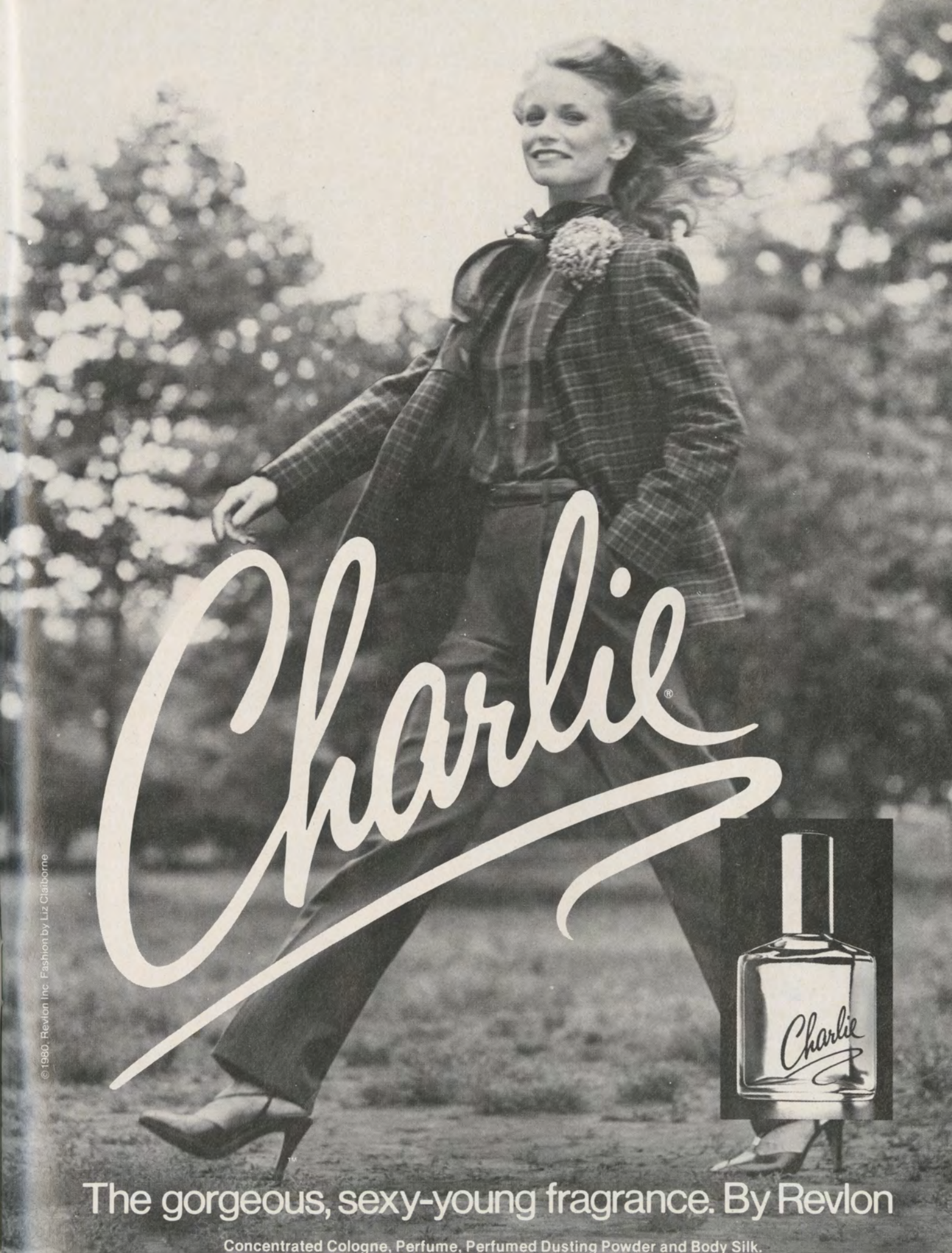
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 Eva Marton  
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 Fredda Rakusin\*  
 Emily Rawlins\*  
 Leslie Richards\*  
 Leonie Rysanek  
 Elisabeth Söderström

Pamela South  
 Olivia Stapp  
 Kiri Te Kanawa  
 Shirley Verrett  
 Ruth Welting  
 Dennis Bailey\*  
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 John Brandstetter\*  
 Wolfgang Brendel  
 Renato Bruson  
 Frederick Burchinal  
 Allen Cathcart  
 Ulrik Cold\*\*  
 Steven Cole\*  
 John Del Carlo  
 Benito di Bella  
 Placido Domingo  
 Dale Duesing  
 Warren Ellsworth\*  
 Simon Estes  
 Geraint Evans  
 Gerd Feldhoff\*  
 Jonathan Green\*  
 Colin Harvey  
 Raimund Herincx

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 Luis Lima\*  
 William Livingston\*  
 Alexander Malta  
 Allan Monk  
 Timothy Nolen  
 Perry Price\*  
 Beniamino Prior\*  
 David Rendall  
 Lorenzo Saccomani\*  
 Cesare Siepi  
 Gregory Stapp\*†  
 Thomas Stewart  
 Michail Svetlev\*  
 Robert Tate\*  
 Arnold Voketaitis\*  
 Spas Wenkoff  
 Stanley Wexler\*  
 Willard White\*  
 Ingvar Wixell  
 Thomas Woodman\*†

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 Candida Arias-Duazo  
 Roberta Irene Bowman  
 Hilda Chavez  
 Louise Corsale  
 Dottie Dean  
 Beverley Finn  
 Lisa Louise Glenister  
 Theodotia Hartman  
 Anne Huffington  
 Lola Lazzari-Simi  
 Gail MacGowan  
 Cecilia MacLaren  
 Tamaki McCracken  
 Iris Miller  
 Irene Moreci  
 Rose Parker  
 Laurel L. Rice  
 Anna Marie Riesgo  
 Shelley Seitz

Bonnie Jean Shapiro  
 Susan Sheldrake  
 Linda Millerd Smeage  
 Barbara Louise Smith  
 Ramona Spiropoulos  
 Lorice Stevens  
 Sally Winnington  
 Susan Witt  
 Garifalia Zeissig  
 Winther Andersen  
 John Beauchamp  
 Daniel Becker-Nealeigh  
 David Chervený  
 Robert Clyde  
 Angelo Colbasso  
 Edward Corley  
 Robert Delany  
 Dale Emde  
 Peter Girardot

John L. Glenister  
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 Conrad Knipfel  
 Eugene Lawrence  
 Kenneth MacLaren  
 Kenneth Malucelli  
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 Eugene Naham  
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 Monte Pederson  
 Robert Philip Price  
 Kenneth Rafanan  
 Tom Reed  
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 Robert Waterbury  
 R. Lee Woodriff

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 Karen Bergantz  
 Darlene Brock  
 Teresa Colyer  
 Margaret Hamilton  
 Kathleen Hamon  
 Gloria Holmby  
 Elizabeth Kenady

Liya Kushnirskaya  
 Roberta Maxwell  
 Linda Moody  
 Margaret Thome  
 Kristin Womack  
 Manfred Behrens  
 Michael Bloch

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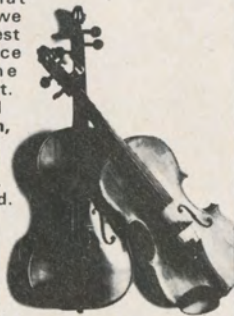
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Sean Nyhan  
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Amos Yang

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Elvia Marta  
Kathy Pruzan  
Kathryn Roszak  
Marika Sakellariou

Dan Gardner  
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Jeffrey Smith  
John Sullivan

### MIMES

Priscilla Alden  
Ed Holmes  
Douglas Leach  
Carol Sue Thomas

### SOLO DANCER:

Christian Holder

## Supernumeraries

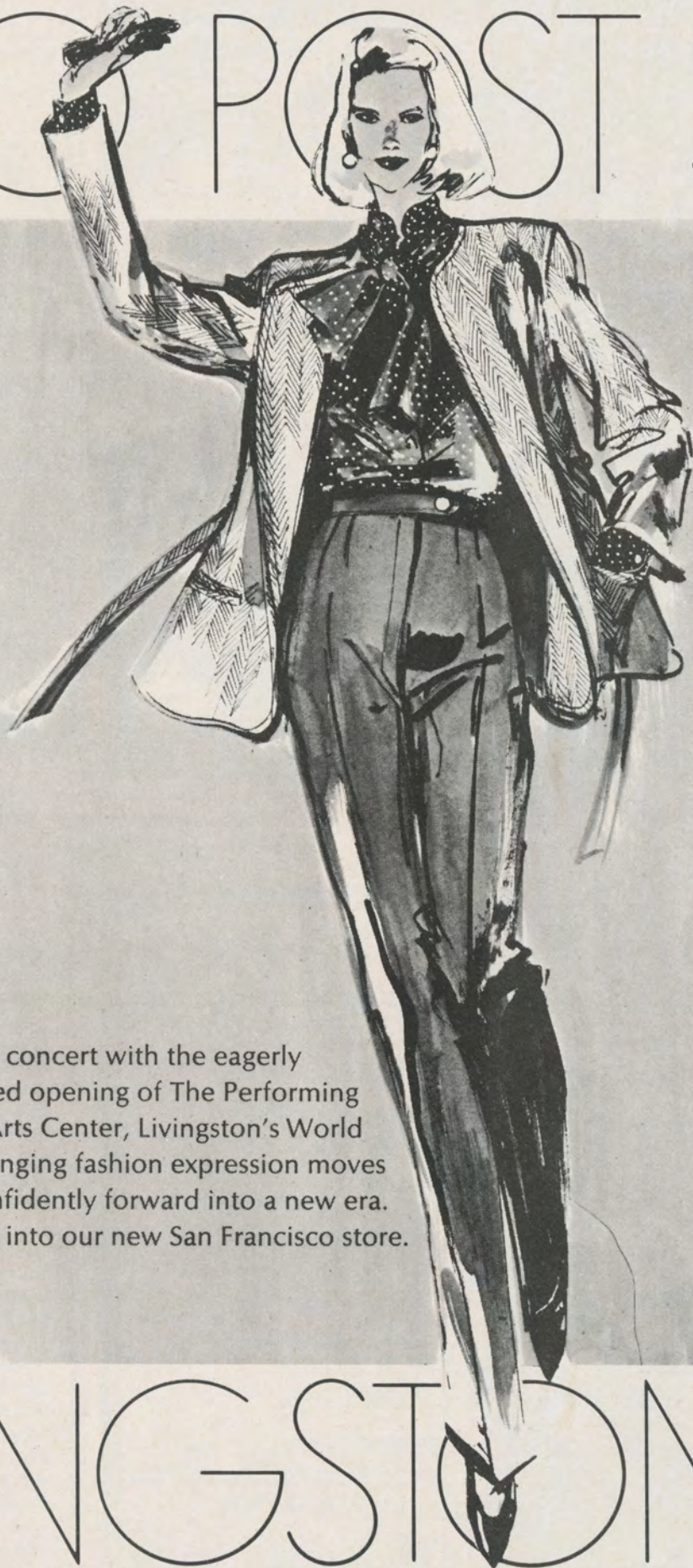
Joan Bacharach  
Barbara Bruser  
Esther Jennings  
Mary Joyce  
Karen Moawad

Robert Brackett  
William Burns  
Roy Castellini  
Richard Collins  
Bill Coppock  
Robert Corrick  
Paul Crawford  
Tom Curran  
Mark D'Angelo  
Richard Eskilsen  
Clyde Franklin  
Bob Geary  
Bob Gilmore

Jo Glasgow  
Cliff Gold  
Dennis Goza  
Clark Hale  
Joe Hay  
Mark Huelsman  
James Jackson  
Steve Jacobs  
Clint Jennings  
William Joyce  
Ted Langlais  
Donald Martin  
Brian Matza  
Wendell Maunula  
Lawrence Millner  
Stewart Morton  
James Muth  
Neil Nevesny  
Paul Newman

Brad Niebling  
Michael Pitkin  
Joel Posner  
Paul Price  
Bro. Kurt Rawhauser  
Paul Ricks  
Jim Scheuer  
Randy Shaner  
Roy Siniard  
Patrick Smith  
Kent Speirs  
Jerry Stiemle  
Paul Sullivan  
Ronald Urrutia  
Collin Warner  
Richard Weil  
Frank Willis  
Joe Willis  
Arthur Zigas

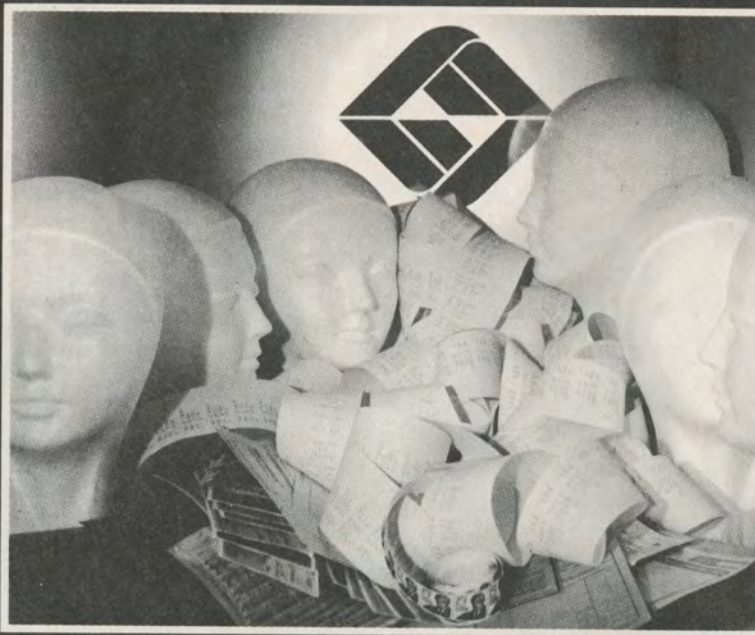
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1979 was so full of "firsts"—our international telecast of *La Gioconda*, the visit of our company to the Philippines, the completion of the Opera House addition, our four San Francisco premieres and five new productions—that it seemed 1980 might be somewhat of a letdown. Not so; Kurt Herbert Adler and his staff have embarked on a year of unprecedented ambition and excitement for all of us.

The current season opens with a new production of Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* which we will share with the Lyric Opera of Chicago. It has been made possible through the cooperation of the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa, the Lyric and the San Francisco Opera Guild. Television cameras will again be in the Opera House to tape this production for future airing nationwide. We are also creating a new production of Donizetti's delightful *Don Pasquale*.

The Lyric Opera of Chicago has also sent us their beautiful production of Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*, which was donated by the Gramma Fisher Foundation, while from New York we will see the Metropolitan Opera's Chagall-designed production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, made possible by a gift to the Met from the late Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. And from the Houston Grand Opera comes the production of *Arabella*, the first time San Francisco audiences have heard this lilting Strauss opera.

This will be the tenth season that the sounds of the San Francisco Opera have been broadcast from the stage of the Opera House to a radio audience numbering in the millions. The broadcasts this year will originate with station KQED and will be beamed directly throughout the United States on the new satellite hook-up of the National Public Radio network. This exciting development will make it possible for NPR stations anywhere in the country to receive the Friday broadcasts live or to tape a superior-quality signal for later airing. Production of the broadcasts, which make the San Francisco Opera truly a national resource, is made possible by grants from Chevron, U.S.A., Inc.

# FROM THE PRESIDENT



Ron Schel Photo

and the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California.

In the pit this season you will hear our newly constituted, independent San Francisco Opera Orchestra. Now that our colleagues at the San Francisco Symphony have their magnificent new home next door and our seasons will overlap, musicians can no longer play in both orchestras. Maestro Adler and his musical staff performed a herculean task in assembling some of the finest musicians—from the Bay Area and from across the country—into a first-class new orchestra.

Creating an orchestra of that caliber is expensive, as is every aspect of producing international grand opera. Thanks to capacity houses for nearly all performances and modest price increases, we continue to cover nearly 60% of our soaring costs from box office revenues, a high proportion compared to other major companies. Since most of our costs are wages, salaries and the fees of the hundreds of singers, orchestra members, artisans, technicians and others who comprise our company, we are particularly subject to the ravages of inflation, despite the economies effected by Maestro Adler and his staff, which are nothing short of miraculous. Raising the remaining

40% of our costs is a continuing challenge. The number of individuals contributing to the San Francisco Opera has increased substantially in the last few years, and it is only through the support of our thousands of contributors—with gifts both large and small—that we have been able to bridge the gap between expenses and ticket revenue without pushing ticket prices through the ceiling.

If you have not already contributed to our fund drive, I urge you to join the Opera family of supporters now.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the newest member of our staff on board. Terry McEwen, who will succeed Kurt Herbert Adler as general director of the Company in 1982, joined the Opera staff this summer to begin the long-range planning necessary for future seasons. We are delighted to have him with us, and look forward to the success that will surely crown his future leadership of the Company.

A host of organizations and individuals continue to play a vital role for the San Francisco Opera, assuring our financial and moral support. I would like to extend our continuing gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts and its chairman, Livingston Biddle; the California Arts Council and its chairman, Marl Young; the Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Mayor of San Francisco; Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas; the City and County of San Francisco; the War Memorial Board of Trustees and the San Francisco Opera Guild for their support which is so essential to the San Francisco Opera.

Oh, by the way: do come to the Opera Fair on the afternoon of October 5. You will enjoy it; there is something for everyone—and bring the children.

Walter M. Baird  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
San Francisco Opera



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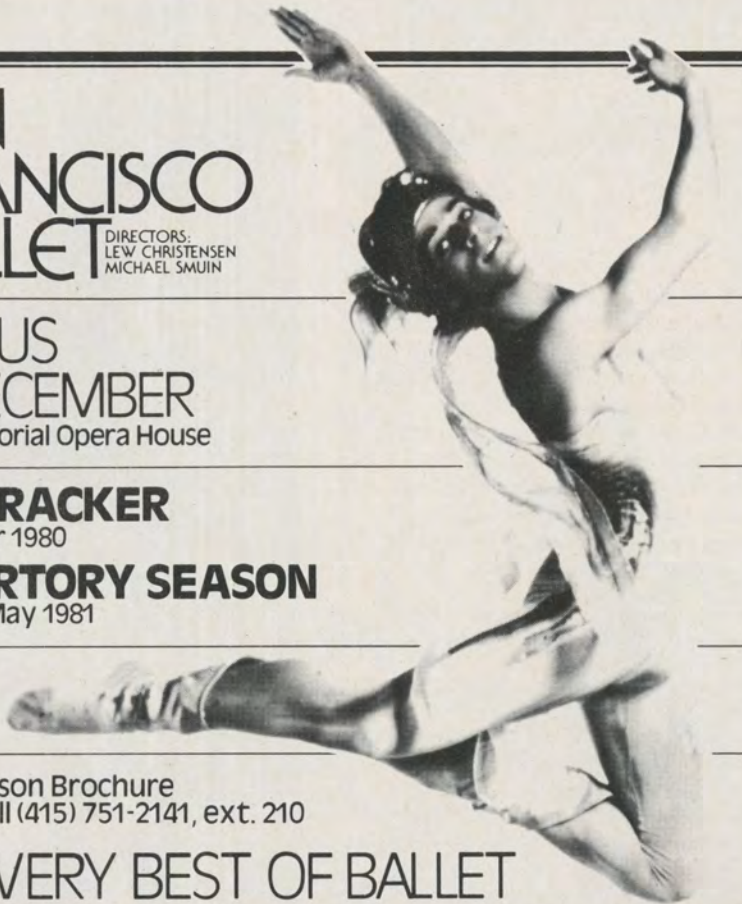
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American Opera Project  
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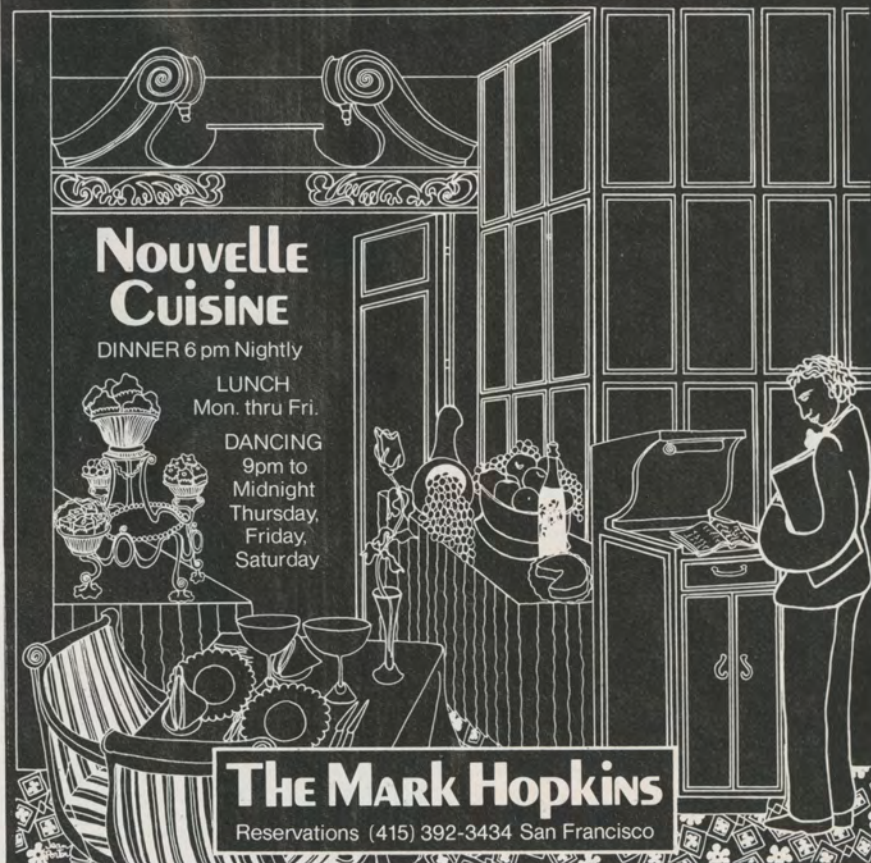
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Assistant Managing Director

# GUILD PROGRAM

Opera for Young Audiences  
**DON PASQUALE**  
Donizetti  
In English

Wednesday, November 19, 1:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 25, 1:00 p.m.

