

Simon Boccanegra

1980

Saturday, September 6, 1980 8:00 PM

Thursday, September 11, 1980 8:00 PM

Sunday, September 14, 1980 2:00 PM

Wednesday, September 17, 1980 7:30 PM

Tuesday, September 23, 1980 8:00 PM

Friday, September 26, 1980 8:00 PM Live radio broadcast

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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

**VIVA  
VERDI**

The Real Boccanegra  
and the Political Verdi

The Boccanegra-Fiesco Duets • Verdi Ensembles

**SIMON BOCCANEGRA/1980**

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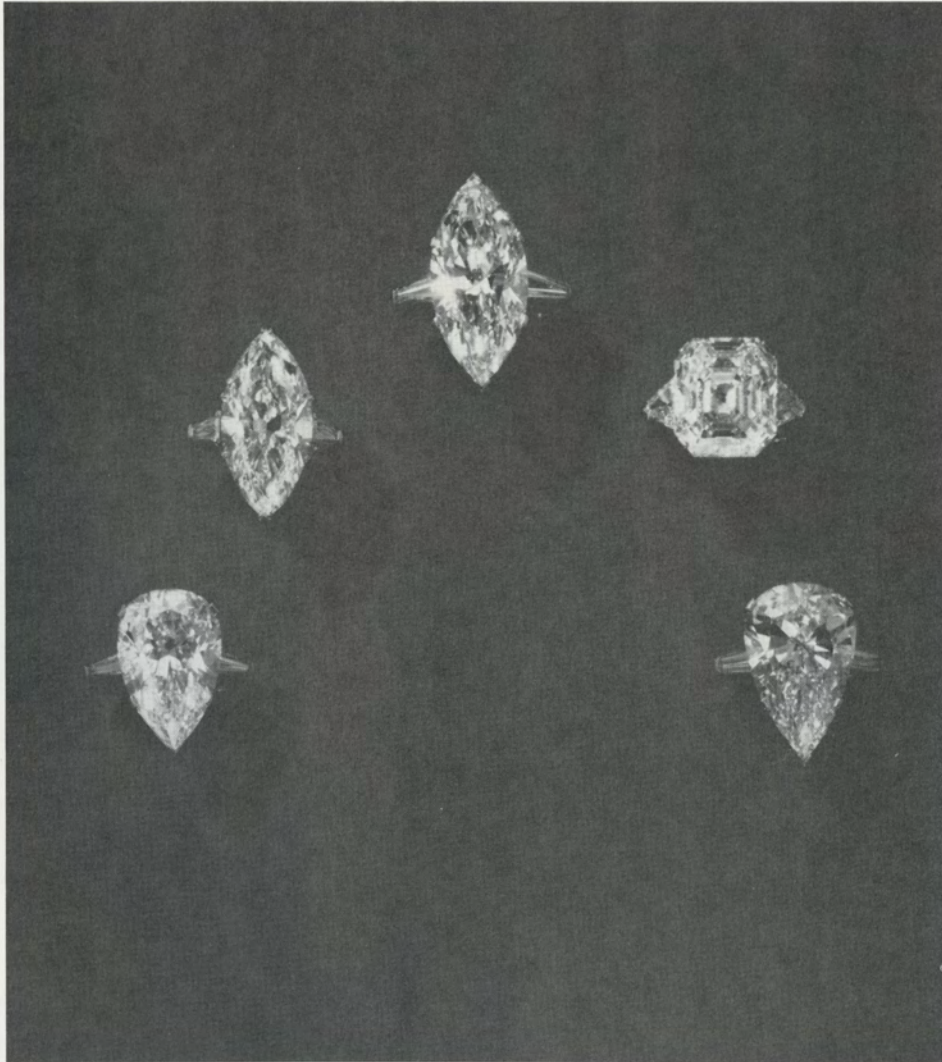
Welcome to our new season and to the beginning of the busiest period in San Francisco Opera history. We are proud to present for you our 58th fall season, the longest in the company's history. The extraordinary demand for opera by our audiences is what has made this growth necessary, and I hope we can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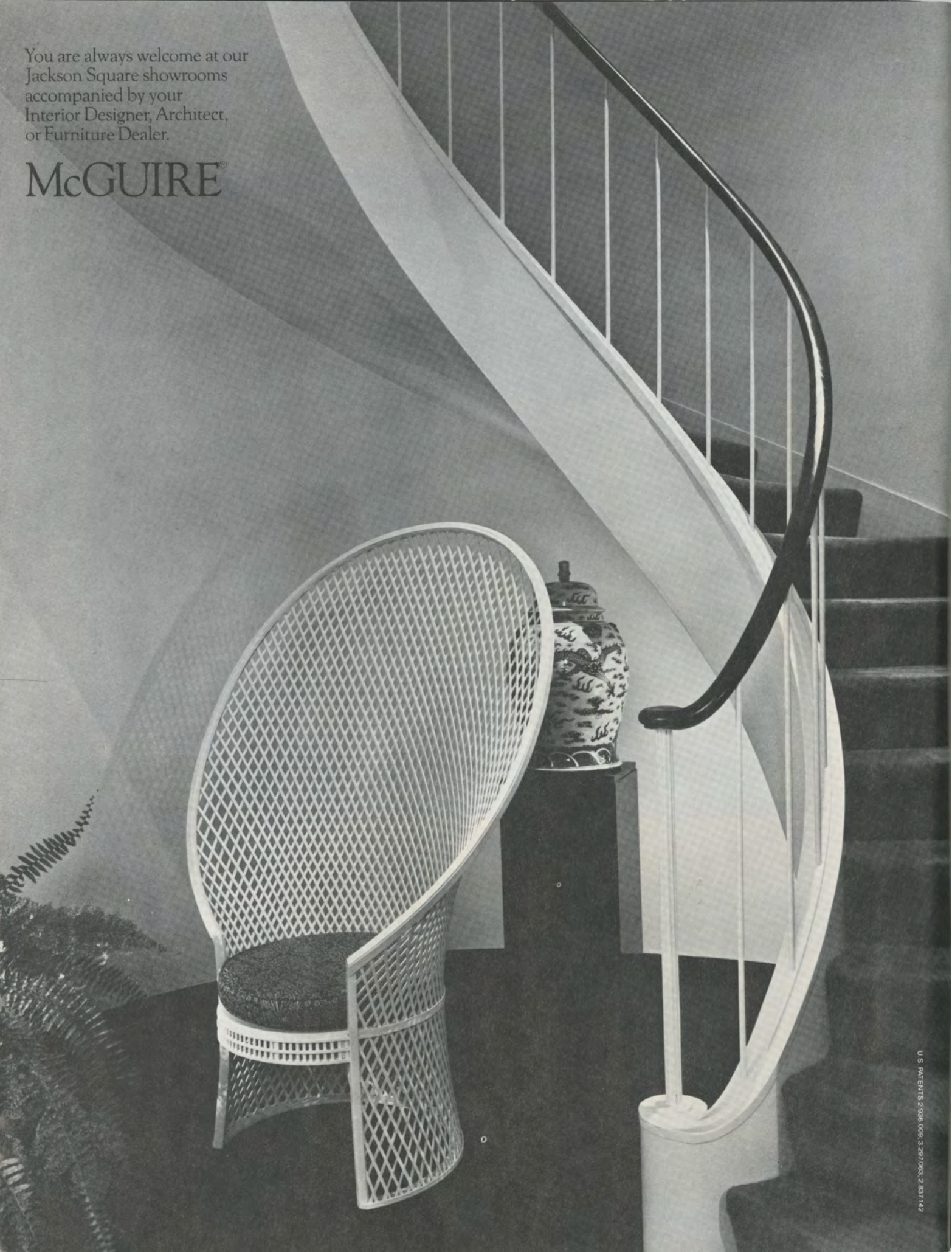
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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

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

Cover: Signs of *VIVA V*(ittorio) *E*(manuele) *R*(e) *D'I*(talia) once linked the great composer with his beloved cause, Italian unity. Design by Richard High.

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.

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George Jellinek

The opera inspired by history's Simon Boccanegra links two of Verdi's recurrent themes, tyranny and the cause of Italian unity.

### The Sum of the Verdi Ensemble 45

Speight Jenkins

Wonderful moments abound in *Simon Boccanegra*, but the Council Chamber scene is special, a focus for Verdi's development of ensembles.

### Cesare Siepi: Reflections 58

#### on a 40-Year Career

Arthur Kaplan

Performing in San Francisco for the first time since 1968, world-renowned bass Cesare Siepi reflects on his distinguished 40-year career.

### The Boccanegra-Fiesco Duets 72

George Martin

If *Simon Boccanegra*'s keystone is the famed Council Chamber scene, its pillars of support are two remarkable, matched duets for baritone and bass.

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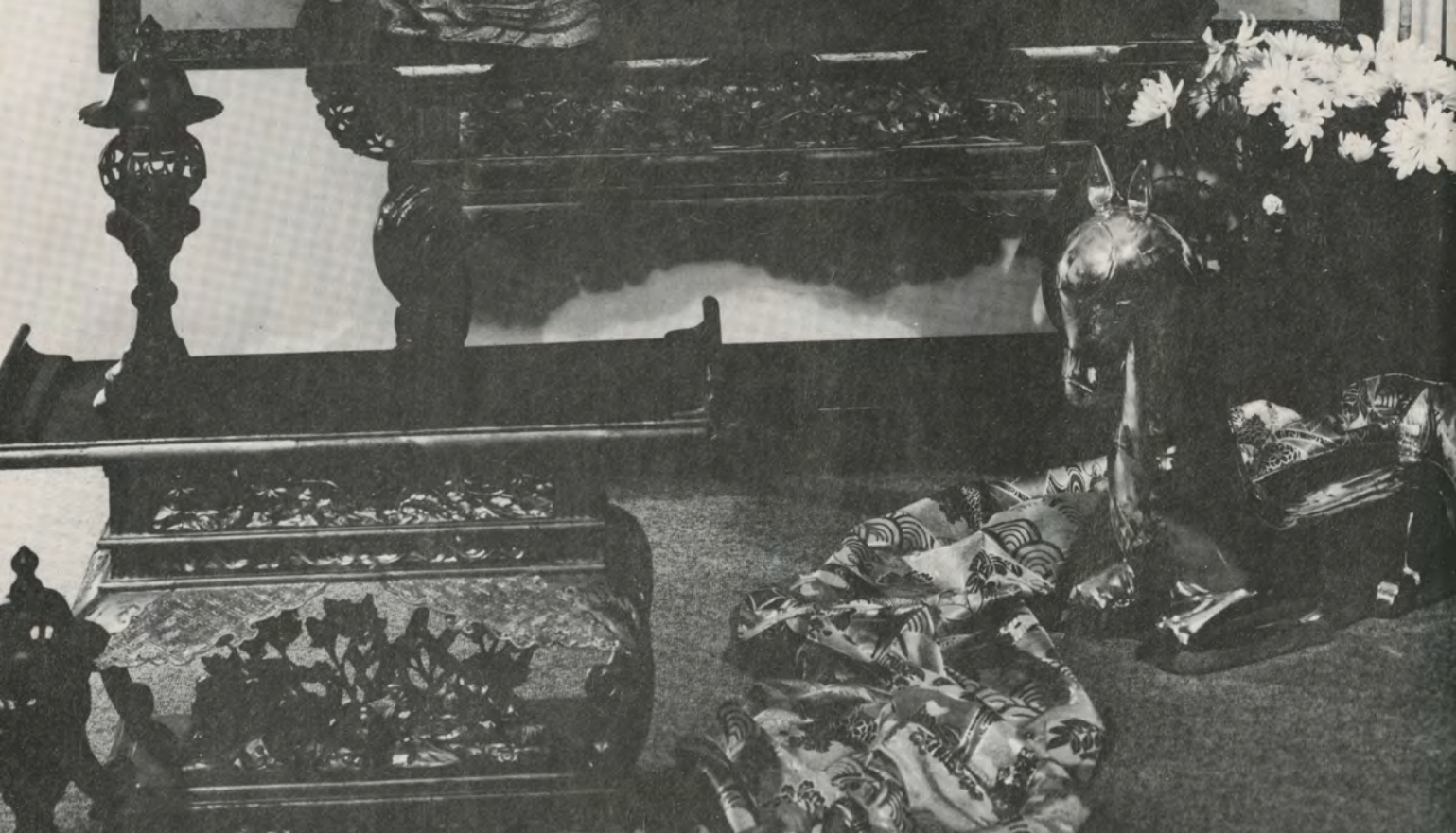


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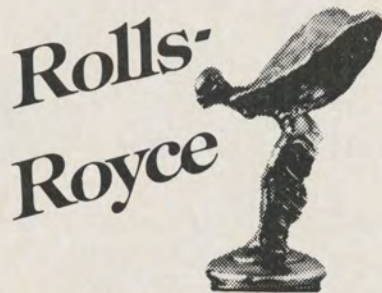
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The San Francisco Opera is supported by much appreciated grants from the City and County of San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal Agency.

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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)

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 Mafalda Guaraldi  
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 Michael Sand  
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 Celia Rosenberger

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

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 Nina Falk  
 Lucien Mitchell  
 Asbjorn Finess  
 Jonna Hervig  
 Ellen Smith  
 Harry Rumppler

## CELLO

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 Doug Ischar  
 Jonathan Kramer  
 Jennifer Culp  
 Helen Stross

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 Steven D'Amico  
 Shinji Eshima  
 Philip Karp

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Lloyd Gowen

## OBOE

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## ENGLISH HORN

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 Laurel Hall  
 Gregory Dufford

## BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

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 Robin Elliott

## CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

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 Brian McCarty  
 Paul McNutt

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 Edward Haug  
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 Donald Kennelly  
 John Bischof

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 Ruth Welting  
 Dennis Bailey\*  
 Michael Ballam  
 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

James Hoback  
 James King  
 Giorgio Lamberti\*  
 Kevin Langan\*  
 William Lewis  
 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\*  
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 Spas Wenkoff  
 Stanley Wexler\*  
 Willard White\*  
 Ingvar Wixell  
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 Roberta Irene Bowman  
 Hilda Chavez  
 Louise Corsale  
 Dotty 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  
 Timothy Jagers  
 Gerald Johnson  
 Conrad Knipfel  
 Eugene Lawrence  
 Kenneth MacLaren  
 Kenneth Malucelli  
 Jim Meyer  
 Eugene Naham  
 Stephen Ostrow  
 Monte Pederson  
 Robert Philip Price  
 Kenneth Rafanan  
 Tom Reed  
 Robert Romanovsky  
 Karl O. Saarni  
 B. Chastaine Tredway  
 John Walters  
 Robert Waterbury  
 R. Lee Woodriff

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Deborah Alexander  
 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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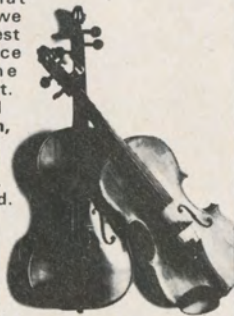
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William Weber  
Amos Yang

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Carolyn Houser  
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Elvia Marta  
Kathy Pruzan  
Kathryn Roszak  
Marika Sakellariou

Dan Gardner  
Jay Lehman  
Darryl Lloyd  
William Sanner Ramsdell  
James Shipley  
Jeffrey Smith  
John Sullivan

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Christian Holder

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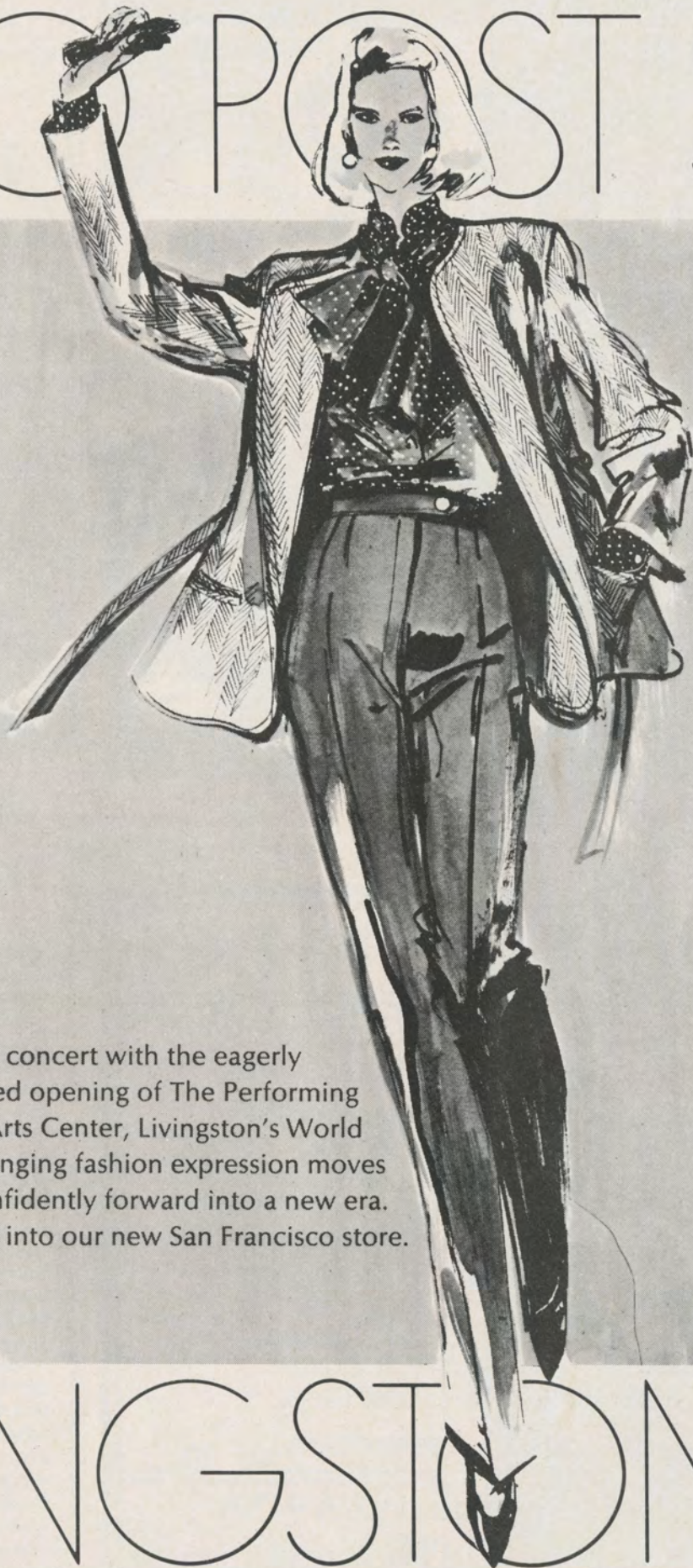
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Lawrence Millner  
Stewart Morton  
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Brad Niebling  
Michael Pitkin  
Joel Posner  
Paul Price  
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Paul Ricks  
Jim Scheuer  
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Roy Siniard  
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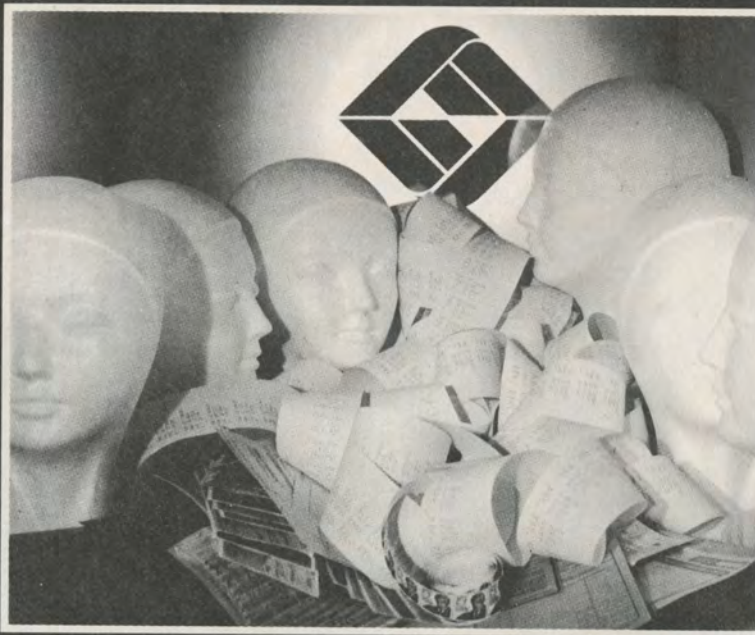


