

Tristan und Isolde
(Tristan and Isolde)

1980

Friday, November 7, 1980 7:00 PM
Tuesday, November 11, 1980 7:00 PM
Sunday, November 16, 1980 1:00 PM
Friday, November 21, 1980 7:00 PM (live radio broadcast)
Wednesday, November 26, 1980 7:00 PM
Saturday, November 29, 1980 7:00 PM

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TRISTAN UND ISOLDE/1980

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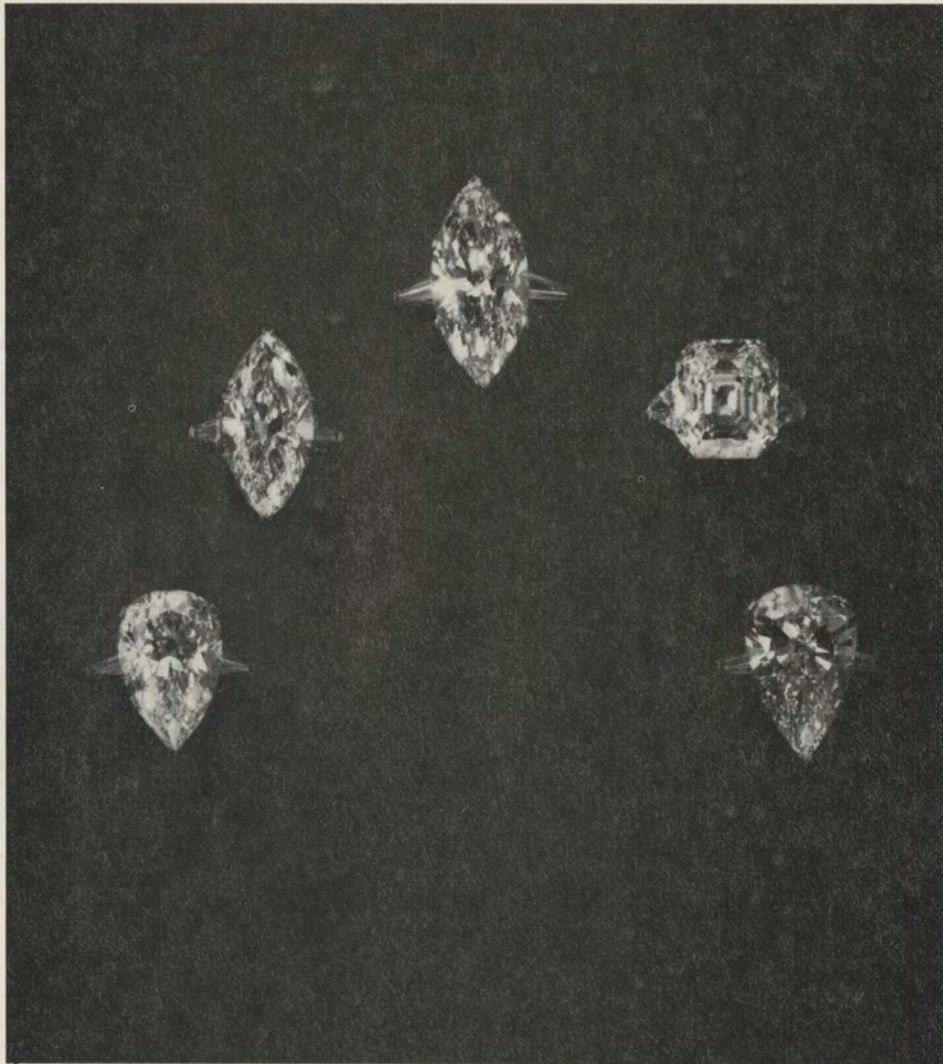
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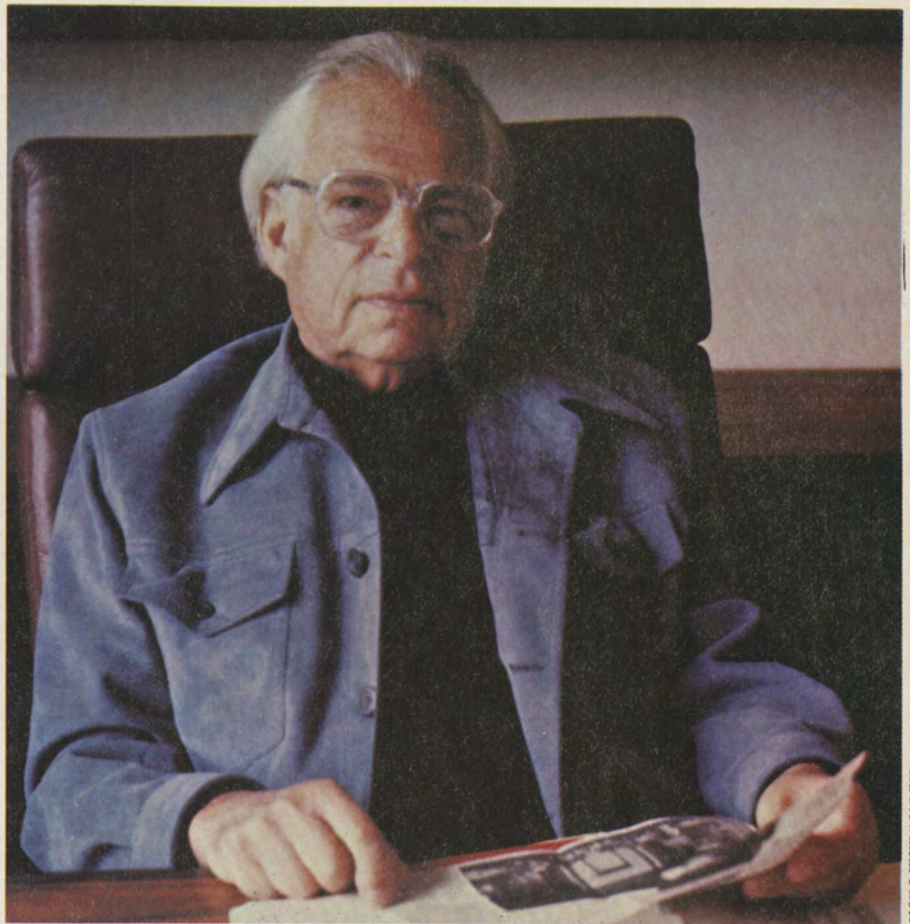
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Welcome to our new season and to the beginning of the busiest period in San Francisco Opera history. We are proud to present for you our 58th fall season, the longest in the company's history. The extraordinary demand for opera by our audiences is 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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Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

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

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TRISTAN UND ISOLDE/1980

FEATURES

From Faust(s) to Tristan by Irving Kolodin 38

Beethoven and Liszt exerted important influences on *Tristan und Isolde*, the greatest expression of romantic love in musical history.

Thoughts on Tristan by Thomas Mann 57

The equation of love and will in *Tristan* shows Wagner's debt to Schopenhauer.

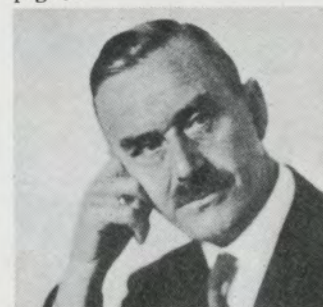
The Chord That Binds by Michael Steinberg 74

In a single chord Wagner created a totem so powerful that its briefest evocation can conjure a world of magic and love and death.

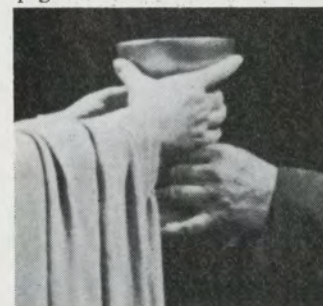
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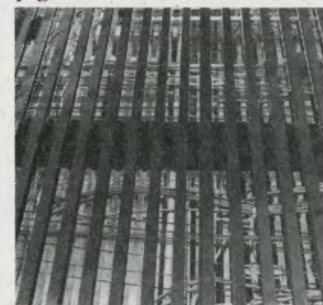
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58th Season

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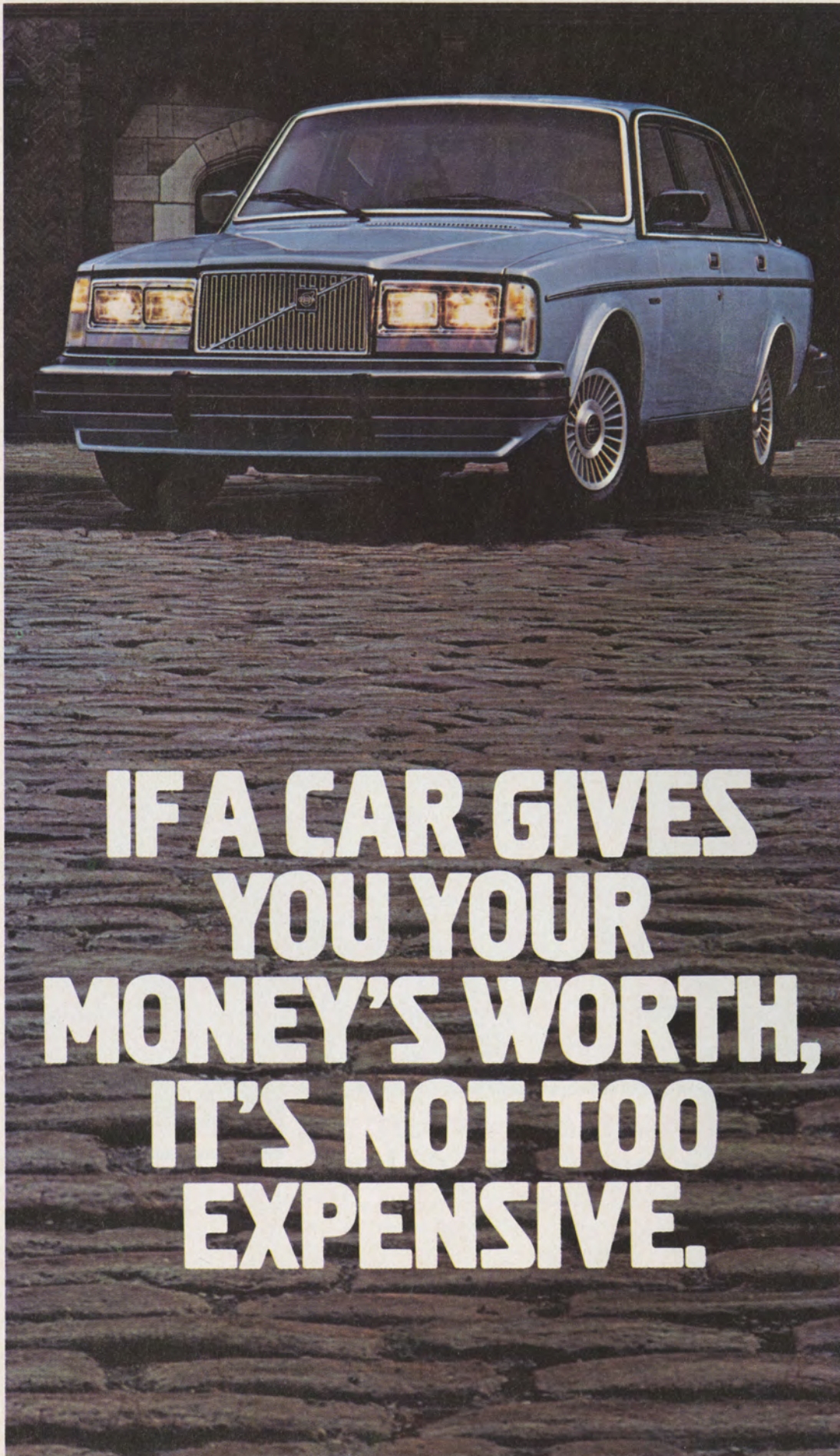
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 Barbara Riccardi
 Michael Sand
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 Celia Rosenberger