Monday, December 1, 1:00 p.m.

Friday, December 5, 1:00 p.m.

Matinee for Senior Citizens  
and Disabled Patrons

Friday, November 28, 1:00 p.m.

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# 1980 PREVIEWES

## 1980 OPERA PREVIEWES

Information on opera previews and lectures is always carried in the San Francisco Opera program magazines in the fall. Since many of these series begin prior to the opera season, and to enable patrons to make advance plans, we are printing an early list of all previews and lectures which are open to the public.

### SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWES

#### SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD AUXILIARY

Previews held in the Green Room of the Herbst Theatre, Veteran's Memorial Building, Van Ness & McAllister, in San Francisco. Lectures are free to the public and feature some of the season's outstanding artists in discussion. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432.

SAMSON ET DALILA 9/4, 7:30 p.m.  
DON PASQUALE 9/19, 7:30 p.m.  
ARABELLA 10/21, 6:45 p.m.  
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 10/28, 6:45 p.m.

#### MARIN

Lectures begin at 8:00 p.m. Series registration is \$12.50 (\$10.00 for Guild members, students and seniors). Single tickets are \$3.00 (\$2.50 for Guild members, students and seniors). Location to be announced. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432.

SAMSON ET DALILA  
Arthur Kaplan 9/4

JENUFA  
Dale Harris 9/18

DON PASQUALE  
Arthur Kaplan 9/25

THE MAGIC FLUTE  
James Schwabacher 10/9

ARABELLA  
Dale Harris 10/23

#### SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road, at 8:00 p.m. Series registration is \$10.00; single tickets are \$3.00. For further information, please call (415) 941-3890.

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN  
Speight Jenkins 9/9

JENUFA  
Arthur Kaplan 9/16

DON PASQUALE  
Ramona Rockway 9/23

ARABELLA  
Dale Harris 10/21

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE  
Andor Toth 10/28

There will be a special Champagne Gala Preview of SAMSON ET DALILA with singers on September 4 at 8:00 p.m., also at the Cultural Center. Admission is \$5.00.

## SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD PREVIEWES

Previews will be held at the Courtside Tennis Club, Wingate Room, 14675 Winchester Blvd., Los Gatos. All lectures begin at 10 a.m. except for Sept. 11, which is at 7:30 p.m. Series is open to the public at a cost of \$2.00 per lecture (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild members). For further information, please call (408) 867-0669.

SAMSON ET DALILA  
Arthur Kaplan 9/5

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN  
Speight Jenkins 9/11

SIMON BOCCANEGRA  
Speight Jenkins 9/12

JENUFA  
Dale Harris 9/16

DON PASQUALE  
Arthur Kaplan 9/26

THE MAGIC FLUTE  
David Kest 10/3

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE  
James Koelker 10/10

To Be Announced 10/17

ARABELLA  
Dale Harris 10/24

## JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWES

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.

SAMSON ET DALILA  
Michael Barclay 9/4

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN  
Speight Jenkins 9/9

JENUFA  
Dale Harris 9/17

DON PASQUALE  
Arthur Kaplan 9/25

THE MAGIC FLUTE  
Michael Walsh 10/9

ARABELLA  
Dale Harris 10/22

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE  
Allan Ulrich 11/4

## FRIENDS OF THE KENSINGTON LIBRARY

A general lecture on Verismo Opera, with concentration on *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci* and *Madama Butterfly*, will be given by Michael Barclay on Thursday, October 23 at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington. The lecture will begin at 8 p.m. and admission is free. For further information, please call (415) 524-3043.

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Previews will be given by Michael Barclay on Monday evenings at 7:30 in Richardson Auditorium, UC Extension Center, 55 Laguna St. (at Market), San Francisco. Series registration is \$55, which includes 11 lectures plus Barclay's discography "The Season on Records—1980." Single lectures are \$5.50. For further information, please call (415) 666-3291.

SAMSON ET DALILA 8/25  
SIMON BOCCANEGRA 9/8  
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN 9/15  
JENÚFA 9/22  
DON PASQUALE 9/29  
THE MAGIC FLUTE 10/6  
LA TRAVIATA 10/13  
ARABELLA 10/23  
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 10/27  
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/  
I PAGLIACCI 11/3  
MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/10

**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, one Thursday and nine Monday evenings. Lectures with slides will be given by San Francisco Opera Magazine editor Arthur Kaplan. Series registration is \$35; \$30 for Piedmont residents. Pre-registration desirable. For further information, please call (415) 653-9454 or 658-3679.

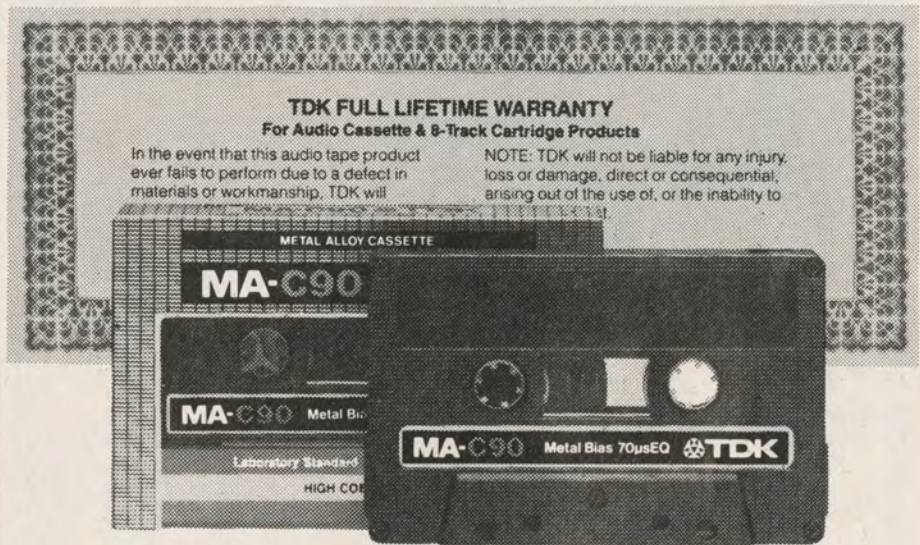
SAMSON ET DALILA 9/2  
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN 9/8  
SIMON BOCCANEGRA 9/15  
DON PASQUALE 9/22  
JENÚFA 9/29  
THE MAGIC FLUTE 10/9  
LA TRAVIATA 10/13  
ARABELLA 10/27  
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 11/3  
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/  
I PAGLIACCI 11/10  
MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/17

**EAST BAY FRIENDS  
OF THE OPERA**

Previews will be presented by Michael Barclay at St. Procopius Catholic Church, 1901 - 8th St., in Berkeley. Individual admission is \$5.00 with a discount series ticket of \$35.00 offering 8 lectures for the price of 7. All lectures will begin at 7:30 p.m. For further information, please call (415) 848-9583.

SAMSON ET DALILA 9/2  
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN 9/9  
JENÚFA 9/16  
DON PASQUALE 9/23  
LA TRAVIATA 10/14  
ARABELLA 10/21  
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 10/28  
MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/4

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**SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC LECTURE SERIES**

An 11-week series of informal introductions to opera and to the 1980 San Francisco Opera season. Offered by the San Francisco Conservatory and conducted by Allan Ulrich, the lectures will be presented on Monday evenings at 7:30 in the Upstairs Lounge, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 1201 Ortega St., San Francisco. Series registration is \$100. For further information, please call (415) 564-8086.

What is Opera? 9/8

SAMSON ET DALILA

Characterization through music  
SIMON BOCCANEGRA 9/15

Vocal Categories 9/22  
DON PASQUALE

From *Bel Canto* to Verdi 9/29  
LA TRAVIATA

The Mozart Operas 10/6  
THE MAGIC FLUTE

The Nationalist Movement 10/13  
JENÚFA

Wagnerian Music Drama 10/20  
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

The Strauss Operas 10/27  
DIE FRAU OHNE  
SCHATTEN/ARABELLA

Puccini & Verismo Opera 11/3  
CAV/PAG and MADAMA BUTTERFLY

20th Century Opera 11/10  
The Drinking Song in Opera 11/17

**AN ADVENTURE IN OPERA**

Radio Station KCSM-FM, 91.1 MHz, Saturdays at 2 p.m. Robert Finch, Producer and Commentator.

THE MAGIC FLUTE 10/4

LA TRAVIATA 10/11

ARABELLA 10/18

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 10/25

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/

I PAGLIACCI 11/1

MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/8

**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 7:30 p.m. Lectures will be given by opera educator Michael Barclay. The admission for individual lectures is \$4.50 (\$3.00 for center members). Series subscriptions, 5 lectures for the price of 4, are available through the Community Center. For further information, please call (415) 494-2511.

SAMSON ET DALILA 9/4

JENÚFA 9/18

DON PASQUALE 10/2

ARABELLA 10/16

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 10/30

**UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC  
LECTURE SERIES**

A series of nine Saturday morning opera previews to be held August 30 to November 15 in central San Francisco near the Opera House. Programs begin at 10:30 a.m. Lecturer for the series is Professor George Buckbee. University extension credit is available for participants. For additional information or to register, please call the University of the Pacific at (209) 946-2424, or write OPERA PREVIEWES, Continuing Education, University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA 95211.

**NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES**

For the eighth year there will be an eleven-week course called ADVENTURES IN OPERA in Napa. The course, which accompanies the Sunday series at the San Francisco Opera, will be held on Wednesday nights from 7:30-9 p.m. (location to be determined). 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.

SIMON BOCCANEGRA 9/3

SAMSON ET DALILA 9/10

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN 9/17

DON PASQUALE 9/24

JENÚFA 10/1

THE MAGIC FLUTE 10/8

LA TRAVIATA 10/15

ARABELLA 10/22

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/

I PAGLIACCI 10/29

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 11/5

MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/12

**CHABOT COLLEGE LECTURE  
SERIES/OPERA FOR EVERYONE**

A ten-week series of introductions to the 1980 San Francisco Opera Season. Offered by Chabot College and conducted by Eugene Marker, these 10 lectures are open to all, free of charge, and will be given on eight Thursday evenings and two Wednesday evenings. All lectures are from 7:00 to 9:15 p.m. beginning on Thursday, September 4, 1980 and are located at the City of San Leandro Community Library Center, 300 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro. For further information, please call (415) 786-6632.

SAMSON ET DALILA 9/4

SIMON BOCCANEGRA 9/11

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN 9/17

JENÚFA 9/25

DON PASQUALE 10/2

LA TRAVIATA 10/9

ARABELLA 10/15

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 10/23

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/

I PAGLIACCI 10/30

MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/6

# 1980 BROAD CASTS

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

- 9/26 SIMON BOCCANEGRA
- 10/3 DON PASQUALE
- 10/10 JENŪFA
- 10/17 LA TRAVIATA
- 10/24 SAMSON ET DALILA\*
- 10/31 THE MAGIC FLUTE
- 11/7 DIE FRAU OHNE  
SCHATTEN\*
- 11/14 ARABELLA
- 11/21 TRISTAN UND ISOLDE
- 11/28 CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/  
I PAGLIACCI
- 12/5 MADAMA BUTTERFLY

\*Taped from an earlier performance. All broadcasts begin at 8:00 PM Pacific Time, Fridays except for *Tristan und Isolde* which begins at 7:00. San Francisco Opera broadcasts can also be heard throughout the United States over National Public Radio. Please check local listings for dates and times.

- San Francisco KQED 88.5 FM
- Fresno KVPR 89 FM
- Los Angeles KUSC 91.5 FM
- Sacramento KXPR 89 FM
- San Diego KFSD 94.1 FM
- Corvallis KOAC 550 AM
- Portland KOAP 91.5 FM
- Seattle KING 98.1 FM
- Chicago\* WFMT 98.7 FM

\*Check local listings for day and time.

## KQED 88.5 FM

**Matters Musical**, including commentary on the San Francisco Opera season, can be heard Tuesday through Friday at 7:40 AM with Allan Ulrich as host. The program is made possible in part through a grant from the L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California.

**Sunday Morning at the Opera.** Recorded operas and interviews with Sedge Thompson, host. 10 AM every Sunday.

## KPFA 94.1 FM

**KPFA Opera Review** with Bill Collins, Melvin Jahn and Bob Rose. September 7, 14, 28, October 5, 12, 19, November 2, 9, 23 and 30, all at 5 PM.



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## SERVICES

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### Emergency Telephone

The telephone number 431-4370 may be used by patrons for emergency contact only during performances. Before the performance, patrons anticipating possible contact should leave their seat number at the Nurse's Station in the lower lounge where the emergency telephone is located.

**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.

### Ticket Information

San Francisco Opera box office. Lobby, War Memorial Opera House: Van Ness at Grove, (415) 431-1210. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. 10 a.m. through first intermission on all performance days.

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

### Unused Tickets

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

### Opera Museum

The 1980 exhibit in the opera museum honors Wagnerian soprano Kirsten Flagstad and mezzo-soprano Blanche Thebom. In addition to rare photographs from the San Francisco Opera files and costumes which Miss Thebom has donated to the San Francisco Opera, there are materials from the Flagstad Memorial Collection, founded by Mrs. Milton H. Esberg, Sr., and recently placed in the care of the San Francisco Archives for the Performing Arts, which has prepared the current exhibit.

The Archives for the Performing Arts, with headquarters in the San Francisco Public Library, Presidio Branch, is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation which serves as a depository for invaluable collections pertaining to opera, dance, music and theater. It is headed by artistic director Russell Hartley and administrative director Judith Solomon. The opera museum, located in the south foyer, box level, is open free of charge during all performances.

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 lost and found information inquire at check room No. 3 or call (415) 621-6600, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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"Opera is the people's art form in San Francisco. Probably nowhere outside Italy is there a place with such a knowledge of and passionate interest in opera. 'Opera in the Park,' sponsored by the San Francisco Examiner, gives people a chance to hear it for free."

### **The Opera Season**

"For the first time the San Francisco Opera has an orchestra it does not have to share with the Symphony. For the first time the season will run to 23 weeks in the fall. This is the longest season in the company's history and bolsters the Opera's claim to be second only to the Metropolitan."

---

# *"A Season of Firsts for San Francisco"*

---

At last, the Symphony will begin its season when other symphonies do and not wait until Opera is over.

At last, San Francisco will be able to enjoy visiting orchestras and soloists the Opera House could not accommodate.

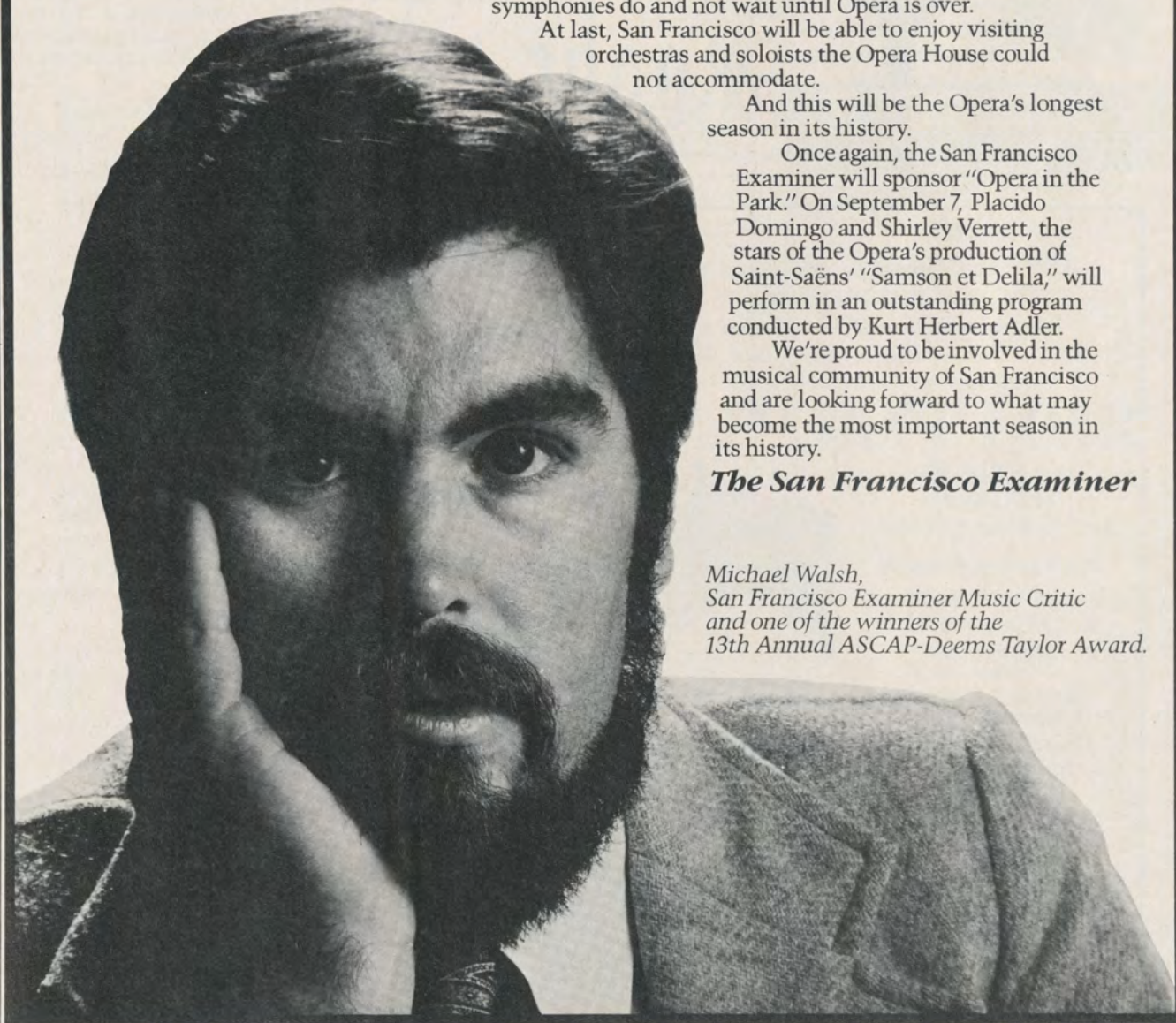
And this will be the Opera's longest season in its history.

Once again, the San Francisco Examiner will sponsor "Opera in the Park." On September 7, Placido Domingo and Shirley Verrett, the stars of the Opera's production of Saint-Saëns' "Samson et Delila," will perform in an outstanding program conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler.

We're proud to be involved in the musical community of San Francisco and are looking forward to what may become the most important season in its history.