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1979 was so full of "firsts"—our international telecast of *La Gioconda*, the visit of our company to the Philippines, the completion of the Opera House addition, our four San Francisco premieres and five new productions—that it seemed 1980 might be 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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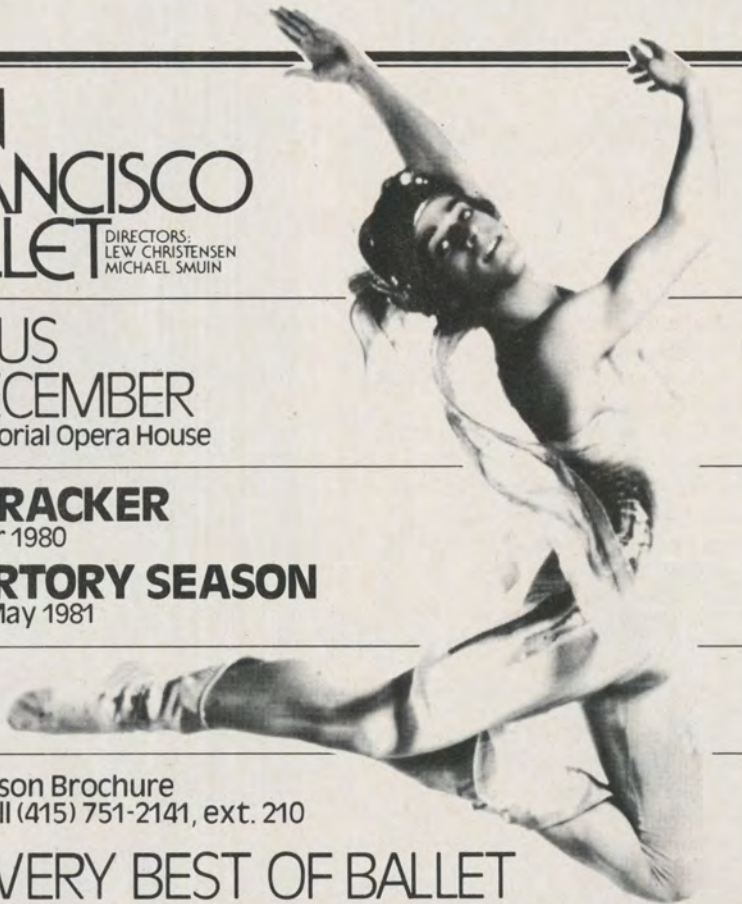
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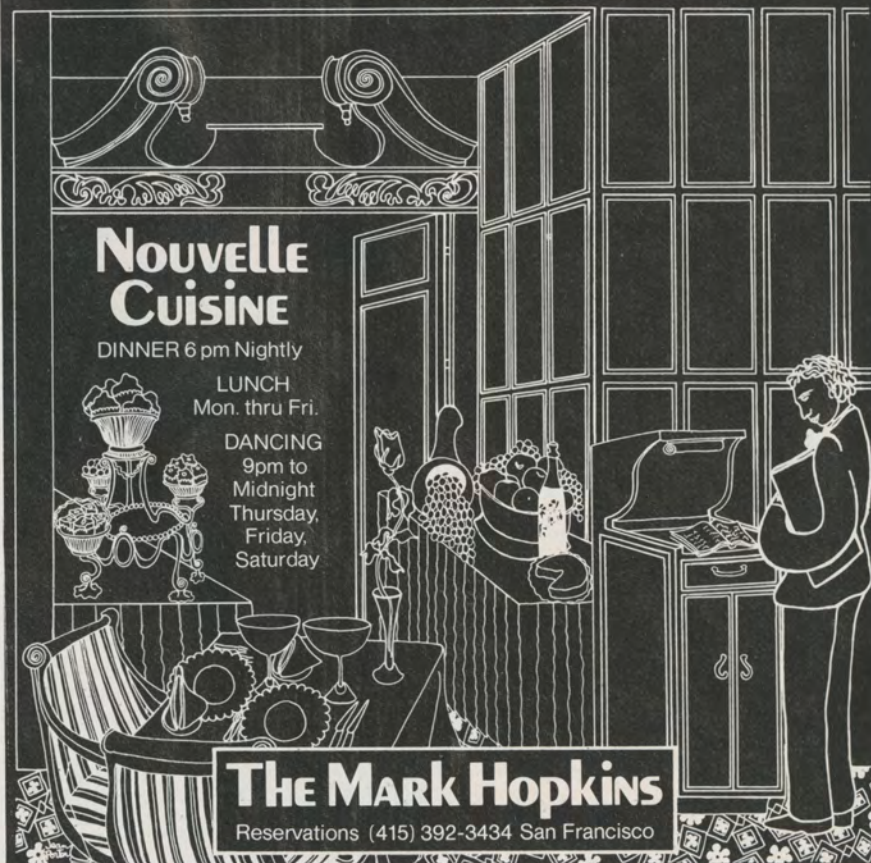
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Donizetti  
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Wednesday, November 19, 1:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 25, 1:00 p.m.  
Monday, December 1, 1:00 p.m.  
Friday, December 5, 1:00 p.m.  
Matinee for Senior Citizens  
and Disabled Patrons  
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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LECTURE SERIES**

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.

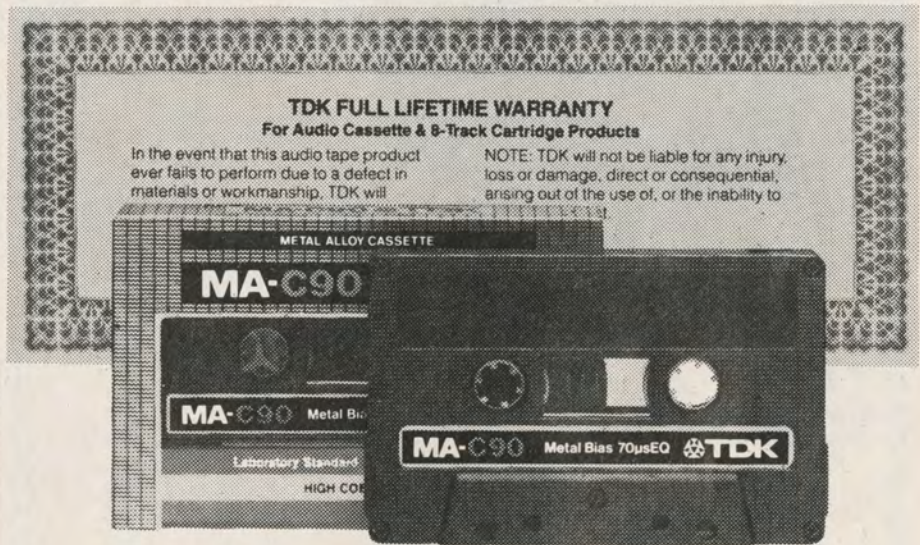
SAMSON ET DALILA 9/2  
DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN 9/8  
SIMON BOCCANEGRA 9/15  
DON PASQUALE 9/22  
JENÚFA 9/29  
THE MAGIC FLUTE 10/9  
LA TRAVIATA 10/13  
ARABELLA 10/27  
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE 11/3  
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/  
I PAGLIACCI 11/10  
MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/17

**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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### 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 in the Park**

"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"*

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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.

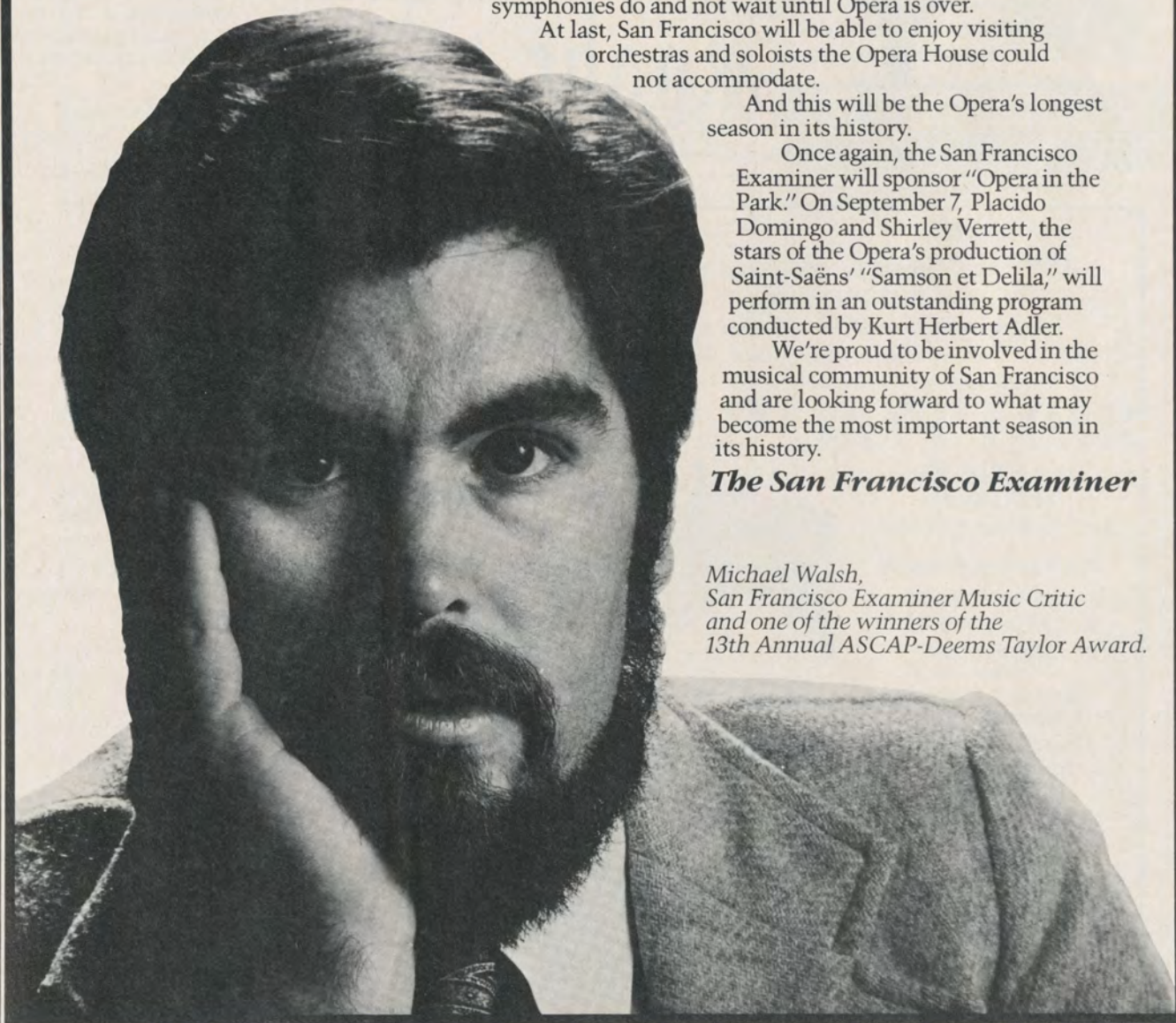
And this will be the Opera's longest season in its history.

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

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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\*

Klobučar/Lehnhoff-Asagaroff/Zimmermann



# 1980 SEASON

Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

New Production

## Don Pasquale

In Italian  
Donizetti

Welting/Evans, Rendall, Nolen,  
Wexler

Mund\*\*/Mansouri/Conklin

Popular-priced performances in English  
Mills/Malta, Hoback, Brandstetter,  
Wexler

Agler/Mansouri-Irwin/Conklin

## 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  
generous gift from James D. Robertson.

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

# Bay Meadows

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## 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.

## 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

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The 1980 San Francisco Opera Raffle is a way for individuals to each give a little, adding up to a lot for the San Francisco Opera.

The 1980 San Francisco Opera Raffle package will be sent in late summer to more people than ever before. An outstanding prize roster makes this expanded mailing possible. Gems, furs, silver, trips, dinners, home-items, everything and anything that smacks of pure luxury, can be found among the Raffle Prizes. San Francisco's outstanding stores, galleries and hotels have made much of this roster possible. These include Ivan Gems, Delta Steamline Cruise, Statements, Trans World Airlines, I. Magnin's, the Hyatt Hotel on Union Square and the Fairmont Hotel on Nob Hill. Hewlett-Packard even offers a home computer as one of the 12 grand prizes.

The prize roster also includes attractive gems, crystal and prints from private collections, made available to the Raffle by patrons of the Opera, including Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Gruhn and Mrs. William Ham.

Organization of the 1980 San Francisco Opera Raffle is a demonstration of the success of combined imaginations. Directed by San Francisco Opera Board member, Robert Leefeldt, the Raffle has the invaluable donated services of Foote, Cone & Belding/Honig. The Raffle project will also be aided by members of the San Francisco Opera Guild. Together, board, staff, Guild members and one of the nation's leading advertising agencies have cooperated to produce the largest raffle ever undertaken among the arts in California.

Anyone not currently on the San Francisco Opera mailing list who wishes to enter the 1980 Raffle can call (415) 391-4000 to be sent the

Raffle package. The package includes Raffle tickets, a prize roster and some tantalizing articles on the San Francisco opera, an opera crossword puzzle and treasurable photographs. The package is entertaining and the opportunities for anyone to win something wonderful are limited simply by the number of tickets entered in the Raffle.

The odds are everyone will win something in the 1980 San Francisco Opera Raffle.

## National Arts Award for B of A

The BankAmerica Foundation, which sponsored the Emmy Award-winning international telecast of San Francisco Opera's production of *La Gioconda*, has been named a winner in the 1980 "Business in the Arts" competition; sponsored by the Business Committee for the Arts and Forbes magazine. The foundation was cited for outstanding contributions in the areas of special projects (such as *La Gioconda*) and for capital support programs and annual support activities in the arts. Its support for *La Gioconda*, a co-production with KCET-TV Los Angeles, included underwriting production of the live telecast aired in the fall of 1979; of educational materials on the opera made available to secondary school teachers throughout California; of *Opening Night: The Making of an Opera*, the backstage documentary aired last April; and of the *La Gioconda, Act by Act* miniseries, also aired last April.

## Adler Named to National Council

San Francisco Opera general director Kurt Herbert Adler was one of six prominent Americans recently nominated by President Carter to serve on the prestigious National Council on the Arts, the advisory board to the National Endowment for the Arts. His appointment to the 26-seat council is for a six-year term. Others tapped by the president for service were actress Margo Albert, choreographer Robert Joffrey, author Toni Morrison, architect I. M. Pei and Lida Rogers, executive director of the Mississippi State Arts Commission.

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# BOCCANEGRA POLITICAL VERDI

The opera inspired by history's Simon Boccanegra links two of Verdi's recurrent themes, tyranny and the cause of Italian unity.

By GEORGE JELLINEK

When Verdi was born in 1813, his birthplace, the tiny village of Le Roncole in the duchy of Parma, was part of Napoleon's empire. So was Simon Boccanegra's city, Genoa, less than 100

miles away, a vital seaport then, now, and throughout the turbulent centuries of its history. When Napoleon fell two years later, Parma came under Austrian domination, while Genoa was annexed

by Piedmont and Sardinia, a kingdom which was to become the foundation of a united Italy—a cause for which Verdi worked with fanatical zeal until it became a reality 45 years later.

But back in 1815, the independent-minded Genoese did not welcome their enforced union with any kingdom. Their representative at the 1815 Congress of Vienna protested, just to be reminded by the victorious powers that republics were "out of date nowadays." By contrast, Genoa in past centuries—like the other city-states of Venice, Pisa, and Florence—had flourished under various forms of republican governments, profiting enormously from the Crusades and from her aggressive seafaring traditions.



Vittorio Emanuele, future king of a united Italy (1861-1878), entering Milan in 1859, in a painting by M. Bisit.



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Signs of *Viva Verdi!* made the composer's name synonymous with patriotic aims throughout Italy.

Genoa's strength was constantly dissipated, however, in fratricidal wars with rival city-states. The most destructive of these was the one with Pisa, which ended in 1284 with the elimination of that city as a maritime power. During a particularly tumultuous period, from 1257 to 1262, Genoa was governed by a prosperous commoner named Guglielmo Boccanegra. As "primo capitano" he tried but proved unable to curb the power of the city's self-serving nobility. In the end, that early Boccanegra was exiled, and Genoa continued its perennial struggles: Guelphs against Ghibellines, nobles against bourgeois, brother against brother.

Members of Genoa's prominent noble families—the Doria, Spinola, Grimaldi, and Fieschi—governed the city in the succeeding decades, but internal peace was rare and never long-lasting. Eventually, the economic decline and widespread discontent caused by a century of destructive internal and external wars exploded into a popular uprising in 1339. The nobles were driven from power and a new head of state was chosen with wider powers and the title of "Doge," following the Venetian example. It was specifically mandated that no one of noble birth could carry that high office. The first Doge of the new Genoese republic was Simon Boccanegra.

*Simon Boccanegra*, the opera he inspired, represents a significant link in the chain of Verdi operas that express the composer's recurrent concern with two political themes: the tyrannical abuse of power and the cause of Italian unification. By 1840, young Verdi had become attracted to the patriotic movement of Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872), the first architect of the *Risorgimento*, an ardent republican and, incidentally, a native of Genoa. *Nabucco* (1842) was the first Verdi opera in which the spirit of the *Risorgimento*

was unmistakably heard. No Italian could fail to identify the plight of the enslaved Hebrews of the Old Testament with that of subjugated Italy, and the magnificent chorus "Va, pensiero" soon passed through all Italy with its patriotic message beautifully set to deeply moving yet uncensorable words like "Oh, mia patria, si bella e perduta."

Verdi's next opera, *I Lombardi* (1843) was set in the time of the Crusades, but its famous chorus "O Signore, dal tetto natio" delivered the same patriotic message. Even more powerful was the line he gave the Roman general Ezio in *Attila* (1846): "Avrai tu l'universo, resti l'Italia a me!" ("You may have the universe, but leave Italy to me!").

There is nothing particularly inspired about the musical content of this line, yet it swept through the entire peninsula with a powerful effect. Neither historical setting nor geography really mattered; Verdi's patriotic message rang out clearly and memorably. The music he wrote for *Macbeth* (1847) had nothing to do with Scotland of the 11th or any other century: Macduff's rebellious troops sang: "Fratelli! gli oppressi corriamo a salvar!" ("Brothers, let us rush to save the oppressed!") and marched to rousing tunes similar to those written (some by Verdi himself) for Garibaldi's troops. As a matter of fact, it was about this time that a scientific congress in Genoa was dramatically interrupted by patriots celebrating the anniversary of the Austrians' expulsion from that city. Patriotic fervor was at the highest pitch, and it was unavoidable that Italy, too, should succumb to the revolutionary fever that pervaded Europe in 1848.

The "political" Verdi injected his patriotic views into his operas in two ways: by reminding specific localities of their own glorious past and traditions, and by recurrent cries for unification. Venice is glorified in *I due Foscari*



(1844), an opera that resembles *Simon Boccanegra* in many ways, a family tragedy unfolding in a city torn by internal strife. In the revolutionary year of 1848, it was *La battaglia di Legnano* which carried Verdi's patriotic cry. The opera's subject deals with faraway history, the invasion of Italy by the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in the 12th century and his defeat by the armies of the Lombard League. It so happened that in 1848 there was a heroic but short-lived attempt in Lombardy to shake the Austrian yoke, and for a few days Milan enjoyed a brief illusion of freedom. *La battaglia di Legnano*, perhaps the most fervent of all of Verdi's *Risorgimento* operas, takes place largely in Milan; it is generously peppered with fiery cries for unity, and its second act, set in dissident Como, offers a powerful lesson to Italians everywhere: that victory would always elude them as long as individual regions persisted in divisive struggles.

Of the Verdi operas of the succeeding decade, only *La Traviata* (1853) is entirely free of political implications. Abuse of princely power is certainly present in *Luisa Miller* (1849), *Rigoletto* (1851) and *Il Trovatore* (1853), to say nothing of *I Vespri Siciliani* (1855), distressed as Verdi was that Scribe, his insensitive and emotionally French librettist, did not show the oppressed and rebellious Sicilians in a particularly sympathetic light.