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 Virginia Price
 Felix Khuner
 Lev Rankov
 Eva Karasik
 Leonid Igudesman
 Gerard Svazlian
 Lani King
 Linda Deutsch

VIOLA

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 Lucien Mitchell
 Asbjorn Finess
 Jonna Hervig
 Ellen Smith
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CELLO

David Kadarauch *Principal*
 Samuel Cristler
 Doug Ischar
 Jonathan Kramer
 Jennifer Culp
 Helen Stross

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Charles Siani *Principal*
 Jon Lancelle
 Steven D'Amico
 Shinji Eshima
 Philip Karp

FLUTE

Walter Subke *Principal*
 Alice F. Miller
 Lloyd Gowen
 (Principal in *Simon Boccanegra*,
Don Pasquale, *The Magic Flute*
 and *La Traviata*)

PICCOLO

Lloyd Gowen

OBOE

James Matheson *Principal*
 Deborah Henry
 Raymond Dusté

ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Dusté

CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*
 Laurel Hall
 Gregory Dufford

BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

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Rufus Olivier *Principal*
 Jerry Dagg
 Robin Elliott

CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

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Kenneth Rafanan
Tom Reed
Robert Romanovsky
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Darlene Brock
Teresa Colyer
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Kathleen Hamon
Gloria Holmby
Elizabeth Kenady

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Roberta Maxwell
Linda Moody
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Ronald Ponce
Michael Yasko

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Teresa Davis
Avi Downes
Lara Downes

Shana Downes
Kristin Genis
Angela Harrison

Kirsten Mayer
Anna Savant
Elizabeth Warden

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Marti Kennedy
Cecilia Marta
Elvia Marta
Sherri Parks
Kathy Pruzan

Kathryn Roszak
Marika Sakellariou

Peter Childers
Jay Lehman
Darryl Lloyd

William Sanjer Ramsdell
James Shipley
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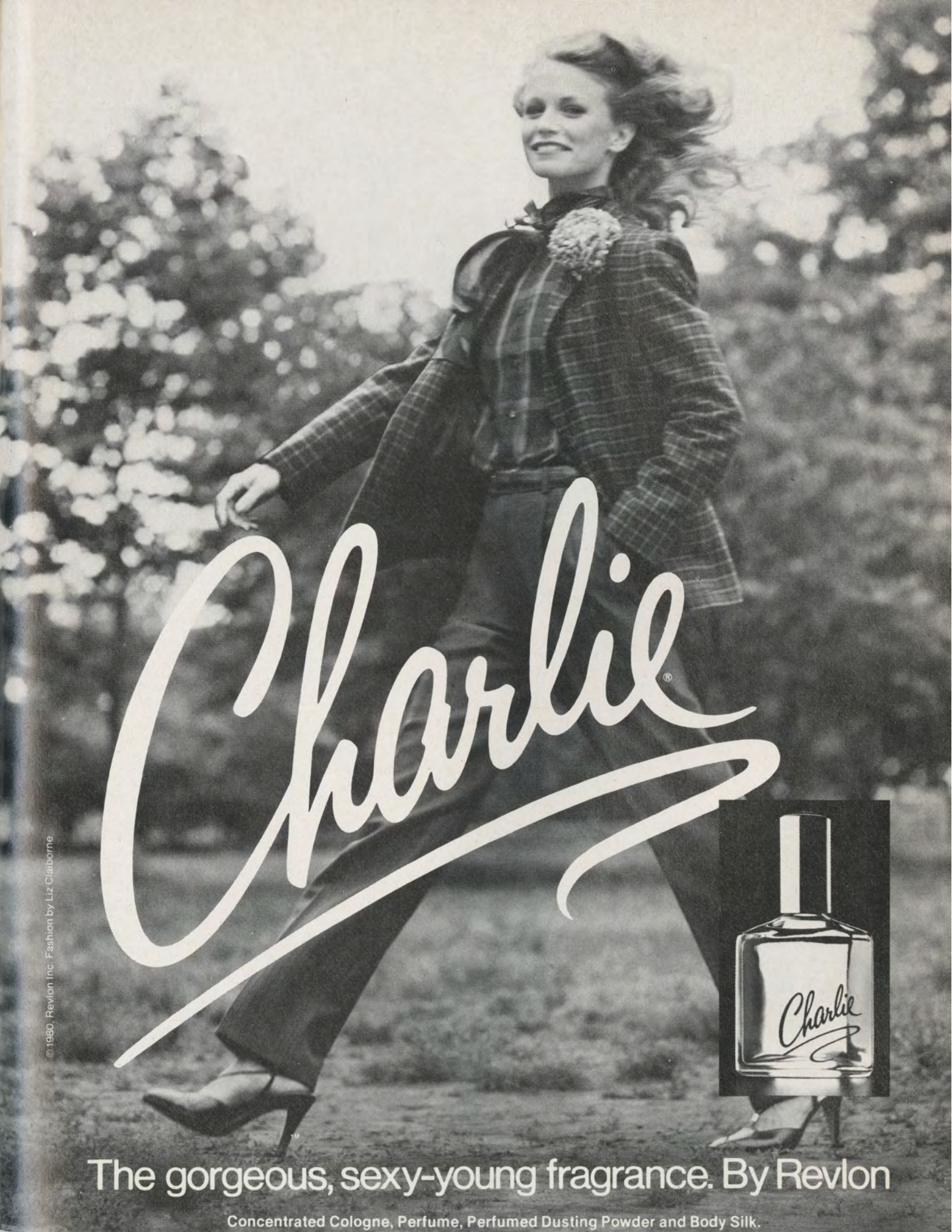
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Kathy Kennelly
Nancy Kraus
Edith Moody
Suga Moriawaki
Ellen Nelson
Miriam Preece
Karen Topp

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Joe Hay
Mark Heulsman
Steve Jacobs
Bill Joyce
Julius Karoblis
Terry Kyle
David Litchfield
Rodney McCoy
Ken McDonald

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Neil Nevesny
Paul Newman
Raul Piccardo
Nick Pliam
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1980 SEASON

Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

New Production

Samson et Dalila

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

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, Lambert,* 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*

Klobucar/Lehnhoff-Asagaroff/Zimmermann

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, Ganz* Gwen. Jones, Quittmeyer, Richards/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* (10/11), Shane,* 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, Brandstetter,* 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, Lewis, Malta, Ballam, Brandstetter, Langan

W. Rennert**/Cox*/Dalton*

Tristan und Isolde

In German
Wagner

Gwyneth Jones, Baldani/Wenkoff, Stewart, Estes, Ellsworth,* Green, Winter,* Del Carlo

Adler/Haugk/Weyl

Productions made possible, in part, by a generous gift from James D. Robertson.

Cavalleria Rusticana

In Italian
Mascagni

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

followed by

I Pagliacci

In Italian
Leoncavallo

Rawlins*/King, di Bella, Saccomani, Green, Tate, Woodman

Bareza**/Martinoty/Ponnelle

Madama Butterfly

In Italian
Puccini

Hayashi,* Forst, Quittmeyer/Lima,* Monk, Livingston,* Del Carlo, Langan, Wexler, Harvey

Chung*/Farruggio/Businger

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

*San Francisco Opera debut

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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. To enable patrons to make advance plans, we are printing a list of all previews and lectures which are open to the public.

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.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE
Allan Ulrich 11/4

U-C BERKELEY EXTENSION 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.

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.

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.

MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/4

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.

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.

MADAMA BUTTERFLY 11/6

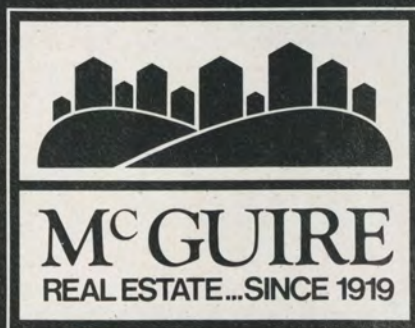


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SERVICES

Bus Service

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

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

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

Its route is as follows:

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

Taxi Service

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

Food Service

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

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

Emergency Telephone

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

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

Ticket Information

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

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

Unused Tickets

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

Opera Museum

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

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

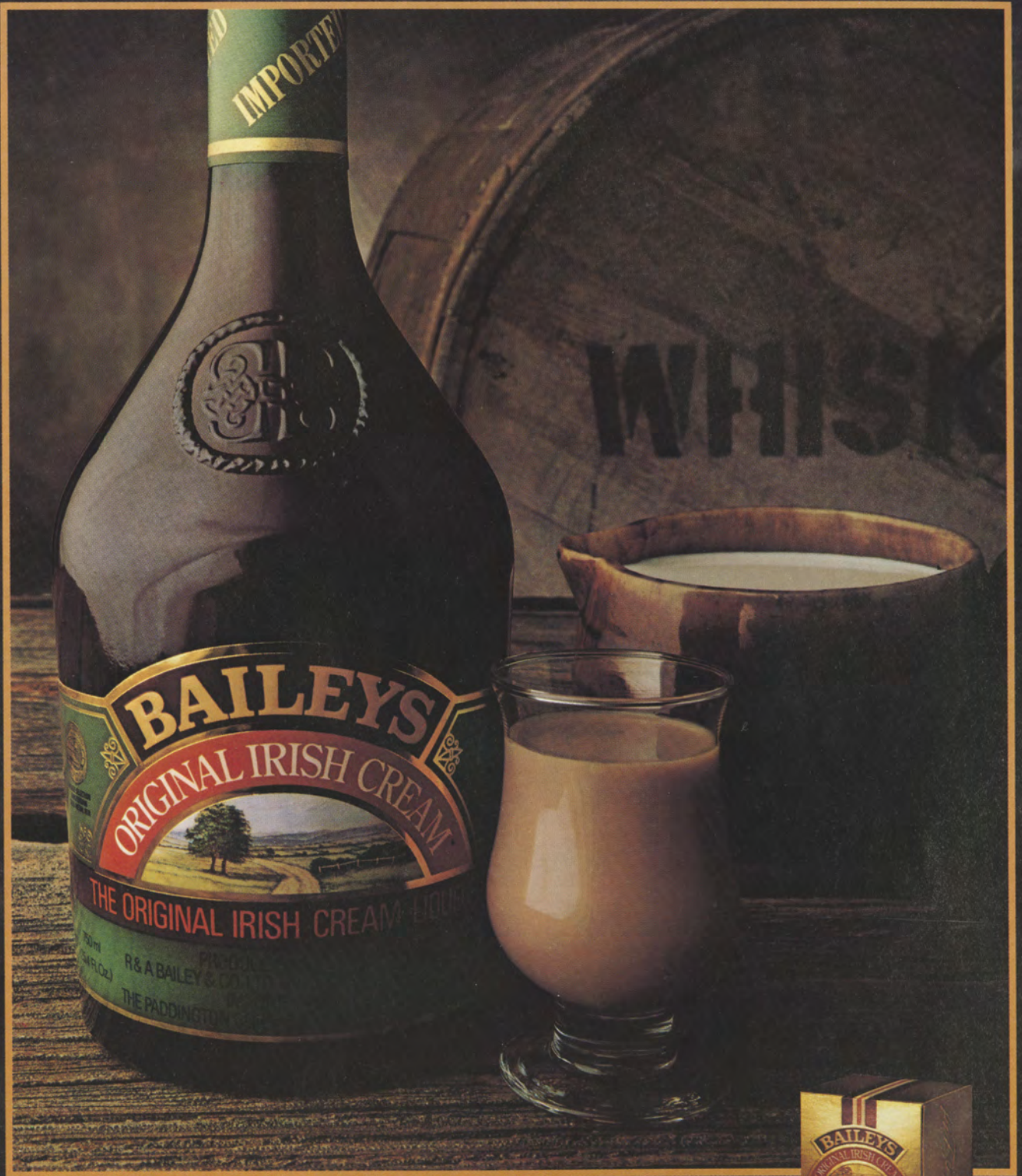
Opera glasses are available for rent in the lobby.