***The San Francisco Examiner***

*Michael Walsh,  
San Francisco Examiner Music Critic  
and one of the winners of the  
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New Production

## Samson et Dalila

Produced through the cooperation of the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa, The Lyric Opera of Chicago and San Francisco Opera

In French  
Saint-Saëns

Verrett/Domingo, Brendel, Voketaitis,\* Langan,\* Ballam, Tate,\* Wexler\*/Holder

Rudel/Joël/Schmidt/C. Robbins\*/Sappington

## Simon Boccanegra

Production from The Lyric Opera of Chicago, donated by the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa

In Italian  
Verdi

M. Price, Quittmeyer/Bruson, Lamberti,\* Siepi, Burchinal, Langan, Tate Gardelli\*/Frisell/Pizzi

## Die Frau ohne Schatten

Production made possible by a generous gift from Cynthia Wood

In German  
Strauss

Rysanek, Marton (9/30), Nilsson, Hesse, Cook, Gwen. Jones, de la Rosa, South, Quittmeyer, Richards\*/King, Feldhoff,\* Herincx, Ballam, Del Carlo, Voketaitis, Hoback, Burchinal, Langan, Woodman\*

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# 1980 SEASON

Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

New Production

## Don Pasquale

In Italian  
Donizetti

Welting/Evans, Rendall, Nolen,  
Wexler

Mund\*\*/Mansouri/Conklin

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Wexler

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## Jenůfa

In Czech  
Janáček

Söderström, Jurinac, Cervena, Cook,  
South, Gwen. Jones, Quittmeyer, Rich-  
ards/Cathcart, Lewis, Del Carlo,  
White\*

Rosen\*/Rennison\*/Bauer-Ecsy/  
Prendergast

## The Magic Flute

Production from The Metropolitan  
Opera

In English  
Mozart

Translation by Andrew Porter

Greenawald, Carter,\* Peterson, Cook,  
Gwen. Jones, Rakusin\*/P. Price,\*  
Duesing, Cold,\*\* White, Cole,\*  
Green,\* Wexler, Ballam, G. Stapp\*  
Weder\*\*/Hebert\*/Chagall\*

## La Traviata

In Italian  
Verdi

Masterson,\*\* Cervena, Quittmeyer/  
Prior,\* Saccomani,\* Tate, Brandstet-  
ter,\* Wexler, Langan  
de Almeida/Karpo/Businger/Vesak

San Francisco Opera Premiere

## Arabella

Production from the Houston Grand  
Opera

In German  
Strauss

Te Kanawa, Daniels,\* Mills,\* Cervena,  
Cook/Wixell, Bailey,\* Malta, Ballam,  
Brandstetter, Langan  
W. Rennert\*\*/Cox\*/Dalton\*

## Tristan und Isolde

In German  
Wagner

Gwyneth Jones, Baldani/Wenkoff,  
Stewart, Estes, Ellsworth,\* Green,  
Ballam, Del Carlo  
Adler/Haugk/Weyl

Productions made possible, in part, by a  
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## Cavalleria Rusticana

In Italian  
Mascagni

Rysanek (11/12, 15, 18, 23), O. Stapp  
(11/25, 28), South, Cervena/Svetlev,\*  
di Bella

followed by

## I Pagliacci

In Italian  
Leoncavallo

Rawlins\*/King, di Bella, Saccomani,  
Green, Tate, Woodman  
Bareza\*\*/Martinoty/Ponnelle

## Madama Butterfly

In Italian  
Puccini

Hayashi,\* Forst, Quittmeyer/Lima,\*  
Monk, Livingston,\* Del Carlo;  
Langan, Wexler, Harvey  
Chung\*/Farruggio/Businger

Richard Bradshaw, Chorus Director  
Thomas Munn, Lighting Designer  
Joan Sullivan, Assistant Lighting  
Designer\*

\*San Francisco Opera debut

\*\*American opera debut

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**Ruth Laredo**, piano

May 7

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# PRELUDES

## 'Lear' Premiere To Launch 5-Opera Festival in June, 1981

The San Francisco Opera will inaugurate an annual summer festival of international grand opera in 1981 with five productions, from June 12 through July 19. Opening the 27-performance festival in San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House on June 12 will be the American premiere of the much-heralded *Lear* by German composer Aribert Reimann, performed in a specially-commissioned English translation by Desmond Clayton. The festival weeks will also include Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Verdi's *Rigoletto* and Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.



Thomas Stewart

"We are delighted," said general director Kurt Herbert Adler, "to begin a new San Francisco tradition of international opera in the summer months for the benefit of both visitors and San Franciscans. San Francisco has always been lauded as a cultural capital, and we are hopeful that the inauguration of summer weeks of opera will lay the groundwork for an area-wide arts festival equal to the best festivals in the world, one that will combine the exceptional cultural resources of San Francisco with the city's internationally known beauty and other visitor attractions," Adler said.

"We will, of course, offer first choice of seating, through subscriptions, to our own San Francisco audience, one of the largest, most enthusiastic opera publics in the world. And we are pleased that the festival weeks will at long last allow us to make opera tickets available to visitors as well."

Jean-Pierre Ponnelle will recreate his world premiere production of *Lear*, which was a sensation at the Munich

Opera in 1978. Baritone Thomas Stewart will sing the title role in Reimann's opera, based on the Shakespearean masterpiece. Helga Dernesch will make her San Francisco Opera debut as Goneril, a role she originated in Munich, and Emily Rawlins will sing Cordelia. David Knutson will also debut here as Edgar, a role he created. Gerd Albrecht, who conducted the opera's premiere, will make his American debut on the podium.

"Presenting this new *Lear* for the first time in America is a proud moment for us," said Adler, whose 28-year leadership of the San Francisco Opera has included many significant American and world premieres. "In a lifetime in opera, I have rarely encountered such a thrilling new work, or so exciting a production as Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's." The critical response to *Lear* has thrust Aribert Reimann, a 44-year-old Berliner, into the front ranks of contemporary opera composers. His *Melusine* received its American premiere at the Santa Fe Opera in 1972. Five performances of *Lear* will be offered: June 12, 15, 18, 21 and 23.

Mozart's *Don Giovanni* will feature Cesare Siepi in the title role and Giuseppe Taddei as the long-suffering Leporello. The production, made possible in 1974 by a gift from James D. Robertson and last seen here in 1978, will be directed by its distinguished German creator, August Everding. Five performances will be sung, in Italian: June 16, 19, 24, 28 and July 4.

Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* has not been given in San Francisco since 1971, when it received a new production honoring the memory



Helga Dernesch

of long-time San Francisco Opera president Robert Watt Miller. Performed in German, it will feature two important San Francisco debuts, bass Karl Ridderbusch as Hans Sachs and tenor William Johns as Walther von Stolzing. There will be six performances, on June 27 and 30 and July 3, 9, 13 and 19.



Emily Rawlins

Verdi's ever-popular tale of a court jester, *Rigoletto*, another production made possible by a gift from James D. Robertson, was last performed in San Francisco in 1973. It will feature three San Francisco Opera debuts next summer, including one of the world's leading Verdi baritones, Piero Cappuccilli, in the title role. Also bowing then will be soprano Krisztina Laki as Gilda and tenor Peter Dvorsky as the Duke of Mantua. *Rigoletto* will be sung in Italian and given six times: July 1, 5, 8, 11, 14 and 17.

One of the world's oldest operas, Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* was a sensation of the 1975 San Francisco Opera season in a production by the late Günther Rennert, and both mezzo-soprano Tatiana Troyanos and tenor Eric Tappy will return to sing Poppea and Nerone, respectively. Baritone Wolfgang Brendel will be heard as Ottone, mezzo-soprano Anne Howells as Ottavia and bass John Macurdy as Seneca. *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* will be performed five times, in Italian: July 7, 10, 12, 15 and 18.

Subscription tickets to the 1981 summer weeks will be made available this winter, with priority going to current Opera subscribers and donors. Package tour arrangements for visitors are also being planned.

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### GREAT ENTERTAINMENT

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Wed., Sept. 3 1st Race 1:00 P.M. <b>BAY SWEEPS PICK SIX</b> BEGINS For Only \$2.00... You Could Win a Fortune	Nov. 8 1st Race 12:30 P.M. <b>JACKET DAY</b> FREE TO FIRST 17,000 PAID ADM.
Fri., Sept. 5 1st Race 4:00 P.M. <b>TWILIGHT RACING</b> 4 P.M. START... Every Fri. thru Nov. 14	Nov. 11 1st Race 12:30 P.M. <b>VETERAN'S DAY</b> <b>STANFORD BAND</b> SALUTES THE STANFORD STAKES
Sat., Sept. 6 & Every Saturday <b>MUSIC ON-THE GREEN</b> Disco, Western, Hawaiian, Mariachi, etc. etc.	Nov. 22 1st Race 12:30 P.M. <b>S.F. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL HDCP</b> OVER \$25,000 IN CASH PRIZES
Sat., Sept. 27 1st Race 1:00 P.M. <b>TOTE BAG DAY</b> FREE TO THE FIRST 20,000 PAID	Nov. 27 1st Race 11 A.M. Nov. 28 & 29 <b>THANKSGIVING WEEKEND</b> Thanksgiving Hdcp.—Courtship Stks.—BM Derby
Sat., Oct. 18 1st Race 1:00 P.M. <b>ASCOT DAY</b> NOEL COWARD REVUE ROLLS ROYCE CONOURS	Sat., Dec. 6 1st Race 12:30 P.M. <b>CALIFORNIA JOCKEY CLUB HANDICAP</b> \$75,000 ADDED
Sat., Oct. 25 1st Race 1:00 P.M. <b>OKTOBERFEST DAY</b> 50¢ BEER & HOT DOGS—Infield Park	Sat., Dec. 13 12:30 P.M. <b>BAY MEADOWS HDCP \$100,000</b> AUTOGRAPH DAY

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## 'Samson' Reunites S.F. Favorites

*Samson et Dalila* reunites two San Francisco Opera favorites, Placido Domingo and Shirley Verrett, whose last appearance here together in the 1972 production of Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* drew critical raves. They are joined by Wolfgang Brendel, who made a sensational debut as Rodrigo in *Don Carlo* last season. As befits stars of international magnitude, they have recently distinguished themselves in new productions. Domingo sang the title role in Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's staging of Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* to open the 1980 Salzburg Festival. Miss Verrett, a famous Amneris, was hailed for her first performance in the title role of Verdi's *Aida* with the Opera Company of Boston in June. This spring and summer in Munich Brendel was heard as the King in Carl Orff's *Die Kluge*, which celebrated the composer's 85th birthday.

## Opera Shop Staff Stands Ready

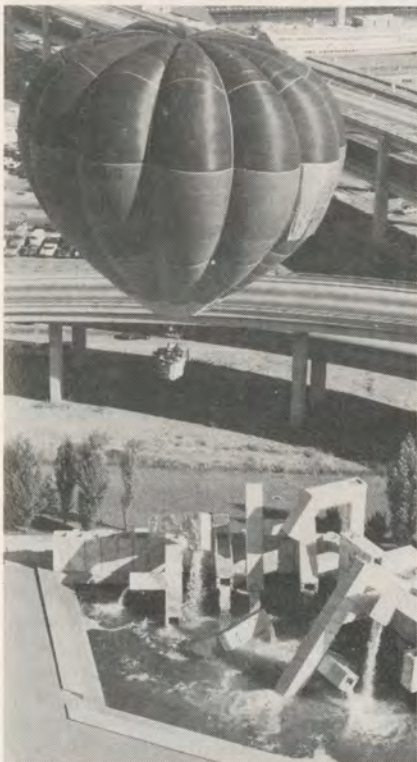
Generous volunteer assistance has made the San Francisco Opera Shop a retail reality. Over the past four months, volunteers have given their time and professional expertise in the areas of inventory control, mail order fulfillment and overall retail operations. Volunteer diligence has ensured that the 1980 reopening of the Opera Shop will be a success for the benefit of the San Francisco Opera.

Five volunteers deserve the special gratitude of the San Francisco Opera: Jack Tarr, inventory; Betty MacDonald and Eve Zigas, libretti mail orders; and Gabrielle Harmer and Gordon Engler, retail development and sales procedures.

The following individuals are the Opera Shop Staff for the 1980 Fall season:

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# PRELUDES



Napa's Great Balloon Escape Company will, quite literally, highlight the 1980 Opera Fair on Sunday, October 5, with benefit balloon tours departing from the Opera House Courtyard for a spectacular floating view of the Bay Area. Owner and chief pilot Gary Strain has spent over 10,000 hours aloft in a wide variety of aircraft, and offers champagne flights daily in the Napa Valley. San Francisco Chronicle Photo

## Opera Fair Set for October 5

Sunday, October 5, noon to 6 P.M. is the date and time of the 1980 San Francisco OPERA FAIR, which will spill out of the Opera House and occupy practically the entire Performing Arts Center. Opera movies, opera costume exhibits, opera bingo, opera food, opera fantasy, opera stars, opera nostalgia and entertainment celebrating the joy of opera will be the order of the day.

Tickets for what has proved to be one of the Bay Area's most delightful annual celebrations may be reserved in advance by calling (415) 431-1210. Admission (\$4 for adults, \$2 for children under 12) covers access to over 20 fun-filled events.

## 'Samson' Display at Conservatory

The San Francisco Conservatory of Music is currently presenting a display devoted to Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* in the foyer of Hellman Hall at 19th and Ortega Streets in San Francisco. The display includes material relating to the new San Francisco Opera production as well as the opera's 1877 premiere at Weimar.

## New Opera Orchestra Completed

Creation of a new, independent San Francisco Opera Orchestra—consisting of 67 players, a librarian and an orchestra manager—has been completed following a lengthy nationwide search. With the September opening of the San Francisco Symphony's new home, the Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall, the Opera and Symphony Orchestras of San Francisco will no longer be able to share musicians, necessitating that the Opera create a completely independent orchestra in time for the 1980 fall season.

Forty-two musicians have been retained from last year's Opera Orchestra, while the remaining 25 new members were selected through auditions in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Chicago. A significant number of the Opera's new players are from Northern California.

A search committee comprised of David Agler, the San Francisco Opera's resident conductor and musical supervisor; Zaven Melikian, concertmaster; and Thomas Heimberg, orchestra manager, heard over 500 candidates nationwide. All finalists were re-auditioned in San Francisco in the presence of general director Adler.

The musicians' contract for the 1980-81 period encompasses 14 performance weeks in the fall of 1980, and 6 performance weeks in 1981 for the San Francisco Opera's first summer festival, doubling the length of the Opera's previous contract.

Orchestra rehearsals for this season began August 11, providing two extra weeks that eased integration of new players and prepared the orchestra for an enlarged San Francisco Opera schedule. The orchestra membership is listed elsewhere in this magazine.

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# A Spectacular New 'Samson' Launches 58th Season

By ARTHUR KAPLAN and  
THOMAS O'CONNOR

It took architect Arthur Brown and his builders months to construct the magnificent stage of San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House in 1932. This year a dapper, diminutive scenic artist named Douglas Schmidt has devised a spectacular way to destroy that same stage in mere seconds.

And he was paid to do it. Schmidt is set designer of San Francisco Opera's sensational new production of *Samson et Dalila*.

Fortified by his prayers to *le bon Dieu*, Samson, in the person of tenor Placido Domingo, will quite literally bring the house down when he collapses the Temple of Dagon on the unfortunate Philistines at the climax of Camille Saint-Saëns' opera. Walls, massive columnar pillars, statues and even the roof itself will come tumbling down, while the back wall of the Temple explodes in flame.

The evening's pyrotechnics will have already included a panic-inspiring solar eclipse, a series of spectacular storms, and a flame-lit Bacchanale replete with scanty costumes of the sort that might well have brought out the vice squad in another era.

It is surprising, then, to discover that the perpetrators of this operatic mayhem are a decidedly mild-mannered lot, who approach the creation of chaos with studied calm and professional élan.

Schmidt explains that he, staff technical director John Priest and the Opera's technical wizards have planned huge three-dimensional sculptural elements as part of the Temple setting of the final scene. The actual collapse of the Temple, an extremely complicated technical feat, transpires in a mere seven seconds. "In the movies," says Priest, "they would use superimpositions, montages and various other camera tricks, none of which are possible in the theater."

Instead, they will use what is described in theatrical jargon as a "rubble drop." A similar device was employed in the recent television production of Minkus' ballet, *La Bayadère*, whose finale also involves the collapse of a temple. The netted drop, 70 feet high and 50 feet wide, containing chunks of



Detail from *The Women of Amhissa* (1887) by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, whose paintings helped fashion the look of the new San Francisco Opera production of Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*.

Destroying the Temple of Dagon is but one of the delights of San Francisco's spectacular new *Samson et Dalila*, a production rooted in a visually lush, Victorian sensibility.

Below: Costume design by Carrie Robbins for Dalila in Act III of *Samson et Dalila*. Right: Costume design for the High Priest of Dagon.



foam rubber, styrofoam, canvas and dust, will come down on the Philistines as Samson tears the Temple asunder. There will also be a jagged silhouette on the back wall of the Temple onto which will be projected towering flames. The total effect will be one of mass confusion, pandemonium and destruction.

"I suppose the most noticeable difference from the traditional biblical image of Samson destroying the Temple is that Domingo will actually pull the two principal columns *inward* by the huge rings to which he is chained, rather than pushing them outward," says Schmidt.

"I'm getting a reputation for specializing in destruction endings," smiles Nicolas Joël, the handsome, heavy-lidded Frenchman whose recent spectacular production of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* for Lyons and Strasbourg confirmed the growing impression that he is one of the opera world's most brilliant young directors. As stage director, Joël, a protégé of the renowned Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, is the principal architect of San Francisco's *Samson*.

He and Schmidt used as a starting point the paintings of Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836-1912), a lesser-

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known Victorian artist who produced richly textured, sensual canvases of idealized beauty, drawing on classical biblical and Greek themes.

"When we first met on this production, in New York in March," recalls Joël, "Douglas and I had only briefly discussed visual concepts on the phone. Yet we both walked into the meeting carrying the same volume of Alma-Tadema paintings; it was uncanny. We agreed from the start that for this opera the so-called '19th-century academic style' was the only possibility of attack. The work is not at all biblical in style, only in subject matter. It is decidedly a part of the late 19th-century sensibility. To set off this Victorian world, we have created a framing portal and show curtain, a simulation of the curtain at Weimar, where *Samson* had its premiere in 1877. I think of this curtain as a frame

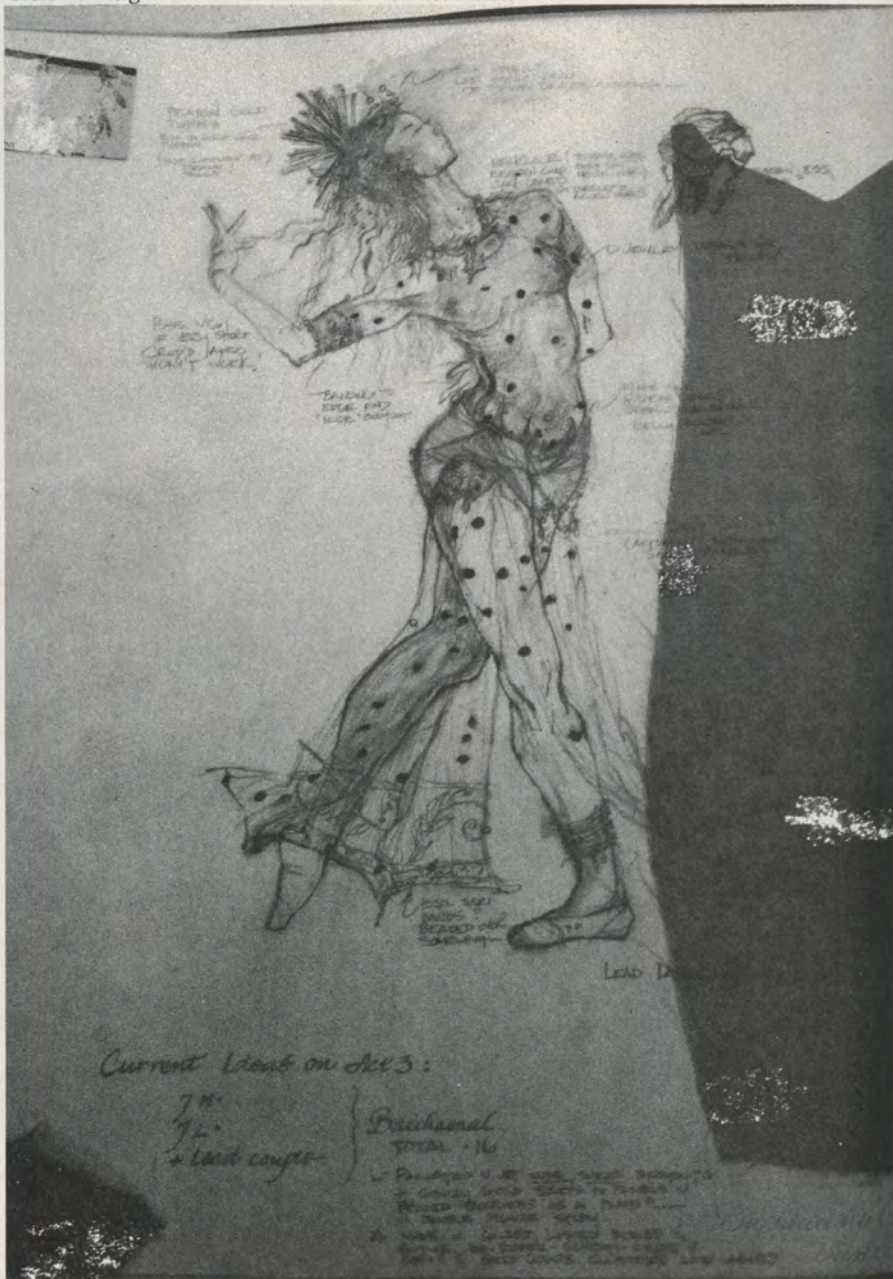
that separates the 19th and 20th centuries, a constant reminder of the stylized period concept.