When Verdi signed a contract with the Teatro La Fenice of Venice (May, 1856), his choice fell on *Simon Boccanegra*. By then the city of Genoa had grown especially close to his heart; he would often escape to the gentle Ligurian climate from the harsh winters of Parma. The orchestral introduction to the opera's first act, aside from being a musical seascape, is also a paean to the



The church of San Lorenzo in Genoa, in front of which Verdi situated the Prologue of *Simon Boccanegra*.

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scenic beauty of Genoa, with its placid seacoast where (to quote Amelia's line in the libretto) "the stars and sea are smiling, and the moon's radiance merges with the waves."

Verdi's opera was based on a play by the Spanish playwright Antonio Garcia Gutierrez, author of the original source for Verdi's earlier *Il Trovatore*. Though both Gutierrez's play and Piave's opera libretto display a considerable measure of historical faithfulness, a few departures from historical fact should be noted. The real Simon Boccanegra was not a *corsaro* (a sea captain with implied piratical inclinations), but an eminent citizen of means and honorable reputation. It was his brother Egidio who was known for his sea adventures. In the service of Alfonso XI, King of Castile (a principal character in Donizetti's *La Favorita*), Egidio distinguished himself in many sea battles and was credited with the destruction of the pirates who threatened Genoa's commercial lifeline. Staying clear of Genoa's internal politics, Egidio Boccanegra became an admiral of Spain and presumably died of natural causes, a fate that eluded his brother Simon and many of Genoa's succeeding *dogi*.

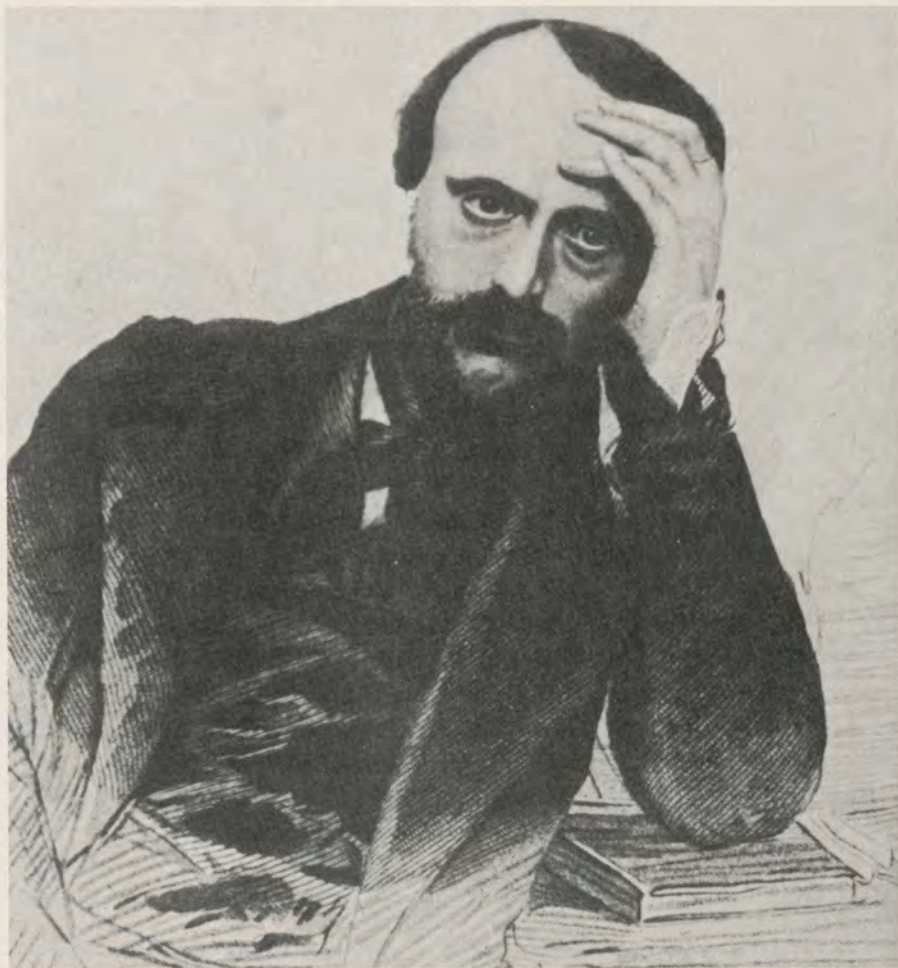
Taking an understandable poetic license, Gutierrez and Piave combined the two brothers into one, surrounding the drama's Simon with an appealingly Romantic maritime aura. The sea, in fact, plays a prominent part throughout the entire opera. Its atmosphere is evoked in the orchestral Prelude to Act I and in the magically orchestrated accompaniment to Amelia's aria which follows. Later, in Act III, his body already weakened by the poison that slowly consumes him, Simon looks out on the sea, recalls his early adventures, and wishes that he could have found death then, "in the sea's friendly bosom."

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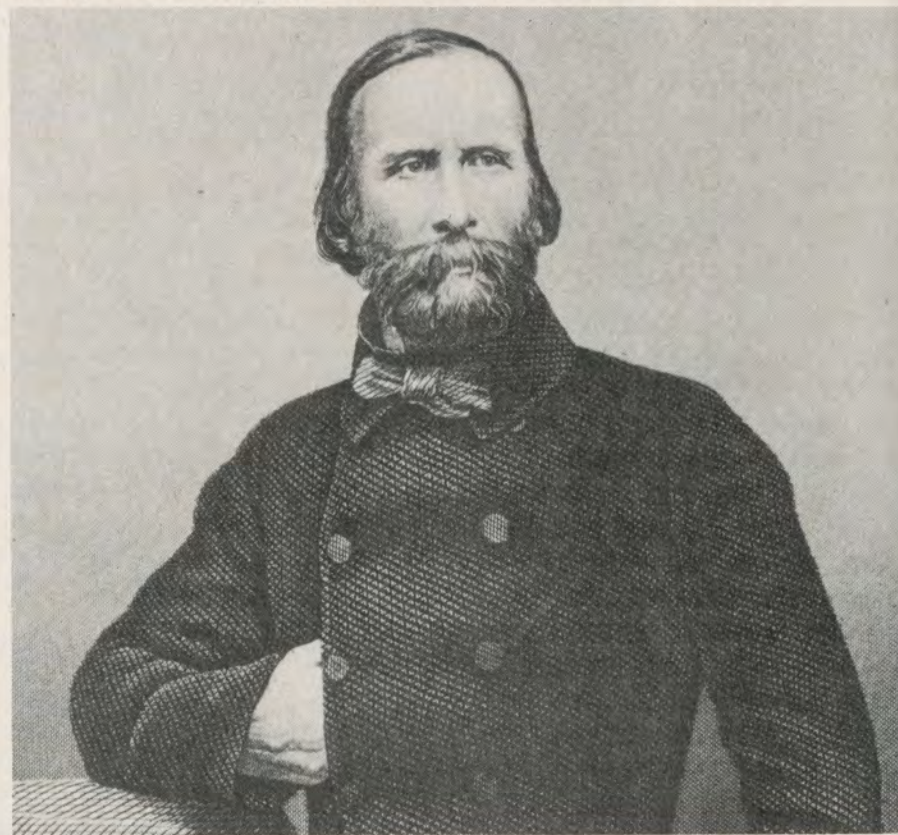
### The real Simon Boccanegra was not a corsaro, but an eminent citizen. . . .

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The libretto clearly specifies that 25 years elapse between the Prologue (Simon's election and Fiesco's exile) and the rest of the opera, which culminates in the Doge's fatal poisoning and his succession by Gabriele Adorno. All this more or less coincides with historical facts, though the opera fails to indicate that Boccanegra actually had two, nonconsecutive terms as Doge. Tired of the usual intrigues in 1344, he resigned and went into exile in Pisa (where, in the opera, his daughter's abduction took place). But he returned in 1356, had himself reelected, and resolved to fight his opponents with stronger measures. His death in 1363, relatively merciful in



Italian patriots Giuseppe Mazzini (above) and Giuseppe Garibaldi (below), theoretician and soldier of the *Risorgimento*, the ideological and political movement which led to the unification of Italy. Mazzini (1805-1872), a romantic revolutionary, formed the "Young Italy" movement designed to arouse Italy to unification under a democratic republic. Garibaldi (1807-1882) led his army of redshirts to triumph first in Sicily and then in Southern Italy.





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Count Camillo Cavour (1810-1861), prime minister of the Kingdom of Sardinia under Vittorio Emanuele II, worked for the cause of Italian unity as a respected statesman throughout Europe.

the opera, was far more brutal in actuality: he was poisoned at a banquet and died a slow death while his enemies gloated over his agonies.

In the opera, Verdi's commitment to the cause of unified Italy is driven home in the Council Chamber Scene (with words by Boito, as part of the opera's 1881 revision). The Chamber seethes with hostility, the councillors are determined to declare war on Venice, scarcely heeding the Doge's reminder that "Adria e Liguria hanno patria comune" ("Adria and Liguria have a common homeland.") Petrarca's letter, to which Simon refers, is a historical fact and, in his impassioned plea "Plebe, patrizi, popolo della feroce storia" ("Plebeians, patricians, heirs to a fierce history"), Boito includes an almost ver-

***Nabucco* (1842) was the first Verdi opera in which the spirit of the *Risorgimento* was unmistakably heard. . . .**

batim quote from a Petrarca poem in these lines: "E vo gridando: pace, e vo gridando: amor."

Perhaps the opera would have been accorded a better reception had this marvelous scene, with its Venetian references, been part of the original 1857 version. "I thought I'd done something

passable," Verdi wrote to Clarina Maffei soon after the premiere, "but it seems I was mistaken." But he wasn't. And, in a subsequent letter to Tito Ricordi, he asserts: ". . . whatever my friends or enemies say, *Boccanegra* is in no way inferior to many other operas of mine which were more fortunate; perhaps this one needed both more care in performance and an audience which really wanted to listen to it."

Verdi was right, of course. Neither the critics nor the public were ready in 1857 to embrace an opera that did not fit into the composer's established pattern, that was so relentlessly dark in mood, to say nothing of its "advanced" harmonic idiom. (A recent English revival of the original 1857 version proved it to be remarkably effective and dramatically tighter than the musically superior 1881 revision which is usually performed.)

After *Boccanegra*, Verdi found himself more deeply involved in political matters than ever before. He was by then won over by the astute pragmatism of Camillo Cavour (1810-1861), whose policies led to tangible results. With French support, the forces of Victor Emanuel, King of Sardinia, successfully battled the Austrians and annexed the duchies of Verdi's native Parma, Tuscany, and Modena. Signs of *Viva Verdi!* (Vittorio Emanuele *Re D'Italia*) made

his name synonymous with patriotic aims all over Italy, while the composer personally subsidized the purchase of 172 rifles to arm Parma's National Guard against possible counter-attacks. It so happens that the shipment was dispatched from — Genoa.

It was also Genoa which provided the starting point for Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) to embark on a campaign that eventually reclaimed Naples and Sicily from centuries of Spanish rule. By the end of 1860, the prophecy of Petrarca and the ambition of the *Risorgimento's* three bickering architects — Mazzini, Cavour, and Garibaldi — became a reality. In Turin, King Victor Emanuel issued his proclamation, "Italy for the Italians." With the exception of Rome (a French protectorate) and Venice (still under Austrian rule), the unification was complete and Verdi, reluctantly yielding to Cavour's persistence, became a member of Italy's first parliament, a post he never sought and (after the death of Cavour) soon resigned.

For Verdi's uncompromising patriotism, however, unification had to be total — Italy without Rome was unthinkable (Venice had joined the union in 1866 after a plebiscite.) Is it surprising that through the ruthless and unyielding Grand Inquisitor of *Don Carlos* (1867), Verdi passionately exposed the dangers in a state where "il trono piegare dovrà sempre all'altare" ("The throne must always yield to the altar!") As a by-product of the Franco-Prussian War, Rome was ceded to Italy in 1870, while Verdi was working on *Aida*. Amonasro still sings a beautiful phrase about "un popolo vinto, straziato" ("a conquered and tortured people") and Ramfis looms large as a symbol of Verdi's enduring anti-clericalism; but here, with the *Risorgimento's* aims achieved at last, the "political" Verdi injects himself into his music for the last time.

Three years earlier, Verdi and his devoted wife Giuseppina had set up a permanent vacation residence in Genoa. "The apartment is magnificent, and the view stupendous, and I plan to spend about 50 winters in it," he wrote in one of his letters. He proved almost right: Verdi's last stay in Genoa was recorded in March, 1900, less than a year before his death at 88. As for that "stupendous view," he must have often thought of the heroic Simon Boccanegra as he freely breathed "l'aura beata del libero cielo" ("the blessed air of the open sky"), a joy the noble Doge enjoyed all too briefly. ■

GEORGE JELLINEK is music director of radio station WQXR in New York and contributing editor of *Stereo Review*.





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# The Sum of the Verdi Ensemble

Wonderful moments abound in *Simon Boccanegra*, but the Council Chamber scene is special, a focus for Verdi's development of ensembles.

By SPEIGHT JENKINS

At a recent post-concert supper, when the conversation turned to opera, a friend said, "My favorite opera by Verdi—in fact, my favorite opera—is *Simon Boccanegra*." Though this friend has strong and interesting ideas about things musical, I was still surprised and asked why. He said, "I find it so touching. Particularly the Council Chamber scene. It grips me no matter how it's sung. I'm always involved with every character in it."

The thought was fascinating because it is rare for one scene to make such an impact. One usually expresses general affection for *La Traviata*, or *Lobengrin*, not just for Violetta's Death scene of the former or the Bridal Chamber scene of the latter. Yet with *Boccanegra* this specific affection makes very good sense, because the Council Chamber scene, the conclusion of the first act, is not only the heart of the opera, but the section most consistently inspired. The scene brings

together Verdi's patriotism and hatred for political wrangling (which he saw as often leading to bloodshed), his love for the theatrically unexpected and a whiff of his favorite family tie, the father-daughter relationship. Technically, it gave him a chance to bring to focus all his experience with the ensemble.

As much a part of Italian opera tradition as the aria or the duet, the ensemble of Verdi's day traced its immediate roots to Rossini and his famed comic ensembles. Of these none is so familiar or so fecund as the conclusion of the first act of *The Barber of Seville*. It begins with a fast passage when everything seems to be going to pieces in the house of Dr. Bartolo. Count Almaviva then whispers his identity to the Sergeant, who salutes him. Everyone freezes and reacts with amazement in the "Fredda ed immobile" passage, the slow, traditionally funny section of an ensemble. Afterwards, the music explodes into the fastest possible presto, and the act

ends with everyone trying to express his opinion while no one listens to anyone else. The crucial fact of *The Barber* ensemble and almost every one that followed, was that the slow section stemmed from a surprise, which was supposed to be funny.

Fine for comedy, but not so for tragedy. Audiences knew they were supposed to laugh and did, no matter how serious the situation. So Donizetti began to adapt the ensemble to a slow-fast pattern, more like the traditional slow-fast aria pattern, with the slow part heavily developed, as in the Sextet from *Lucia*, and the fast section, sometimes separated from the slow part, brief and conventional.

Verdi modified ensemble writing, but he was a careful revolutionary. He almost never theorized about what he was doing; he simply did it, moving slowly and carefully from the traditional pattern to create his own scheme. Though his inventions irrevocably

Tony Romano Photo



The Council Chamber scene from *Simon Boccanegra* in The Lyric Opera of Chicago production.



changed the course of Italian opera, they were each worked out progressively over the course of several operas.

Verdi's gift for memorable ensemble can be found as early as *Ernani* (1844), his fifth opera. The feeling of the finale of Act I is one of enormous energy, with melodies tossed off at a fever pitch. In the three-part piece, however, words and feelings of the several characters are often obscured; one can only know what the people are singing from reading the libretto. When the king promises to help the hero and heroine, who regard him as an enemy, the confusion in their minds cannot be understood by the audience. The soprano does not have a larger part than the tenor or the baritone; all have significant phrases and the whole is built together to the curtain. Youth and vigor carry all before them.

The unintelligibility of singers in an ensemble was one of the reasons why Wagner, six years after the premiere of *Ernani*, lashed out at all concerted pieces in his treatise, *Opera and Drama*. Commencing with the idea that words were most important in any lyric drama, he opined that because any piece involving two or more singers not singing in unison would be unintelligible to the audience, all ensembles would have to be abolished. Though he did not keep to his words—only *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre* and part of *Siegfried* follow his denial of the duet and all larger pieces—those words focused on a problem. If opera was going to become more realistic, something would have to be done to make the ensemble less a purely musical expression of different ideas and more an integral part of the plot.

A development of the ensemble can be found in *Macbeth* (1847), a remarkable opera, much less faithful to Shakes-

peare than Verdi's *Otello* or *Falstaff*. The ensemble of greatest interest here is the one following Duncan's murder. With discovery of the dead king, the ensemble begins not slowly, according to tradition, but in a great fortissimo cry. Though the minor-major key tradition is followed, the writing is generally in unison, which allows the words to be understood; the sentiments expressed are uniform even from Macbeth and his lady, who sing duplicitously of their horror. The ensemble is also interesting in that no one voice dominates. The male and female voices move together. Only if the Lady Macbeth has a huge dramatic soprano can she seem to lead the field, but this is not inherent in the music.

The future for Verdi was suggested in an earlier work, *Giovanna d'Arco* (1845), a strange, historically inaccurate story of the Maid of Orleans, which casts her father as the villain. At the moment of her greatest triumph, he condemns her as a blasphemer and a witch. Verdi's music is conventional as the father makes the accusation; the king and chorus react with predictable amazement. Crushed by what her father said, Giovanna accepts everything and simply asks that Heaven prove her to be innocent. She sings this in a simple, rising line, its purity and prominence suggesting that of many Verdi heroines to come. Her resignation makes the ensemble seem a meaningful part of the drama, not just a musical necessity. Furthermore, something happens dramatically as Giovanna sings; her song is neither an introspective soliloquy nor is it lost among other characters' remarks. She moves the drama forward by her words. When the others join her, the musical treatment is not particularly unusual, but her long solo as a part of the ensemble makes an enormous impact. In *Giovanna*

*d'Arco*, as in *Macbeth*, Verdi still felt it necessary to include a short, fast close to the ensemble. In neither case is it particularly impressive, a sure sign that soon this convention would disappear in the composer's works.

The next in the series of Verdian ensembles is among the best known, that which concludes Flora's party in the second act of *La Traviata* (1853). Indeed the familiarity is so great that it is somewhat difficult to hear this music freshly. The ensemble begins with Germont's appearance and his denunciation of his son's humiliation of Violetta. Germont's words are as conventional as his music, and in the same vein Alfredo expresses his dismay and horror over his act. But Violetta, much as did Giovanna d'Arco, makes the ensemble special with a high-flying line (or at least one that seems very high, wherever it is located on the staff) as she expresses her undying love for Alfredo and how he will eventually know, after her death, of her

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### *Boccanegra* is more a story of politics than of romance. . . .

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sacrifice. The glory of this ensemble is the manner in which Verdi gives his three principals very separate emotions and, though everyone is frozen onstage, makes their conflicting feelings understood through their individual music. Violetta may dominate, but anyone who listens attentively can hear the others and appreciate their different sentiments. This ensemble is not nearly as long, incidentally, as the one ten years before in *Ernani*. Brevity to Verdi was all important and he progressively strove to say more in less time—a characteristic adopted by Puccini, if not by those composers working north of the Alps.



The banquet scene from *Macbeth* in the 1957 San Francisco Opera production, which featured Giuseppe Taddei in the title role and Leonie Rysanek as Lady Macbeth.