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

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

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Donizetti
In English

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

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

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

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

Matinee for Senior Citizens
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Friday, November 28, 1:00 p.m.

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- 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.


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KPFA Opera Review with Bill Collins, Melvin Jahn and Bob Rose. November 2, 9, 23 and 30, all at 5 PM.

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KEN HOWARD PHOTO

**Spring Opera Theater Returns
 to the Curran
 in February**

Spring Opera Theater will return to the Curran Theater in February, celebrating its 20th season of popular-priced opera in English produced by the San Francisco Opera, Kurt Herbert Adler has announced.

The four-production, 19-performance season will include new productions of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* and Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*,

the West Coast premiere of John Eaton's gripping *The Cry of Clytaemnestra*, and a revival of Offenbach's sparkling, perennial favorite, *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*.

The season will run from February 19 through March 15, and five subscription series will be offered, including a new, Saturday matinee, three-opera series.

Both *Figaro*, Mozart's comic masterpiece, and *Romeo*, Gounod's melodic setting of Shakespeare's timeless ro-

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■ **1979.** The renowned Sacramento Bee Wine Tasting. *A panel of leading experts picked Giumarra Chablis over 76 other California white wines, giving it a much coveted gold medal.*

■ **1978.** The International Viticulture and Wine Fair. *Experts from all over Europe awarded Giumarra Chablis still another gold.*

■ **1977.** The Los Angeles County Fair. *Among California Chablis, Giumarra was given the Fair's highest award.*

■ **1976.** The Los Angeles County Fair. *Giumarra's long, full body and pleasing character delighted the judges, who gave it a gold medal over 25 other popular California Chablis.*

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CAROLYN MASON JONES PHOTO

Bruce Yarnell created the role of General Boom in the 1973 Spring Opera production of *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*.

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mance, have not been performed by Spring Opera since 1969. John Eaton's *The Cry of Clytaemnestra* had its world premiere at the Indiana University Opera Theater in March of 1980, where it received international acclaim for its dramatic intensity, virtuoso vocal and orchestral writing, and its telling portrayal of the tragic Greek myth. *Grand Duchess*, given on the Spring Opera stage in 1973 and 1974, makes a long-awaited return to the repertoire as one of the most delightfully charming productions in Spring Opera's history.

Subscriptions, which are available for the first time at a discount, are as follows: *Four Thursday evenings*: February 19, *Figaro*; February 26, *Romeo*; March 5, *Duchess*; March 12, *Cry*. *Four Friday evenings*: February 20, *Duchess*; February 27, *Figaro*; March 6, *Cry*; March 13, *Romeo*. *Four Saturday evenings*: February 21, *Figaro*; February 28, *Romeo*; March 7, *Duchess*; March 14, *Cry*. *Three Saturday matinees*: February 28, *Duchess*; March 7, *Romeo*; March 14, *Figaro*. *Four Sunday matinees*: February 22, *Duchess*; March 1, *Figaro*; March 8, *Cry*; March 15, *Romeo*.

More information and a free brochure are available by writing: SPOT brochure, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, CA 94102, or by calling (415) 391-4000. ■

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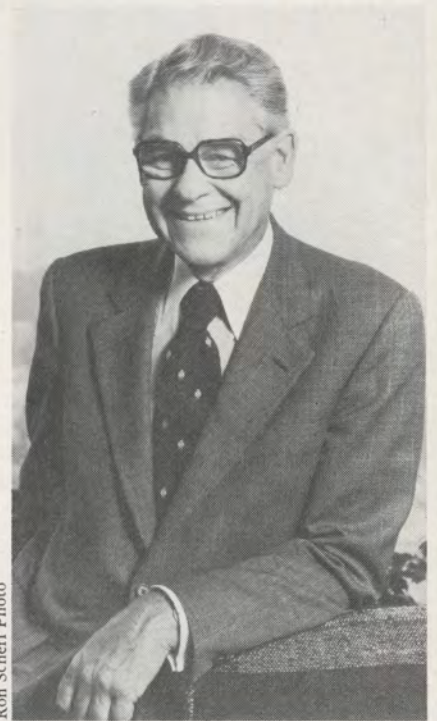
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1979 was so full of "firsts"—our international telecast of *La Gioconda*, the visit of our company to the Philippines, the completion of the Opera House addition, our four San Francisco premieres and five new productions—that it seemed 1980 might be 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.



Ron Scherl 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.

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Opera Raffle Winners Announced

Patricia L. Fleischer, San Francisco Opera's director of development, announces the winner of the grand prize in the 1980 San Francisco Opera Raffle, drawn by Sir Geraint Evans at the climax of the October Opera Fair. The winner of a white-gold and diamond solitaire ring, with a 1.8 karat old cut diamond, was Gene Ayres of Berkeley, California. The ring, donated to the Raffle by Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Gruhn and valued at \$11,000, was one of 165 valuable prizes awarded to 1980 Raffle winners through the donation of individuals, merchants and corporations. Other Raffle winners came from throughout the West and across the nation, such as James Hafley of Flush-

ing, New York, who won a \$2,200 gold and diamond pendant donated by Sidney Mobell Fine Jewelry of San Francisco, and an Idaho man, Humbert M. Valenti, who received a 1.14 karat yellow diamond, valued at \$5,000 and donated by Ivan Gems of San Francisco. Among other top prize winners were L. Byrd of San Francisco, who received the Delta Steamship Lines donation of a \$5,500 deluxe cruise for two to Venezuela; Malinda Thomas of El Cerrito, California, who won an anonymously donated Morganite pendant valued at \$4,800; and Maria Skoczylas of Gilroy, California, winner of a \$5,000 antique Oriental carpet donated by Burton Lowell Kaplan of San Francisco.

Softbound Opera Score Series Launched

G. Ricordi, the Italian music publisher noted for critically esteemed editions of great opera, has introduced a series of full scores of operas in softbound quality editions, to complement its opera vocal score series. Many of the scores are now available in the Opera Shop. The editions, previously available only in hardcover, are distributed through Associated Music Publishers, a subsidiary of G. Schirmer, Inc.

Nineteen operas by Donizetti, Puccini, Verdi and Wagner will be released during the next year and a half. They are priced at \$15.00 and \$18.50, depending upon the length of the work.

Already available are Verdi's *Falstaff*, Puccini's *Tosca*, both at \$18.50, and Puccini's *Il Tabarro*, \$15.00. Soon to come are *Don Pasquale* and *L'Elisir d'Amore* by Donizetti; *La Bobème*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Suor Angelica* and *Turandot* by Puccini; *Aida*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Messa di Requiem*, *Otello*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata* and *Il Trovatore*, by Verdi, and Wagner's *Parsifal*.

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Opening the 27-performance Festival at the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House 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 will also include Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Verdi's *Rigoletto* and Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.

Detailed brochures for the San Francisco Opera Summer Festival 1981 tours may be obtained from travel agents, airline tour desks, Opera Guilds or from the operator, California Inbound Services, a division of Char-Tours, Inc., 605 Market Street, San Francisco, California 94105.

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Largest Opera Fair Ever

The largest and best-attended San Francisco Opera Fair ever spilled through nearly every crevice of San Francisco's Performing Arts Center on October 5, raising funds for the Opera and offering the entire Bay Area community a day of operatic festivities, colorful sights and sounds and good things to eat or do. Dedicated this year to the memory of its late founder, Jean Donnell, the Opera Fair was headed by San Francisco Opera board member Robert Leefeldt. Sir Geraint Evans served as grand marshal of the opening parade.

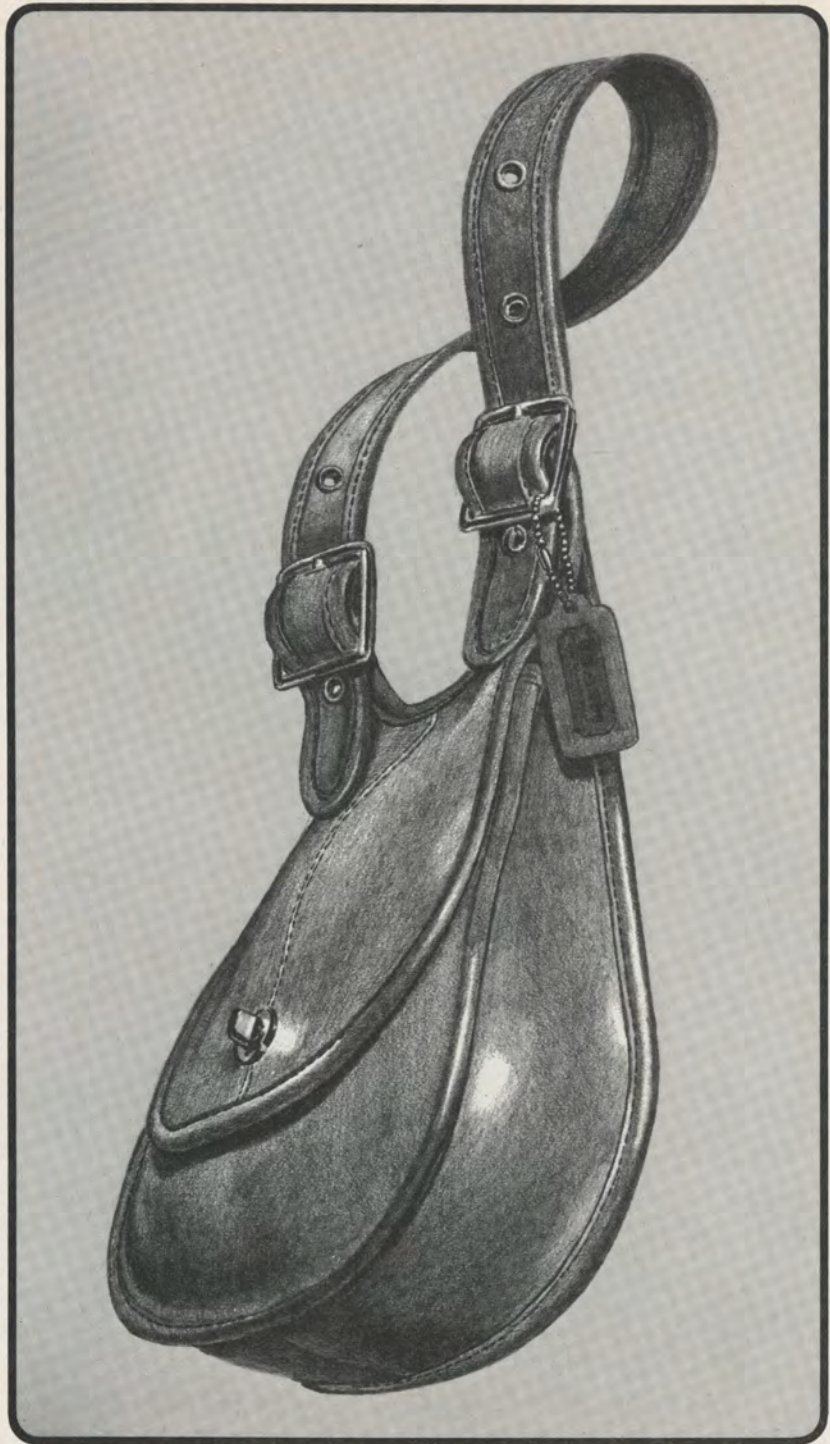
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A young fairgoer tries to measure up to Brunnhilde at the opera character photo booth.