"In a way, Saint-Saëns' music is almost too good," Joël says in his precise, fluid English, as he lights another of the Camels he virtually chain smokes.

"It is quite remarkable. Here is this young man who steps fresh out of the Paris Conservatoire and writes a nearly perfect piece of music, unusual for the time in its seriousness and academicism. But this creates a problem for the director."

That problem, with which Joël has wrestled long, is to avoid the static nature of a work which began as an oratorio and emerged as an opera. "Much of the first act is practically an oratorio; therefore, it is necessary to invent stage business, particularly for the chorus. I will spend much of my time working

Costume design for a dancer in the Act III Bacchanale.



with the chorus. There will be a solar eclipse when Samson brings the Hebrews to rebellion before Abimélech is slain, corresponding to the beautiful, climactic storm music in Act I, with lots of people running around with torches. The music here is really very dramatic."

Joël smiles with the special delight of a general marshalling forces when he describes his use of the 72-member full chorus and an additional 30 or so supernumeraries. He admits the serious danger of things becoming campy, à la Cecil B. DeMille, in the scenes of spectacle, including the Act III Bacchanale and the fiery dénouement. "It is a risk, but I think we can avoid it. Camp comes when you become lazy and do not take your subject matter seriously."

The centerpiece of the Bacchanale is a spectacular ballet choreographed by New York-based dancer Margo Sappington, who created the "Dance of the Hours" ballet for San Francisco's internationally-televised *La Gioconda* last season. A lithe, energetic woman with huge, smiling eyes, Sappington clearly shares Joël's enormous relish for the project.

She is particularly pleased that Shirley Verrett will participate in both dance sequences, the Act III Bacchanale set in the Temple of Dagon and the Act I dance of the Philistine priestesses set in front of the Temple.

"We're using a corps de ballet of 14 to form a tapestry-like background for the solo dancer in the Bacchanale. And I'm looking for three or four muscular men who can throw girls across a huge onstage 'fire.' The dance is really a spontaneous insert into the opera. The sequence begins with the Philistine

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"We are searching out dancers who will look good in gauzy, revealing costumes . . ."

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chorus. Then a rhythmically undulating melody on the oboe leads directly into the Bacchanale. A similar thing happens at the end, where there is a slow musical transition into Samson's entrance. This is not like the "Dance of the Hours" sequence, which is clearly set off from the rest of the act as a divertissement. Here we have to ease in and out of the dance so that it doesn't clash with what surrounds it. I want to give it a *plastique*, classical look with organized patterned movement, not just general flailing about. There will be sharp-edged movements in profile, corresponding to the stylized reliefs on the portal and the back wall.

"Nicolas wants the scene to be as sexy as possible, so we are searching out dancers who will look good in gauzy, revealing costumes," adds Sappington,

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Douglas Schmidt's set design for Act III, scene 1 of *Samson et Dalila*.

who, as choreographer of the long-running musical *Oh! Calcutta!*, is no stranger to the minimalist approach to dance costume. "The idea," interjects Joël, "is to contrast the libidinous ways of the Philistines with the upright, staunchly moral outlook of the Hebrews, which Saint-Saëns portrays so clearly in the musical themes. Much of the orchestration for the Philistines has an appropriate Middle Eastern tinge, yet still remains very French, like the music from Massenet's *Thaïs*."

That same contrast between the Philistines and the Hebrews has also been sought by costume designer Carrie Robbins, a fragile-looking New Yorker with large black eyes and cascades of thick, black curls. The richly hued sketches and fabric swatches she displays show an exceptional sense of color and texture, concerns which have preoccupied her in planning the *Samson* costumes.

"I've tried for a luminous sort of look for the Philistines," she says, "with the women in marbled, shiny costumes, highlighted with hundreds of beads. The Hebrews, on the other hand, will be in rough-hewn costumes in raw earth tones. The contrast will even be conveyed in the beards. The Philistines will wear structured beards in stylized Babylonian corn-row style, the Hebrews will have a natural look with rough, raw beards.

"The slick, marbled look for the Philistine women is part of the whole Victorian sensibility Doug (Schmidt) and I have been working toward. If you examine the inner lining of many finely

produced 19th-century books, you'll see a beautiful marble-like quality, an effect we have been able to achieve through a process involving oil and water. In a bathtub we pour oil onto a thin surface of water. Since the oil sits on top of the water, you can cut through the water with a knife, parting the oil and pushing it out of the way. A knife swirled around in the water will agitate the oil paint and create patterns. When the sought-after pattern is achieved, a paper is placed lightly and rapidly on the surface to pick up the top layer of the oil paint. To reproduce this pattern on material, black and white photos are taken of the oil slicks created on the paper and photographic silk screens can then be made to print the marbled pattern on fabric."

And how many costumes, all told, will *Samson et Dalila* require? "Oh, I . . . I . . . I don't know," she says slowly. "I'd have to stop and count . . . It comes to about 250 costumes in all," she interrupts later, rolling her eyes and sighing at the thought of the man-hours of work this number represents. She estimates that a less-than-one-foot square piece of

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The new production of *Samson et Dalila* is produced through the cooperation of the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa, The Lyric Opera of Chicago and San Francisco Opera.

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hand-beaded material costs over \$100 to make. "We are going to build some of the costumes in New York, including those for all the principals and most of the Philistines. The Hebrews' costumes will be constructed here in San Francisco. The materials are very expensive, so we are looking for ways to cut costs, such as having the Philistine ladies make only a partial change from their appearance in Act I to the Bacchanale of Act III, just enough to create a sense of the change of seasons from spring to fall. For the "Printemps qui commence" look in the first act, there will be lighter materials, petals woven into the wigs and garlands for the dance; the autumnal look in the third act will be more elaborate with darker makeup done with copper powders and Pre-Raphaelite colored headdresses backlit for a golden effect. The costumes will be enriched with gold coins, bunches of grapes, etc."

The final word on this massive undertaking comes from director Joël, who clearly relishes the opportunity *Samson* offers. "This is undeniably an ambitious production of a difficult opera. Yet we are dealing with one of the most accomplished opera houses in the world, and one with a particularly fine chorus. The two leading singers are simply the best casting imaginable for this opera; both vocally and physically, they are perfect for the roles and perfectly matched.

"What we have tried to do is to put around them a late 19th-century looking production—not something all grey and stony—true to the spirit of the piece and as coloristic, as rich and as lush as Saint-Saëns' marvelous music." ■

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# 'Samson': A Glorious Finale for Parisian Grand Opera

*Samson et Dalila* belongs to the final glory of 19th-century Parisian grand opera, demanding two phenomenal singers for its commanding vocal line . . .

By ROBERT LAWRENCE

Despite a long, insistent trend by opera lovers since the death-in-action of Puccini and the rarification of late-late Strauss to turn back to those two composers in their prime—plus the basic glories of Mozart, Verdi and Wagner—there still exists a move on both sides of the proscenium towards a widened, more diversified repertoire. The answer to that impulse in the last century would have been the appearance of new works. Opera lovers today are not favored in that way (except for a handful of recent bequests by Berg and Britten) and must look elsewhere—nearly always with inventive compromise—for

the routine-breaker.

While Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*, reappearing occasionally, remains far from rare or unfamiliar, neither is it a constant or overworked commodity. Fresh intellectual interest, a startling discovery of up-till-now uncharted musico-dramatic trends? No. But we may gladly bid it welcome. *Samson*, depending for success on the presence of two vocally phenomenal and (in the case of the lady) physically glamorous stars, belongs in the attractive, post-Romantic category that includes such other periodic visitors as *Manon Lescaut*, *Louise*, *L'Amore dei Tre Re*, works which, when cast with first-rate singing-actors, can bring much pleasure.

There remains, though, one important difference between *Samson et Dalila* and those scores, which are predominantly intimate. *Samson*, cast in an ambitious mold, has retained over a period long removed from its first years of glory the style and much of the power of Parisian grand opera—that monumental art form begun in the late 1820s with works even then expansive and exciting by Daniel François Auber (*La Muette de Portici*) and Gioacchino Rossini (*Guillaume Tell*). These two composers, one domestic, the other imported, but both in the mainstream of French musical life, were to launch an art form that would flourish for almost 40 years, culminating gloriously in *Les Huguenots* of Meyerbeer, *Les Troyens* of Berlioz and Verdi's *Don Carlos*, created for Paris and sung originally to a French text.

Grand opera on the Seine reached its climax with this trio. After that the shores were still flanked by impressive monuments (among them Thomas'

*Hamlet*, Massenet's *Le Cid*, Reyer's *Salammbô*) in a genre that had—at its magnificent best—dominated large-scale Parisian theater for four decades. With the advent of Gounod and Bizet, and the stylistic unfolding of Massenet, another, more intimate genre—lyric drama—came into its own, taking over popular favor. Even so, a few grand operas—solitary and impressive—were still to make their mark in the closing quarter of the century.

Among them one must certainly reckon *Samson et Dalila*, in three concise acts rather than the old-fashioned four or five but conforming in general to accepted rules for the big stage, including an elaborate ballet. Yet what has assured the longevity of *Samson* is not so much its grand scale as the intensely glowing sound, the gorgeous writing for the two principal voices: deep contralto with vibrant top (a rare commodity) and dramatic tenor. The hard-to-find contralto with soaring high B flat has yielded in our time to the less rarified mezzo; but the spell of the music to be sung by either lady persists.

With text by Ferdinand Lemaire (based on the biblical source and rethought as a spectacle anticipating by more than half a century the type of holy-sexual pitch made famous by Cecil B. DeMille in his Hollywood epics), *Samson* began on a tortuous road. Problems of production and of casting made the way especially difficult.

*Samson* had particular trouble with early, recalcitrant theatrical managers because of a prevailing tradition against bringing biblical characters in costume onto a secular stage. The composer, in coping with this situation, perhaps tried to cover too many angles. What came off



Camille Saint-Saëns at 52 with the composer's autograph of the opening measures of "Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix."



Margarete Matzenauer as Dalila, Enrico Caruso as Samson and Léon Rothier as the Old Hebrew in the 1915 Metropolitan Opera production of *Samson et Dalila*.

in his time as a clever compromise between the sexual and the sacramental too often suffers in our own from stylistic inconsistency. Cheek-by-jowl with an ascetic opening for chorus (the Hebrews' lament), elevated sentiments for Samson and dignified hostility by the Philistine High Priest, there flourishes a frankly lascivious Dalila. In the opera's early days one way of downplaying this erotic imbalance was to offer the work as a concert piece, which happened first on the Continent, then later in the United States and England.

*Samson's* American premiere as a theater piece took place at New Orleans in 1893, followed two years later by a production at the Metropolitan in

which Francesco Tamagno—creator of the title role in Verdi's *Otello*—sang Samson. The incident, somehow, was largely ignored. Not until a couple of decades later (opening night of the 1915-16 season) did this opera revisit the same theater with a duo that would establish it as a favorite for many years: Enrico Caruso and Margaret Matzenauer. (In the excitement, memories of some eloquent performances in New York at Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House during the seasons of 1908 and 1909 tended to be forgotten.) From then on the score became a frequent—if not constant—visitor to the major opera houses of this country.

Both leading roles are plums for charismatic vocalists, whose presence

can raise a dangerously static opera to the near heights. Since the days of Caruso and of Charles Dalmorès, Hammerstein's protagonist, every great dramatic tenor in this country has sung Samson (one has personal recollections, from about 40 years ago, of a special broadcast in English—superbly done—that featured Lauritz Melchior). The

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Since the days of Caruso, every great dramatic tenor in this country has sung Samson. . . .

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darker-voiced Dalilas (the genre for whom Saint-Saëns created the part) have included Jeanne Gerville-Réache, Louise Homer and Karin Branzell. More recently, higher mezzos singing the role with success have included Risë Stevens, Rita Gorr, Grace Bumbry, Elena Obraztsova and Shirley Verrett. The important role of the High Priest has been assumed by many distinguished performers, among them Jean Lassalle, Hector Dufranne, Pasquale Amato and Gabriel Bacquier. Because of the near-symphonic status of the orchestra, this remains a conductor's as well as a singers' enterprise. Notable maestri associated with it in the past have included Cleofonte Campanini, Giorgio Polacco, Fausto Cleva and Sir Thomas Beecham.

*Samson* differs strikingly from its grand opera ancestors in one important respect: it is brief, concentrated, to the point. Once the statuesque choral laments at the start are out of the way, the work maintains a notable command of pacing. Closely linked to this asset is the opera's overall sense of intensity: unflagging,

commanding, eloquent. And the twin goals of sonic and architectural authority have been skillfully achieved. Many are the examples of Saint-Saëns' phenomenal command of long melodic line and dynamic flux. Together with these vaulting passages have come marvelously tailored details. Indeed that wonderful switch from B minor, the persistently gloomy key of the oppressed Israelites which starts the opera, to the heroic, wide-open tonality of E-flat major as Samson commands his brethren to shed their discouragement typifies the composer's mastery of theatrical color that will grow, hardly ever receding, until the close of the opera.

This abundance of expressive nuance lends itself almost from the start to intensity of characterization. Samson's opening phrase, "Arrêtez, mes frères!", possesses a sound at once reassuring, majestic and bold. Then, more hymn-like but still impulsive, comes his command to the Israelites to kneel before their Lord . . . broken by the entrance of the Philistine commander, Abimélech. Here, in a momentary lapse, the musical characterization becomes as rigid and dull as the man himself (a literal device out of joint in the theater). But dramatic interest is revived by Samson's defiance of Abimélech's pomposity, thrillingly underscored by upward runs in the strings against solemnly descending brasses, suggesting militant angels that form the legions of God. The reappearance of this figure toward the very end of the work, just before the destruction of the temple, will mark one of the supremely compelling moments in French opera.

The rest of the opening act marches proudly forward. Abimélech is slain in no time at all; the High Priest enters with his solo cursing the race of Israelites. An argument might be made that Saint-Saëns was here too concerned with rhythmical variety at the expense of vocal directness, but the reservation is a minor one. The High Priest having made his point and departed, the prevalent musical anger yields—in a superbly effective transition—to the luminous entrance of the Philistine priestesses and the first appearance of Dalila, who rings the bell right off with one of the most evocative, beautiful pair of phrases in the opera, "Je viens célébrer la victoire" and that gorgeous declaration, "Doux est le muguet parfume." In the course of the opera, three celebrated, full-length arias for Dalila will follow that bit about the *muguet* (lily-of-the-valley), every one of them more familiar to operatic audiences than the melody I have cited; but this seems to me the most rewarding cantilena for Dalila in the entire work. And it is presented on her first entrance.

A dance of the priestesses follows—conventional but attractive—in which Dalila joins; then an old basso-priest of the Israelites, held over from oratorio style at its most weighty, does some side moralizing. He cannot, however, spoil the gloriously evocative close to Act I, Dalila's "Printemps qui commence."

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**Samson has retained over a period long removed from its first years of glory the style and much of the power of Parisian grand opera . . .**

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Yet, no matter how effective the first act of *Samson et Dalila*, it is the second—limited to the three major voices of the cast—that establishes the



Hedy Lamarr and Victor Mature in a scene from Cecil B. DeMille's 1949 epic *Samson and Delilah*.

score as memorable. First, in the orchestra, an atmospheric evocation of a night sky, coupled with intimations of the sexual exchange toward which the act builds. There follows Dalila's invocation to the power of love as a seductive weapon, "Amour! viens aider ma faiblesse."

A powerful duo follows for Dalila and the High Priest, who has come to help plot Samson's destruction. This yields to that spell-binding moment where Dalila, once more alone, awaits the hero. Here the musical eroticism resumes: a wonderfully undulating figure for clarinets in their low, darker (*chalumeau*) register, with brooding, chesty passages for Dalila herself.

She withdraws momentarily and we

have the agitated entrance of Samson, then the beautiful, voluptuous resolution of his troubled mood upon the sudden re-entrance of Dalila to woodwinds and harp.

The remainder of this act—the high point of the opera—springs from a constantly shifting interchange that culminates—so naturally and inevitably when heard at full performance—in Dalila's famous "Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix" ("My heart at thy sweet voice"). The climactic tone is taken not by the Philistine beauty but impetuously by Samson, as he exclaims "Dalila! Dalila! Je t'aime!," a theatrical miracle.

From here until curtain, the second act moves with supreme dramatic force. Samson, dismayed at Dalila's insistence on learning the secret of his strength, resists. Dalila, in turn, grows incensed and reproachful. Topping this conflict

comes the outbreak of the storm. Above it resounds the magnificently scornful B flat hurled by Dalila; "Lâche!" ("Coward!"). Then, after an electrifying and silent reconciliation of the lovers and their flight into Dalila's house, the orchestra takes over, underlining symphonically the return of the High Priest with a group of armed men. This passage, five pages in the piano-vocal score, has struck some critics as too extended. Yet the close of the act, marked by the hero's cry from offstage, "Trahison!" ("Betrayed!"), remains triumphant.

The opening of the next act—Samson blinded, at the wheel of the Gaza prison yard—is not only subdued (dramatically right) but also somewhat

pedestrian and non-theatrical. The lapse soon passes. With no break in orchestral continuity, the scene changes to the temple, where Samson's downfall is to be celebrated. Sexuality, in various guises, here determines the music; a fragrantly decadent chorus of the Philistine worshipers soon gives way to the celebrated bumpy-grindy Bacchanale.

After this orgy, the opera builds toward a truly imposing climax. First comes the High Priest's sardonic welcome as the sightless hero, guided by a child, enters the temple. And then a series of brilliant musical taunts, poisonous reminiscences from Dalila, burlesquing former love themes and jesting malevolently of things past, as she in turn welcomes Samson. This is followed by an evocative, commanding duo for the woman and the Priest, sung in canon, honoring the Philistine god Dagon.

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*Samson* had particular trouble with early, recalcitrant theatrical managers . . .

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From this grows an associated, dance-like tune taken up by the chorus against wild, inflammatory vocal runs by Dalila, which leads in turn to a sudden, incredibly stable passage of grandeur, obliterating all the physical aspects of the scene that have dominated till now. The orchestral evocation of wings—first heard in Samson's dominant solo of Act I—returns as the hero, standing between two massive pillars of the temple, achieves through spiritual rehabilitation the brief return of strength that causes the building to fall. And with the opera's climax comes the tenor's last, soaringly monumental top tone.

I have concentrated on the music rather than the text because the drama is straightforward and uncomplicated, a biblical tale presented traditionally and with directness (albeit with certain trade magazine overtones). It is the score by Saint-Saëns that remains worthy of attention. No matter if at times triumphant major tonalities suggest 19th-century Paris rather than near-Asiatic regions of the past. Few operas are without their challenges to logic. In the case of *Samson*, the sum total is one of commanding vocal line poised on orchestral sonorities that stimulate almost constantly. ■

ROBERT LAWRENCE, artistic director and conductor of Friends of French Opera, is professor of vocal studies at Temple University in Philadelphia. He is currently at work on a book entitled *The Great French Operas — and the Famous*.