Four years after *Traviata*, in 1857, came the first version of *Simon Boccanegra*. The opera was almost incomprehensible to its first audiences. A prominent music critic of the time is quoted by Julian Budden as declaring that he had to read the libretto through six times before he was able to make head or tail of it. Verdi had been inexplicably drawn to a play by Gutierrez, the author of the source for *Il Trovatore*; in his first librettist, Francesco Maria Piave, he had less than an ideal partner. Piave, who is the author of the infinitely better libretto for *Rigoletto*, followed in *Simon Boccanegra* the sad practice among librettists of simplifying a complicated play by leaving out the actions that explain many of the characters' motivations. For opera, *Boccanegra* has a strange plot to begin with: it involves six men and only one woman. Even with one male role excised by the librettist, tradition caused four of the five remaining ones to be assigned to low voices. This makes for a much more dour work than the longer and even more tragic *Don Carlos*, which has two very prominent women and a great variety of scenes. In addition to the sexual imbalance, *Boccanegra* is more a story of politics than of romance, although it does have the kind of father-daughter relationship that most appealed to Verdi, and its politics reflect the kind of patriotism beloved by the composer.

The 1857 version of the opera, which received its less-than-successful premiere in Venice, stripped a convoluted plot to the bare essentials, and Verdi composed music that wonderfully suited the stark tragedy. There were many strong melodies, but there was more declamation than in any prior Verdi opera, declamation vital to render

such a plot comprehensible. The crucial scene involving the abduction of Amelia was drastically altered in the 1881 revision, the version most familiar to opera audiences. The scene in the earlier version is, nevertheless, fascinating. It takes place in a public square in Genoa during a celebration of Boccanegra's

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**Amelia's line begins with a figure that is almost unbearably exquisite. . . .**

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silver jubilee as Doge. When Gabriele, the patrician who loves Amelia, brings word that she has been abducted, he hurls insults at the Doge and threatens to kill him, blaming him for the abduction. As his accusations grow in intensity, Amelia appears, and says the Doge is innocent. To a shocked, silent crowd, she tells of her kidnapping, identifies her abductor but frees him from blame, charging that he had acted on behalf of a highly placed man. The element of surprise which Amelia introduces and Verdi's treatment of it brings the piece perilously close in structure to the comic Rossini finale, an idea that would occur less readily to us today than to an Italian audience of the period. The ensuing ensemble is typical of its time in that everyone expresses individual feelings, and the drama is stopped cold. Amelia refuses to name the powerful man, though everyone asks her to do so except the Doge, who agrees that she should remain silent. With no resolution of the mystery, the ensemble moves into the requisite fast section. Everyone remains angry and confused as the act ends.

Before looking at the new Council Chamber scene, it is instructive to follow Verdi's course. Some 15 years after composing *Simon Boccanegra* (and after *Un*

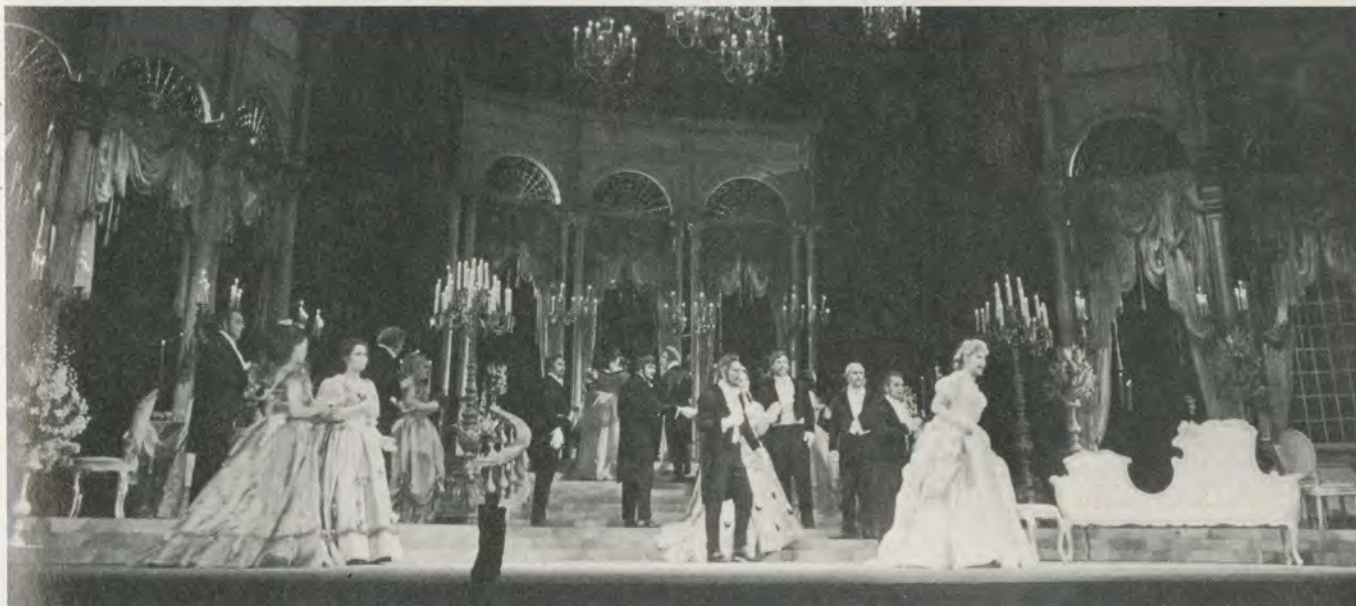
*Ballo in Maschera*, *La Forza del Destino* and *Don Carlos*), *Aida* appeared, with the Triumphal scene one of Verdi's best ensembles. After Amonasro has voiced his patriotism, he begs the king to grant freedom to his people. The principals take up his words and his tune, and, dominated by the soprano, make a powerful statement. Aida's voice, especially in her descending solo line, adds tremendous poignancy. It is the logical dramatic moment for the Ethiopian prisoners to plead to the conquering Egyptians, but no real action takes place during the ensemble.

In that sense the *Aida* ensemble is somewhat like the one in the third act of *Otello*, perhaps Verdi's most imposing concerted piece. The impact of that ensemble is a freezing in grief as Desdemona questions what could conceivably have brought her to this ghastly moment. Almost everyone concentrates on her sorrow, which focuses the plot not on the absurdity of Otello's jealousy, but on its results.

The Council Chamber scene of *Boccanegra* is different and even more important to the opera's total scheme and effect. But it came into being only with the greatest difficulty. In the late 1870s Verdi did not seem inclined to worry over *Boccanegra*. However, Ricordi, his publisher, wanted Verdi to compose *Otello* with Boito as librettist, and he believed that if the two successfully revised *Boccanegra*, Verdi would be willing to collaborate on an opera based on the Shakespearean tragedy. By November 1880 Ricordi's persistence had won out, though Boito viewed *Boccanegra* as a rickety table with a single solid leg—the prologue.

It was clear to Verdi that the crucial ensemble had to be redrawn. The person who caused the abduction of Amelia,

Carolyn Mason Jones Photo



The ensemble from Act III of *La Traviata* in the 1973 San Francisco Opera production, with Beverly Sills as Violetta.



Paolo, had to be named; any other solution left the audience completely confused. Boito knew that Petrarch had written the Doges of both Venice and Genoa during Boccanegra's reign, counseling peace when war seemed inevitable. It occurred to the librettist that the Doge could bring the counselors of both parties together to hear a letter from the most famous Italian poet of the time, and while they were so assembled the scene with Amelia could take place. In fact, Boito proposed three different scenarios for Verdi; the composer opted for the Council Chamber scene because it allowed the rest of the opera to continue without major changes.

### The 1857 version stripped a convoluted plot to the bare essentials. . . .

The power and excitement of the Council Chamber scene can be felt in the opening music, which unmistakably suggests the energy and diabolism of *Otello* (a similar situation occurs in Wagner's revised music for *Tannhäuser*, composed 15 years after the original. The 1860 version suggests *Tristan und Isolde*, just completed, in its new music and yet manages to mesh with the original). As *Boccanegra* is reading Petrarch's letter to his counselors, noises from outside indicate that there is an insurrection in the city. When the Doge hears it is directed at him, he flings open the chamber doors and invites the people to destroy him. In a passage reminiscent of the fourth act of *Don Carlos* (but this time without any Grand Inquisitor) the people rush in and fall to their knees when confronted by the Doge's majesty. Budden suggests that Boccanegra's words at this point ("Is this then the voice of the people? From afar the thunder of the tempest, from

nearby the cries of women and children.") stem more from Boito's patrician cynicism than Verdi's. I think they are Verdi's sentiments, too, disillusioned as he was by politics in Italy after the unification.

Gabriele is convinced that the Doge instigated the abduction of Amelia and, of course, is ignorant of the fact that she is the Doge's daughter. At the very instant when he hurls himself at the Doge, Amelia appears (having talked her way to freedom) and cries out to save the Doge. The moment suggests strikingly the defense of *Tannhäuser* by Elisabeth. Both sopranos interrupt the proceedings with a high note—Elisabeth with a long held B-natural; Amelia with a shorter B-flat—and then make a profound and complicated statement of their position. Amelia changes the mood of the gathering instantly as opposed to Elisabeth, who works to do so throughout the entire scene.

When Amelia finishes her explanation of the abduction with only the crucial name of the instigator missing, the two parties begin accusing each other. It takes very little at this moment to make the Doge explode. For 25 years he has been trying to calm the battle between nobles and commoners, and now he launches the big ensemble with "Plebe! Patrizi!", a cry for common sense and decency. The piece is in two parts, but there is no sense of repetition because Verdi modulates not to the tonal major key, which would make it seem as if the Doge had won his point, but to a relative key, which makes the second section even more of a plea than the first. The action continues as Amelia takes the Doge's idea and pleads ever more intensely for peace. Her line, beginning with a figure that is almost unbearably exquisite, makes the largest impression. The ensemble is so

constructed, however, that, given appropriately balanced voices, the audience at crucial moments can hear Paolo plotting, Fiesco lamenting that Boccanegra still runs the city, the Doge continuing to plead for peace and Gabriele rejoicing over Amelia's safety. The lines are discernible and the energy of the ensemble makes it seem the antithesis of a stop-in-action while people think aloud.

Paolo, the traitor, has still not been named. The scene ends with a brilliant stroke in which the Doge demands that Paolo, whom he suspects of the villainy from his attempts to get out of the room, curse the traitor who abducted Amelia. Paolo complies, with everyone joining him. The final brief section takes the place of the old-fashioned, conventional fast conclusion.

There are many other wonderful moments in *Boccanegra*: the bass' "Il lacerato spirito" in the Prologue; the juxtaposition in that scene of Boccanegra's personal tragedy and political success; the picture of the sea conveyed in Amelia's opening aria; and the final haunting ensemble. But the Council Chamber scene remains special. It combines Verdi's political ideals with all the developments in ensemble practice that had evolved over the years, allowing him to compose a compelling expressive line for the soprano, which still affects the plot and bursts with the kind of energy which was Verdi's signature. It cannot be stressed enough how Verdi in old age seemed to compose as if still a young man. The feeling of the Council Chamber scene is of a composer exploring new paths triumphantly. ■

SPEIGHT JENKINS writes music criticism for the *New York Post* and lectures extensively on opera around the country.



The Act III ensemble from *Otello* in Franco Zeffirelli's production at the Metropolitan Opera.

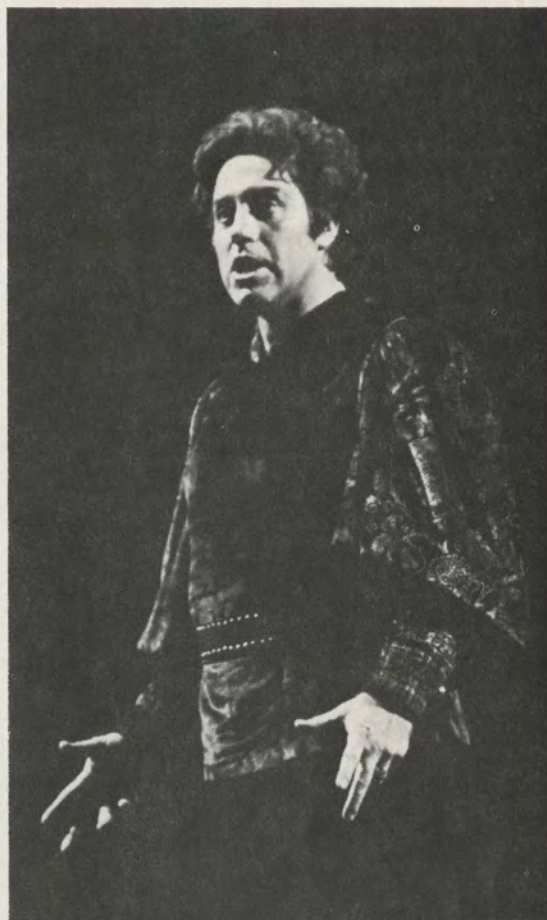


# Simon Boccanegra

Photos taken in rehearsal by IRA NOWINSKI



Renato Bruson, Margaret Price



Giorgio Lamberti



Margaret Price





Renato Bruson



Cesare Siepi



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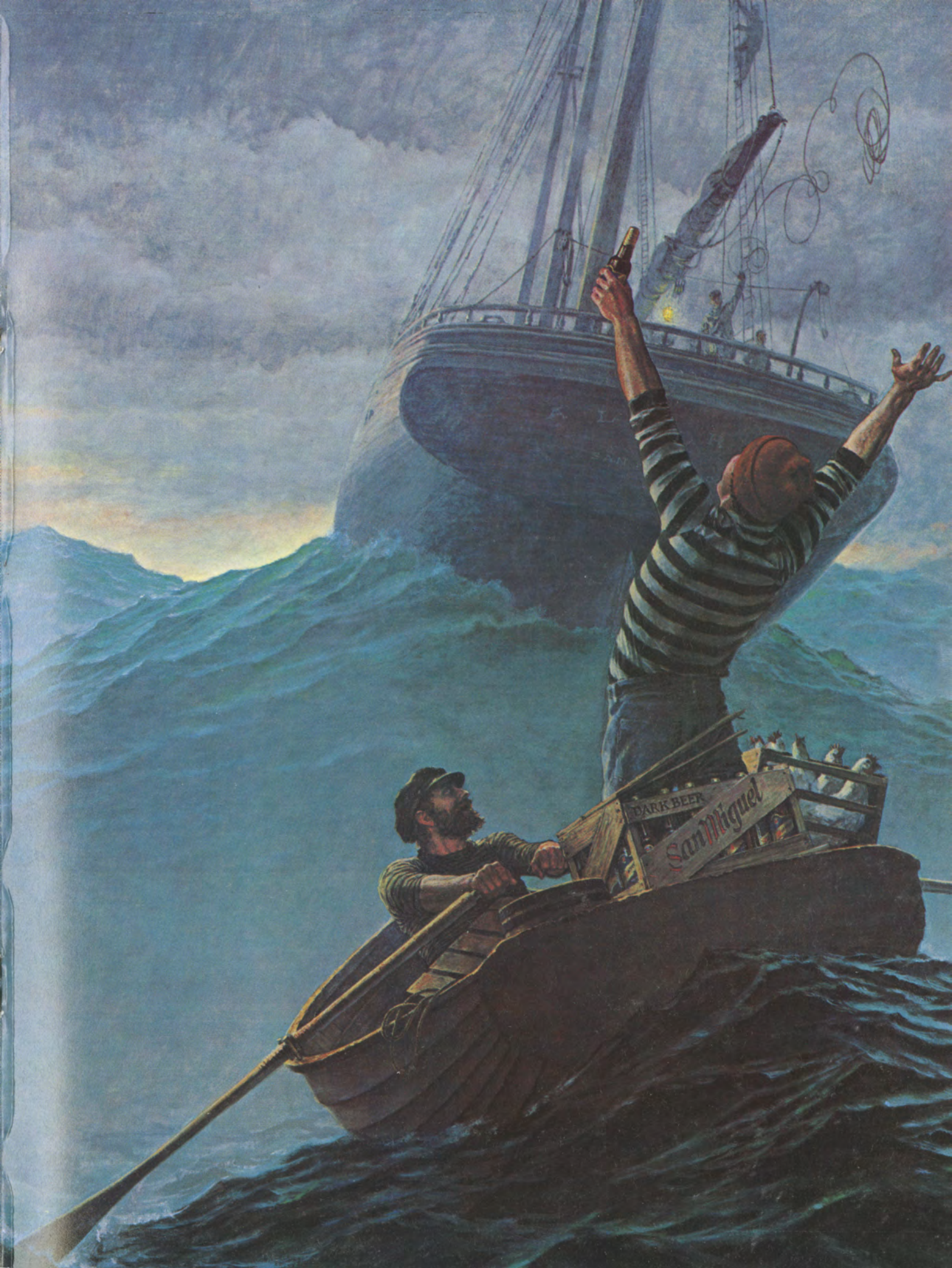
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Libretto by FRANCESCO MARIA PIAVE, revised by ARRIGO BOITO

# Simon Boccanegra

(IN ITALIAN)

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Pier Luigi Pizzi

*Chorus Director*  
Richard Bradshaw

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Joan Sullivan\*

*Musical Preparation*  
Philip Highfill

*Prompter*  
Susan Webb

*First performance: Venice, March 12, 1857*

*First performance revised version:  
Milan, March 24, 1881*

*First San Francisco Opera performance:  
November 1, 1941*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 AT 8:00

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 AT 7:30

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 AT 8:00

*Simon Boccanegra* radio broadcast live  
on September 26

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

*Paolo Albiani*

Frederick Burchinal

*Pietro*

Kevin Langan

*Simon Boccanegra*

Renato Bruson

*Jacopo Fiesco*

Cesare Siepi

*Amelia Grimaldi*

Margaret Price

*Gabriele Adorno*

Giorgio Lamberti\*

*Amelia's Servant*

Susan Quittmeyer

*Captain of the Guards*

Robert Tate

*Soldiers, sailors, people, senators,  
courtiers of the Doge*

\*San Francisco Opera debut

PLACE AND TIME: Genoa, middle of the fourteenth century

ACT I Piazza San Lorenzo in Genoa

INTERMISSION

ACT II Scene 1

The Grimaldi terrace twenty-five years later

Scene 2

Assembly room in the Ducal palace

INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1

Ducal chambers

Scene 2

Terrace in the Ducal palace

*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

## SIMON BOCCANEGRA

### ACT I

Night in a square of Genoa. Paolo and Pietro are discussing the forthcoming election of a Doge for Genoa. Paolo persuades Pietro that they should back Simon Boccanegra, the preference of the populace, for that will gain them "gold, power, honor." Simon is approached, but lacks interest, until it is suggested that, as Doge, he would have the power to marry Maria, daughter of the wealthy Fiesco who scorns him as a commoner. A crowd of Genoese gather, and Paolo rallies them to the support of Boccanegra. The crowd is concerned about the whereabouts of Maria Fiesco, who has not left the family home for months. As the crowd disperses Fiesco appears to denounce Simon as the villain who has seduced his daughter and to lament her death. Simon returns, confronts Fiesco and pleads for forgiveness. Without telling him that Maria has died, Fiesco demands the daughter she bore him as the price of a reconciliation. This Simon cannot do, because she has disappeared. Fiesco leaves. Simon enters the darkened house, and discovers that Maria is dead. The crowd bursts in acclaiming Simon as Doge.

### ACT II

Scene I—Garden of the Grimaldi villa. Maria, the child of Boccanegra, has grown to maturity as the adopted daughter of the Grimaldis. Fiesco, now known as Andreas, is her guardian, unaware that she is his granddaughter. Gabriele Adorno, whom she hopes to marry, appears. She chides him for plotting with Andreas (and others) to overthrow Boccanegra, fearful that he may be captured and so destroy their plans to be married. A visitor is announced. It is Boccanegra, come—so she thinks—to represent Paolo as a candidate for marriage to Amelia. Instead, Boccanegra presents her with a pardon for the exiled Grimaldis. He is surprised that she is not really a Grimaldi. This leads to a further conversation about her background, and the information that develops raises the hope that she may, indeed, be his long-missing daughter, Maria. A locket that Amelia-Maria has carried since infancy matches one in Boccanegra's possession, and an emotional reunion ensues. As Simon leaves, Paolo approaches to find out how his suit has progressed. Simon tells him to abandon hope. Paolo plots to kidnap Amelia-Maria.