SFO Wig & Make-Up Program Recognized

Spurred by the success of its debut year, the Wig and Make-Up Training Program of the San Francisco Opera will continue in 1981, offering professional instruction under the direction of Richard Stead. Fourteen students will be accepted for the seven-month program, beginning in January. The Washington-based National Opera Institute has awarded the Program a \$3,000 grant to assist with operational costs, recognizing the esteem the program has already won among musical theater professionals. Director Stead has been head of the San Francisco Opera's Wig and Make-Up Department for the last 12 years.



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From Faust(s) to



Richard Wagner in a tempera by Clementine Stockar-Escher in 1853, when he was living in Zurich.

By IRVING KOLODIN

To judge from its universal reputation as the greatest expression of over-powering romantic love in musical history, one would have to assume that Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* was the out-pouring of an emotion too powerful to repress. But its internal history bears unquestionable evidence of other, more mundane considerations.

The first evidence of such an idea in Wagner's mind appears in a letter to Franz Liszt from the fall of 1854. The answer came, rather belatedly, in a letter dated January 25 of the following year in which Liszt interjects this brief paragraph: "One thing I forgot to write to you: Your *Tristan* is a splendid idea; it may become a glorious work. Do not abandon it."

Considering that Wagner had been working steadily since September 1853 on a project that had evolved into the whole *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, and that he was absorbed in getting on with *Siegfried*, there was nothing yet to put aside. But in the latter months of 1856 and the beginning of 1857, when he had led *Siegfried* into the forest to ponder the identity of his mother, it was the dictate of financial as well as artistic necessity that any score in three acts would be "more easily producible" than *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, for which no theater existed.

It soon became apparent that what Wagner began in October 1857 was not just "any" score. It was "the" score of the second half of the 19th century, a work that would slowly, steadily move away from the mainstream of the mid-century's musical flow. And, as it drove forward, it gathered the mental energy and musical distinction to carve a by-pass so distant from its point of departure that some eddies and backwaters have not yet been wholly explored.

Like some other things so circuitous, *Tristan* has been overexplained and misattributed. That Wagner's affair with Mathilde Wesendonk, the wife of his generous friend and benefactor, Otto Wesendonk, occurred while the work was being written at the Wesendonk villa in Zurich, is unquestionable. Wagner elaborated a series of mood poems written by her during the early months of 1857, as he became absorbed in the problems of *Tristan*, into brief songs that parallel thematic ideas contained in the score.

Is this, then, an instance in which a musical vocabulary was born to express

Beethoven and Liszt exerted important influences on *Tristan und Isolde*, the greatest expression of romantic love in musical history.

Tristan

an emotion contained in the poems of a woman with whom he was having an affair, or was the poetry utilized to set free a musical vocabulary already in existence?

While the answer to that question lies in the realm of speculation, the question of musical influences on *Tristan* can be examined through the evidence of written scores.

During his early, uncertain years in Paris, Wagner in 1840 heard a performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D minor, which, for the first time in his listening life, brought to his ears the fulfillment of what he had previously discovered in the score. The conductor was François Antoine Habeneck; Wagner, then 27, wrote in his autobiography, *Mein Leben*, many years later: "I owed the recovery of my old vigor and spirits to the deep impression the rendering of the Ninth Symphony had made on me when performed in a way I had never dreamed of . . . In this mood I sketched an overture to *Faust*, which, according to my original scheme, was only to form the first part of a whole Faust symphony." As a glance at the first page of the score shows, the "Faust Overture" is also in D minor.

In the decade after 1840, Wagner left Paris and produced *Rienzi*, *Die Fliegende Holländer* and *Tannhäuser* as music director of the opera in Dresden, and also composed *Lohengrin*. Identified with the political uprising of 1849, he fled Dresden and found refuge in Zurich. Along the way he ventured a meeting in Weimar with Franz Liszt, whom he had first encountered in Paris. During the 1850s, Wagner converted Liszt from a casual acquaintance to a devoted admirer. Under Liszt's direction, *Lohengrin* had its premiere in Weimar in 1850, an act that elevated Wagner from a mere refugee in Zurich to an outstanding composer of whom even greater things could be expected.

In the correspondence that flowed between the two men are discussions and decisions that provide a backdrop to some of the most important musical happenings of the time. Among them is the aftermath of a performance of Wagner's "Faust Overture" conducted by Liszt in May 1852, which resulted when the composer sent a score and a set of parts to his insatiable new friend in Weimar.

When Wagner requested the return of the materials, Liszt had them copied, and in October returned the original

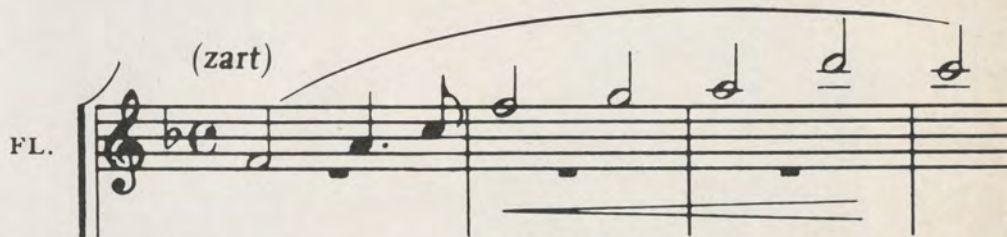


Mathilde Wesendonk, Wagner's young Muse, who wrote the texts of Wagner's five so-called "Wesendonk Lieder."

manuscript with a lengthy letter containing this commentary:


The work is quite worthy of you: but if you will allow me to make a remark, I must confess that I should like either a second middle part or else a quieter and more agreeably colored treatment of the present middle part:

before and what follows, and in consequence impedes the interest. If instead of this you introduced a soft, tender, melodious part, modulated *à la* Gretchen, I think I can assure you that your work would gain very much. Think this over, and do not be angry in case I have said something stupid [*Liszt's italics*].



The brass is a little too massive there and—forgive my opinion—the motive in F is not satisfactory: it wants *grace* in a certain sense and is a kind of hybrid thing, neither flesh nor fowl, which stands in no proper relation to what has gone

Several weeks passed before Wagner replied to Liszt's comment, though he had said, in a hurried note dated October 13 bearing on other matters, that he accepted Liszt's praise. In his letter of November 9, 1852, Wagner bowed to his slightly older but vastly



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more experienced colleague:

You beautifully spotted the lie when I tried to make myself believe that I had written an "overture to *Faust*." At that time I intended to write an entire *Faust* symphony; the first movement, that which is ready, was this "solitary *Faust*," longing, despairing, cursing . . . The second movement was to introduce Gretchen, the woman . . . I had a theme for her, but it was only a theme . . . The whole remained unfinished . . .

So the subject rested for several years. Busy with his *Ring* project (which he had conceived, as librettist, from the end to the beginning, but would compose from start to the finish), Wagner had one special reason to rejoice: a visit that Liszt made to Switzerland in July 1853, when they met for the first time in four years. As recorded in *Mein Leben*, Wagner recalled: "Now for the first time I enjoyed the delight of getting to know my friend as a fellow composer. In addition to many of his celebrated

piano pieces, which he had written only recently . . . we went through several symphonies with great ardor, and especially his *Faust* Symphony . . . My delight over everything I heard by Liszt was as deep as it was sincere and, above all, extraordinarily stimulating . . ."

The immediate consequence was that on September 5, 1853, Wagner began to compose for the first time in four years. From this impulse arose the grand, spacious prelude to *Das Rheingold* (from the chord of E flat) and thus, the whole *Ring*. Many months later (January 18, 1855), Wagner sent Liszt a letter with the information that he had been seized with a desire to rewrite his "Faust Overture." Liszt replied that he should send a score as soon as possible for immediate performance.

When he received it (the "new" version is the only form in which the "Faust Overture" now circulates), Liszt must have reacted with some degree of self-congratulation. In the passage of which he had previously expressed disapproval, Wagner had written:

Molto agitato



In his revised version, Wagner eliminated the kind of "turn" to which he was addicted in the *Rienzi* overture, or in the Entrance of the Guests in *Tannhäuser*, and extended the basic thought as follows:



That, of course, is a direct preliminary to one of the rising phrases by which *Tristan* is best known. But it is also the direct echo of a salient passage in Liszt's *Faust* Symphony:



Thus it may be asked: Which Faust led to *Tristan*: Wagner's or Liszt's? Or is it simply a matter of Faust(s) to *Tristan*?

A long-buried manuscript of the original "Faust Overture" in the Bayreuth library bearing the inscription "Paris 1840" shows that the falling interval was present in the material as Wagner wrote it down just after hearing the Beethoven D minor symphony.

Which *Faust* led to *Tristan*, Wagner's or Liszt's?

But he had little idea of what to do with it musically until he became a close associate of Liszt and discovered a whole new world of harmonic possibilities. Though Wagner was born in 1813, two years after Liszt, the Hungarian composer's gifts were such that he was known to all Europe while Wagner was still a schoolboy. And his vast command of the keyboard led him into areas of harmonic resource that were long unavailable to Wagner, whose piano playing was restricted to performing his own music. Wagner admitted as much in a letter of October 7, 1859, (when the whole *Tristan* existed) to his protégé and then close friend Hans von Bülow: "There is indeed much that we shall admit to ourselves. For instance, since becoming acquainted with Liszt's compositions, I have become a completely different person harmonically. But when friend [Richard] Pohl [in an article in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, of which he was editor] applauds this secret *à la tête* in a short description of the *Tristan* prelude—and for all the world to hear—then an indiscretion is committed."

Had Pohl gone on beyond the *Tristan* prelude and dealt with all 300 pages (in the piano reduction; 655 in the orchestral score), he might have had an additional bank of information from which to borrow endless examples of how Wagner's ingenuity, once engaged, went far beyond that of Liszt.

I have in mind the much later, more powerful, utterly unprecedented transformation of sound Wagner created to exemplify the deterioration of *Tristan* from the hero of Act I to the mortally ailing victim of Melot's sword in Act III. Deterioration? Perhaps. But viewed in a certain light (including Wagner's transformation of day into night, and night into the only true reality), was not *Tristan* more heroic in refusing to engage his old friend in a duel at the end of Act III? It was left for Kurvenal to avenge that onslaught with a blow of his sword when Melot appears in the closing moments of Act II and dies with the word "Tristan!"

In the period between Liszt's performance of the "Faust Overture" in

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Franz Liszt,
with his daughter Cosima,
who later became Wagner's
second wife, in a
photograph taken about 1860.

May 1852 and Wagner's revision of the work in 1855, many other sources of musical input had come Wagner's way. Among the most stimulating was the richly innovative C-sharp minor quartet (Opus 131) of Beethoven, which came

Wagner converted Liszt from a casual acquaintance to a devoted admirer.

to Wagner's attention during a visit to Paris in October 1853. Specifically chromatic and infused with the kind of worlds-apart emotion that later became Wagner's own, it brought him such stimulation as he had previously derived from the Ninth Symphony. Wagner him-

self invokes the comparison when, in writing in *Mein Leben* of the performance by the Morin-Cheillard Quartet, he says, "It impressed me in very much the same way as the performance of the Ninth Symphony by the Conservatoire Orchestra had once done."