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# Samson et Dalila

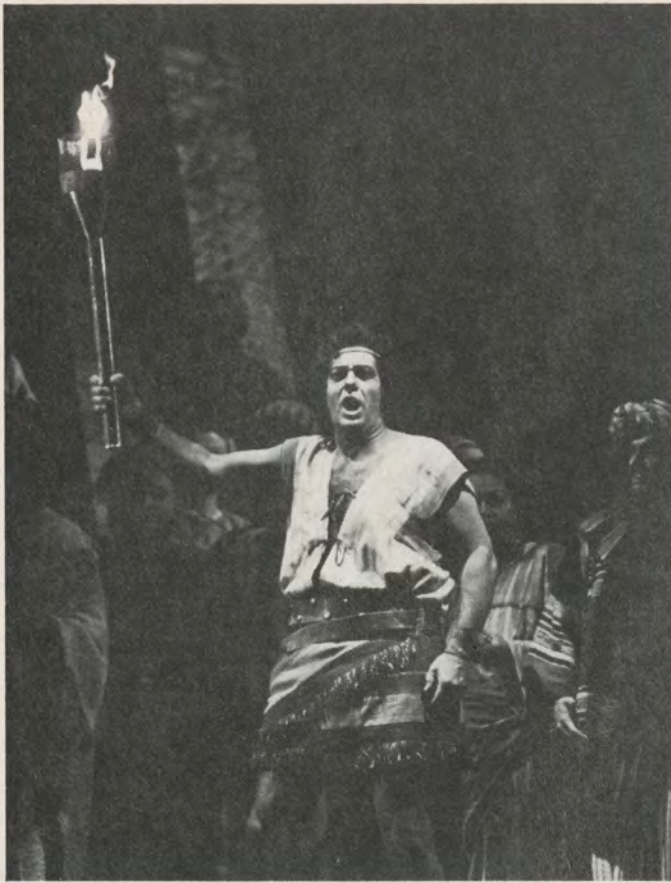
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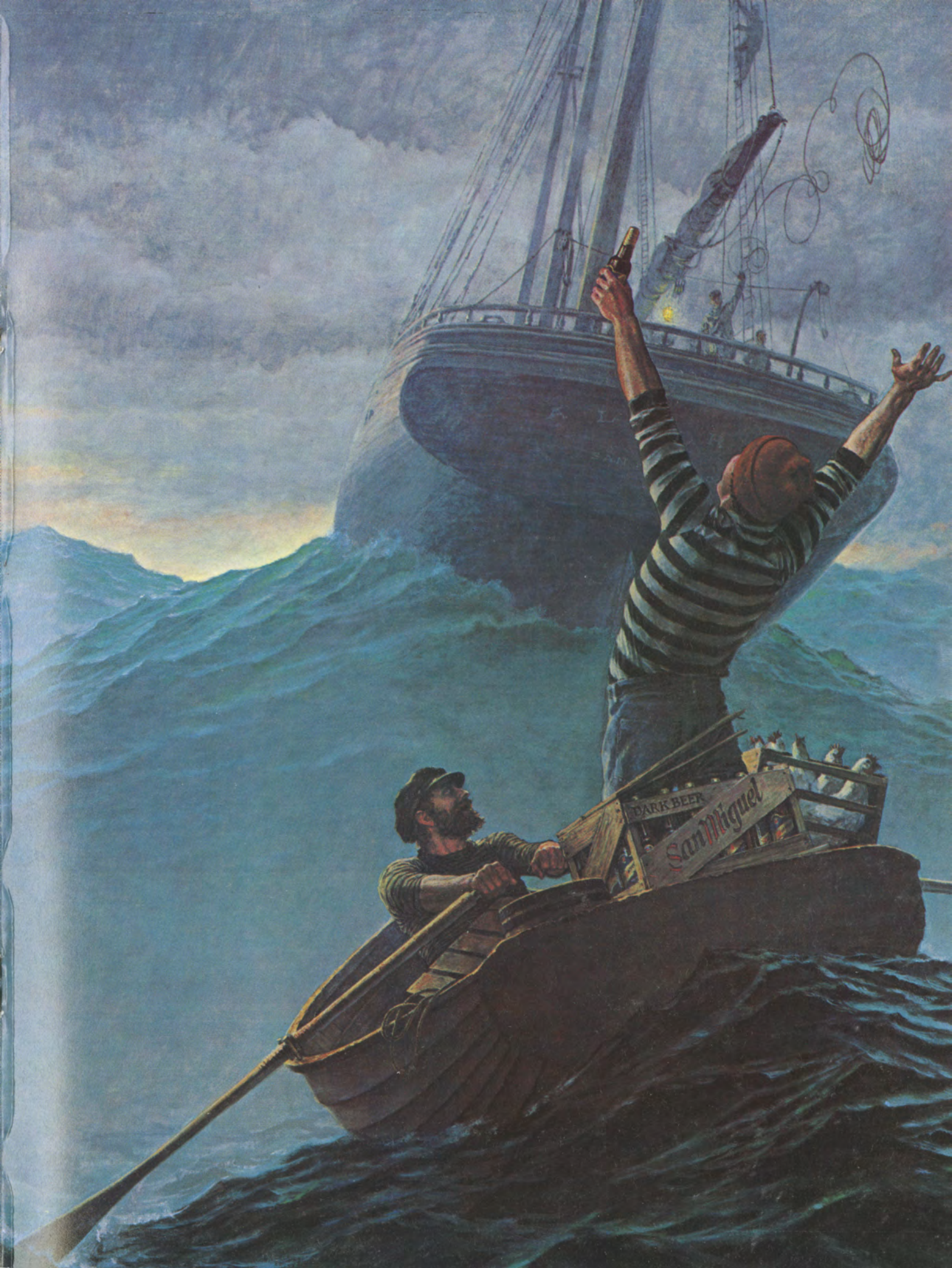
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*First performance: Weimar, December 2, 1877*

*First San Francisco Opera performance:*  
September 21, 1925

OPENING NIGHT  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 AT 7:00

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 AT 2:00

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 AT 8:00

*Samson et Dalila* radio broadcast on October 24

CAST  
(in order of appearance)

<i>Samson</i>	Placido Domingo
<i>Abimélech, Satrap of Gaza</i>	Arnold Voketaitis*
<i>First Philistine</i>	Michael Ballam
<i>Second Philistine</i>	Stanley Wexler*
<i>The High Priest of Dagon</i>	Wolfgang Brendel
<i>Messenger of the Philistines</i>	Robert Tate*
<i>An Old Hebrew</i>	Kevin Langan*
<i>Dalila</i>	Shirley Verrett
<i>A boy</i>	Greg Moawad*
<i>Hebrews and Philistines</i>	
<i>Solo Dancer</i>	Christian Holder

*Corps de ballet*

\*San Francisco Opera debut

PLACE AND TIME: Gaza in Palestine; 1150 B.C.

ACT I Public Square in Gaza

INTERMISSION

ACT II Dalila's home in the valley of Sorek

INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1 Prison dungeon in Gaza  
Scene 2 Interior of the temple of Gaza

Opening Night flowers courtesy of Tiffany & Co. and  
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The performances of *Samson et Dalila* on September 18 and 21 are being videotaped for telecast at a later date, partially funded through the generosity of a friend of San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Opera Guild.

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 three hours



# SYNOPSIS

## SAMSON ET DALILA

### ACT I

In front of the pagan temple of Dagon at Gaza, a group of Hebrew men and women crowd about their leader, Samson, in distress at their persecution by the Philistines. Rebuking them for their lack of faith, Samson rallies their courage. Abimélech, the satrap (governor) of Gaza, interrupts their prayers with taunts against their god, whereupon Samson warns him that vengeance will soon strike him down. Rousing his people to break their chains, Samson defies the threats of Abimélech and kills the satrap with his own sword. When the Hebrews have left, the High Priest of Dagon appears from the temple, discovers Abimélech's body and tries to send the Philistine soldiers to crush the rebels, but they recoil in fear. A messenger brings word that under Samson's command the Hebrew band has destroyed the harvest. Cursing the Israelites, the High Priest rushes off with his guards. Samson and his followers return, thanking God for the new strength he has given them. The temple doors open and Dalila comes out with the other priestesses and avows her old love for Samson. In spite of the warning of an old Hebrew, Samson is irresistibly attracted to her as she and the priestesses, dancing with garlands, hail the coming of spring.

### ACT II

Dalila awaits Samson on her terrace in the valley of Sorek, invoking the power of love to help ensnare him. Visited by the High Priest, who urges her to

learn the secret of Samson's strength, she assures him of her hatred of the valiant Hebrew. After the priest departs, Samson arrives at Dalila's tent. He is seized with misgivings, but to no avail. Dalila, confident of her success in arousing his passion, describes how her heart awakens at the sound of his voice. At length, unable to pry from Samson the secret of his strength, she repulses him scornfully and runs off. Samson follows helplessly. Philistine soldiers surround the tent and, when Dalila gives the signal, they rush in to seize their prey.

### ACT III

Blinded, shorn and shackled, Samson turns the millstone of his captors in the prison of Gaza. Taunted by the reproaches of his followers as they echo through the darkness, he cries out to God for mercy.

At dawn the temple of Dagon is filled with worshippers. A Bacchanalian dance ensues. Suddenly a silence falls on the crowd as the blind Samson is led in by a child. Unmoved by the jeers of the crowd or Dalila's mockery, he continues to pray. When the High Priest challenges him to prove the power of God to restore his sight, Samson begs for a return of his strength. Approaching the altar, the pagans celebrate their rites, ending with the humiliation of Samson, chained to the temple pillars by Dalila. Pulling on the shackles to which he is bound, he brings down the temple upon himself and his enemies.



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# Camille Saint-Saëns: “In Youth, Mozart; In Age, Titian”

He wrote his first piano piece at age three and his sole interest from infancy on was music. Yet Camille Saint-Saëns might not be remembered as an operatic composer were it not for Franz Liszt.

By BARBARA FISCHER-WILLIAMS

“Que c'est beau!” (How beautiful it is!) So exclaimed Camille Saint-Saëns when he saw the second act of his opera *Samson et Dalila* staged for the first time. The circumstances were, to say the least, unusual. The stage was not in any theater, but a specially constructed platform in the garden of a house in a Parisian suburb, and the date was Thursday, August 20, 1874, three years

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There was never any doubt about what profession young Camille would follow.

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before the world premiere of *Samson* at Weimar in 1877, and 18 years before the Paris Opéra finally overcame its hesitations and presented the work.

The garden performance was a joyous surprise for the composer, planned—and sung—by the fascinating and celebrated artist to whom the opera was dedicated, his close and greatly admired friend, Pauline Viardot. Saint-Saëns had been in England, appearing as pianist with the London Philharmonic Society, and upon his return to Paris he attended one of Mme. Viardot's “Thursday evenings.” This one was held at Croissy-sur-Seine where, without telling him, she had arranged the performance in the garden of some friends and had staged the “Delilah scene” in the Valley of Sorek, complete with decor and elaborate Oriental costumes. She had also seen to it that a specially selected audience of influential personages was assembled, including the director of the Opéra, Henri Halanzanier. Tenor Charles-Auguste Nicot sang Samson.

In one of his several books of essays, *Musical Memories*, Saint-Saëns writes that Viardot's “marvelous voice did not please everyone, for it was by no means smooth and velvety. Indeed it was a little harsh and was likened by some to the taste of a bitter orange. But it was just the voice for a tragedy or an epic, for it was superhuman rather than human.” It is not difficult to imagine how Dalila's great second act aria, “*Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix*,” poured out by that magical voice, must have thrilled those who heard it in the little garden that summer night. But, unfortunately, the experience failed to move Halanzanier sufficiently to induce him to cast aside the Opéra's prejudice against a biblical subject. Other potentates held similar views, objecting that the work was unactable and that the plot was suited more to an oratorio than an opera. *Samson* was laid aside for a while.

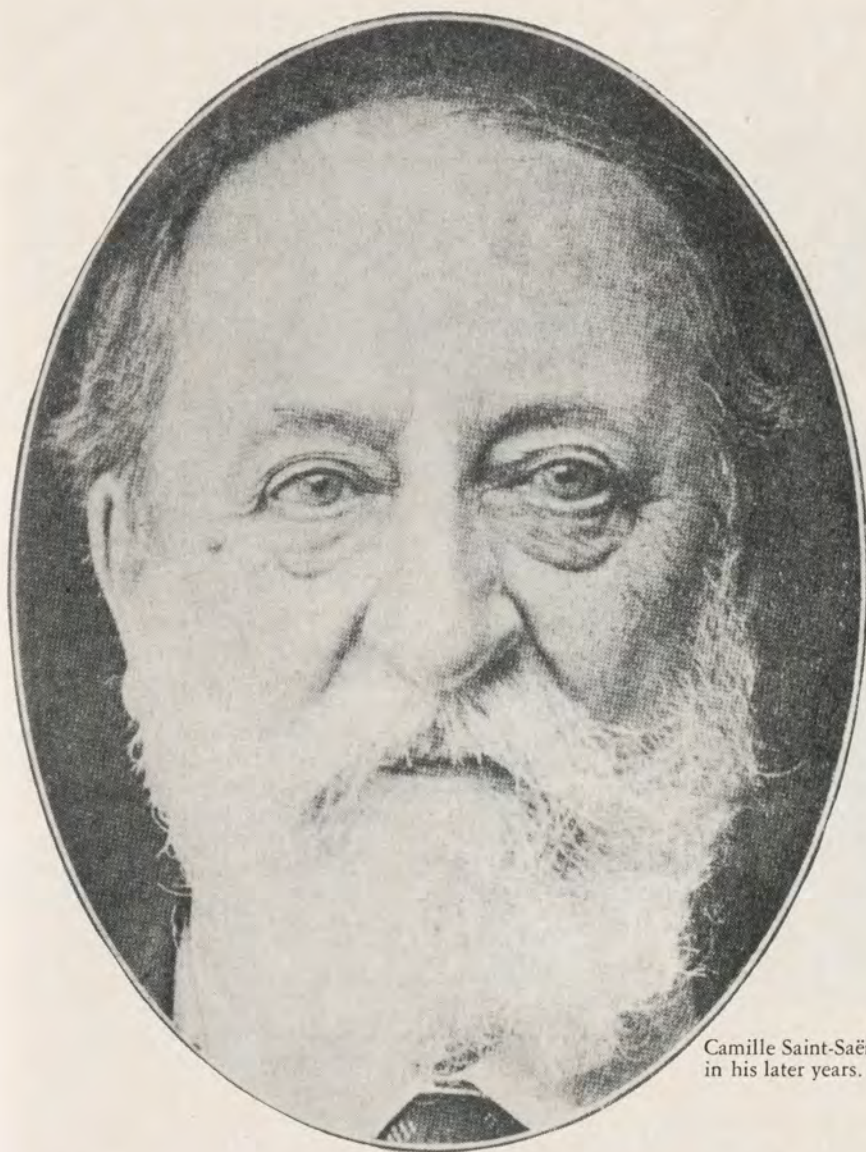
At the time, Saint-Saëns was a few weeks short of his 39th birthday. He had

by then achieved considerable renown in Parisian musical circles and abroad, not only as a composer of instrumental works, pianist and organist (he became organist at La Madeleine when he was 22), but also as founder of the Société Nationale de Musique, a prestigious association devoted to the promotion of contemporary French music, despite the conservatism of the official Establishment. He was amply fulfilling the promise he had shown ever since, as an infant prodigy, he composed his first piano piece when he was three. Possessing perfect pitch, the future composer was able, while still a young child, to win an argument with Pierre Zimmermann, professor of piano at the Conservatoire, about whether or not a piano in the Saint-Saëns home was a semi-tone out of tune. It was, and Zimmermann reportedly never forgave him. Years afterwards, while serving in the National Guard during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, he whiled away the time spent on patrol duty by noting the key in which the German shells whined over Paris.

Born in the Latin Quarter on October 9, 1835, Charles Camille was the only child of Victor Saint-Saëns, a clerk in the Ministry of the Interior, and his wife, Clémence, adopted daughter of an aunt, Charlotte Masson. Mme. Masson moved in with the young married couple, and after Victor died of tuberculosis when his son was only two months old, the boy was brought up by the two women, his mother and his great-aunt. He was devoted to both of them, and despite his own brief and unsuccessful marriage in 1875, continued to make his home with them as long as they lived, great-aunt Charlotte until she was 91, Mme. Saint-Saëns until her 80th



Franz Liszt, through whose efforts *Samson et Dalila* received its world premiere in Weimar on December 2, 1877.



Camille Saint-Saëns  
in his later years.

year. At the loss of each, Saint-Saëns was profoundly saddened and shaken.

There was, of course, never any doubt about what profession young Camille would follow. His sole interest from infancy on was music. After concentrated study in both piano and composition, he entered the Conservatoire—"that ridiculous and venerable palace," as he described it affectionately in later years—at the age of 13. Before that, however, he had earned quite a reputation for himself by his public appearances, the most notable of which was a recital when he was ten and a half at the famous Salle Pleyel, where he played his whole ambitious program from memory. The critics were impressed, and the career of the precocious young musician, compared by some with the youthful Mozart, was launched.

Fifty fantastically prolific years later, after he had become something of a legend in his own lifetime, another concert took place in the same hall to mark his 50th jubilee. He played the same Mozart B-flat concerto which had

won him such enthusiastic applause so many years before and it was received just as rapturously. But when the triumphant affair was over, Saint-Saëns returned to the furnished rooms where he was then leading a solitary existence, attended by his faithful manservant, Gabriel Geslin, and spent the rest of the evening alone with his little poodle, named Dalila.

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**Saint-Saëns was able, while still a young child, to win an argument with a professor about whether or not a piano was a semi-tone out of tune. . . .**

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During those lonely years following the death of his mother, the composer's thoughts must often have wandered back to the bygone days when he was organist (first at the Paris church of St. Merri, and then, for 20 years, at the Madeleine) and piano teacher at the

esteemed Niedermeyer Institute, where his pupils included André Messager and Gabriel Fauré. His association with Fauré grew into a close and lifelong friendship, and he lavished upon Fauré's two boys the affection he had felt for the two little sons he lost so tragically. The elder, André, fell from a window at the age of two and a half; the younger, Jean, a frail infant, died soon after his brother when he was only a few months old.

Saint-Saëns is sometimes depicted as a learned figure of outstanding technical excellence and staggering productivity, but with a personality lacking in humor, and overly impressed with the royalty with whom he came into contact in the course of his illustrious career, among them Queen Victoria. That there was quite another side to his character is evident from his correspondence with Fauré, and also from various light-hearted theatrical jokes and exploits in which he engaged at times. His letters to Fauré, for example, often began with such affectionate salutations as "Mon grand chat" (Dear old pussy-cat), "Mon gros loup" (You old wolf), and even "Insupportable animal" (Unbearable creature). The more decorous Fauré, mindful of the erstwhile teacher-pupil relationship, and of the fact that Saint-Saëns was the elder, continued to write "Cher Camille."

As to the theatrical episodes, these included such merry spoofs as the charades with which the guests at Mme. Viardot's informal Sunday evenings (as distinct from her more formal Thursdays) amused themselves. Saint-Saëns was an enthusiastic participant who won special applause when he appeared as Marguerite in *Faust*, wearing a blue and white bonnet, two thick blonde braids—and his own pointed black beard. The Jewel Song, given falsetto, was a wicked parody of the singing of Madame Miolan-Carvalho, the original Marguerite, now past her first youth and with a tendency to sing just a shade sharp. Another popular turn was a mimed performance of a dissection, when the corpse was impersonated by Saint-Saëns, clad in pink tights, and the doctor by Mme. Viardot's faithful lover, Anton Turgenev. The composer is also reported to have partnered another famous Russian, Tchaikovsky, when Saint-Saëns was visiting Moscow in 1875 and the two danced an impromptu ballet (in private this time) on the stage of the Conservatoire, with Tchaikovsky performing Pygmalion to his guest's Galatea.

So versatile was Saint-Saëns that he did not confine his interests to music and the theater, but also gained recognition as an author and an influential journalist. Among his literary works were four books of essays and reminiscences,

two volumes of poetry and two one-act plays. As a journalist, under the pseudonym Phemius, he became well-known, if not always well-loved, for a column in which he commented vigorously and sometimes controversially upon the current musical scene. And for good measure, as an amateur scientist he interested himself in natural history, physics and especially astronomy—the last named to the great delight of Fauré's children, whom he introduced to its joys.

But there was one field in which he encountered more difficulty than in all the rest, and this was opera, a medium in which he was most anxious to excel. As British critic and musicologist Martin Cooper points out in *French Music from the Death of Berlioz to the Death of Fauré*, "It was impossible to make anything like a financial success of composition without writing for the theater. . . . Opera alone enabled a composer to get a large hearing and possibly a large fee, both orchestral and chamber music remaining the taste of a comparatively small public, and producing correspondingly small financial results." It was not for lack of tenacity that Saint-Saëns failed to win laurels in the genre. In all, he has twelve operatic works to his credit, including one-act pieces and operettas, but only three of them, in addition to *Samson*, achieved performance at the Opéra: *Henry VIII* (1883), *Ascanio* (1890) and *Les Barbares* (1901). *Samson* alone remains on the boards today, and it is to his vast outpouring of instrumental music that Saint-Saëns owes his perennial popularity.

The world might never have heard *Samson* had it not been for Franz Liszt, who used his influence as musical director at the Weimar court of Grand

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### It is to his vast outpouring of instrumental music that Saint-Saëns owes his perennial popularity.

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Duke Karl Alexander to obtain the world premiere of the opera there on December 2, 1877. Saint-Saëns himself felt that Liszt should be given full credit. Although written as an opera, the aura of an oratorio dogged the work and impeded its acceptance until Liszt took up the cudgels. The young Camille had idolized the great Hungarian composer and pianist ever since, in his late teens, he had first met him in Paris. Liszt, for his part, recognized the youthful composer's talent and became his firm friend and patron. Years later, in 1870, Saint-Saëns confided his troubles about *Samson*, and Liszt—without having heard a note of it—had faith

enough to tell him "Finish your opera. I will have it performed at Weimar." The Franco-Prussian War intervened, but seven years later he kept his word.