Scene II—The Council Chamber. Boccanegra implores his councillors to join the plea of Petrarch that Venice and Genoa be brought together. The suggestion is denounced. A sound of an uprising outside is joined by voices in the chamber attacking Boccanegra. He confronts them defiantly. Gabriele and Andreas-Fiesco are brought in, but it develops that Gabriele's wrath has

been directed against the kidnapers of Amelia-Maria, one of whom he has killed. Gabriele accuses Boccanegra of instigating the plot, but Amelia-Maria appears and transfers the guilt to another. As arguments rage, Boccanegra calls for all those who love Genoa to unite in a quest for peace, to abandon factionalism and hatred. Gabriele offers his sword to Boccanegra, who rejects it, but will hold him in custody until the plot is clarified. The Doge transfers his attention to Paolo, demanding that he join in a curse against the villain who has attempted to kidnap Amelia—implying, without saying so, that he knows that the guilty one is Paolo himself.

### ACT III

Scene I—Doge's Quarters. Paolo plans the assassination of Boccanegra: poison for him to drink, and if he should not, daggers to do him in. Fiesco and Gabriele are brought in. Fiesco rejects an invitation to join in the plot. When Paolo tells Gabriele that Amelia-Maria has been brought to the palace for Boccanegra's pleasure, the inflamed nobleman agrees to murder the Doge. Left alone, Gabriele denounces both. When Amelia appears, her protestations of innocence are useless. The Doge must die. Boccanegra enters after Gabriele withdraws, and tells his daughter that he is willing to pardon her husband-to-be if he repents. Alone, Boccanegra fills a glass from the carafe and drinks the poisoned water. He dozes. Gabriele appears with a drawn dagger, but before he can attack Boccanegra, Amelia-Maria returns and the Doge is identified as her father. The sound of an uprising outside rouses the repentant Gabriele to an action on behalf of the Doge, who promises Amelia-Maria to him in return.

Scene II—Interior of the Ducal Palace, with Genoa and the sea in the distance. Paolo and Andreas-Fiesco meet. The latter has been set free, the former is being led to his execution, but gloats that the poisoned Doge will be dead before he is. Offstage the sound of music from the wedding of Gabriele and Maria. Boccanegra appears, weak and suffering. Andreas-Fiesco approaches and denounces the Doge, revealing himself as the father of the girl whom Boccanegra had wanted to marry twenty-five years before. Boccanegra, surprisingly, welcomes the reappearance of his old antagonist, for it provides him with the opportunity to return the daughter Fiesco demanded twenty-five years before, as the price of forgiveness. As death approaches, Amelia and Gabriele join Fiesco in easing Boccanegra's pain with tears of reconciliation. With his last breath, he instructs the Senators: "Let the Doge's crown circle the brow of Gabriele Adorno."





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# CESARE SIEPI

## REFLECTIONS ON A 40-YEAR CAREER

Performing in San Francisco for the first time since 1968, world-renowned bass Cesare Siepi reflects on his distinguished 40-year career.

By ARTHUR KAPLAN

"It used to take me an hour to make myself up as an old man; now it takes me an hour to make myself up as a young man," confesses renowned Italian bass Cesare Siepi. Forty years ago, as a 19-year-old student from the Milan Conservatory, he first stepped onto an opera stage as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* in the town of Schio, near Venice.

At 57, with silver-grey hair, broadly handsome features and a trim six-foot frame, the matinee idol Figaro, Don Giovanni and Mephisto of the 1950s and 1960s still turns the heads of admiring females.

At home in his unassuming, single-story house off Biscayne Bay at the northern edge of Miami, Siepi has just returned from performances as Sarastro in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte* in Venice. He obviously enjoys the relaxation and quiet company of his family—his American wife, Louellen; his teenage children, Ezio (16) and Luisa (14); and his mother, who is visiting from Italy. The sun shines brightly on a front garden of well-tended semi-tropical plants and flowers; in the back yard cardinals flutter around the bird feed, unmolested by the two family cats.

Since his last performances at the Metropolitan Opera in 1972 and his move from New York to Miami, Siepi has been singing "on-and-off, here-and-there," accepting only occasional engagements. *Simon Boccanegra* in San Francisco is his first performance with a leading American opera company in over eight years.

This reduction in activity plus his settling in Miami caused many people to think he had gone into semi-retirement. "After I left the Met, my activity went practically to zero. It was my choice," he admits. "I didn't care. We moved here to Miami and I started to play a little lazy. Even my kids sometimes asked if I was retired. I



Ron Scherl Photo

Bass Cesare Siepi singing "Aprite un pò quegli occhi" from Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the 1978 Anniversary Gala honoring general director Kurt Herbert Adler.

don't think singers really retire if it's in their blood. Look at Martinelli. He was active in the musical world until the end.

"But coming to Miami was perhaps indirectly harmful to my career because many people assumed I moved here to retire. Instead of retiring *my* old bones, I'm going to enhance and fortify the bones of my kids by allowing them to live in a beautiful climate and enjoy life as it used to be. Here they can walk outside barefoot and enjoy the natural, healthy outdoor life. Where my son Ezio goes to school there are *three* football fields, not one, *three* . . .

amazing," says the former soccer player who gave up the possibility of a professional career in the sport to become an opera singer. "Coming to Miami was dictated solely by the fact that at the time, six years ago, I had two kids, aged eight and ten, and I thought they deserved a little better air and a little better ground to develop physically.

"Artists who marry young when they still have a very intense professional life and have young kids . . . Well, something must be given up. In my case, I married fairly late and had my children necessarily late too. I worked hard in my early career so that I could limit my activity later. Now it doesn't cost me anything to cut back; it's not a sacrifice because I'm doing it for the love of my family. Instead of singing an intense 20 years, I'm stretching it out to a leisurely 40 years.

"It's difficult for artists to control their ambitions and not give in to the *smania* of grabbing every chance. It's human nature," he says philosophically, using a favorite phrase to indicate certain attitudes and activities he finds unfortunate or reprehensible. "In terms of speed of development, there are fruits which need three months to ripen and others that need five months. What does it matter if one is famous at 30 or famous at 40? Time doesn't get cheated, you know."

As with many other basses, Siepi began his career portraying old men. "I was doing King Philip in *Don Carlo* when I was 25 or 26 years of age and I sang Silva in *Ernani* in 1946, when I was 23," he says, intoning the aged suitor's famous aria, "Infelice! e tu credevi." "All basses must take these *basso nobile* or *basso toga* roles. You can make your face up with collodium until you look like the hunchback of Notre Dame or Dr. Jekyll, but it's the walk that establishes your age. Makeup is good for about five rows and then the lines and wrinkles that you made so



carefully just disappear. To create an old man you must be able to drag your feet to give the impression of age; otherwise there's an old head walking on young legs.

"Composers don't write lead roles for older, squeaky voices; character roles like Trabuco in *Forza* or one of the zanies in *I quattro rusteghi*, maybe," he says, imitating the nasal bottled-up sound to great effect. "You can look old and decrepit, but you can't sing Padre Guardiano with an old and decrepit voice. There's no such thing as singing an old sound. Can you imagine a man of 90, like the Grand Inquisitor, singing with such power? That's the surrealism of opera."

The discussion turns to the Act IV scene in *Don Carlo* for two basses—King Philip and the Grand Inquisitor. Siepi, who has sung both roles, analyzes what to many is one of the greatest scenes in all opera. "For the Grand Inquisitor, it's very important to look old, although he should really stand straight. You can always have him shaking his stick or coming up to his full height from a bending down, curved position, but there are less obvious ways of interpreting the supremacy of the Inquisitor and the Church over the power of the King. You can suggest a sturdy old man by conveying energy and authority.

"There's a misunderstanding that such intensity and authority must be expressed through the voice. Consequently, the scene often becomes a shouting match between temporal and spiritual power. But it's a very intimate political dialogue—low class politics really—which should be done in a sneaky whisper from mouth to ear. As long as there is balance between the two basses, with crescendos, decrescendos and appropriate highlights, then the volume of sound isn't important. The ear easily gets accustomed if everything is in the right proportion. When the moment comes to



Robert Lackenbach Photo

Siepi as Méphistophélès in the 1955 San Francisco Opera production of Gounod's *Faust*.

sing *forte* and *fortissimo*, Verdi says so. As soon as singers try to outdo each other, there will never be a good duet, a good confrontation between *persone drammatiche*, in whatever opera."

King Philip is one of Siepi's favorite roles. He loves the opera and loves portraying the role of the anguished Spanish monarch, with its rich vocal and dramatic challenges. The velvet-voiced *basso cantante* made his Metropolitan Opera debut in this role on opening night of the 1950 season, inaugurating the directorship of Rudolf Bing. He was also on stage—the only lead singer from the original 1950 production—for the April 22, 1972 performance which ended the Bing régime.

"In 1923, when I was born, *Don Carlo* was done at the Met with Chaliapin and Martinelli. Then it wasn't performed again for 27 years. Strange. I suppose it's because there are no elephants, no belly dancers, no action . . . very little dance and very little happy music. You don't go home after *Don Carlo* saying, 'Oh, I had such a good time,'" he says, mimicking mindless middle-class mentality. "It depends on whether you want to smile with your teeth or with your heart."

He begins to vocalize Eboli's Veil Song, ranking it among the most

beautiful Spanish tunes ever written. "It's something serpentine which goes through your body every time you hear the music of *Don Carlo*. Why was it not done for 27 years? I can understand not doing Boito's *Mefistofele* for that long, but *Don Carlo*?"

"With operas like *Macbeth* and *Don Carlo* you can go back to the sources, to Shakespeare and Schiller. Perhaps I go back and read them more than others. It's a desk effort, but afterwards it's so much easier to sing these parts because you are motivated."

What about Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*? "You know, the opera was an even greater flop in Italy than *Don Carlo* until it started growing, growing, growing. Dramatically Fiesco is easy; there aren't 20 ways of creating the character. You don't have to tailor a characterization like for King Philip. But you have to sing well, with heart and humanity. Fiesco emerges beautifully in spite of not being as interesting as some other bass roles. In the final confrontation with Boccanegra he has to be very forceful and it's vocally very demanding.

"*Simon Boccanegra* is a difficult work because of the plot." As he attempts to sort out the complexities, Siepi purposefully gets himself as entangled as the convolutions of the story. "It's really rough. With *Ernani*, for example, it's straightforward. You've got four characters and sex. There is no sex in *Simon Boccanegra*. It's an opera of generosity, love and politics.

"You know," he interrupts himself, "I'm really happy to be a bass, but once in a while I'm sorry I'm not a baritone to be able to sing Simone. What a great part! When he's in the Senate and sings 'Io vo gridando pace . . .'" Siepi enthuses, launching into the baritone's poignant plea from the Council Chamber scene. "And at the end, his death scene . . . it's fantastic. I occasionally go through phrases, hum-



ming other people's music just to cleanse myself a little bit, and I inevitably come out singing some lines of Nabucco or Simone."

A man of honor and integrity, Siepi evidently enjoys interpreting the Verdi *basso nobile* roles such as Fiesco, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, Silva, King Philip and Padre Guardiano. The one such role he has never gotten to sing—and that by the quirk of circumstances beyond his control—is the patriot Procida in *I Vespri Siciliani*. "I was supposed to do it at the Met. I had it in my contract. Then came the famous strike in 1973 that cut off the first two to three months of the season. When things began again in January, they couldn't make a *repêchage*; they



Robert Lackenbach Photo

Siepi in his 1954 debut role with the Company, Padre Guardiano in Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*.

couldn't go back, they had to go on.

"When the Met management changed and *Vespri* was finally put on [the opera had its Met premiere on January 31, 1974], they seemed to have forgotten that I had had it in my contract. They never offered it to me again. At the time just before the strike, artists were very kindly offered the alternative of considering themselves free agents and seeking engagements elsewhere, or staying at the company's disposal. I gambled and exasperated with the stage technique of said, 'All right. I will stay,' hoping the strike would be called off. I didn't quit the Met; the Met quit me. They didn't honor the contract, and that's unethical. When *Vespri* came back to the program they should have offered me the role again. With *Boris* it was the same thing. I learned the role in Russian, and Ghiaurov and I were supposed to split the performances. But Ghiaurov gave up with the strike and then they took Talvela instead. I don't care that the management changed. I signed a contract with the Metropolitan Opera Association, a firm with a supposedly responsible board of directors."

The experience obviously rankled him, and perhaps precipitated his move to Miami. Though not an American citizen, Siepi has resided primarily in the United States for the past three decades. One has the impression that he feels most at home in this country and in American opera houses. The Vienna State Opera has been good to him ("They offered me everything. How could I say no?"), but he severely decries the repertory system which allows almost no rehearsal time for revivals and restagings.

"It's sadistic; it's murder. I made my debut in Vienna in *Don Carlo*, *Faust* and *Don Giovanni*. I hardly saw the inside of the theater. I just stepped on stage and sang. In repertory opera the production is sacred. Whoever steps in, it's up to him to show that he can make it. If you do make it, then you're in. Otherwise you'll never come back to that theater again. It was the same at La Scala. No matter what performance, the tenor arrived the day of the dress rehearsal from South America and the artists greeted each other just before going on—'Hi, hi'—and they sang the performance just like that."

A self-avowed perfectionist, Siepi has several other *bêtes noires* concerning the ways of the opera world: the political intrigues and snobbishness in certain Italian opera houses ("The lowest secretary at La Scala looks at you as if she's the Minister of Education. I never liked that severe,

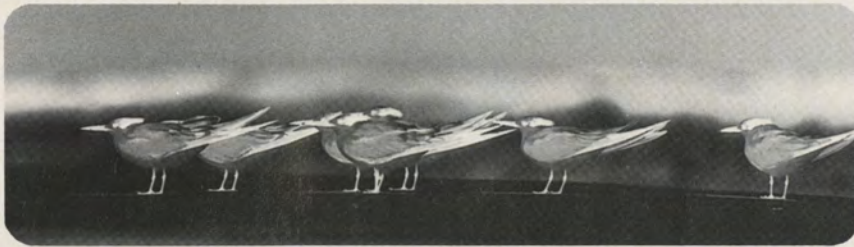
nose-in-the-air attitude."); the egotistical stage director ("All they think about is stunning lights or crazy costumes or controversial scenery. They want to show the lamb on the shoulder of a shepherd because it's so picturesque while they keep you in the dark when you have something important to do. Opera is already a difficult art form, so why make it more difficult with screwy ideas to distract the audience?"); the undisciplined fellow singer ("a colleague who tries to put an elbow in front of my face while singing a high note and creating a dissonance by holding it two bars too long"); and the music critic ("Everyone tries to grab for the punch-in-the-eye which will make him discussed.")

Twice in his career Siepi has temporarily foresaken the opera stage for the lights of Broadway. In 1962 he starred in his first musical, *Bravo Giovanni*, which, despite opening on "Blue Monday" ("The day when President Kennedy cut off all expense accounts"), was a relative success and ran for nearly half a year. With his characteristic candor, the basso calls the 1979 *Carmelina*, a musical based on Melvin Frank's successful film, *Buona Sera, Mrs. Campbell*, a flop ("It was a masterpiece of unyielding and unblending personalities.")

Looking back with particular fond memories to *Bravo Giovanni*, he terms it a "tremendous, beautiful experience. At the time I was more than a little the world of opera, which still has not progressed that much. The operatic singer often concentrates so much on the glitter of the sound that he forgets to act. I always have wondered why the stage director doesn't tell the singer that at this moment he's not supposed to gesticulate in front of somebody else. I can forgive a tenor who, before an important note, turns around to clear his throat. But there are some purely superfluous gestures for which there are no reasons at all. It's so much easier *not* to make them. We artists try to save energy when it's not necessary, and when it *is* necessary, we make a tremendous effort to do things which spoil the general picture? Why? The passion to make mistakes . . . human nature.

"In the rehearsals for *Bravo Giovanni* I was refreshed with joy because it was so different. I learned so many things about real theater direction, and the things I already knew I could put into practice. I enjoyed using stage technique as precise as a clock. I saw people around me working with real discipline. In a new musical comedy you are tailored to the part; you create it. If things are no





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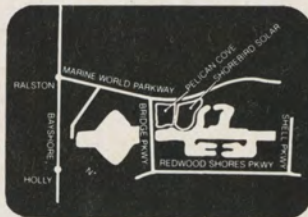
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Siepi portrayed a dashing Don Giovanni, perhaps his most famous role, in San Francisco in 1955 and 1968.

good in the script or the music, you can change it. In opera you're doing already established successes. The sets and costumes may change, but *Otello* will always remain *Otello*.

"Then in opera you work two or three weeks to prepare for a performance; in musical comedy you work for two months. In opera you may have five or six performances, and maybe after three performances the cast changes; in musical comedy, unless someone is sick, you go for months without a cast change. For the freshness of the sound maybe it's not so good, but for the precision of the performance, the professionalism of the theatrical experience, it's ideal."

To someone with such a keen sense of professional pride, the near-sightedness of certain opera house administrations is particularly vexing. "La Scala offered me Raimondo in a new production of *Lucia*, Pimen in *Boris* and a recital. They called me at least eight times at the Italian taxpayers' expense, saying that the dream of the director's life was to have me play Pimen. I never even met the director before and besides, if I were to sing in *Boris Godunov* again, I'd sing Boris. And for all that I was supposed to go back and forth three times to sing six performances. It's like being a traveling

salesman. Then they offered me Banquo in *Macbeth*," he adds, the exasperation growing in recollection. "I never sang Banquo. Maybe it's a great part, but I don't know it and I don't intend to learn it. So I said, No, thanks. I don't feel like fighting all these *battaglie musicali* to reestablish my position. I'm not that ambitious. If it comes easy, I do it."

Siepi now carefully selects his engagements, picking roles that are already in his repertoire and circumstances which are favorable to his schedule and his sense of professionalism. "I'm a theater singer. I don't like singing two performances here and three performances there. I prefer to concentrate. I like to have two or three houses and not be like a gypsy, flying around all the time. I've never been one of those singers that grabs a plane to catch a performance in Valparaiso one night and then has to fly back to Naples the next.

"I'm 57. What am I expecting? That I'm getting younger and better? No. I keep fit and I'm aware of being able to do certain things that maybe colleagues of mine at my age aren't doing any more. Maybe they worked harder and I didn't. But to do somersaults now . . . to prove what? It's already enough that I'm able to main-

tain my good name. You cannot make mistakes at this stage of your career. A young artist can afford a bad performance. But if we sing a wrong note now . . . Ah, ha!" says the public, 'it's the end.' If a movie star sees a few wrinkles, she can hide them with makeup; you can't hide the wrinkles in your voice.


"I like to sing. I like to be engaged. I will accept any role in my repertoire—Mefistofele or Boris or Fiesco or Figaro or whatever—as long as it's offered in a nice way. I will accept engagements that I can honor very well, but I'm not trying to prove my eternal shape. I don't go looking to sing 40 performances in three months.

"To me going on stage today offers the same thrill, the same excitement as it did 30 years ago. The same awareness in my soul is there. I don't take the public for granted and say, 'Oh well, they know me already. I don't have to give as much tonight.' You can't always give a top performance. There can be an off night and you have to take it philosophically. But I know that for myself and for a good number of other artists, whatever we have, we give. To serve a performance, to give unconditionally of one's ability for the performance and not use it for one's own vanity, that's the thing."

Siepi's excellent English is dotted with picturesque analogies and comparisons. "Sometimes there is a chemistry with the public and when it crystallizes, you feel it and it keeps the performance humming," he says, vocally imitating the rhythmic vroom-vroom of an airplane motor. "Without a sense of fatigue, it's like reaching a certain altitude where you go gliding without forcing the engine. You can't expect such a marvelous thing to happen at every performance.