A similar experience took place later that winter during the music season in Zurich, when Wagner brought together the principal string players of the orchestra he conducted there to rehearse "with infinite patience" the C-sharp minor quartet, and offer it for public performance—Wagner's prose commentary on the quartet has become a classic on its own.

Blending the impulses he had derived from Liszt with the outermost flights of Beethoven's fantasy gave Wag-

continued on page 63

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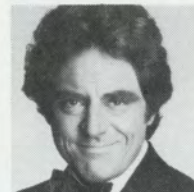
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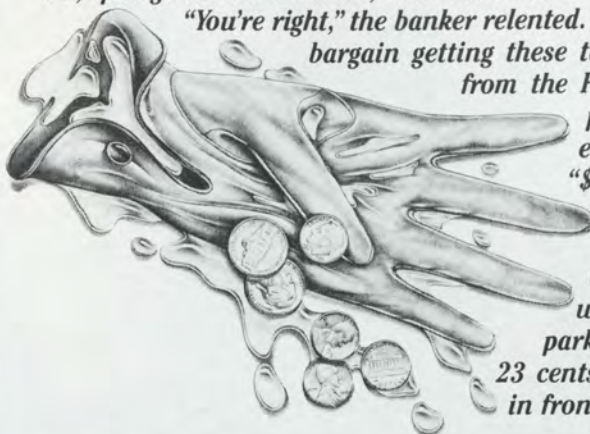
"Oh, splurge a little for once," said his wife.


"You're right," the banker relented. "After all, it is quite a bargain getting these two complete dinners

from the PreTheatre menu and parking for the whole evening for just \$30."

"\$29.77," said his wife, wringing out her evening glove into the ashtray.

"While you were getting the valet parking receipt, I fished 23 cents out of the fountain in front."



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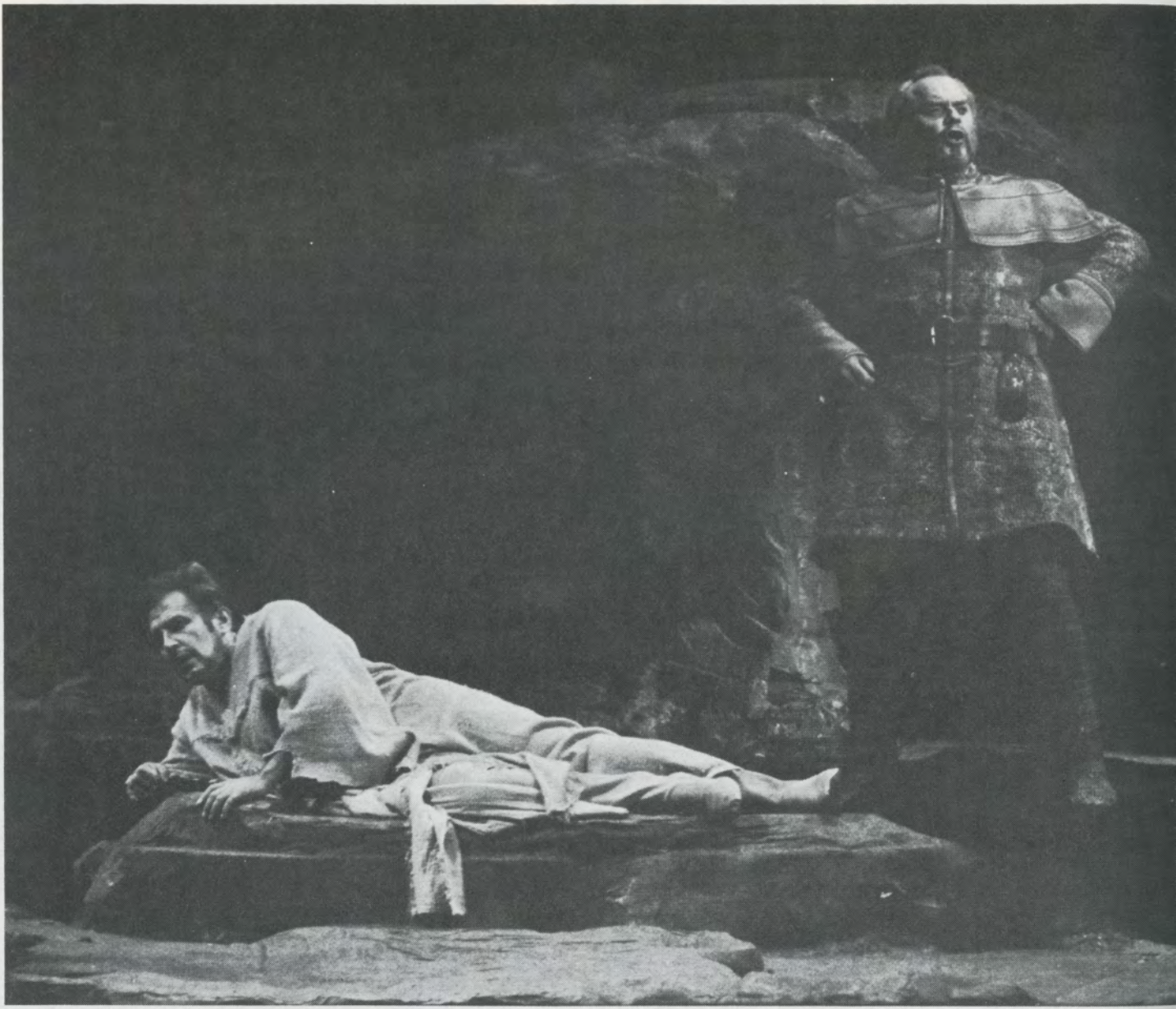
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Tristan und Isolde

Spas Wenkoff, Gwyneth Jones

Photos taken in rehearsal by Ira Nowinski

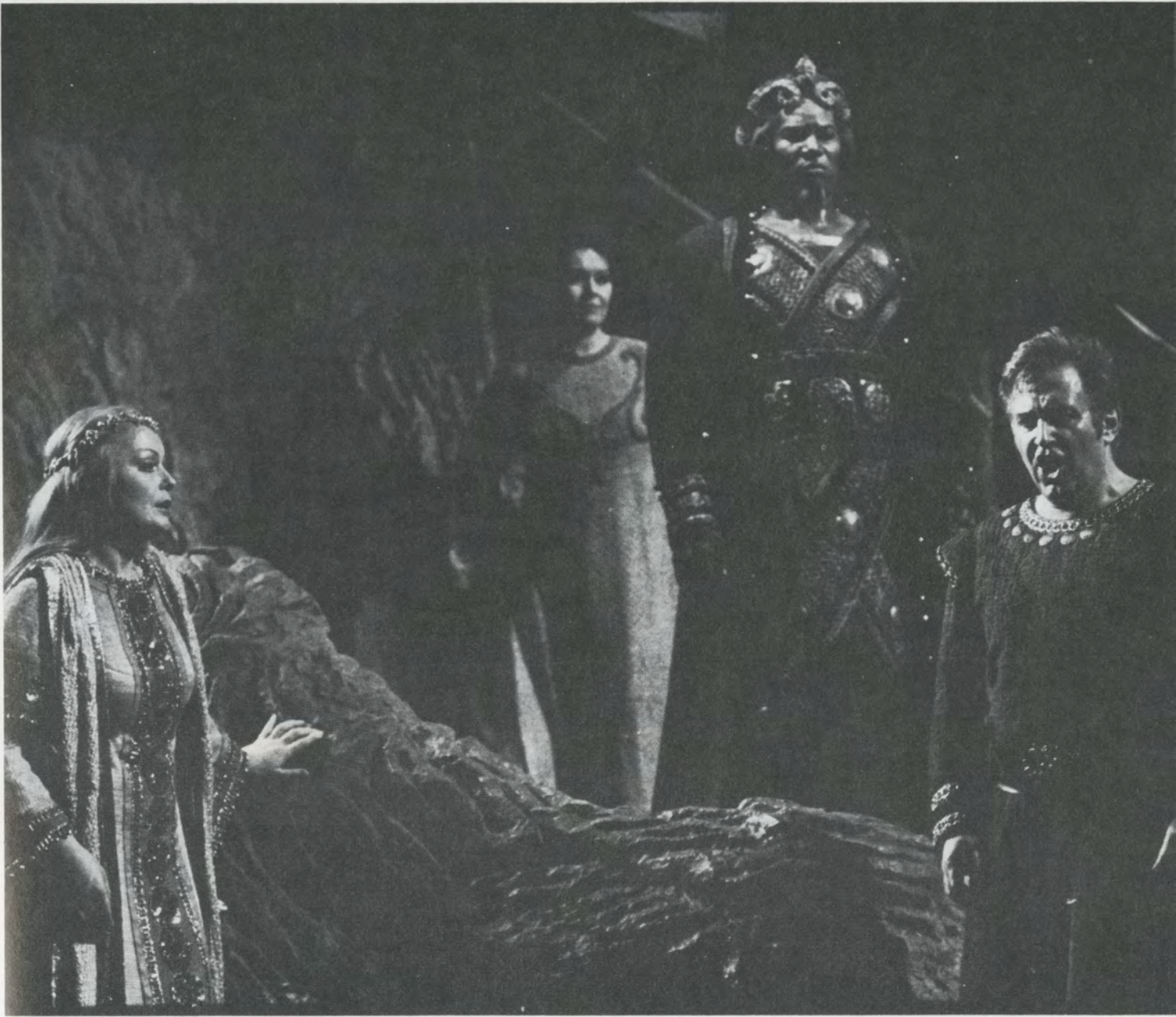




Spas Wenkoff, Thomas Stewart



Gwyneth Jones, Ruza Baldani



Front: Gwyneth Jones, Spas Wenkoff; rear: Ruza Baldani, Simon Estes



Spas Wenkoff, Gwyneth Jones



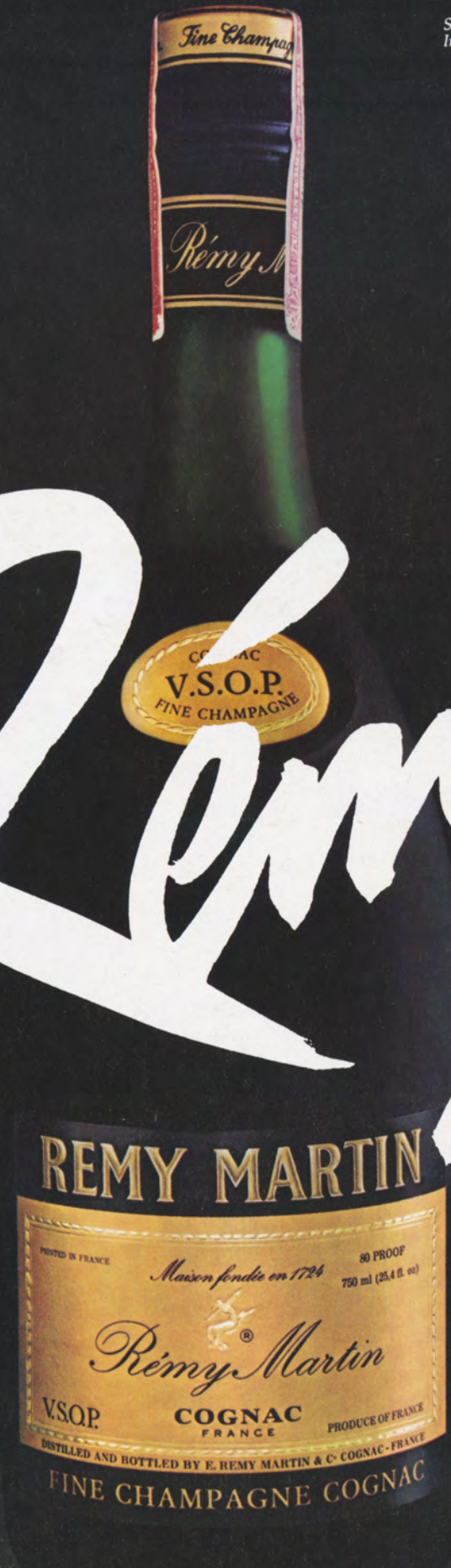
Simon Estes



Spas Wenkoff, Gwyneth Jones

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Tristan und Isolde

(in German)

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Kurt Herbert Adler

Production

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21 AT 7:00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26 AT 7:00

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Tristan und Isolde radio broadcast live
on Friday, November 21

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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 four hours and thirty minutes.