If Liszt receives the recognition which is clearly his due in the matter, the same cannot be said for the unidentified person, apparently an habitué of the Monday musical evenings held by Saint-Saëns, who first drew his attention to the possibilities of the biblical story of Samson and Delilah. Biographies fail to mention his name, and Saint-Saëns, in a letter to his friend Henri Collet, critic and composer, refers to him only as "an



old music lover," who recalled that Voltaire had written the text for a *Samson* opera (set to music by Rameau in 1733 but never performed), and who even sketched out a scenario. If the unnamed music lover had hoped thereby to write the libretto, he was disappointed, for Saint-Saëns entrusted the task to Ferdinand Lemaire, a young Creole poet from Martinique, who was a distant connection of his by marriage, and whom he found "a charming boy." He was evidently very satisfied, but oddly enough the two never worked together again.

The Weimar premiere, with the libretto translated into German by one Richard Pohl, was a heart-warming success. It had narrowly averted potential disaster at the start when the conductor, Edward Lassen, mounted the podium somewhat the worse for premature celebration, but was shocked into cold sobriety by making an early error. Performances followed at Hamburg, Cologne, Prague and Dresden. French managers remained unimpressed, however, and it was not until March, 1890 that *Samson et Dalila* was heard in France, and then not in Paris, but in Rouen, due largely to the efforts of a group of the composer's friends, includ-

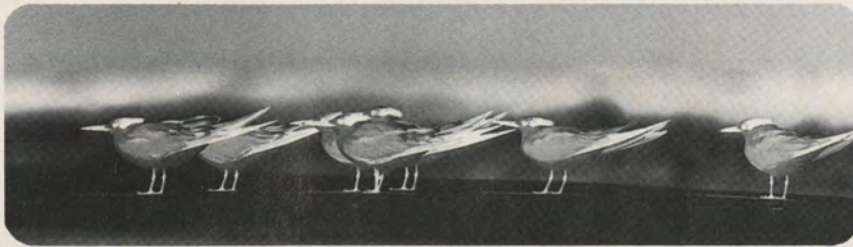
ing Fauré and Émanuel Chabrier. A few months later, in the autumn of the same year, a Paris debut was achieved, at the Théâtre-Lyrique-Eden, a short distance from the Opéra. Other major French cities jumped on the bandwagon, and the aloof Paris Opéra, at long last, with an air of pained surprise at not having been kept informed of what was going on, followed suit, although not until November 23, 1892. Mezzo-soprano Blanche Deschamps-Jéhin and tenor Jean Vergnet sang the title roles and Édouard Colonne conducted. Later landmark premieres include the Metropolitan on February 8, 1895, with Eugenia Mantelli and Francesco Tamagno, Luigi Mancinelli in the pit, and the San Francisco Opera on September 21, 1925, with Marguerite d'Alvarez, Fernand Anseau and Marcel Journet as the High Priest and Pietro Cimini on the podium.

With the Paris Opéra presentation of *Samson*, Saint-Saëns had attained a long-sought goal, but 29 years still remained to him, and far from slackening off, he used them to pursue his ceaseless activities as composer and performer. He also continued his indefatigable travels to many foreign countries, where awards were bestowed and festivities held in his honor. In his 80th year he visited San Francisco as the French Government's official representative at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition, and for the occasion he composed and energetically conducted a resounding orchestral work suitably entitled "Hail California!" Less diplomatic was his reply when asked his opinion of American composers: "I've never heard of any!"

Happily for a man of such boundless energy, he did not have to endure a prolonged last illness. The chronically weak chest he had inherited from his father finally caught up with him on December 16, 1921, in Algiers, where he had arrived nearly two weeks earlier for his customary winter stay in a warmer climate. Congestion of the lungs set in after he had retired for the night at the end of a peaceful day spent indoors to avoid aggravating a slight cold he had caught, and half an hour later he was dead at the age of 86.

The body was returned to Paris, where a state funeral was held at the Madeleine on Christmas Eve. Some months after, at the annual meeting of the Institut de France, the president eulogized him as a man "who had the youth of Mozart and the old age of Titian." ■

BARBARA FISCHER-WILLIAMS, a British journalist based in New York, specializes in opera and has contributed to several opera publications, including *Opera News*, *Opera* and *Music and Musicians*.



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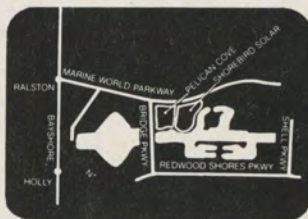
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# PROFILES



## SHIRLEY VERRETT

Outstanding American artist Shirley Verrett is one of a handful of singers whose range successfully spans two repertoires—the contralto and mezzo-soprano roles on the one hand, and the dramatic soprano roles on the other. In her debut season with the San Francisco Opera in 1972 she created a sensation as Selika in Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* and Amneris in *Aida*. In 1975 she appeared as Azucena in two performances of *Il Trovatore* to thunderous applause and returned in 1978 to sing one of the most demanding roles in the entire soprano repertoire, Norma. Miss Verrett is one of only four singers in history to sing both Adalgisa and Norma in the Bellini opera. In 1973 she electrified Metropolitan Opera audiences by performing both Cassandra and Dido in the New York premiere of Berlioz' *Les Troyens*. She has also been heard there in such rarities as Rossini's *L'Assedio di Corinto*, Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* and Donizetti's *La Favorita*. Recent engagements include her first *Tosca*, seen nationwide on television in the *Live from the Met* series, Norma at Covent Garden, Lady Macbeth at La Scala (repeating a role she had first sung there to open the 1975-76 season and had performed with the company on its historic visit to the Kennedy Center in 1976) and, for the first time in her career, *Aida* with the Opera Company of Boston. In great demand as a recording, recital and concert artist, Miss Verrett holds the honor of

having appeared at the opening concerts of two Lincoln Center concert halls—Philharmonic Hall and Alice Tully Hall.



## PLACIDO DOMINGO


World famous as one of the foremost singing actors on the operatic stage today, tenor Placido Domingo appears in his ninth season with the San Francisco Opera, singing Samson in *Samson et Dalila* for the first time in the United States. He has performed the role at the Orange Festival in France and recently recorded it for Deutsche Grammophon. Domingo made his San Francisco debut in 1969 as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and has since been heard here as Don José in *Carmen* and Cavaradossi in *Tosca* (1970), Manrico in *Il Trovatore* (1971), Cavaradossi and Vasco da Gama in *L'Africaine* (1972), in the title role in *Andrea Chenier* (1975), as Turiddu and Canio in the *Cavalleria/Pagliacci* double bill (1976), Otello (1978) and Dick Johnson in *La Fanciulla del West* (1979). He also appeared with the Company in the Ponnelle *Tosca* production under Maestro Adler's baton last December in Manila during a tour which Domingo was instrumental in arranging. A leading artist with the Metropolitan Opera since his celebrated debut there in *Adriana Lecouvreur* in 1968, he has been seen in the televised *Live from the Met* series as the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* and as Otello. Since wielding the baton for a performance of *La Traviata* with the New York City Opera, Domingo has had several other conducting engagements, including a student matinee performance of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* during the 1976

San Francisco Opera season. Recent engagements include *Andrea Chenier* in Chicago, *Otello* in London and Monte Carlo, *Manon Lescaut* in New York, *Carmen* in Paris and Hamburg, and a new Ponnelle production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Salzburg. In June he performed the title role in the Madrid world premiere of Torroba's *El Poeta*, a work written especially for him.



## WOLFGANG BRENDEL

After his sensational debut here last season as Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, German baritone Wolfgang Brendel returns to the San Francisco Opera as the High Priest in *Samson et Dalila*. He made his operatic debut in Kaiserlautern and was subsequently engaged by the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. During the 1979-80 season he has appeared with his home company as Pelléas in the Ponnelle production of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, the Herald in *Lohengrin*, Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, Don Carlo in *La Forza del Destino*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, the Count in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, in the title role in *Don Giovanni*, as Amfortas in *Parsifal* and the King in Orff's *Die Kluge*. He also made guest appearances in Vienna, Paris, Zurich and Hamburg. Brendel made his Metropolitan Opera debut in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 1975 and will be heard for the first time at La Scala in a new production of *Falstaff* conducted by Loren Maazel. Between opera engagements he often appears on radio and television programs in Germany.



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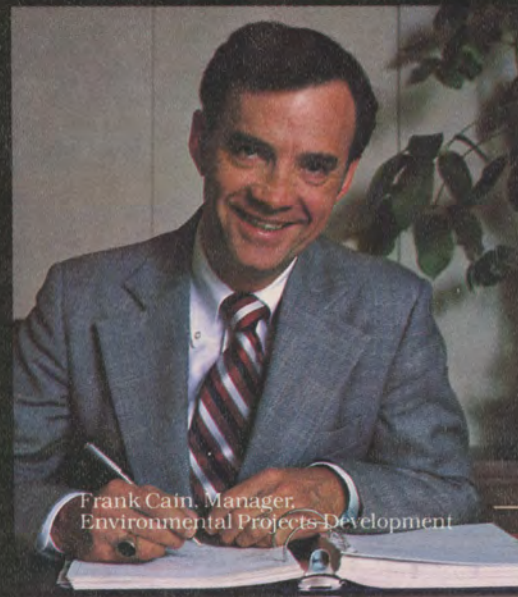
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# PROFILES



## ARNOLD VOKETAITIS

Bass-baritone Arnold Voketaitis, making his San Francisco Opera debut as Abimélech in *Samson et Dalila* and the One-Armed Man in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, combines a career as concert artist with an extensive operatic repertoire of over 120 roles. He has been a member of the Lyric Opera of Chicago since 1966 and has appeared frequently with the New York City Opera. Outside the United States, Voketaitis has sung at the Gran Liceo in Barcelona, and with both the National Symphony and the Opera in Mexico City, where he just performed the title role in Massenet's *Don Quichotte* in June. Other recent engagements have included the title roles in Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* with the Pasadena Symphony, the Prologue of Boito's *Mefistofele* with the Pensacola Symphony, and in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* in Toledo and Dayton. Upcoming opera roles are Tomaso in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Chicago, the four villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Mobile and Hunding in Act I of *Die Walküre* with the Puerto Rico Symphony. Voketaitis has appeared with most of the leading American orchestras, among them the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Minnesota Orchestra and the St. Louis Symphony. Last year he made his debut with the San Francisco Symphony in Prokofiev's *Ivan the Terrible* and with the Indianapolis Symphony as King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*.



## KEVIN LANGAN

Bass Kevin Langan sings a variety of roles in his debut season with the San Francisco Opera: the Old Hebrew in *Samson et Dalila*, Pietro in *Simon Boccanegra*, a watchman in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata*, Count Lamoral in *Arabella* and the Imperial Commissioner in *Madama Butterfly*. He holds a master's degree in voice from Indiana University, where he performed over 15 leading roles, including Figaro and Dr. Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Daland in *The Flying Dutchman*, Mephistopheles in *Faust* and Pimen in *Boris Godunov*. He studied with Margaret Harshaw and was a protégé of the late Walter Legge and soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. Under their sponsorship he made a highly acclaimed recital debut at Wigmore Hall in London in 1979. In January of that year he sang the role of Pimen in a concert version of *Boris Godunov* with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Other recent engagements include productions of *Don Carlo* and *La Traviata* with the New Jersey Opera, and *The Magic Flute* with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis and the Opera Company of Philadelphia under the baton of Julius Rudel. A member of the Merola Opera Program for the past two summers, Langan was the recipient of the Florence Bruce Award in the Grand Finals of the San Francisco Opera Auditions.

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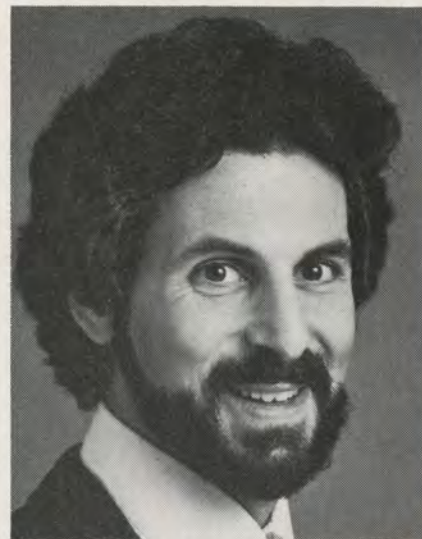
**MICHAEL BALLAM**

Returning to the Company for his second consecutive season, tenor Michael Ballam sings five roles: the First Philistine in *Samson et Dalila*, the Hunchback in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, the First Armored Man in *The Magic Flute*, Count Elemer in *Arabella* and the sailor's voice in *Tristan und Isolde*. 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 Faustus*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Andrea 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. That year with the Lyric Opera of Chicago he performed Harry in *La Fanciulla del West*, Schmidt in *Werther* and Beelzebub in the world premiere of Penderecki's *Paradise Lost*. In 1979 Ballam sang the title roles in Cavalli's *L'Ormindo* with Pennsylvania Opera Theater, Berlioz' *The Damnation of Faust* with the Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra and *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Santa Barbara.

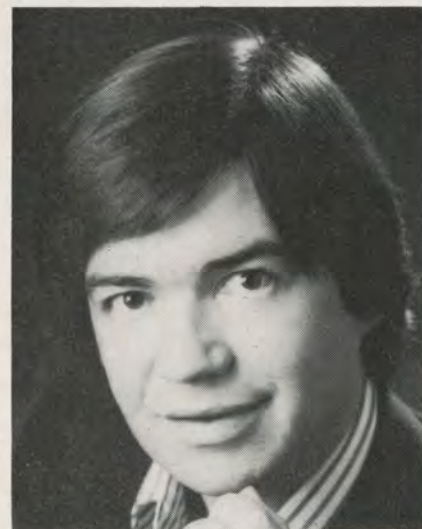
**STANLEY WEXLER**

Following his Spring Opera debut in Susa's *Transformations*, in which he also performed the 1978 PBS telecast from the Minnesota Opera, bass-baritone Stanley Wexler makes his first appearances with the San Francisco Opera in several roles: the Second Philistine in *Samson et Dalila*, the notary in *Don Pasquale*, the Second Priest in *The Magic Flute*, the Marquis d'Obigny in *La Traviata* and Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly*. A member of Western Opera Theater in 1976 and 1977, he sang the

title roles in *Don Pasquale* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Dr. Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville*, among others. Since then he has performed with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City as Figaro, the King in *Aida*, Sonora in *The Girl of the Golden West* and, most recently,



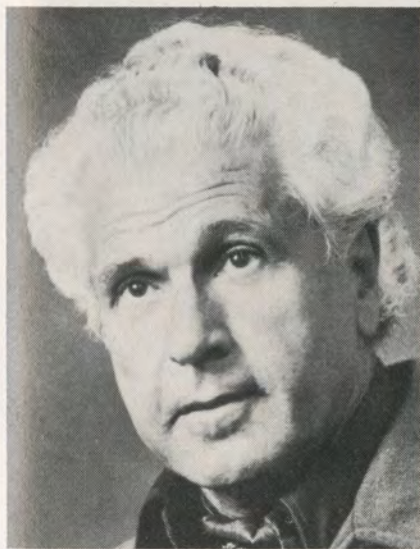
Don Giovanni. With the Minnesota Opera he has been heard in Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All* and Menotti's *The Consul*. He has sung Pistola in *Falstaff* with Portland Opera and early this year portrayed Sulpice in *The Daughter of the Regiment* with Augusta Opera. Wexler's credits include appearances with Santa Fe Opera, the Wolf Trap Company and the Goldovsky Opera Company. He is frequently heard as a concert soloist and sang with the San Francisco Pops in 1977 and again this summer in the Rodgers and Hammerstein program.



**ROBERT TATE**

In his first season with the San Francisco Opera tenor Robert Tate performs four

roles: the Messenger of the Philistines in *Samson et Dalila*, Captain of the guards in *Simon Boccanegra*, Gastone in *La Traviata* and the first farmer in *I Pagliacci*. He made his Spring Opera debut in the ensemble of Britten's *Death in Venice* in 1979 and subsequently sang Antigonus in the world premiere of John Harbison's *Winter's Tale* to inaugurate the American Opera Project last summer. This year Tate appeared with Spring Opera in Susa's *Transformations* and with the American Opera Project as Valère in the world premiere of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe*. The lyric tenor has portrayed Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* with Brown Bag Opera, Pocket Opera and West Bay Opera. Additional engagements with Pocket Opera include Lindoro in Rossini's *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, Sellem in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* and Percy in Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*. Other recent assignments were Gastone with Mobile Opera and the Fisherman in Stravinsky's *Rossignol* at the Aspen Music Festival. Tate, who has been heard with many Bay Area music organizations, won the first-place L. Henry Garland Award in the 1979 San Francisco regional San Francisco Opera Auditions.



**JULIUS RUDEL**

Following his highly acclaimed debut with the San Francisco Opera conducting *Pelléas et Mélisande* last season, Julius Rudel returns to the War Memorial podium for the opening production of the 1980's season, Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*. In the fall of 1979 he assumed musical directorship of the Buffalo Philharmonic, after having resigned as director of the New York City Opera, a post he held for 22 years. He still conducts regularly with that company and during the 1979-1980 season led per-



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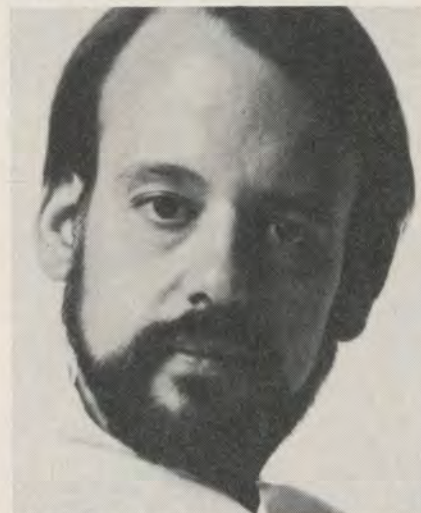
performances of Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and Weill's *Silverlake*. In the early 1970s Rudel held five administrative posts simultaneously; he was music director of the Kennedy Center in Washington, the Cincinnati May Festival and the Caramoor Festival, music advisor of Wolf Trap and director of the New York City Opera. At the Kennedy Center he was responsible for all the opening festivities, for the premiere of Ginastera's *Beatrice Cenci* and the first staged performance in this country of Handel's *Ariodante*. He frequently conducts at such important European houses as the Vienna State Opera, the Paris Opera and the Hamburg Opera. In the United States he has led, among other important symphony orchestras, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the New York Philharmonic and the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1978 with *Werther*. Rudel has recorded several complete operas, ranging from Handel's *Julius Caesar* to Ginastera's *Bomarzo*, many with his longtime colleague Beverly Sills.

the Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg and, for two summers, at the Salzburg Festival on *Don Giovanni*. For three years Joël acted as assistant to Patrice Chéreau for the Ring cycle at the Bayreuth Festival. He recently staged a Ring cycle of his own, which is being shared by Strasbourg and Lyons: *Das Rheingold* was premiered in Strasbourg in January 1979; *Die Walküre* in Lyons in May 1979; *Siegfried* in Strasbourg this January, and *Götterdämmerung* in Lyons this May. For the Opéra du Rhin he has also directed the first staging of Haydn's *L'Infedeltà delusa* and was assistant director for Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*. In 1975 at Arles, as part of the Aix-en-Provence Festival, he co-designed the production of Rossini's rarely performed *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*, which featured Montserrat Caballé and José Carreras.