"I feel that I'm still in the fullness of my professional sense of responsibility. The only thing that bothers me a little bit is that I look around me and there aren't many old-timers that I used to work with. With few exceptions, my partners have all changed. Yes, I sang *Don Giovanni* with Margaret Price in London. What a beautiful, running-water voice! And Bruson. I did *Simon Boccanegra* with him in Macerata and it was very successful because we blended. But these are not the colleagues I've been singing with intensively and constantly all the time. Perhaps it's just as well," he says with a chuckle. "Otherwise you could get emotionally involved. I feel a little isolated, a little obsolete. Sometimes I feel as if I shouldn't be there. But that's all psychological. I still sing with the same great joy." ■





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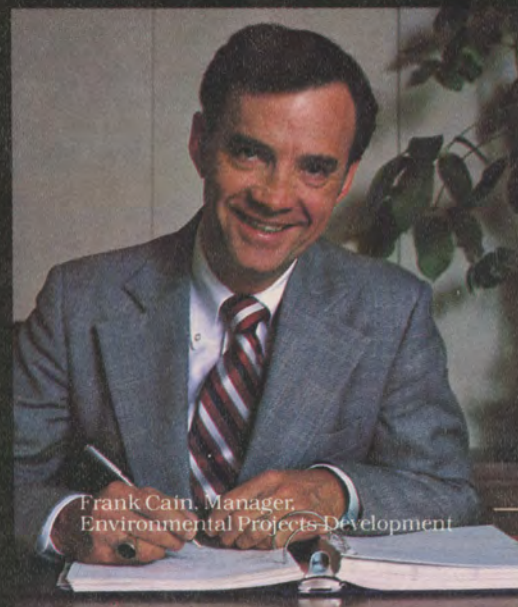
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# PROFILES



## MARGARET PRICE

Returning to the opera house of her 1969 American debut as Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Welsh soprano Margaret Price, respected in the entire operatic world as one of its leading artists, sings Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra*. She also performed Nanetta in *Falstaff* and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* with the Company in 1970. Her ascent to international stardom began in 1962 when, on 18 hours' notice, she appeared as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Covent Garden, the role of her operatic debut with the Welsh National Opera that year. She was then invited to sing Pamina and Marzelline in *Fidelio* at Covent Garden and to appear in *La Vida Breve* and *Eugene Onegin* with BBC Television. She also made numerous appearances at the Glyndebourne and Aldeburgh festivals. Since then she has scored successes at La Scala, the Paris Opera, the Vienna Staatsoper, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Munich Staatsoper and the Hamburg Staatsoper. During the 1976 Bicentennial year visit of the Paris Opera to New York and Washington she was hailed for her performances as Desdemona in *Otello* and the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. She made a debut in the title role of *Norma* during the 1978-79 season in Zurich. In the 1979-80 season Miss Price's United States engagements included performances of *Simon Boccanegra* in Chicago and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Sir Georg Solti and the Chicago Symphony. In Europe she was heard in the title role of Rossini's *Semiramide* and as Odabella in Verdi's *Attila*, in addition to Elisabetta in *Don Carlo*, Aida and the Countess in Munich, Desdemona in Hamburg, Fiordiligi in Vienna and the Countess

in Paris. In great demand as a concert soloist, Miss Price has also recorded extensively in opera, lieder and symphonic music.



## SUSAN QUITTMAYER

Mezzo-soprano Susan Quittmeyer, who made her San Francisco Opera debut last season as La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi* and Dorabella in the student and special family-priced matinee performances of *Così fan tutte*, sings five roles with the Company: Amelia's servant in *Simon Boccanegra*, a solo voice in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, the Maid in *Jenufa*, Annina in *La Traviata* and Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*. She performed the *Traviata* role in her Spring Opera debut in 1979 and was heard in Susa's *Transformations* this year. She portrayed Hermione in the world premiere of John Harbison's *Winter's Tale* to inaugurate the American Opera Project last August and this spring was Elmiere in the world premiere of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe* in the Project's second offering. Recipient of a master's degree in music from the Manhattan School of Music, she has appeared with the Asolo Opera Theater in Florida, the Opera Theater of St. Louis and as an apprentice with Santa Fe Opera in 1978 in such roles as Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*, the Third Lady in *The Magic Flute* and Maddalena in *Rigoletto*. This February she was heard as Siebel in *Faust* with the Baltimore Opera. Miss Quittmeyer is the U.S. Steel Affiliate Artist in her second year in the San Francisco/ Affiliate Artist-Opera Program.

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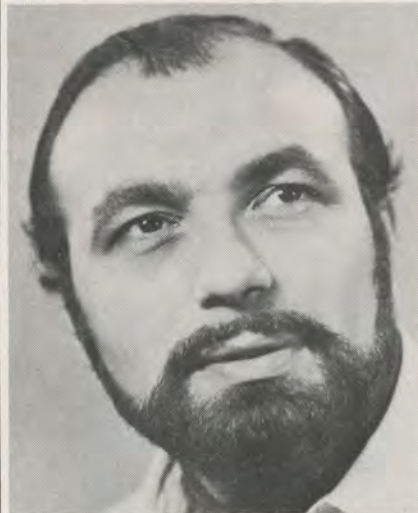
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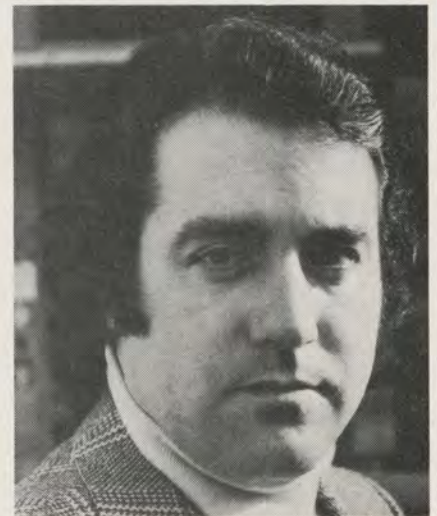
### RENATO BRUSON

In ever-increasing demand in the major opera houses throughout Europe and the United States, Renato Bruson, recognized as one of the world's leading Verdi baritones, sings the title part in *Simon Boccanegra*. He has performed the role at La Scala, in Verona, Parma and Santiago, Chile. Last year he flew from Chicago, where he was rehearsing Gérard in *Andrea Chenier*, to sing two performances of Don Carlo in *La Forza del Destino*, a role which he had previously portrayed with the San Francisco Opera during the 1976 season. Bruson made his Company debut on opening night of the 1973 season as Alfonso XI in *La Favorita*. His first operatic appearance was as Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* in Spoleto in 1961. Other Verdi roles in his repertoire include Macbeth, Rigoletto, Iago, Germont, Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Francesco Foscari in *I due Foscari*. Recent engagements in the Verdi roles were *La Traviata* at Covent Garden, *Macbeth* in Hamburg, *Otello* in Florence, *La Forza del Destino* in Munich, *Don Carlo* in Munich and Zurich, and *I due Foscari* in Buenos Aires. His future schedule includes several performances of *Macbeth* in Berlin, Lisbon and London. Bruson made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1969 as Ashton in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in 1978.

### GIORGIO LAMBERTI

Leading Italian tenor Giorgio Lamberti makes his first appearance with the San Francisco Opera as Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra*, the role of his Munich debut in 1974 and his Covent Garden debut in 1976. His in-

itial performance on the opera stage was as Arrigo in Verdi's *I Vespri Siciliani* with the Rome Opera in 1964. Other important debut roles were Radames in Chicago (1965), Don José in *Carmen* at the Verona Arena (1970), Arrigo at La Scala (1970), Radames in Vienna (1973), Cavardossi in *Tosca* at the Metropolitan Opera (1974) and Radames in Berlin (1977). In 1977 he also appeared in Munich in *Tosca*, *La Bohème*, *Il Trovatore* and *L'Africaine*, in Naples in *Macbeth* and in Brussels in *Madama Butterfly*. Other Verdi roles in the tenor's

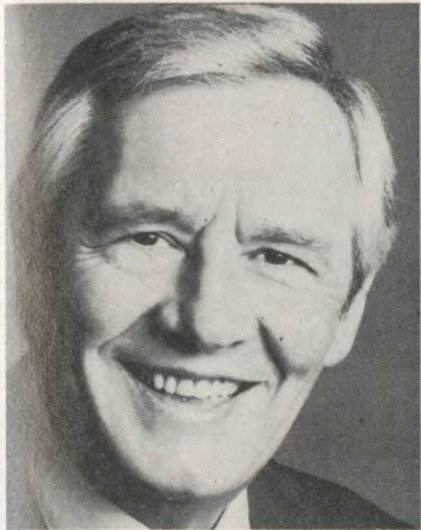


repertoire include Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* and the title role in *Don Carlo*, which have recently been heard in Munich and Berlin, and Jacopo Foscari in *I due Foscari*, heard in 1979 in Buenos Aires. That year he also appeared in *Manon Lescaut* in Rome and *Norma* in Cologne. This spring Lamberti sang Alvaro in Munich and Radames with the Metropolitan Opera.

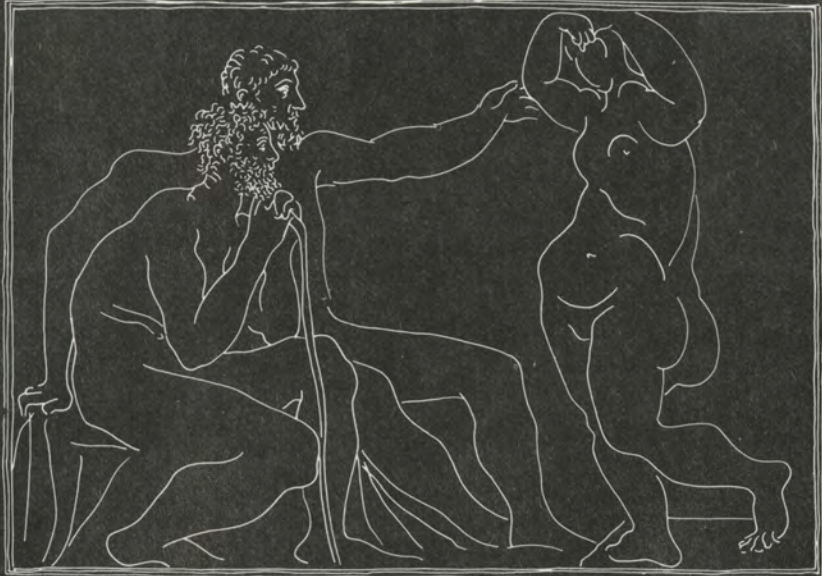
### CESARE SIEPI

Veteran bass Cesare Siepi returns to the San Francisco Opera to sing Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*, a role with which he has long been associated and which he recently performed in Milan and Zurich. He bowed with the San Francisco Opera as Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino* and in the title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 1954 and portrayed Don Giovanni and Méphistophélès in *Faust* the following year. He enacted the title role in Mozart's *dramma giocoso* again here in 1968 and will sing it during the first summer festival weeks in 1981. This year marks the 40th anniversary of Siepi's opera debut as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*. Soon





after his La Scala debut in *Nabucco* following the War, he was chosen by Arturo Toscanini to participate in the Boito celebrations at that theater. Siepi made his Metropolitan Opera debut on opening night of the 1950 season as King Philip in *Don Carlo* to inaugurate the directorship of Rudolf Bing, and was the only singer to repeat a leading role in that opera at the final performance of the Bing régime in 1972. In more than 20 years as leading bass with the Met he sang 17 roles, including Figaro, Don Giovanni, Méphistophélès, Boris Godunov and, his last new role with that company, Gurnemanz in *Parsifal*. Siepi made his successful bow on Broadway in *Bravo Giovanni* and returned to star in the Lerner and Lane musical, *Carmelina*, last year. In December of 1979 he was awarded the coveted Verdi d'Oro prize in Buseto, the composer's home town, where he participated in the Friends of Verdi Society concert, singing "Il lacerato spirito" from *Simon Boccanegra*, among other selections. Earlier this year the bass sang Sarastro in a new production of *The Magic Flute* in Venice.



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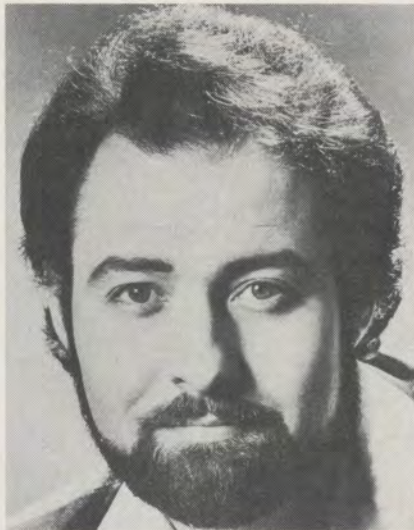


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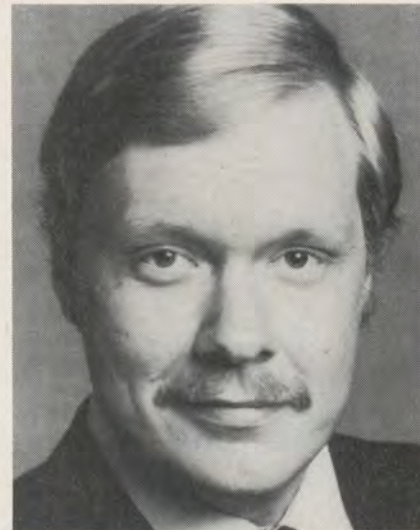
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PROFILES



**FREDERICK BURCHINAL**  
Baritone Frederick Burchinal, who bowed with the San Francisco Opera as Mr. Flint in the 1978 production of *Billy Budd*, is heard as Paolo in *Simon Boccanegra*. He first came to the attention of the opera world with his portrayal of the travel bureau agent in the American premiere of Britten's *Death in Venice* at the Metropolitan Opera in 1974. The following year he made his debut with Spring Opera as the Composer in Donizetti's *Viva la Mamma* and sang Rabbi David in Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz* with that company in 1976. In that year he made his European debut with the Netherlands Opera and returned there in 1978 for Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*. Among Burchinal's roles are Rigoletto, with which he opened the 1976-77 season of the Virginia Opera, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Scarpia in *Tosca*, which he has performed with the Virginia Opera, the Connecticut Opera, the Hawaii Opera Theatre and the Denver Symphony. Last season he created the role of Scrooge in Thea Musgrave's new opera, *A Christmas Carol*. Other engagements for 1979-80 included *Il Trovatore* in Mexico City, his first Escamillo in *Carmen* in Caracas, and the leading baritone roles in *Cavalleria/Pagliacci* in Providence. For New York City Opera he has sung Germont in *La Traviata*, Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Scarpia and Enrico. With Miami Opera he has been heard in the title role of *Falstaff* and as Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*. Last season Burchinal made his Broadway debut as Tony in a revival of *The Most Happy Fella*.



**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.



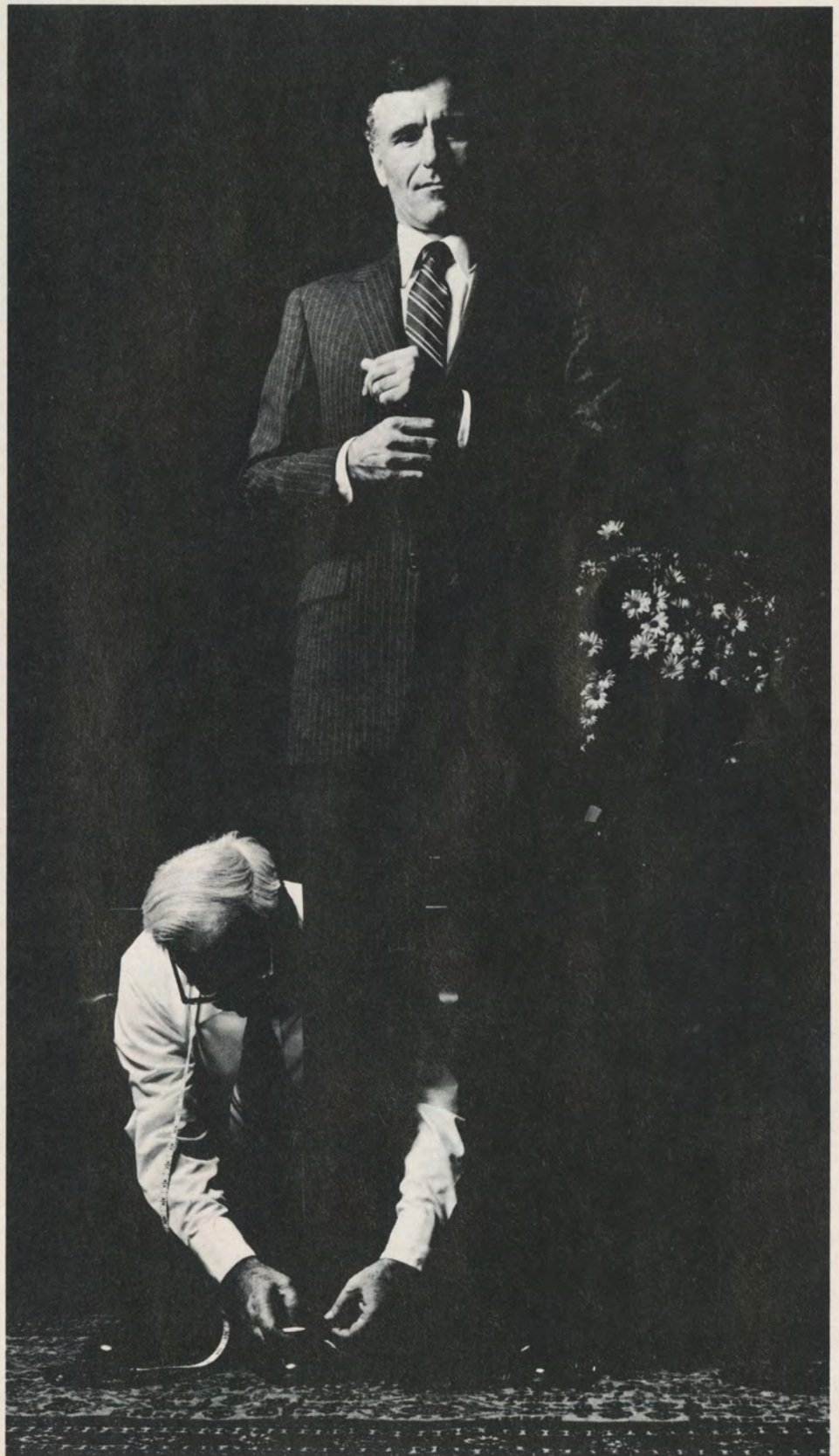
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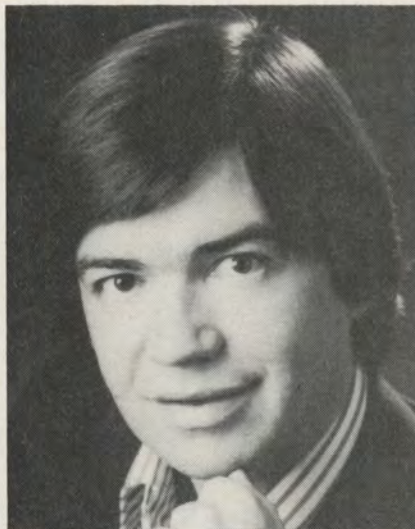


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## PROFILES



### ROBERT TATE

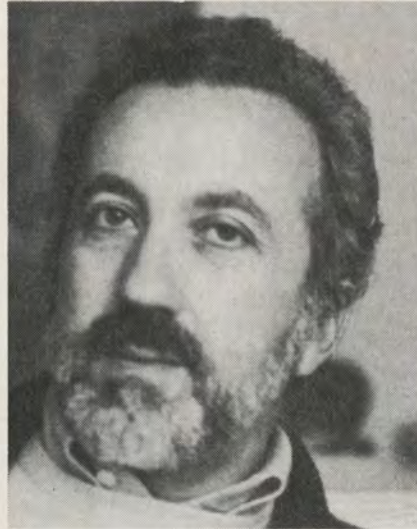
In his first season with the San Francisco Opera tenor Robert Tate performs four roles: the Messenger of the Philistines in *Samson et Dalila*, Captain of the guards in *Simon Boccanegra*, Gastone in *La Traviata* and the first farmer in *I Pagliacci*. He made his Spring Opera debut in the ensemble of 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.