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Sailor's voice

Quade Winter*

Isolde

Gwyneth Jones

Bragäne

Ruza Baldani

Kurwenal

Thomas Stewart

Tristan

Spas Wenkoff

Melot

Warren Ellsworth*

King Marke

Simon Estes

Shepherd

Jonathan Green

Steersman

John Del Carlo

Voices of sailors

**San Francisco Opera debut*

The action takes place in medieval Cornwall and Brittany

Act I A ship en route to Cornwall

INTERMISSION

Act II Near the shore at King Marke's castle in Cornwall

INTERMISSION

Act III Outside of Tristan's castle "Kareol" in Brittany

Tristan und Isolde

Background:

Isolde, princess of Ireland, was engaged to Sir Morold, who was killed in battle by Tristan. Wounded in the fight, Tristan assumed a disguise and sought out Isolde, who was known for her healing skills. She tended him and one day discovered that he was the slayer of Morold. She wanted to kill him, but their eyes met, and in a combination of pity and love, she spared his life. Some time later he returned, using his real name and seeking her hand for his uncle, King Marke. Isolde assented, all the time secretly loving Tristan and believing he loved her, and followed him to Cornwall.

ACT I

The deck of a ship. A sailor sings of his Irish maid, a song that only increases Isolde's unhappiness. The ship is nearing Cornwall and the princess grows indignant at Tristan's persistent refusal to see her. Her maid Brangäne suggests that with the aid of a magic potion she can win Tristan's love. However, Isolde orders Brangäne to prepare a poisonous draft. She summons Tristan and at first tells him that she has decided to avenge the death of Morold, then relents and suggests they share the drink of reconciliation. Sailors shout joyfully at the sight of land. Isolde presents the cup to Tristan. He drinks, but before he

has finished, Isolde takes the cup from his hands and drains it. Brangäne, reluctant to see the princess die, had substituted the love potion for the poison. The lovers look at each other and embrace, as shouts announce the arrival of the ship at Cornwall.

ACT II

Isolde, in the absence of her husband Marke, awaits Tristan. The king is away on a hunt, but Brangäne fears that the hunt is just a ruse planned by the king's attendant Melot. While Brangäne keeps watch, the lovers meet, aware of nothing but their love. Tristan's friend Kurwenal runs in, asking Tristan to hide. The king and Melot arrive. Marke is too grief-stricken to show anger at Tristan's betrayal. Isolde answers Tristan that she will follow wherever he goes; he is attacked by Melot and allows himself to be wounded.

ACT III

In Brittany, Tristan's home, Kurwenal watches over his wounded friend, who thinks only of Isolde. The repeated sad strain of a shepherd's pipe tells that Isolde, sent for by Kurwenal, is not in sight. As the shepherd's joyful tune announces the ship, Tristan dies. A second ship brings King Marke and Melot, and Kurwenal dies killing Melot, unaware that they came to forgive Tristan. In her love-death, Isolde tells of the love which she can only now fulfill.

Thoughts on Tristan

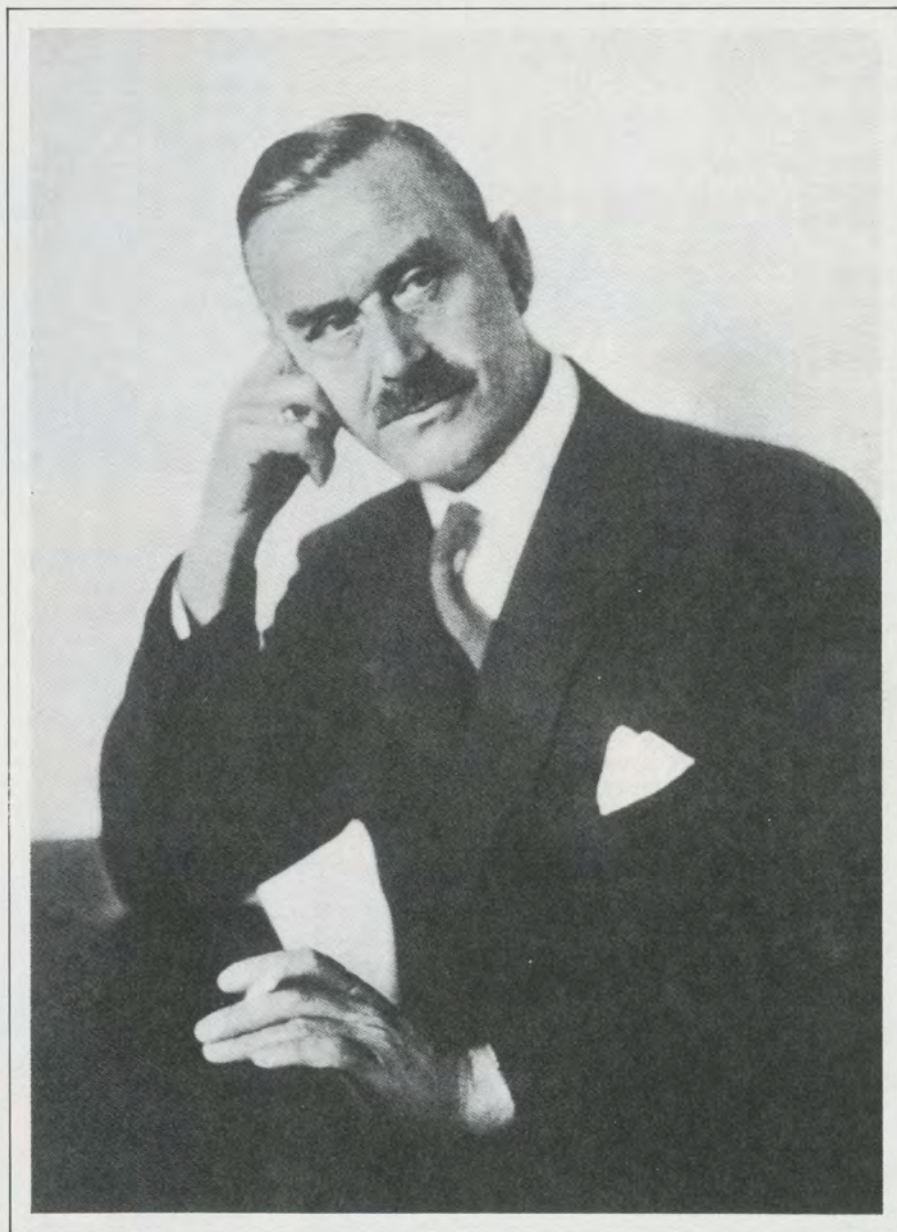
The equation of love and will in *Tristan* shows Wagner's debt to Schopenhauer.

By THOMAS MANN

The official works on Wagner assert in all seriousness that *Tristan* was not influenced by the Schopenhauerian philosophy. That seems to me a curious lack of insight. The arch-romantic worship of the night embodied in this sublimely morbid, consuming, enchanting work, deep-dyed in all the worst and highest mysteries of the romantic essence, has about it nothing specifically Schopenhauerian. The sensuous, supersensuous intuitions in the *Tristan* come from a remoter source: from the perfervid and hectic Novalis, who writes: "Union joined not only for life but for death is a marriage that gives us a companion for the night. Love is sweetest in death; for the living death is a bridal night, a sweet mysterious secret." And in the *Hymns to Night* he complains: "Must morning always come? Does the domain of the earthly never cease? Will it never be that love's sweet sacrifice shall burn forever on the altar?" Tristan and Isolde call themselves the "Night-consecrate"—the phrase actually occurs in Novalis: "Consecrated to the night." And still more striking from the point of view of literary history, still more significant for the sources of *Tristan*, for its emotional and intellectual bases, are its associations with

Tristan and Isolde call themselves the "Night-consecrate."

a little book of evil repute, I mean Friedrich von Schlegel's *Lucinde*. I quote a passage from this work: "We are immortal as love. I can no longer say my love or thy love, both being so utterly one, love as much given as returned. It is marriage, eternal union and bond between our spirits; not alone for what we call this world, but for a true, indivisible, nameless, infinite world, for our whole, everlasting life and being." Here is the mental image of the love-and-death-potion: "Thus I, too, if the time seemed come, would drain a cup of laurel-water with thee, freely and gladly, as the last glass of champagne we drank together, with the words: 'Let us drink out the rest of our lives!'" And here is the thought



Thomas Mann (1875-1955).

of the *Liebstdod*: I know you, too, would not outlive me, you would follow to the grave your impatient spouse, from love and longing you would descend into the flaming abyss whither the Indian woman is driven by a desperate law which by harsh and deliberate enforcement violates and destroys the most delicate sanc-

tuaries of the free will." And there is a reference to the "exaltation of voluptuousness," surely a very Wagnerian formula. Here indeed is an erotic, mystical prose poem, in praise and adoration of sleep, the paradise of rest, the holy silence of passivity, which in *Tristan* becomes the lulling motif of the horns

and the divided violins. And it was nothing less than a literary discovery that I made, when as a young man I underlined the ecstatic passage between Julian and Lucinde: "Oh, eternal yearning! For the fruitless desire and vain brilliance of the day die down and expire, and a great night of love knows eternal repose," and wrote in the margin: "*Tristan*." . . .

Its cult of the night, its execration of the day, are what stamps the *Tristan* as romantic, as fundamentally affiliated with all the romantic aspects of emotion and thought—and as such not needing the Schopenhaurian sponsorship. Night is the kingdom and home of all romanticism, her own discovery, always she has played it off against the empty vanities of the day, as the kingdom of sensibility against reason. . . .