**NICOLAS JOËL**

French director Nicolas Joël returns for his fourth consecutive season with the San Francisco Opera with the new production of Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*. Last year he directed the premiere of *La Voix humaine* and the revival of *Così fan tutte* during the fall season, and staged *Tosca* for the Company's tour to the Philippines in December. In 1978 he was responsible for *Tosca* and assisted Jean-Pierre Ponnelle on *Otello* and *La Bohème*. He previously worked with the world-renowned Ponnelle at



**DOUGLAS SCHMIDT**

Douglas Schmidt, whose designs for the world premiere production of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose* were greeted with critical praise in 1976, is responsible for the sets for the new production of *Samson et Dalila*. Spring Opera audiences will remember his set designs for Hans Werner Henze's *Elegy for Young Lovers* in 1978. In New York Schmidt has been long associated with such organizations as the New York City Opera, the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center, the New York Shakespeare Festival and television station WNET. His work for the theater includes award-winning designs for Gorky's *Enemies* for the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center, with whom he was resident designer from 1969 until the company disbanded in 1973. He also designed the sets for the Richard Foreman/New York Shakespeare Festival production of *The*

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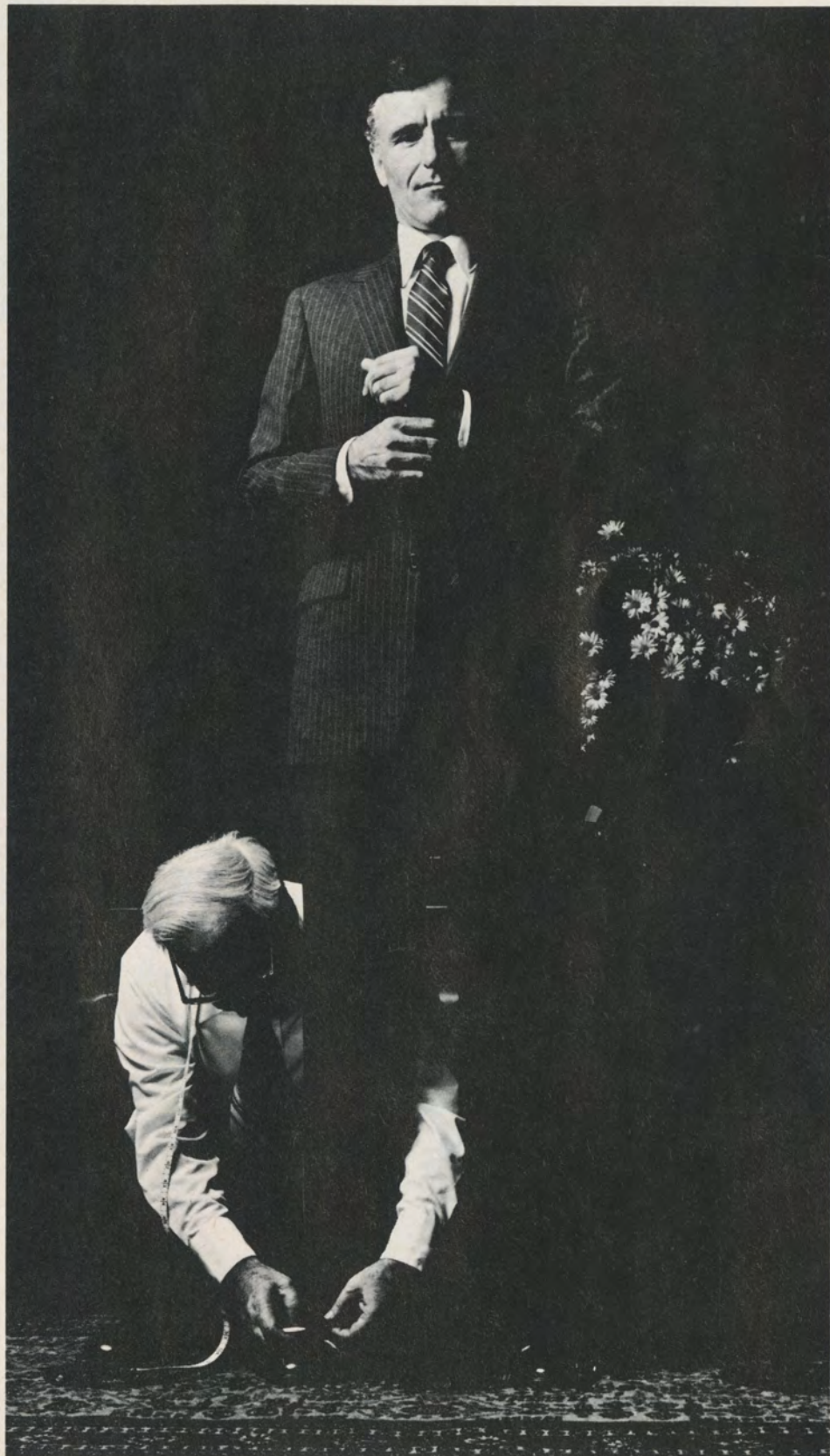
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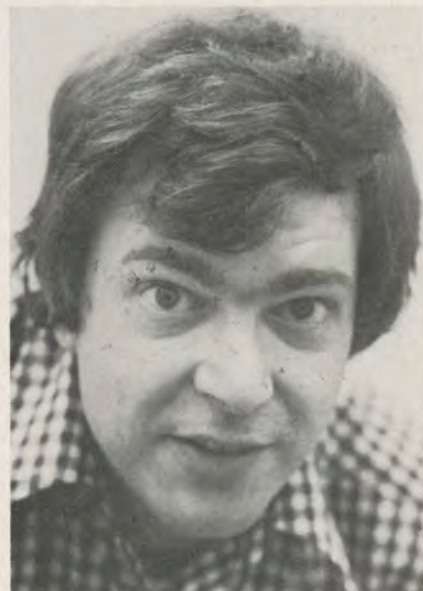
*Threepenny Opera*; Andrei Serban's *Agamemnon*, which earned him a Joseph Maharam Distinguished Design Award in 1977; and the Chelsea Theatre Company's production of *The Crazy Locomotive*, for which he won an Obie. On Broadway, Schmidt won Drama Desk Awards for his scenic contributions to the Andrew Sisters musical *Over Here* and Ira Levin's *Veronica's Room*. He is currently represented there by *Romantic Comedy* and Neil Simon's *They're Playing our Song*. Schmidt designed the original production of *Grease*, which recently concluded its record-breaking run as the longest running musical in Broadway history.



**CARRIE ROBBINS**

Making her San Francisco Opera debut with the new production of *Samson et Dalila*, costume designer Carrie Robbins has done extensive work in opera and theater throughout the country. For the Opera Company of Boston she designed the U.S. premiere of Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmilla* and *Rigoletto*, and for the Washington Opera Society *The Rake's Progress*. She was also responsible for the costumes for the Hamburg State Opera's production of *West Side Story* and productions of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* and *Polly* for the Chelsea Theater Center. Broadway credits include *Over Here* and *Grease*, on both of which she collaborated with set designer Douglas Schmidt and for which she received Drama Desk Awards and Tony nominations. Additional New York credits are the Brecht-Weill musical *Happy End*, *The Iceman Cometh* for Circle in the Square, *The Consort* for the Eliot Feld Ballet Company, and

various classical and contemporary plays for the New York Shakespeare Festival, the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center and the City Center Acting Company. Among the regional theaters for which Robbins has created costumes are the Tyrone Guthrie in Minneapolis, the Studio Arena in Buffalo, the McCarter in Princeton, the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles and the Seattle Repertory Theater. She was hailed locally for her costume designs for A.C.T.'s production of *The Little Foxes*. Robbins holds an MFA in theater design from the Yale School of Drama and has been on the design faculty of New York University's School of Arts since 1971.



**THOMAS MUNN**

In his fifth year as lighting designer/director of the San Francisco Opera, Thomas Munn creates the lighting designs for the new productions of *Samson et Dalila* and *Don Pasquale*, and for all the other 1980 productions except *Simon Boccanegra* and *Arabella*. In 1979 he was responsible for lighting *La Gioconda*, *Il Prigioniero*, *La Voix humaine* and *Roberto Devereux*, and designed the scenery for the Donizetti opera and for *Pelléas et Mélisande*. In past seasons he has also created special effects for the Company's productions and has served as supervising set designer for *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Faust* and *Billy Budd*. Since 1976 he has designed the lighting for the new productions of *Billy Budd*, *La Bohème*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Thäis*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci* and the world premiere of Imbrie's *Angle of Repose*. He created

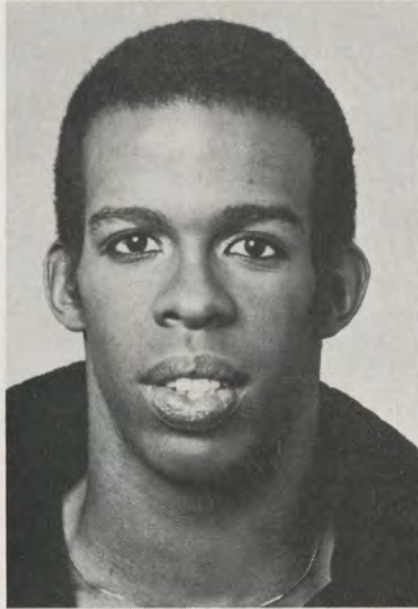
the scenery and lighting for the Netherlands Opera productions of *Macbeth* and *Lulu*, and early this year designed the lighting for *Tristan und Isolde* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* with the Washington Opera Society. In December he received critical praise for his production of *The Nutcracker* with the Hartford Ballet. He has designed numerous regional opera productions in addition to his work in television, film and the legitimate theater throughout the country.



**MARGO SAPPINGTON**

Responsible for the choreography of last season's internationally-televised San Francisco Opera production of *La Gioconda* and the dance sequences in *La Forza del Destino*, Margo Sappington creates the dances for Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*. She made a triumphant debut with Spring Opera in the 1979 production of Britten's *Death in Venice*. A native of Baytown, Texas, she was invited to join the Joffrey Ballet at an early age. She danced as a member of that company and later performed the role of Eve in her ballet, *Rodin*, as a guest artist with Ballet Caracas in the Venezuelan capital and in Paris. On Broadway, Miss Sappington appeared in *Sweet Charity* and *Promises, Promises*. Her association with Michael Bennett led her to choreograph and dance in *Oh! Calcutta!*; she later staged the Los Angeles, San Francisco and London productions of the work, as well as the film version. Her credits include *Weewis*, *Mirage* and *Face Dancers* for the Joffrey Ballet, *Rodin* for the Harkness Ballet, *Under the Sun* for the

Pennsylvania Ballet and *Juice* for the Netherlands Dance Theater. Last fall she appeared with Dance L.A. in *Juice II*. She recently choreographed and performed *Sfere di Mercurio* for the Ater Balleto in Reggio Emilia and on tour in Northern Italy. During the 1978-79 season she created her first work for the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, *Medusa*. The vast majority of her choreographic credits have been in collaboration with composer Michael Kamen and costumer Willa Kim.



**CHRISTIAN HOLDER**

Youngest member of the famous Trinidadian family of artists and entertainers (Geoffrey Holder is his uncle), Christian Holder dances the solo role in the Bacchanale ballet sequence of *Samson et Dalila*. Last year he was seen as the Lord of the Night in the "Dance of the Hours" ballet in *La Gioconda*. He first studied dance with his father's company in London and then took classes at the High School of Performing Arts in New York. He was discovered by Robert Joffrey while he was studying at Martha Graham's School of Contemporary Dance and joined the Joffrey Ballet in 1966 when he was only 16. Holder is best known for his performances in Gerald Arpino's *Trinity* and *Touch Me*, José Limon's *The Moor's Pavane* and Kurt Jooss' *The Green Table* with that company. Since January he has been performing in Italy with Margo Sappington in her ballet *Sfere di Mercurio*, for which he also designed the costumes. When not on stage, he designs clothes for himself and rock star Tina Turner, among others.

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# LEGEND'S RELUCTANT HERO

His story runs less than 100 biblical verses and has inspired little drama or music. Yet Samson's legend is a universal one that fired both poet John Milton and librettist Ferdinand Lemaire.



*Samson* by 17th-century French painter Valentin de Boulogne, showing the biblical hero's attributes, the lion's skin and the jawbone of an ass.

By BARRY HYAMS

Heroes make prime subjects for opera and literature, but few are the dramatic and musical compositions about Samson. Poser of riddles, Samson is himself a puzzle. His story in chapters 13-16 of the Book of Judges is generally regarded as depicting a hero with the mind of a thickwit, a misconception which possibly accounts for the paucity. Partly, the scarcity can be attributed to the prohibition, as late as the 19th century, against the use of the Bible for theater in England and France

Samson inspired few composers. An "opéra tragi-lyrique" *Samson* to a text by Voltaire was composed by Rameau in 1733 but never performed. Handel wrote an oratorio *Samson* (1743), based primarily on John Milton's dramatic poem *Samson Agonistes*, which was given as an opera by the Dallas Civic Opera in 1976 with Jon Vickers in the title role. Camille Saint-Saëns is responsible for the most famous work, a three-act grand opera *Samson et Dalila* (1877), on this feckless superman. Bernard Rogers' one-act opera, *The Warrior*, premiered at the Metropolitan Opera in 1947 and disappeared soon thereafter. The latest version is a *Samson* by Hungarian composer Sándor Szokolay, first performed at the Hungarian State Opera in 1973.

The solution to the puzzle of the Biblical bravo is to be found hidden within the 96 verses which chronicle his feats and his folly, both of prodigious proportions. To read them prosaically, they recount the exploits of a bullheaded,

**From the start,  
magic and mystery were  
at work in the life of Samson.  
His was no ordinary birth.**

capricious strongman with a weakness for women, gulled by two of them in precisely the same manner, and striking back in vengeful violence to his ultimate doom. However, as with most of the Bible, there is more in its brevity than meets the eye.

Samson arrived on the scene when the Hebrew tribes, loosely federated, dwelt uneasily in the land they intended to occupy. Surrounded by hostile nations, they banded together only in danger when the need was crucial to rally against a common enemy, as when, led by Gideon, they subdued Midian; and under Jephthah they vanquished Ammon. When strong men arose to bring them victory, the Hebrews appointed them as judges in the hope that those adroit in war would also prove wise in statecraft,

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The seduction of Samson in a late 19th-century French engraving.

a fallacy which endures to this day. The unsettled conditions lasted for 200 years. Between periods of friendship, the Philistines periodically harassed the Hebrews, once for 40 years. During two of the decades of Philistine domination Samson, of the tribe of Dan, was a paladin. But to think of this willful child-man as a judge strains credulity. The significance of his role lay elsewhere.

From the start, magic and mystery were at work in the life of Samson. His was no ordinary birth. His mother conceived him the same way three of the Hebrew Matriarchs became pregnant. Legend has it that one of them, Rachel, was his ancestress. Like her and Sarah and Rebecca, Samson's mother was barren until by divine augury she and her husband bore a child whose destiny as a Nazirite was "to begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

A Nazirite was a votary required to abstain from the fruit of the vine and the wine thereof, and from a strong drink of any kind. He was bound to stay clear of the dead and unclean things, and never to shave his head. Such vows were made not under duress but of the devotee's own free will. However, Samson's consecration was involuntary. As his mother explained to Manoah, her husband, their child "shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb to the day of his death."

Nothing much is told of Samson's childhood except that he grew up and "the Lord blessed him," from which may be inferred his awesome physical endowments. In strange sequence, after "the spirit of the Lord began to move in him," Samson went down to Timnah to be overcome by passion for a Philistine woman. When he announced to his parents that he desired her for a wife, they objected to a Philistine as a daughter-in-law. Samson was obdurate. "Get her for me," he insisted, "for she

pleases me well," and according to the custom, his father arranged the nuptials.

Here the Biblical storyteller injected an aside: Samson's parents were unaware that all was the Lord's doing, a device to bring about a confrontation between Samson and the Philistines. All at once, the narrative acquires the dimension of an allegory. But of that later.

Samson encountered a lion which he slew with his bare hands. Later its carcass housed a honeycomb to which he helped himself. When his bride and her father invited 30 Philistine toughs to the wedding feast, Samson needled them with a riddle, wagering 30 linen garments and changes of raiment, no mean sum, on their inability to solve it.

"Out of the eater came forth food,

And out of the strong came forth sweetness."

Baffled, the men threatened to kill Samson's wife if she didn't pry the answer from him. For four days she cajoled, pleaded and wept, until, sorely pressed, he yielded. She disclosed the answer to the guests who in triumph declared it to Samson.

"What is sweeter than honey?  
And what is stronger than a lion?"

Furious at the treachery, Samson shouted, "If you had not plowed with my heifer, you had not found out my riddle," and racing to Ashkelon, he struck down 30 men and took from them the spoils with which to settle his wager. And he departed from Timnah and his wife.

Having cooled off, he returned only to learn that his father-in-law, thinking Samson hated his mate, had given her to another. Wouldn't Samson like instead her younger and fairer sister? And Samson exploded: "This time shall I be quits with the Philistines when I do a mischief."

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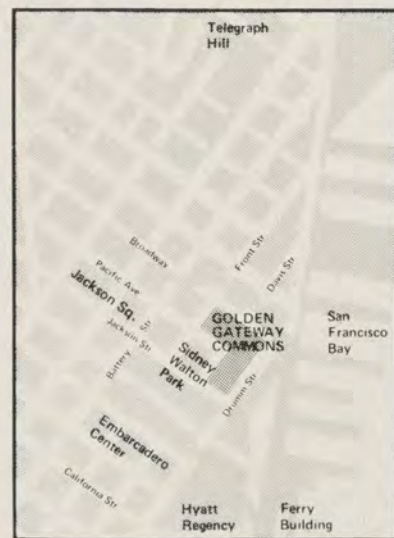
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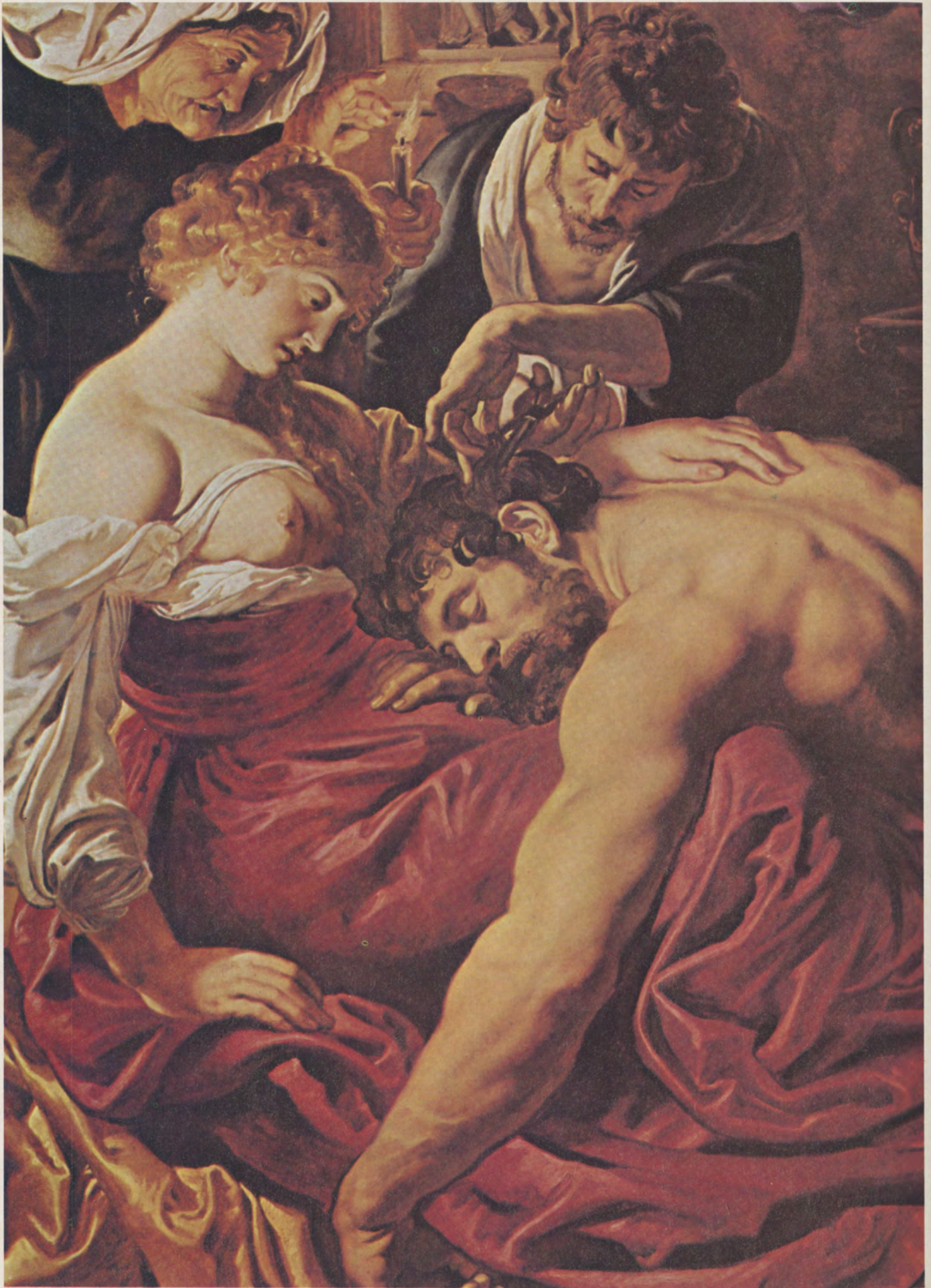
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Pairing 300 foxes by tying their tails around flaming torches, he sent them into the standing corn of the Philistines, destroying the entire crop. The Philistines retaliated by burning his wife and father-in-law together with their house. Whereupon Samson "smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter."

But he was not yet "quits with the Philistines." They made ready to attack the tribe of Judah unless Samson was delivered up to them. The Hebrews appealed to him and he protested that he had done to the Philistines only what they had done to him; but rather than strive against his brethren, Samson agreed to be bound and turned over to the enemy. Thereupon he burst his bonds, swung about him with the jawbone of an ass, and sent a thousand Philistines to join their forefathers.