### LAMBERTO GARDELLI

Lamberto Gardelli makes his San Francisco Opera debut conducting *Simon Boccanegra*. He began his career as a pianist and double bass player in his native Italy. He studied singing and composing, and his works have been performed in many countries. Gardelli spent eight years as assistant to Tullio Serafin, during which time he also worked with Mascagni. From 1946 to 1955 he appeared as permanent guest conductor of the Royal Swedish Orchestra and then Court Conductor after the reopening of the Drottningholm Theater. He was permanent conductor of the Danish Radio Orchestra from 1955 to 1961, when he succeeded Otto Klemperer at the Budapest Orchestra, where he still appears as a regular guest. He has also held appointments as musical director of the Stadttheater in Berne and at the Royal Opera in Copenhagen. Gardelli made his British debut at Glyndebourne in 1964 with *Macbeth* and his American debut that same year with *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at Carnegie Hall. He bowed with the Metropolitan Opera in 1966 conducting *Andrea Chenier* and has subsequently led *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata* and *Madama Butterfly* with that company. His Covent Garden credits include *Otello*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci*, *Rigoletto*, *I Lombardi*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and, most recently, *Norma*. Gardelli has received highest praise for his "early Verdi" series of recordings for the Philips label.





### SONJA FRISELL

In her fifth season with the San Francisco Opera, stage director Sonja Frisell revives *Simon Boccanegra* in a production which she originally directed for the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1974 and locally in 1975. She received critical raves for the new production of *Un Ballo in Maschera* during the 1977 season, when she also staged *Aida*. She returned in 1978 for *Norma* and *Werther*, and the following year for *Don Carlo*. She has been on the staff of La Scala, Milan, for 15 years; in 1972 she became staff producer there and since 1974 has been responsible for new productions, revivals and restagings. She made her American debut with a new production of Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* in Chicago in 1969 and returns there this season to stage the San Francisco Opera production of *Un Ballo in Maschera*. New productions she has directed are *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Canadian Opera, Vivaldi's *Tito Manlio* for Piccola Scala, *Fidelio* in Venice, *La Favorita* in Bregenz and *Don Pasquale* in Montepulciano. Other engagements during the 1980-81 season include her debut with the Houston Grand Opera for *Un Ballo in Maschera*, remounting the La Scala production of that work for the Paris Opera, and staging *Carmen* in Madrid. Miss Frisell received operatic training at the Glyndebourne Festival Opera and the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, where she studied with Carl Ebert. She has also been assistant to Franco Enrigues, Margherita Wallmann and Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, and has worked closely with Franco Zeffirelli on such productions as *La Traviata*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Otello*.

### PIER LUIGI PIZZI

The work of world-renowned Italian designer Pier Luigi Pizzi is again represented at the San Francisco Opera by his production of *Simon Boccanegra*, which had its premiere at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1974 and was first seen here the following year. Other Chicago credits are *Maria Stuarda*, *La Bobème*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata* and *Manon Lescaut*. Pizzi made his La Scala debut with *Il Trovatore* and subsequently has created productions of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Ernani*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Aida*, *La Cenerentola*, *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *I Masnadieri*, which he also directed, for that theater. Other recent director/designer assignments include *Don Giovanni* in Turin, *Il Trovatore* in Florence, *Fedora* in Bologna and Naples, Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudon* in Rome and *I due Foscari* at La Scala. Pizzi has also designed *Die Zauberflöte* in Stuttgart, Mascagni's *Parisina* in Rome, *Otello* and Donizetti's *Les Martyrs* in Venice, Vivaldi's *Orlando* in Verona, *Aida* in Genoa and *Porporino* for the 1979 Aix-en-Provence Festival. For the 1980 festival in Aix he designed the production of Rossini's *Semiramide*, which featured Montserrat Caballé and Marilyn Horne. Among the designer's many awards are the Premio San Genesio (the Italian equivalent of the Tony) and the Nettuno d'Oro.

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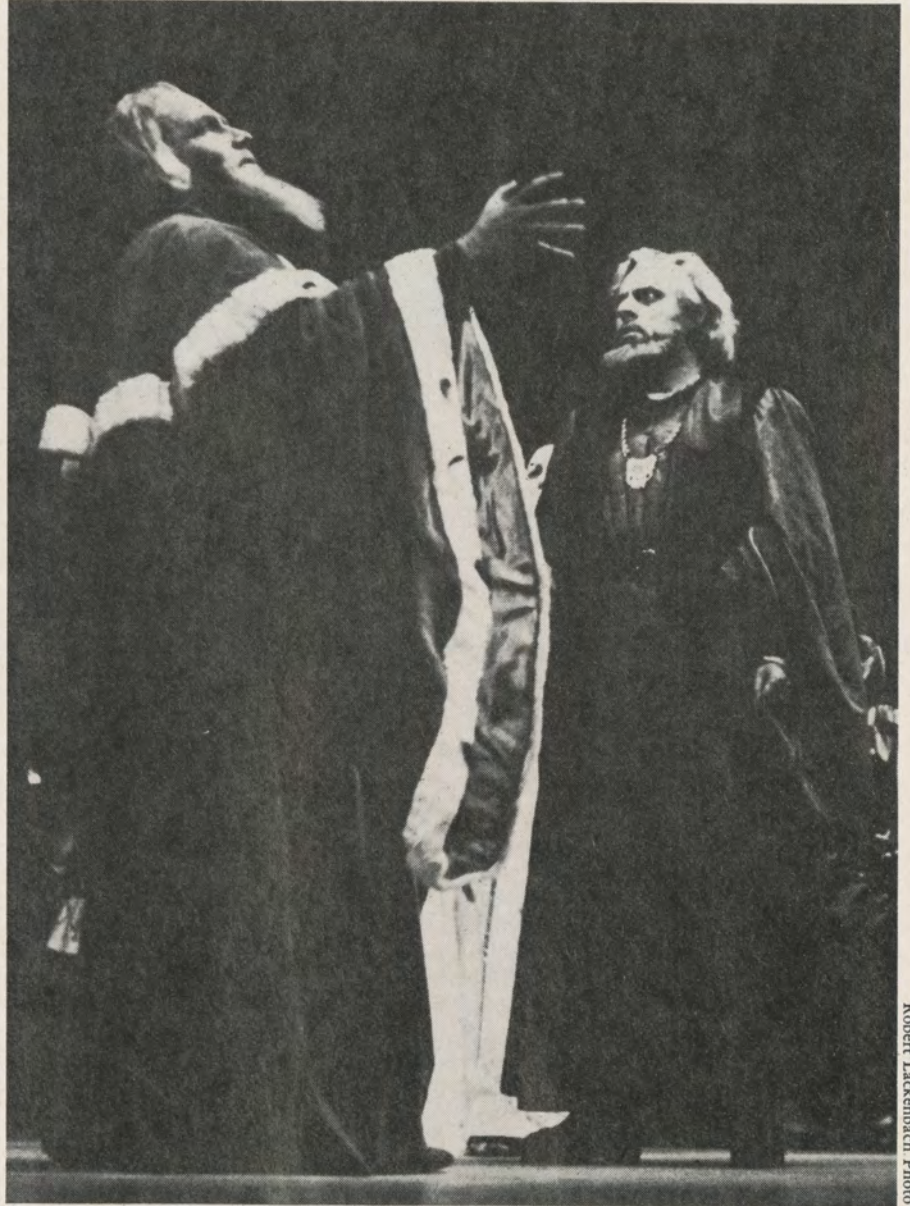
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Leonard Warren and Boris Christoff as Boccanegra and Fiesco in the final scene from the 1956 production of *Simon Boccanegra*.



Robert Lackenbach Photo

# The Boccanegra Fiesco Duets

If *Simon Boccanegra's* keystone is the famed Council Chamber scene, its pillars of support are two remarkable, matched duets for baritone and bass.



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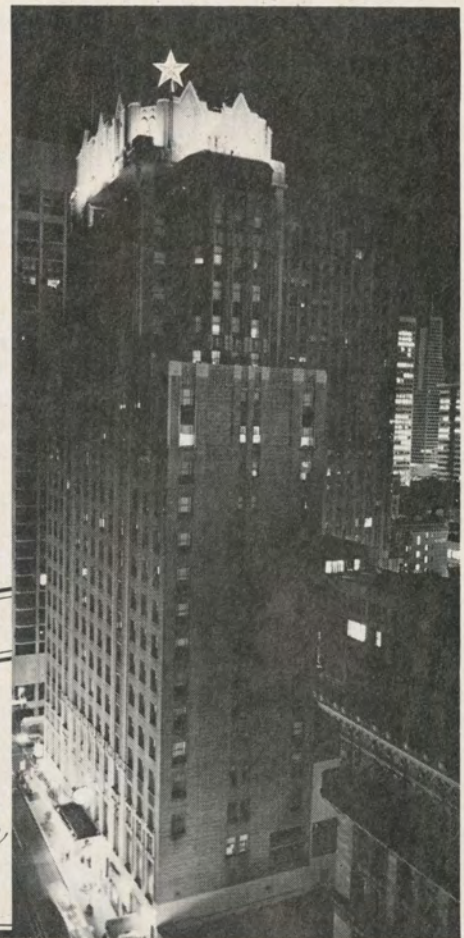
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By GEORGE MARTIN

Is the plot of *Simon Boccanegra* beyond comprehension? I think not—if only some facts about the opera's structure are firmly grasped. But, since the opera's premiere in 1857, many have thought otherwise.

Abramo Basevi, who in 1859 published the first serious study of Verdi's operas,<sup>1</sup> complained in capital letters that to grasp the plot at all he had to read the libretto "no less than SIX TIMES." His irritation carried over to the music, and he wrote strongly against certain new tendencies in Verdi that he characterized as "Wagnerian." But by 1881, when Verdi produced his revision of the opera, critics and audiences alike were ready to rejoice in those musical

<sup>1</sup>Abramo Basevi, *Studio sulle opere di Giuseppe Verdi*, Firenze, Tipografia Tofani, 1859, with a chapter on each of the twenty operas, including revisions, from *Nabucco* (1842) through *Aroldo* (1857).

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parts that Basevi had condemned. Complaints about the plot, however, continued.

Yet even acknowledging the plot complications, much comes clear if only one starts with the idea that the opera's action is an arch through time resting on two matched pillars, which are more important to the opera's structure than its keystone in the revised version, the dazzling Council Chamber scene. These two matched pillars are the duets, with their introductory scenes, for Boccanegra (baritone) and Fiesco (bass) that Verdi placed at the center of the Prologue, the opera's opening scene, and of Act III, the closing scene.

These duets, so important structurally, are also interesting musically, for they well represent Verdi's new style to which Basevi's generation objected but which those succeeding came to admire. Happily, the duets cannot be mistaken or confused with others, for they occur at the only two points in the opera when Boccanegra and Fiesco are brought face to face. And at their meetings sparks fly.

The Prologue opens with politicking. Paolo, a leader of the People's Party in Genoa, persuades his lieutenant, Pietro, to switch the party's backing for Doge in the morning's election to the naval hero Simon Boccanegra. After Pietro leaves to organize the ward leaders, Paolo persuades Boccanegra to accept the nomination by insinuating that the proud patrician Fiesco will not be able to deny his daughter Maria to a man, however humbly born, who has become Doge. As both know, Fiesco keeps his daughter, who several years earlier had run away with Boccanegra, imprisoned in the family's palace.

This dialogue with Paolo offers the first musical clue to Boccanegra's personality, one developed consistently throughout the opera. Despite his victories over pirates at sea, despite his popularity in the city, Boccanegra is a gloomy, depressed man. He has lost his beloved Maria to her father by kidnapping and, a fact which Paolo ignores, he has lost their child, a daughter Maria, who disappeared, possibly kidnapped by pirates. This double loss has entered his soul and saddened him.

Listen to the downward turn he often gives his phrases throughout the opera and, in this Prologue, always gives to the name "Maria," to descriptions of his wife in-all-but-clerical-blessing and his lost daughter: "vittima," "misera," "trista." There is, of course, nothing inherently sad in the name "Maria." Think of the aria of joy Bernstein made of it in *West Side Story*. But for Boccanegra that downward turn of phrase is characteristic.

After a scene in which Paolo and Pietro excite their followers to campaign for Boccanegra, the stage clears, and

Fiesco comes out of his palace, alone. Here the parallel nature of the opera's structural pillars first emerges, for though the chief facet of each is its duet, each duet is preceded by a solo scene of desolation for one of the two characters; in the Prologue, Fiesco; in Act III, Boccanegra.

With his first phrase Fiesco bids his ancestral palace farewell forever, revealing by this extraordinary action that he is a man capable of uniquely intense emotions. The palace has become a tomb. Maria has died, and Fiesco curses her seducer. Addressing an icon embedded in the wall, he asks the Virgin why she did not protect his daughter's virginity. Then, pulling back from blasphemy and pleading his tortured spirit—"il lacerato spirito"—he begs pardon: May Maria in heaven pray for him.

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The opera's action is an arch through time resting on two, matched pillars, the duets for Boccanegra and Fiesco. . . .

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During the orchestral postlude that continues the intensity of feeling in the aria, several persons leave the palace, and Fiesco, racked by grief, moves into the shadows. Into this charged atmosphere hurries Boccanegra, looking for Paolo. He is excited and happy, ignorant still of Maria's death. His name, he murmurs, is on every lip; soon, perhaps, Maria will be able to call him husband. Even here "Maria" is a downward phrase.

The duet begins as the two men recognize each other in surprise and Fiesco, venting his hate, curses the man his daughter loved. As the duet proceeds, it will divide in two short movements and an even shorter coda, the division between the movements easily recognized by Boccanegra's baring his chest for Fiesco to strike.

Three points of musical style are worth noting at the start, for these are what enraged Verdi's original critic, Basevi: (1) the voices never sing together or even overlap; (2) the tunes given them are so short as to be mere phrases, unable to be developed into recognizable stanzas that might give the duet an obvious structure; and (3) for several bars at a time Boccanegra sings on one note while the orchestra carries the melody or at least the harmonic changes. "This is so much [music] of the future," Basevi thundered, "that Wagner himself would not have dared to advance so far."

To prove his point, Basevi cited the Venus-Tannhäuser duet in Act I of *Tannhäuser* where "not only do the characters sing together more often, but they even repeat three times the same theme, which is very long and devel-



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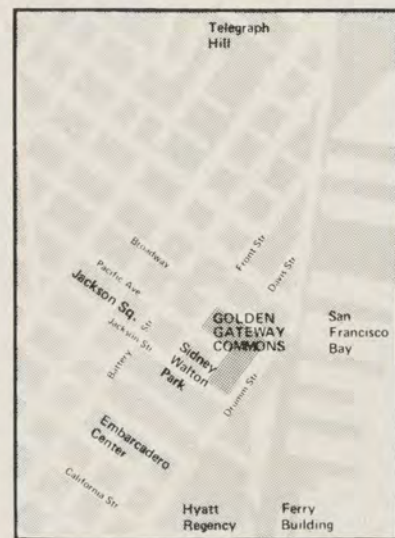
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oped." But Wagner, in 1870, with the love duet in Act I of *Die Walküre*, would exceed by far what Basevi had proclaimed him incapable of daring.

Since Verdi in his revision did not change the duet in these respects, Basevi indirectly suggests why *Boccanegra* in its original version failed: Verdi's shift in style was too great for his audiences to absorb. In 1857 the average Italian opera lover took for granted that a duet meant voices singing together, with a tune repeating in stanzas, and carried always by the voice. Think of *La Traviata*, only four years old, with its "Libiamo" and "Parigi, o cara"! But in these *Boccanegra* duets Verdi sought drama in a different

---

**Between the two duets  
Boccanegra and Fiesco have  
not met "beard to beard,"  
as Arrigo Boito put it. . . .**

---

style, more conversational, with quicker shifts in subject and emotion—like the Germont-Violetta duet in *Traviata*, only more so.

Out of the shadows steps Fiesco and, while the orchestra rattles in fury, he hurls at Boccanegra two phrases of hate. Boccanegra replies softly, sticking close to one note while the violins and oboe sound an expressive phrase: "Father, kneeling to you, I ask your pardon"—"Too late"—"Don't be cruel"—"Too late!"

Rising, Boccanegra states to a brief, slightly martial tune, his hope that his naval victories might make him an acceptable son-in-law. Fiesco approves the bravery but replies with increasing fury that Boccanegra, even if elected Doge, would be an object of loathing to God and the Fieschi. "Peace," cries Boccanegra. "No peace," retorts Fiesco, "until one of us dies." Then, "Strike and bury your hate here," cries Boccanegra, offering his chest, and the first movement of the duet, *allegro agitato*, ends with Fiesco disdaining the role of assassin.

The second begins quietly and at a slower pace. Fiesco softly suggests that if Boccanegra will surrender the grandchild, then pardon is possible. "But I cannot," Boccanegra cries. "Fate has robbed me." To a nautical rhythm,  $\frac{3}{8}$  *andantino*, he describes sailing along the coast to visit his daughter. The house door, he discovered, was closed and locked. It is during this brief narration that, to Basevi's disgust, Boccanegra sings eight measures on the same note instead of repeating the tune in a second stanza. The housekeeper was dead. "And

the child?" asks Fiesco. The child—"misera, trista"—sings Boccanegra in downward phrases, had disappeared. "In vain," he ends, "have I searched."

"Then," sings Fiesco, in the very brief coda, "there can be no peace between us. Addio." "With my love," Boccanegra pleads, meaning for the mother as well as the missing child, "I can placate you." But Fiesco turns away. "M'odi—Hear me!" Boccanegra calls, rising to a high F. "Addio," Fiesco repeats, sinking to an F two octaves below. Emotionally and musically, baritone and bass hardly could be further apart.

Left alone, Boccanegra enters Fiesco's palace, discovers the corpse of his beloved Maria, and staggers out to hear from the gathering crowd that he has been elected Doge. Curtain and, in the intermission, passage of 25 years.

The series of events that now take place form the arch of the opera's story. After the prologue, it rises swiftly to the finale of Act I, the Council Chamber scene, in which Boccanegra, by imposing peace on warring factions through sheer personality, magnificently displays his humanity and moral authority. Then it descends more slowly, through events increasingly personal, to its other supporting pillar, Boccanegra's second meeting with Fiesco and the duet in which the two men are reconciled.

Between the duets Boccanegra and Fiesco have not met "beard to beard"—as Arrigo Boito put it in a letter to Verdi while they worked on the opera's revision—and over the years Boccanegra has assumed that Fiesco, who disappeared the night of the election, has died. But Fiesco has been living quietly on the Grimaldi estates outside of Genoa where he has acted as unofficial guardian to Amelia Grimaldi, whose parents are dead and whose brothers are in exile for opposition to Doge Boccanegra. Fiesco has raised the girl from childhood, lavishing on her all the parental love he felt for his daughter Maria and his lost grandchild. His kindness, however, has also had a political motivation. As long as Amelia Grimaldi lives, the hated Doge Boccanegra cannot confiscate the Grimaldi estates, which are financing much of the political opposition to him. And, as Fiesco knows, the true Amelia Grimaldi died as a child and a foundling was secretly substituted for her.

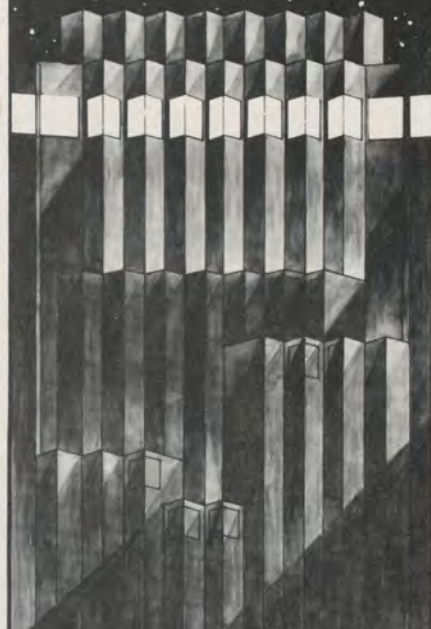
By the second meeting of Boccanegra and Fiesco, which Verdi placed at the center of Act III, each knows something of importance of which the other is ignorant. Boccanegra has discovered that the so-called Amelia Grimaldi is his long lost daughter Maria, Fiesco's supposedly dead grandchild, and Fiesco knows that Boccanegra is dying, poisoned by his political manager, Paolo, because he blocked Paolo's plan to marry Amelia-Maria.

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Ingvar Wixell and Martti Talvela in the Act III reconciliation duet from the 1975 production of *Simon Boccanegra*.