But when the Wagner authorities say that *Tristan* is a love-drama, as such contains the strongest affirmation of the will to live, and in consequence has nothing to do with Schopenhauer; when they insist that the night therein celebrated is the night of love "*wo Liebeswonne uns lacht*," and that if this drama has a philosophy at all, then it is the exact opposite of the doctrine which would deny the will, and that precisely on that ground it is independent of the Schopenhaurian metaphysics—it seems to me that all this betrays a strange psychological insensitiveness. The denial of the will is the

Schopenhauer's philosophical system is fundamentally erotic in nature.

moral and intellectual content of Schopenhauer's philosophy, of secondary significance and not the crucial point. His philosophic system is fundamentally erotic in its nature, and in so far as it is that the *Tristan* is saturated with it. The quenching of the torch in the second act of the mystery play is emphasized in the orchestra by the death motif, the lovers' cry of transport: "*Selbst dann bin ich die Welt*," with the longing motif out of the depths of the psychological and mythical accompanying music—is that not



Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860)

Schopenhauer? Wagner is mythological poet not less in *Tristan* than in the *Ring*; even the love-drama deals with a myth of the origin of the world. "Often," so he writes from Paris in 1860 to Mathilde Wesendonk, "I look with yearning toward the land of Nirvana. But Nirvana soon becomes *Tristan* again. You know the story of the Buddhist theory of the origin of the world? A breath troubles the clearness of the heavens"—he writes the four chromatic ascending notes with which his *opus metaphysicum* begins and ends, the g sharp, a sharp, b natural—"it swells and condenses, and there before me is the whole vast solid mass of the world." It is the symbolic tone-thought which we know as the "*Sehnsuchts* motif," and which in the cosmogony of the *Tristan* signifies the beginning of all things, like the E-flat major of the Rhine motif in the *Ring*. It is Schopenhauer's "will," represented by what Schopenhauer called the "focus of the will," the yearning for love. And this mythical equating of sexual desire with the sweet and fatal world-creating principle that first troubled the clear heaven of the inane—that is so Schopenhauerian that the refusal of the experts to see it looks like obstinacy.

"How could we die," asks Tristan in the early, not yet versified draft; "what would there be of us to kill that would not be love? Are we not utterly and only love? Can our love ever end? Could I ever will to love, love no more? Were I now to die would love die too, since

we are naught but love?" The quotation shows the unhesitating equation of love and will on the part of the poet. The latter stands simply for the love of life, which cannot end in death, though it is

Night is the kingdom and home of all romanticism.

freed from the fetters of individuality. Most interesting it is, too, to see the love-mythus sustained as a conception of the drama and preserved from any historical or religious clouding or distortion. Phrases like "Whether bound for hell or heaven," surviving in the draft, are omitted from the production. We have here doubtless a conscious weakening of the historical element, but it is limited to the intellectual and philosophical and only happens in the interest of these. And it suits admirably with a most intensive technique of coloration, applied to the landscape settings, the cultural elements, the racial characteristics of the protagonists. It is stylistic specialization of incredible ability and certainty of touch. Nowhere does Wagner's skill at mimicry triumph more magically than in the style of the *Tristan*—this not as a matter of language merely, by phraseology in the spirit of the court epic; for with intuitive genius he is able to saturate his word- and tone-painting in an Anglo-Norman-French atmosphere, with a discernment that shows how completely the Wagner soul is at home in the pre-national sphere of European life. The divorce from history, the free humanization, takes place only in the field of speculative thought, and then in the service of the erotic myth. For its sake, heaven and hell are cut out. Christianity too, since it would amount to historical atmosphere. There is no God, no one knows Him or calls upon Him. There is nothing but erotic philosophy, atheistic metaphysics: the cosmogonic myth in which the *Sehnsuchts* motif evokes the world. ■

From *Essays of Three Decades*, translated from the German by H.T. Lowe-Porter (Alfred A. Knopf, 1965). Reprinted by permission.



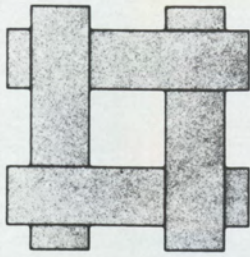
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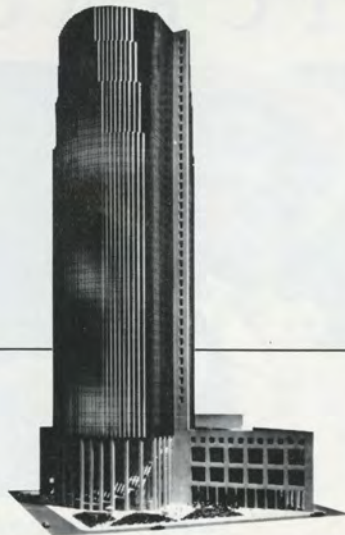


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Current—"Folies Bergere '80"

From Faust(s) continued from page 42



The Munich National Theater, where *Tristan und Isolde* had its premiere on June 10, 1865.

ner a range of expressive latitude neither he nor any previous composer had possessed. In the throbbing woodwind passages that are heard as Tristan lies dying, came a range of sound another generation of composers was to find as enriching as Wagner had found the stimulus of Liszt and Beethoven.

In all his new command of musical resource, Wagner did not bother to apply a name to what he had brought about. Indeed, when he had worked his will, chromatically, on the subject of Tristan and Isolde, he turned his back on the power of coloration he had invented, for the almost wholly C major sunshine of *Die Meistersinger*. The only exception comes in that magical moment of the workshop scene in Act III when Hans Sachs, manfully resisting Eva's appeal to his ego to compete in the song contest and claim her as his young bride, responds:

As the sounds arise from the orchestra, we are mentally transported to a world far from Nuremberg to the one that Wagner created imperishably for his *Tristan*.

Half a century later, the language spoken in the innermost segment of *Tristan* (Act III) was given the title *Klangfarbenmelodie*—"the melody of tone colors" in Arnold Schönberg's *Harmonielehre* in 1911.

That whole range of resource may be heard behind Kurvenal's despairing question: "Bist du nun tod? Lebst du noch?" ("Are you then dead? Do you still live?") to Tristan. In the passage that follows, the pulsations reach the ear from clarinet, French horn and bass clarinet. Time is suspended. Even breath can hardly be heard.

It was not long after the completion of *Tristan*, with all its innovative

Mäßig langsam. allein sehr sark

Mein Kind, von Tristan und Isolde
kenn' ich ein traurig Stück:
Hans Sachs war klug und wollte
nichts von Herrn Marke's Glück.

My child, of Tristan and Isolde
a bitter tale they tell.
Hans Sachs was wise and wanted
none of what King Mark befell.
(translation by John Gutman)

content, that Liszt (in a letter dated May 14, 1859) responded to a panegyric from Wagner: "The noblest reward of my work would be if I were to bring home to you the truth that you are and remain an immense musician." ■

IRVING KOLODIN is music editor of the *Saturday Review* and author of numerous books on music.

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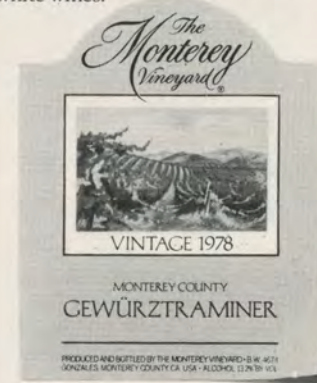
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GWYNETH JONES

Celebrated around the world as a leading interpreter of Wagner and Strauss, as well as the Italian repertoire, Welsh soprano Gwyneth Jones returns to the San Francisco Opera to sing her first Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde*. Since her Bayreuth Festival debut as Sieglinde, she has sung both Elisabeth and Venus in the production of *Tannhäuser* seen over international television, Eva in *Die Meistersinger*, Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Kundry in *Parsifal* and Brünnhilde in the Ring cycle every year since the 1976 centennial celebration. The role of Leonore in Beethoven's *Fidelio* has played a vital part in Miss Jones' career. It was the vehicle of her brilliant debuts at the Berlin Staatsoper and the Vienna Staatsoper in 1966, the role of her San Francisco Opera debut in 1969 and a career highlight when she performed Leonore in the 1970 Beethoven centenary production at the Theater an der Wien under Leonard Bernstein. In 1979 she performed the role, again under Bernstein, during the Vienna Staatsoper's U.S. tour in Washington, D.C. and New York, following performances of *Fidelio* at the San Francisco Opera the preceding year. Other roles the soprano has portrayed with the Company are Aida (1969), Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* (1974) and an electrifying Tosca in 1978. Miss Jones first appeared in this country as Lady Macbeth with the Dallas Civic Opera and immediately thereafter sang the title role in a concert performance of Cherubini's *Medea* at Carnegie Hall. During 1979 she sang in several concert performances of Strauss' *Die Ägyptische Helena* with the Detroit Symphony in Detroit, at the Kennedy

Center and Carnegie Hall. Other Strauss roles in her repertoire include Salome and the Marschallin, which she has portrayed to acclaim throughout Europe, and, most recently, the Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, sung this fall in Paris.



RUZA BALDANI

Returning to the San Francisco Opera, Yugoslavian mezzo-soprano Ruza Baldani sings Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*. She previously appeared here during the 1972 season as Amneris in *Aida*. In her first year as a student at the Zagreb Academy of Music in 1961 she made her debut in Prokofiev's *War and Peace* at the Croatian National Theater. Before completing her studies she had appeared at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, the Dubrovnik, Holland and Edinburgh festivals and had made impressive debuts at the Munich Staatsoper as Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Marina in *Boris Godunov* (a role she repeated there this fall) and at the Metropolitan Opera as Madalena in *Rigoletto*. Other roles at the Met include Carmen, Orfeo, Amneris, Ulrica, Erda in *Siegfried*, Fricka in *Die Walküre*, La Ciega in *La Gioconda* and Madelon in *Andrea Chenier*. In Munich, where she is a frequent performer, Miss Baldani recently appeared in *Das Rheingold* and *Il Trovatore*. Other engagements in 1980 include Ulrica in Hamburg, Carmen in Verona and Amneris in Salzburg. A frequent soloist with symphony orchestras, she performed in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* to open the Salzburg Easter Festival under von Karajan.



SPAS WENKOFF

Bulgarian heldentenor Spas Wenkoff has in the last few years been acclaimed in the major opera houses of Europe, particularly for his portrayals of the Wagner repertoire. Especially in demand for productions of *Tristan und Isolde*, he returns to San Francisco, the scene of his American operatic stage debut as Florestan in *Fidelio* in 1978, to perform the role of Tristan. Since his highly praised Bayreuth Festival debut in the role in 1976, he has sung it at La Scala under Carlos Kleiber, at Covent Garden under Colin Davis, at the Vienna, Berlin and Hamburg State Operas and, most recently, in Washington, D.C., and Toronto. In the United States he has also been heard as Tristan in concert performances with the symphony orchestras of Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Indianapolis. Wenkoff's other Wagnerian roles are Walther in *Die Meistersinger*, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin, Siegmund in *Die Walküre*, Siegfried and Parsifal. He has portrayed Tannhäuser in Bayreuth opposite Gwyneth Jones in a production that was seen on international television, and in Frankfurt, Munich, Dresden, Vienna, Stuttgart and Amsterdam. He is also known for his interpretations of Otello and Radames and sings Herman in Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame* in the original Russian. Wenkoff's recent engagements include Tristans in Hamburg, Trieste, Toronto, Washington, D.C., and West Berlin. During the 1979-80 season he also appeared in the title role of *Siegfried* in East Berlin and as Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at Bayreuth.