The story then modulates into a somber key. Samson hid himself to a brother in Gaza where the Philistines lay in wait to fall upon him in the morning. But Samson rose at midnight, tore the gates with their posts and bolts from the city wall, and made off with them to a hill opposite Hebron, a distance of 40 miles.

**As late as medieval France, wizards, sorcerers and witches were shaved clean of all hair to nullify their demonic power . . .**

Then, in the valley of Sorek, Samson fell in love with Delilah. At this point is where both Milton and Saint-Saëns' librettist, Lemaire, chose to begin their dramas. Incited by the princes of Philistia, who each promised her 1,100 pieces of silver, Delilah determined to wheedle from Samson the secret of his strength. Three times he misled her, and three times she accused him of mocking her, of faithlessness. Finally, "vexed unto death" by her importunings, he revealed that as a Nazirite his head with its seven locks had to remain unshaven. Delilah, sensing the truth, that his strength resided in his hair, alerted the Philistines who came bearing their bribes. Delilah lulled Samson to sleep "upon her knees" and summoned a man to shear his head. When Samson awoke, "he knew not that the Lord was departed from him." The Philistines seized him, blinded him, bound him "with fetters of brass" and set him in prison to turn the great millstone.

In time, Samson's hair grew long again. To a celebration in the temple of Dagon he was brought to provide sport for the princes, priests and populace. He

prayed for strength "only this once that I may be avenged for my eyes" and to die with the enemy. Stationed between the two pillars on which the temple rested, he pressed them apart and toppled them, bringing the building down upon the multitude and himself; and "the dead that he slew at his death were more than those he slew in his life." His brothers and kinsmen retrieved his body and interred him between Zorah and Eshtaol, the burying place of his father, Manoah.

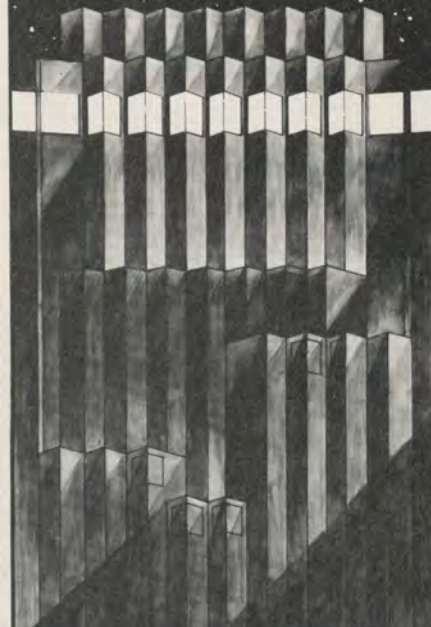
Thus ended the story of Samson. In all of the Bible, only once again was he mentioned. In the New Testament, Paul referred to him in his Epistle to the Hebrews (11:22-23) saying, "For time would fail me to tell of Samson [and others] . . . who through faith and subdued kingdoms [and] stopped the mouths of lions." In truth, Samson in all of his exploits evinced little of faith, only egotism and infantile impulses which gratified appetites of the palate, pride and the loins.

Approached allegorically, however, Samson's valor, made to look foolish by his foibles, is not an enigma. Notwithstanding his wish to "be quits" after the incident of the flaming foxes, or reducing his quarrel with the enemy to a personal grudge, the "spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him" whenever in some way Samson acted out his predestined, if unwilling, role of champion of his people. The chronicler had somehow to reconcile a lover of Philistine women with a heroic Nazirite who also frequented brothels, brawled and was a companion of carcasses, animal and human. Halting Philistine oppression for a time was part of a divine plan. Wreaking vengeance for the death of his estranged wife and stealing the gates of Gaza, however, were exhibitions of Samson's prowess, not of the Lord's. Samson broke almost all the vows of Nazirite-ship, even bringing about the clipping of his hair. Unable to extenuate his violations of an oath Samson had been made to shoulder by his mother, the author turned the Delilah affair to an ulterior purpose. Upon the hero's capture and degradation, the jubilant Philistines exulted, "Our god has delivered Samson into our hands." By destroying the temple and all its occupants, the writer humbled their god, Dagon, before the judgment of Yahweh.

Legends of heroes are found among peoples in all ages, stretching back in time, even before the Bible, and forward to comparatively recent days. Sometimes transmuted, they duplicate features of Samson's character and adventures, and the elements have startling universality. The Bible, itself, long before Samson, speaks of strength in long hair. In Deborah's song of Barak's victory over Sisera, "men let grow hair in Israel when the people offer themselves willingly"—

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meaning that men became hirsute Nazirites when they went to war. As late as medieval France, wizards, sorcerers and witches were shaved clean of all hair, to nullify their demonic power, before they were handed over to the torturer or consigned to the flames.

Hercules of Greek mythology dismembered the Nemean lion and split a mountain to form the Strait of Gibraltar. Likewise, Samson picked up two mountains and rubbed them together into dust. Both paragons ended as the victims of women. Gilgamesh, the Babylonian hero after whom the goddess Ishtar lusted, reversed the Samson syndrome by repulsing her, knowing that loving her led to death for the lover.

In regions as farflung as Asia and the Mexico of the Aztecs, and in Slavonic and Celtic folklore, other versions exist in many permutations. In some, the magical property is invested in an egg or a bird instead of the hair, and the hero is replaced by a villain. Russia's Koshchei, impervious to death, is brought down by his princess wife after her three attempts to discover the location of the egg by which to destroy him. In the case of the Norse god, Balder, the fatal instrument was the mistletoe.

A villainous sorcerer in the village of Ukami, East Africa, is invulnerable to sword, spear or arrow, but in constant strife with his wife. She offers to worm his secret from him if the men of the tribe agree to kill him. Three times her husband misleads her, as Samson did Delilah, before he reveals that only the stalk of a gourd can harm him. The men fetch one, strike him, and he dies. Ostensibly, the stalk of the gourd represented a tribal taboo.

Samson's 300 foxes find their counterparts in Japan's rice-god, Inari, who is pictured as an elderly man astride a white fox. And to celebrate the spring festival of Ceres, the Roman corn goddess, burning torches were tied to the



John Milton, author of *Samson Agonistes* (1671), "a tragedy never intended for the stage."



The blinded Samson at the millstone, being taunted by the Philistines, in a 19th-century English engraving.

tails of foxes who were then driven about. The cornfields, however, were carefully avoided. This represented punishment of the foxes for having once set fire to the crops.

The American analogues of Samson were Paul Bunyan, mightiest logger in the Northwest and exemplar of expanding America, and John Henry, the steel-driving natural man with "the stroke of an Alabama mule." He bet he could beat the steamdrill in cutting the Big Bend Tunnel for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. Winning, John Henry died.

**Like his hero,  
Milton was a doughty warrior,  
though he fought on a  
different kind of battlefield.**

The opera *Samson et Dalila* does not explore the Bible story, except superficially, its view probably determined by its origin. Samson was brought to the attention of Saint-Saëns as the subject for an oratorio by someone he called "an old melomaniac." The composer offered it to "a charming amateur poet who was connected with my family by marriage," but this "newly-made acquaintance" vetoed the oratorio idea in favor of an opera. And, said Saint-Saëns, "we decided for an opera."

Ferdinand Lemaire, the librettist, settled for Delilah, the temptress, and relegated Samson's mighty acts offstage prior to the start of the opera. He transformed this "loner" into a leader of marauding Hebrews who speaks with the voice of God, yet who is helpless in the toils of a mortal passion. Samson pays no heed to the Aged Hebrew who warns him to shut his ears to Delilah's deceitful voice and avoid the serpent's venom—*du serpent évite le venin!* All too readily he succumbs to her wiles.

For her part, Delilah, here a priestess of Dagon, perceives Samson as a threat to her hieratic position and a challenge to her magnetism. Lemaire produces his supreme inspiration in her second-act colloquy with the High Priest who taunts her with Samson's diminished fascination for her. He reminds her that once, at her knees, Samson's strength abandoned him — "*à tes genoux sa force un jour l'abandonna.*" As for the rest, the plot furrows the field to the depth of a television special.

Not so with John Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, "a tragedy never intended for the stage." Like his hero, Milton was a doughty warrior, though he fought on a different kind of battlefield. With pen in place of the jawbone of an ass, in pamphlet and tract he advocated the separation of church and state; he supported Oliver Cromwell; and he opposed the

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At the very opening, "eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves," Samson berates himself for forsaking his mission and not fulfilling the prophecy "... that I should Israel from Philistine yoke deliver" and instead laying his head and hallowed strength "in the lascivious lap of a deceitful concubine." He bemoans his moral frailty, to be thus twice betrayed by a woman.

O impotence of mind in body  
strong!

Of wisdom . . . liable to fall  
By weakest subtleties.

But chiefest of all  
O loss of sight, of thee I must  
complain!

Light, the prime work of God, to  
me is extinct . . .

To which the Chorus responds:

Thou art become  
The dungeon of thy self; thy soul  
Imprisoned now indeed  
In real darkness,  
Thee whose strength, while virtue  
was her mate,

Might have subdued the earth . . .  
Surely, Milton had himself in mind,

voicing his feelings about his own life and predicament. To his three marriages, the first a disaster, would apply his comment:

Love-quarrels oft in pleasing  
concord end,  
Not wedlock-treachery endanger-  
ing life.

He eulogized Samson's death with the lines:

Samson has quit himself  
Like Samson, and heroically  
Has finished a life heroic.

And there is more than a hint of self-identification in the closing statement of *Samson Agonistes*, penned so close to the end of his own life.

His uncontrollable intent  
His servants he with new acquit  
Of true experience from this  
great event  
With peace and consolation hath  
dismissed,  
And calm of mind all passion  
spent.

Milton saw Samson as the protagonist in a Greek tragedy. The Book of Judges, a compilation of popular legends about heroes in a period when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," dwells little on the moral implications of its chronicle, except to repeat that evil ways beget evil days. The story of Samson, a fertile field for poets and exegetes, may yet serve librettists for a drama of spiritual significance. ■

BARRY HYAMS is the author of *Hirshhorn: Medici from Brooklyn*, the biography published by E. P. Dutton.

A German engraving entitled *Samson's Revenge and Death*.



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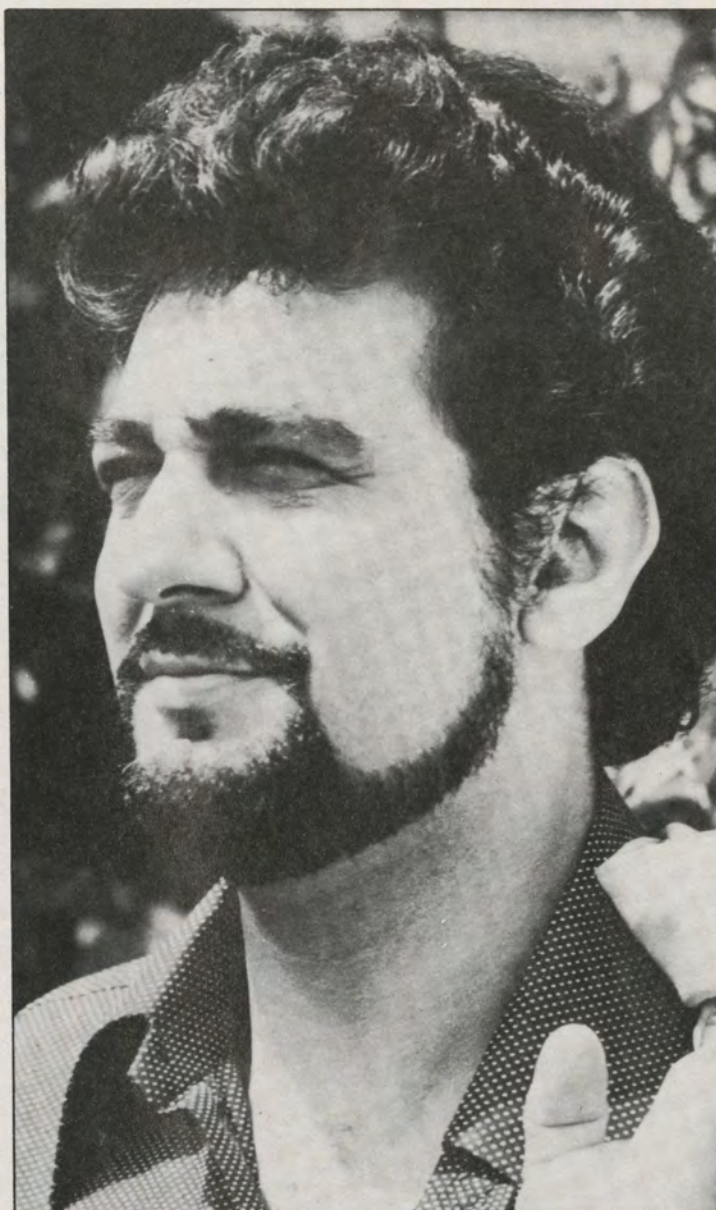
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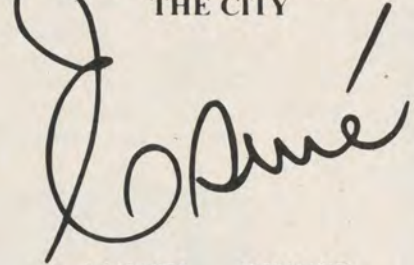
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# NEVADA ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

for OCTOBER 1980

## RENO

**Harrah's Reno (Headliner Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/648-3773)

thru Oct. 1—America  
Oct. 2-8—Gordon Lightfoot  
Oct. 9-15—Melissa Manchester  
Oct. 16-22—Sister Sledge  
Oct. 23-Nov. 5—Loretta Lynn

**Sahara-Reno (Opera House Showroom)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/648-3990)

Oct. 1-31—to be announced

**MGM Grand Reno (Ziegfeld Theatre)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/648-4585)

Current—"Hello Hollywood, Hello"

**John Ascuaga's Nugget (Celebrity Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/648-1177)

thru Oct. 1—Roy Clark  
Oct. 2-7—Eddie Rabbitt  
Oct. 8-19—Tammy Wynette

## LAKE TAHOE

**Harrah's Tahoe (South Shore Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/648-3773)

thru Oct. 2—Anne Murray  
Oct. 3-7—Sammy Davis, Jr./Florence Henderson

Oct. 8-9—Bill Cosby/Florence Henderson  
Oct. 10-16—Sammy Davis, Jr./Florence Henderson

Oct. 17-23—Natalie Cole  
Oct. 24-30—Don Rickles

Oct. 31-Nov. 8—Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme

**Sahara Tahoe (High Sierra Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/648-3322)

thru Oct. 6—Wayne Newton/Dave Barry  
Oct. 7-14—Doug Henning's "World of Magic"  
Oct. 15-21—George Benson

## LAS VEGAS

**Aladdin (Bagdad Showroom)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-3424)

Oct. 1-31—to be announced

**Caesars Palace (Circus Maximus)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-6661)

thru Oct. 1—Ann-Margret

**Desert Inn (Crystal Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-6906)

Current—"Les Alcazar de Paris"

**Dunes (Casino Showroom)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-6971)

Current—"Casino de Paris '80"

**Frontier (Music Hall)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-6966)

thru Oct. 15—Glen Campbell

**Las Vegas Hilton (Hilton Showroom)**—  
(Reservations 415/772-7200)

thru Oct. 20—Liberace  
Oct. 21-27—Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme  
opens Oct. 28—to be announced

**MGM Grand (Celebrity Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-6363)

**Ziegfeld Theatre**—Current: "Hallelujah, Hollywood"

**Riviera (Versailles Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-6855)

thru Oct. 1—Ben Vereen  
Oct. 2-15—Bob Newhart  
Oct. 16-29—Tony Orlando  
Oct. 30-Nov. 12—Neil Sedaka/Bernadette Peters

**Sahara (Congo Room)**—  
(Reservations toll free 800/634-6666)

thru Oct. 1—Dinner Show: Charo  
Cocktail Show: Flip Wilson/  
Mel Torme

Oct. 2-8—Dinner Show: Charo/Jack Jones  
Cocktail Show: Flip Wilson/Vic Damone

Oct. 9-15—Don Rickles/Lainie Kazan

Oct. 16-22—Don Rickles/Rosemary Clooney

Oct. 23-29—Helen Reddy/Fred Travelena

Oct. 30-Nov. 5—Dinner Show: Jerry Lewis/  
Buddy Greco

Cocktail Show: Buddy Hackett  
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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<b>SEPTEMBER</b> Park concert Sunday, September 7 Golden Gate Park, 2 p.m. Kurt Herbert Adler conducting the San Francisco Opera Orchestra with Shirley Verrett, Placido Domingo	8	Samson et Dalila 7:30 pm	9 D, E
	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	15 A, B	16 Simon Boccanegra 7:30 pm
	22	Simon Boccanegra 8 pm	23 A, C
	29	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	30 R, T
	Don Pasquale 8 pm	6 A, C	7 R, T
	13	Jenůfa 8 pm	14 A, B
<b>OCTOBER</b> Opera Fair Sunday, October 5 War Memorial Opera House 12 — 6 p.m.	20	Magic Flute 8 pm	21 A, B
	27	La Traviata 8 pm	28 A, C
	3	Arabella 8 pm	4 A, B
<b>NOVEMBER</b> Fol de Rol Thursday, November 13 Civic Auditorium 8 p.m.  * Broadcast ** Broadcast of <i>Samson</i> will be heard on October 24. <i>Die Frau ohne Schatten</i> will be heard on November 7. *** Special Family Matinee ** Senior Citizens' Matinee • Opera Guild Opera for Young Audiences	10	Tristan und Isolde 7 pm	11 A, C
	Arabella 8 pm	17 R, T	18 Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 8 pm
	24	•Don Pasquale 1 pm Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 8 pm	25 R, S
	•Don Pasquale 1 pm	1	2 A, B
<b>DECEMBER</b> Letters designate subscription series	1	Madama Butterfly 8 pm	2 A, B
	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	15 A, B	16 Simon Boccanegra 7:30 pm
22	Simon Boccanegra 8 pm	23 A, C	
29	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	30 R, T	
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3	Arabella 8 pm	4 A, B	
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24	•Don Pasquale 1 pm Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 8 pm	25 R, S	
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20	Magic Flute 8 pm	21 A, B	
27	La Traviata 8 pm		



# 1980 CALENDAR

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday			
	Opening Night Samson et Dalila 7 pm	5 A	Simon Boccanegra 8 pm	6 J, K	Park Concert 2 pm	7
Simon Boccanegra 8 pm	11 R, S	12	Samson et Dalila 8 pm	13 J, L	Simon Boccanegra 2 pm	14 M, N
Samson et Dalila 8 pm	18 **G, I	19	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	20 J, K	Samson et Dalila 2 pm	21 M, O
Die Frau ohne Schatten 7:30 pm	25 D, E	26 *G, H	Don Pasquale 8 pm	27 J, L		28
2	Don Pasquale 8 pm	3 *G, I	Jenůfa 8 pm	4 J, K	Opera Fair 12 pm to 6 pm	5
9	Jenůfa 8 pm	10 *G, I	Magic Flute 8 pm	11 J, K	Don Pasquale 2 pm	12 M, O
16	La Traviata 8 pm	17 *G, H	Magic Flute 8 pm	18 R, S	Jenůfa 2 pm	19 M, N
23	Magic Flute 8 pm	24 I	La Traviata 8 pm	25 J, L	Magic Flute 2 pm	26 M, N
30	Magic Flute 8 pm	31 *G, H	Arabella 8 pm	1 J, L	La Traviata 2 pm	2 M, O
6	Tristan und Isolde 7 pm	7 R, S	La Traviata 8 pm	8 K	Arabella 2 pm	9 M, O
Fol de Rol Civic Auditorium 8 pm	13	14 *G, I	Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 8 pm	15 J, L	Tristan und Isolde 1 pm	16 M, O
20	Tristan und Isolde 7 pm	21 *G, H	***Don Pasquale (English), 2 pm Madama Butterfly 8 pm	22 J, K	Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 2 pm	23 M, N
Madama Butterfly 8 pm Thanksgiving	27	28 *G, H	Tristan und Isolde 7 pm	29 J, L	Madama Butterfly 2 pm	30 M, N
4	*Don Pasquale 1 pm Madama Butterfly 8 pm	5 *G, I	Don Pasquale (in English) 8 pm	6 S		7



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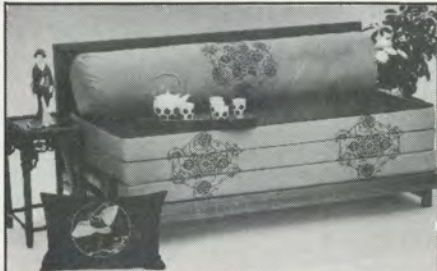
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