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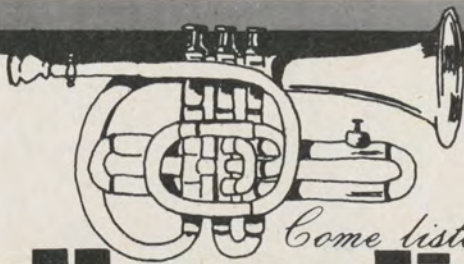


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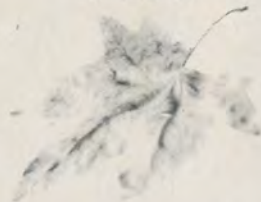
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This second duet, like its counterpart in the Prologue, is preceded by a solo scene of desolation, here for Boccanegra. He enters a room in the Doge's Palace in which Fiesco, still vengeful, lurks in the shadows. Boccanegra has come from the wedding ceremony in which his daughter Amelia-Maria is marrying Gabriele Adorno, a hot-headed aristocrat of whom the Doge thinks little. He feels old, sick and defeated. As he enters, the music, with frequent pauses, drags itself part-way up a chromatic scale, then slips back, exhausted.

What Verdi surely wanted  
was a ferocious,  
Old Testament quality....

Softly, strings alone begin a quavering phrase. "Oh, refrigerio—What a relief," Boccanegra sighs, going to the window, "the sea breeze!" The phrase leads into an *arioso* that today, though the tune shifts constantly between voice and orchestra, many persons consider the most moving music of the opera. "Il mare!—the sea" he sings softly, to a downward phrase. "Il mar . . . il mar . . . Why in its embrace did I not find a tomb?"

"Better for you," bursts out Fiesco, as yet unrecognized, and the duet begins. It is longer than the first, having three movements and a coda instead of two, and each of the movements in itself is longer and more developed. On the whole, however, Basevi disliked this duet, too, and for the same reasons.

In the brief recitative that leads into the first movement, for example, Boccanegra answers Fiesco's phrases while clinging for the most part to Fiesco's note: "Who dares to address me?"—"One who does not fear you"—"Guards!" "You call in vain . . ." To Basevi this repetitive setting was unimaginative, but to a modern Verdi scholar, Julian Budden, it neatly "suggests a man caught in a nightmarish trance."

Fiesco launches the first movement, *largo*, notable for its descending phrases. He predicts with pleasure that Boccanegra soon will be able to read God's handwriting on the wall: "Your star is eclipsed; your Dogeship will end in ruins." Without a repetition the long phrases build to an apocalyptic climax: "You will die amid the ghosts of those you have killed."

Boccanegra, in a connecting passage to the next movement, gasps: "Those tones . . . Can it be? . . . Fiesco!" To which Fiesco replies, "The dead salute you!" But in his joy he misses the implication of Boccanegra's response, "Kind God! Granted at last my heart's desire!"





Lawrence Tibbett (below) and Ezio Pinza (above) as protagonists Boccanegra and Fiesco in San Francisco Opera's premiere production of *Simon Boccanegra* in 1941.



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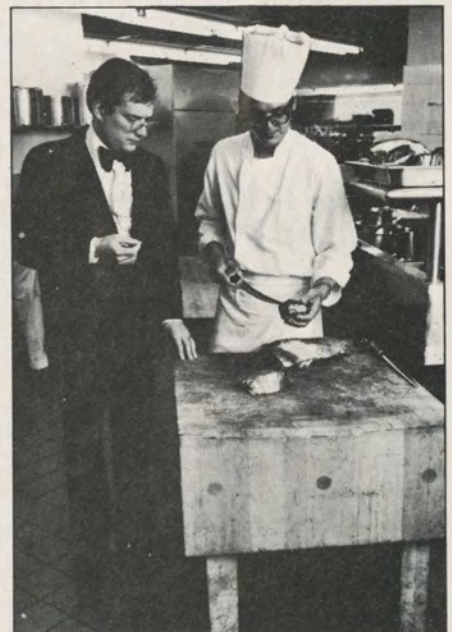
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Tito Gobbi as the Doge Boccanegra in the 1960 production of *Simon Boccanegra*.



Maria Jeanette Photo

The orchestra introduces the second movement, *allegro assai*, with a chain of triplets sliding down the scale while Fiesco intones on one note, "Like a phantom Fiesco appears before you," concluding on a rising sequence of punched-out chords, "an ancient wrong to avenge." But Boccanegra sings of the peace that Fiesco heralds. "Like a phantom . . ." Fiesco repeats furiously. (Basevi thought this *allegro* was "neither pleasant nor touching," but what Verdi surely wanted was a ferocious, Old Testament quality.) Again Boccanegra softly replies: "An angel will seal our friendship."

Fiesco starts a long connecting passage to the third movement: "What do you mean?" Referring to their first duet, Boccanegra reminds him of the condition on which Fiesco once had offered peace between them. Now, in Amelia Grimaldi, the lost grandchild is found.

"Heavens!" cries Fiesco, in an abrupt change of key. (Basevi thought the change lacked "proper preparation.") "Why does the truth come to me so late?" The orchestra gradually shifts into a long series of sobbing phrases as Boccanegra says: "You weep . . . Why do you turn from me? . . . Why?"

In the third movement, *largo*, Fiesco explains: "I weep because through you I hear heaven's voice. I feel its rebuke in your pity." While the orchestra continues its sobbing phrases, Boccanegra asks to embrace him, "padre di Maria," and for the first time in either duet the voices begin to blend ("About time!" snapped Basevi). And whereas in the first duet the men ended two

octaves apart, here they end the movement on the same note—and, according to the opera's production book, in an embrace.

The coda follows instantly with Fiesco warning Boccanegra that he is poisoned, and Boccanegra asking Fiesco not to tell Amelia-Maria, not yet. Their exclamations once again end on the same note, as Boccanegra sinks into a chair. Reconciliation has been achieved. Love has conquered hate.

The married couple and the wedding guests enter, and Boccanegra reveals to his daughter that Fiesco is her mother's father and that he himself now is dying. He blesses the couple, and the opera closes with a quartet finale for soprano, tenor, baritone, bass and chorus that in both its original and slightly revised form (chiefly, Verdi added women's voices to the chorus) has always won universal admiration. Basevi thought it the most beautiful piece in the opera and especially liked the slow, synopated, descending line for the soprano that seemed "so very well adapted to the desperation of her weeping."

The finale is, indeed, very beautiful, but it is a set number, a static piece, a death scene. The action of the opera, at least of the personal strand in its story, lies in those two duets, as does a chapter in the history of aesthetics: changing views of what is considered beautiful. ■

GEORGE MARTIN's books include *Verdi, His Music, Life and Times* and, most recently, *The Opera Companion to Twentieth-Century Opera*.

Carolyn Mason Jones Photo



Giorgio Tozzi, who sang Fiesco opposite Gobbi's Boccanegra.



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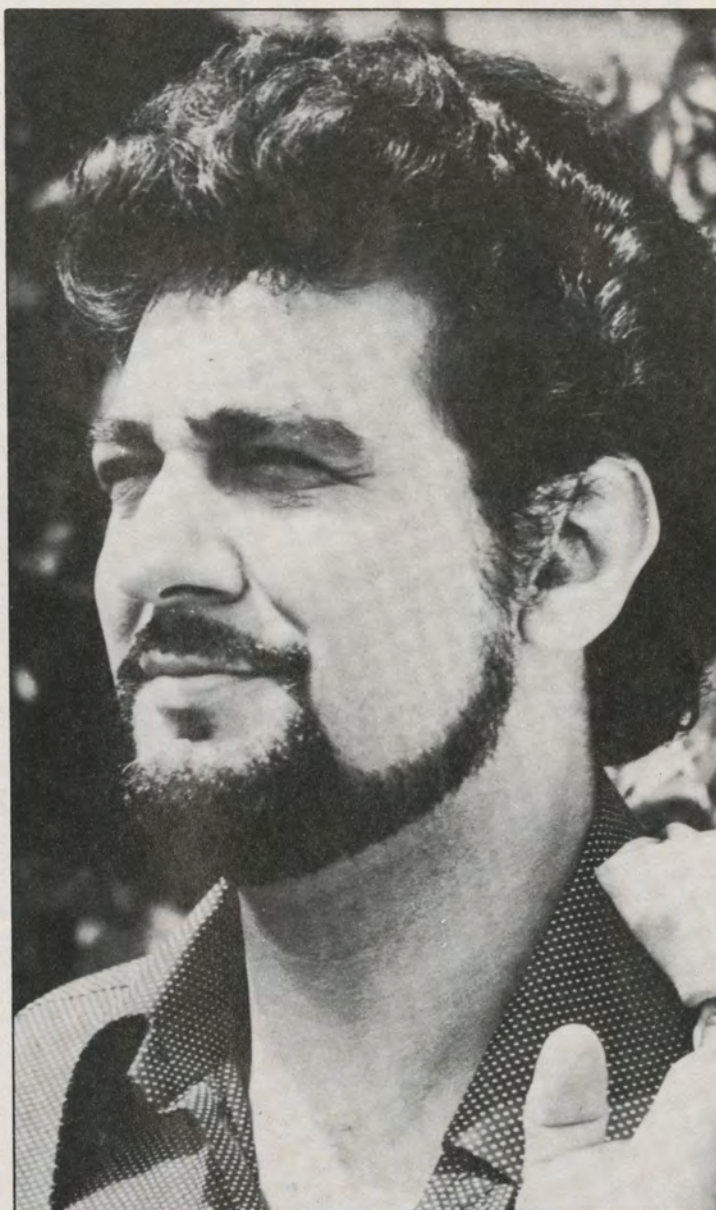
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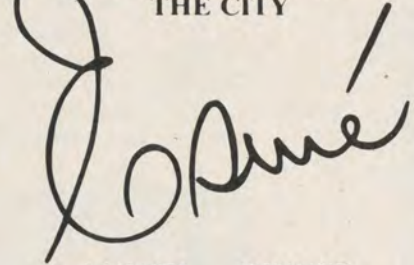
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# NEVADA ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

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  
Joey Heatherton

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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

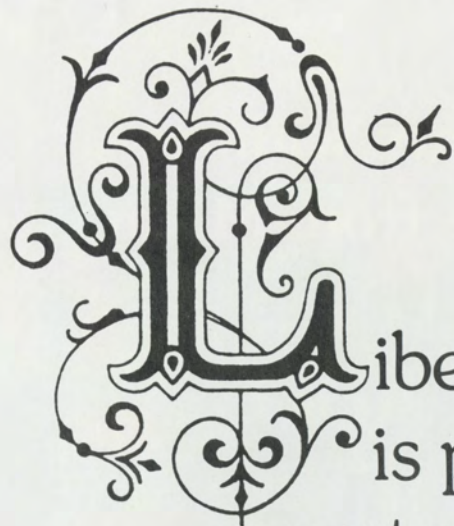
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday			
<p><b>SEPTEMBER</b>                      Park concert                      Sunday, September 7                      Golden Gate Park, 2 p.m.                      Kurt Herbert Adler                      conducting the San                      Francisco Opera                      Orchestra                      with Shirley Verrett,                      Placido Domingo</p>	8	Samson et Dalila 7:30 pm	9 D, E			
			Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	10 **G, H		
	15 A, B	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	16	Simon Boccanegra 7:30 pm	17 D, F	
	22	Simon Boccanegra 8 pm	23 A, C	Samson et Dalila 8 pm	24 R, T	
	29	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	30 R, T	Jenůfa 7:30 pm	1 D, E	
	6 A, C	Don Pasquale 8 pm	7 R, T	Jenůfa 8 pm	Don Pasquale 7:30 pm	8 D, E
<p><b>OCTOBER</b>                      Opera Fair                      Sunday, October 5                      War Memorial                      Opera House                      12 — 6 p.m.</p>	13	Jenůfa 8 pm	14 A, B	Magic Flute 7:30 pm	15 D, F	
	20	Magic Flute 8 pm	21 A, B	La Traviata 8 pm	22 R, T	
	27	La Traviata 8 pm	28 A, C	Arabella 7:30 pm	29 D, F	
	3	Arabella 8 pm	4 A, B	La Traviata 7:30 pm	5 D, E	
<p><b>NOVEMBER</b>                      Fol de Rol                      Thursday, November 13                      Civic Auditorium                      8 p.m.</p> <p>* 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</p>	10	Tristan und Isolde 7 pm	11 A, C	Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 7:30 pm	12 D, F	
	17 R, T	Arabella 8 pm	18 A, C	Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 8 pm	•Don Pasquale 1 pm Madama Butterfly 7:30 pm	19 D, F
	24	•Don Pasquale 1 pm Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 8 pm	25 R, S	Tristan und Isolde 7 pm	26 D, F	
	1	•Don Pasquale 1 pm	2 A, B	Madama Butterfly 8 pm	Don Pasquale (in English) 8 pm	3 R, T
	8	Samson et Dalila 7:30 pm	9 D, E	Die Frau ohne Schatten 8 pm	10 **G, H	
<p><b>DECEMBER</b>                      Letters designate                      subscription series</p>						



# 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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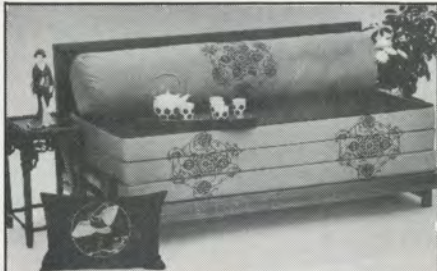
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## AFTER THE THEATRE

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Sep. 18-21—Marsha Lewis

Sep. 25-28—Sharon McKnight

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<b>Carlton 100's Soft Pack</b>	<b>less than 6</b>	<b>0.5</b>
Kent	11	0.9
Kent 100's	14	1.0
Merit	8	0.6
Merit 100's	10	0.7
Vantage	11	0.8
Vantage 100's	12	0.9
Winston Lights	14	1.1
Winston Lights 100's	13	1.0



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# San Francisco Opera

Kurt Herbert Adler, general director

Production from The Lyric Opera of Chicago, made possible by a generous gift from the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa

Opera in three acts by GIUSEPPE VERDI, revised version of 1881

Libretto by FRANCESCO MARIA PIAVE, revised by ARRIGO BOITO

## Simon Boccanegra

(IN ITALIAN)

*Conductor*

Lamberto Gardelli\*

*Stage Director*

Sonja Frisell

*Set and Costume Designer*

Pier Luigi Pizzi

*Chorus Director*

Richard Bradshaw

*Lighting Designer*

Joan Sullivan\*

*Musical Preparation*

Philip Highfill

*Prompter*

Susan Webb

*First performance: Venice, March 12, 1857*

*First performance revised version:*

*Milan, March 24, 1881*

*First San Francisco Opera performance:*

*November 1, 1941*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 AT 2:00

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 AT 7:30

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 AT 8:00

*Simon Boccanegra* radio broadcast live on September 26

CAST

(in order of appearance)

*Paolo Albani*

Frederick Burchinal

*Pietro*

Kevin Langan

*Simon Boccanegra*

Renato Bruson

*Jacopo Fiesco*

Cesare Siepi

*Amelia Grimaldi*

Margaret Price

*Gabriele Adorno*

Giorgio Lamberti\*

*Amelia's Servant*

Susan Quittmeyer

*Captain of the Guards*

Robert Tate

*Soldiers, sailors, people, senators, courtiers of the Doge*

\*San Francisco Opera debut

PLACE AND TIME: Genoa, middle of the fourteenth century

ACT I Piazza San Lorenzo in Genoa

INTERMISSION

ACT II Scene 1

The Grimaldi terrace twenty-five years later

Scene 2

Assembly room in the Ducal palace

INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1

Ducal chambers

Scene 2

Terrace in the Ducal palace

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 / SIMON BOCCANEGRA

### ACT I

Night in a square of Genoa. Paolo and Pietro are discussing the forthcoming election of a Doge for Genoa. Paolo persuades Pietro that they should back Simon Boccanegra, the preference of the populace, for that will gain them "gold, power, honor." Simon is approached, but lacks interest, until it is suggested that, as Doge, he would have the power to marry Maria, daughter of the wealthy Fiesco who scorns him as a commoner. A crowd of Genoese gather, and Paolo rallies them to the support of Boccanegra. The crowd is concerned about the whereabouts of Maria Fiesco, who has not left the family home for months. As the crowd disperses Fiesco appears to denounce Simon as the villain who has seduced his daughter and to lament her death. Simon returns, confronts Fiesco and pleads for forgiveness. Without telling him that Maria has died, Fiesco demands the daughter she bore him as the price of a reconciliation. This Simon cannot do, because she has disappeared. Fiesco leaves. Simon enters the darkened house, and discovers that Maria is dead. The crowd bursts in acclaiming Simon as Doge.

### ACT II

Scene I—Garden of the Grimaldi villa. Maria, the child of Boccanegra, has grown to maturity as the adopted daughter of the Grimaldis. Fiesco, now known as Andreas, is her guardian, unaware that she is his granddaughter. Gabriele Adorno, whom she hopes to marry, appears. She chides him for plotting with Andreas (and others) to overthrow Boccanegra, fearful that he may be captured and so destroy their plans to be married. A visitor is announced. It is Boccanegra, come—so she thinks—to represent Paolo as a candidate for marriage to Amelia. Instead, Boccanegra presents her with a pardon for the exiled Grimaldis. He is surprised that she is not really a Grimaldi. This leads to a further conversation about her background, and the information that develops raises the hope that she may, indeed, be his long-missing daughter, Maria. A locket that Amelia-Maria has carried since infancy matches one in Boccanegra's possession, and an emotional reunion ensues. As Simon leaves, Paolo approaches to find out how his suit has progressed. Simon tells him to abandon hope. Paolo plots to kidnap Amelia-Maria.

Scene II—The Council Chamber. Boccanegra implores his councillors to join the plea of Petrarch that Venice and Genoa be brought together. The suggestion is denounced. A sound of an uprising outside is joined by voices in the chamber attacking Boccanegra. He confronts them defiantly. Gabriele and Andreas-Fiesco are brought in, but it develops that Gabriele's wrath has

been directed against the kidnapers of Amelia-Maria, one of whom he has killed. Gabriele accuses Boccanegra of instigating the plot, but Amelia-Maria appears and transfers the guilt to another. As arguments rage, Boccanegra calls for all those who love Genoa to unite in a quest for peace, to abandon factionalism and hatred. Gabriele offers his sword to Boccanegra, who rejects it, but will hold him in custody until the plot is clarified. The Doge transfers his attention to Paolo, demanding that he join in a curse against the villain who has attempted to kidnap Amelia—implying, without saying so, that he knows that the guilty one is Paolo himself.

### ACT III

Scene I—Doge's Quarters. Paolo plans the assassination of Boccanegra: poison for him to drink, and if he should not, daggers to do him in. Fiesco and Gabriele are brought in. Fiesco rejects an invitation to join in the plot. When Paolo tells Gabriele that Amelia-Maria has been brought to the palace for Boccanegra's pleasure, the inflamed nobleman agrees to murder the Doge. Left alone, Gabriele denounces both. When Amelia appears, her protestations of innocence are useless. The Doge must die. Boccanegra enters after Gabriele withdraws, and tells his daughter that he is willing to pardon her husband-to-be if he repents. Alone, Boccanegra fills a glass from the carafe and drinks the poisoned water. He dozes. Gabriele appears with a drawn dagger, but before he can attack Boccanegra, Amelia-Maria returns and the Doge is identified as her father. The sound of an uprising outside rouses the repentant Gabriele to an action on behalf of the Doge, who promises Amelia-Maria to him in return.

Scene II—Interior of the Ducal Palace, with Genoa and the sea in the distance. Paolo and Andreas-Fiesco meet. The latter has been set free, the former is being led to his execution, but gloats that the poisoned Doge will be dead before he is. Offstage the sound of music from the wedding of Gabriele and Maria. Boccanegra appears, weak and suffering. Andreas-Fiesco approaches and denounces the Doge, revealing himself as the father of the girl whom Boccanegra had wanted to marry twenty-five years before. Boccanegra, surprisingly, welcomes the re-appearance of his old antagonist, for it provides him with the opportunity to return the daughter Fiesco demanded twenty-five years before, as the price of forgiveness. As death approaches, Amelia and Gabriele join Fiesco in easing Boccanegra's pain with tears of reconciliation. With his last breath, he instructs the Senators: "Let the Doge's crown circle the brow of Gabriele Adorno."

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