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THOMAS STEWART

Acclaimed American baritone Thomas Stewart marks his 11th season with the San Francisco Opera singing Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*. He made his company debut in 1962 with five lead roles: Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Valentin in *Faust*, Ford in *Falstaff* and Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*. Since then he has distinguished himself in such varied roles as Don Giovanni, Count Almaviva, Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Germont in *La Traviata*, the Count in *Capriccio*, Orest in *Elektra*, Prince Yeletsky in Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*, the title role in the composer's *Eugene Onegin* and, most recently, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*. He performed Wotan for the Company's 1972 Ring cycle and has been heard locally in such other Wagnerian roles as Wolfram in *Tannhäuser*, Günther in *Götterdämmerung* and Amfortas in *Parsifal*. It was in this last role that he replaced an ailing colleague at the 1960 Bayreuth Festival and attracted international attention. Stewart is the only American to sing major roles at Bayreuth for more than a decade and the only non-German to sing all the baritone leads in the Ring there. His success in Bayreuth brought invitations to sing in Vienna, Munich and Paris. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1966 as Ford in *Falstaff* and a few seasons ago was heard there as Don Giovanni, Iago and all four villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. Stewart's 1979-80 season opened with performances of *Der Fliegende Holländer* with the Netherlands Opera, followed by *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in Hamburg. He sang Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger* in Houston and Captain Balstrode in *Peter Grimes* in Toronto earlier this year. A frequent recording and concert artist, he often appears in recital with his wife, soprano Evelyn Lear, and has been heard with the San Francisco Symphony in Mahler's *Des*

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SIMON ESTES

Following his personal triumph in the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* in San Francisco last season, bass-baritone Simon Estes performs his second Wagnerian role with the Company, King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*. He made his local debut in the American premiere of Gunther Schiller's *The Visitation* in 1967, also singing Colline in *La Bohème*, and was heard in the 1972 season in *Aida*, *L'Africaine* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. In recent years he has made a series of important debuts: as Oroveso in *Norma* at the Metropolitan Opera, as Arkel in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at La Scala and as King Philip in *Don Carlos* at the Vienna Staatsoper. Highlights of his 1979-80 season included performances of *Don Carlos*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* in Zurich, Escamillo in Hamburg, Wotan in *Das Rheingold* in Florence and the Flying Dutchman for the third consecutive year at the Bayreuth Festival. He has sung the last role in Hamburg, Zurich and Boston. His schedule for the current season includes the four villains in a new production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Hamburg and Zurich and the title role in a new production of Verdi's *Attila* in Zurich. Winner of the Munich International Competition in 1965 and Moscow's First International Vocal Competition in 1966, Estes had the privilege of performing William Schuman's *A Free Song* at the gala program inaugurating the Concert Hall at the Kennedy Center, in the 25th anniversary celebration of the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco, in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the opening of the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich and at the inaugural concert of Giulini's tenure with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1978.



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WARREN ELLSWORTH

Tenor Warren Ellsworth, who makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Melot in this season's production of *Tristan und Isolde*, began his vocal studies as a baritone at Juilliard, where he performed with the American Opera Center. In 1975 he appeared at Wolf Trap as Sid in *Alberti Herring* and the Calaph in *Kismet*. He performed for two successive seasons with Texas Opera Theater, portraying the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Scaramisa in John Phillip Sousa's *El Capitan*, and Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*. He made his debut with Houston Grand Opera as Slim in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*. The following year Ellsworth retrained as a tenor under the coaching of Elena Nikolaidi, and in 1979 joined the Houston Opera Studio. During that same year he appeared with Houston Grand Opera as Prince Paul in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* and Cassio in *Otello*. He later made his debut with the Washington Opera, singing Normanno in *Lucia* and the Sailor and Melot in *Tristan und Isolde*. Mr. Ellsworth will return to Washington to appear in *Wiener Blut* and as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* at the Kennedy Center next year.

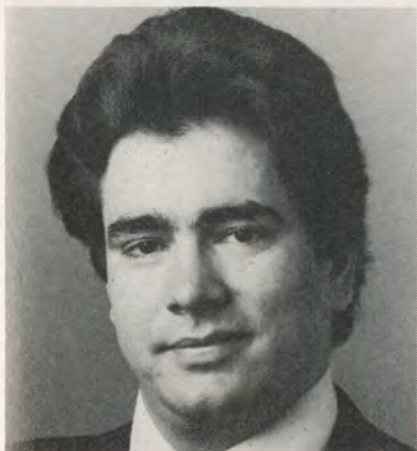
JONATHAN GREEN

Tenor Jonathan Green, who won critical raves for his portrayal of the title role in Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik* with Spring Opera this year, makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season as the First Priest in *The Magic Flute*, the Shepherd in *Tristan und Isolde* and Beppe in *I Pagliacci*. A frequent performer with the New York City Opera, he bowed there as Don Basilio in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 1977 and sang 12 other roles that season. Highlighting the following season were performances as Lippo

PROFILES



Fiorentino in Weill's *Streetscene*, recently seen over PBS television, the creation of the role of Raymond Pocket in the world premiere of Dominick Argento's *Miss Haversham's Fire*, both with NYCO, and a debut with the Cincinnati Opera as the Abbé in *Adriana Lecouvreur* and as Goro in *Madama Butterfly* with the Milwaukee Symphony. Other roles in his repertoire include Pedrillo in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*. He was recently heard as the English servant in Offenbach's *Monsieur Choufleuri* with Spoleto, U.S.A. A former apprentice with Central City Opera and the St. Paul Opera, Green has performed extensively in concert and oratorio.



QUADE WINTER
Singing the Voice of the Sailor in *Tristan und Isolde*, tenor Quade Winter makes his initial appearance with the San Francisco Opera. In 1979 he was invited to participate in the Merola Opera Program, where he portrayed Max in *Der Freischütz* under the baton of Kurt Herbert Adler. That same year he appeared as the Duke in *Rigoletto*

with the Eugene Opera and performed Alfredo in *La Traviata* with the Rogue Valley Opera in Ashland, as well as the tenor solos in Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with the Portland Symphonic Choir. This year he won awards in both the San Francisco Opera and Metropolitan Opera Auditions and was heard with the Portland Opera as the First Prisoner in *Fidelio* and the Mayor in the Merola production of *Albert Herring*. In January 1981 he will appear with the Berkeley Promenade Orchestra as Mazal in Janáček's *The Excursions of Mr. Brouček*, and in March he will be heard at Davies Symphony Hall in the tenor solos of Berlioz' *Lélio* with the San Francisco Concert Orchestra.



JOHN DEL CARLO
A member of the San Francisco Opera Chorus from 1973 to 1976 and now in his third season as soloist with the Company, baritone John Del Carlo was co-winner of the first-place award in the 1977 San Francisco Opera Auditions Grand Finals following participation in the Merola Opera Program that year. In 1978 he made his debut with Spring Opera as Achilles in Handel's *Julius Caesar*, returning for Offenbach's *La Perichole* in 1979 and Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik* this year. He scored a triumph in the title role of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe*, which received its world premiere with the American Opera Project this spring. In the past two seasons he has sung 11 roles with the San Francisco Opera, including Zuane in *La Gioconda*, which he recently recorded for London Records. The baritone won the Giacomo Puccini Award in the San Diego Opera Center Program and was heard there as Dandini in *La Cenerentola* and Pantaleone in *The Love for Three Oranges*. He sang Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with the San Diego Opera in Palm Springs in 1978 and last year appeared

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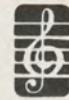


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PROFILES

as Silvio in *I Pagliacci* with that company. A graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Del Carlo has performed with Brown Bag Opera, the Oakland Symphony and the California Bach Society. During the 1980 fall season he is heard as the One-eyed Man in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, the Mayor in *Jenůfa*, the Steersman in *Tristan und Isolde* and the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*.



KURT HERBERT ADLER

The conductor of *Tristan und Isolde*, Kurt Herbert Adler is now in his 27th year as general director of the San Francisco Opera. Other Wagnerian assignments he has taken on at the War Memorial Opera House have been *Lobengrin* in 1978 and the Wagner-Strauss concert in November 1979 featuring Birgit Nilsson. Other recent conducting engagements have included a concert with Luciano Pavarotti last summer in Iceland (which coincided with the birth of his daughter Sabrina Sif); the annual Golden Gate Park Concert with Shirley Verrett, Plácido Domingo and Wolfgang Brendel; the "Night in Old Vienna" concerts with the San Francisco Symphony; *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Marseilles; *Tosca* in Philadelphia and with the San Francisco Opera in Manila; *The Merry Widow* at Colorado's Central City Opera and *Der Freischütz* at Sigmund Stern Grove. Maestro Adler has distinguished himself in several recordings, including *Adler at the Opera*, *O Holy Night* with Luciano Pavarotti, *Verismo Arias* with Maria Chiara, *Romantic Duets* with Renata Scotto and Plácido Domingo and—the most recent—*An Operatic Partnership* with Leona Mitchell. Born and educated in Vienna, Adler was conductor for the Max Reinhardt Theaters and assistant conductor to Arturo Toscanini at the 1936 Salzburg Festival. After five years with the Chicago Opera, he came to

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San Francisco in 1943, making his debut on the podium with *Cavalleria Rusticana*. He has been the recipient of a host of honors and awards for his lifelong service to music; this year alone, Queen Elizabeth II has named him an Honorary Commander of the British Empire (CBE), and President Carter nominated him to membership on the prestigious National Council on the Arts, the advisory body to the National Endowment for the Arts. During the 1978 celebrations of his golden and silver jubilees, the French government honored him as the first American ever to be named a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters, while OPERA America bestowed on him the title "Dean of American Opera Producers" and the National Opera Institute gave him its Repertoire Award. Other foreign honors include the USSR's Bolshoi Theater Medal, the Federal Republic of Germany's Commander's Cross and Order of Merit, Italy's Order of Merit and the title of Cavaliere, and Austria's Great Medal of Honor. He holds honorary degrees from University of the Pacific and the University of San Francisco; received the University of California at Berkeley's highest award, the Berkeley Citation; and was the first cultural leader to be given the City of San Francisco's St. Francis of Assisi Award.



DIETRICH HAUGK

German-born Dietrich Haugk made his American debut in 1974, directing *Tristan und Isolde* for the San Francisco Opera, to which he returns this year to stage that same work. He began his career as an actor in Bremen, Hamburg and Berlin, and eventually became a freelance stage director for German television and theaters in Vienna, Munich, Zurich, Stuttgart and Berlin. His operatic debut was a production of Strauss' *Arabella* at the Stuttgart State Opera in 1967. Since 1971,

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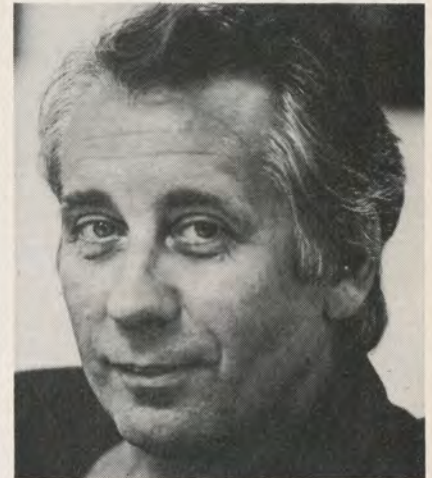


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PROFILES

Haugk has been permanent stage director of the Austrian Federal Theater in Vienna and the Bavarian State Theater in Munich. In 1971 he directed Paisiello's *Il Re Teodoro in Venezia* for the Munich Festival. In 1972 he staged Hassencamp's *Life-Maxims: Catechisms with Music* at the Theater am Gärtnerplatz in Munich, where he staged Fortner's *Elisabeth Tudor* in January 1973. In April of the same year, he directed *Parsifal* at the Munich National Theater, as well as Werner Egk's *Revisor* (after Gogol). At the Residenz Theater in the same city he has staged Sartre's *Les Mains sales* as well as *Richard II* and *Macbeth*. His work for German television has included *Asche des Sieges* and Anouilh's *L'Orchestre*. At the Burgtheater in Vienna he has directed Brecht's *Arturo Ui* and *Mother Courage*.



ROMAN WEYL

Designer Roman Weyl, whose 1974 production of *Tristan und Isolde* is being revived this season, has had a career in stage design as diversified as it is prolific. Born in Mainz, he began his theater work in 1943 at the Schiffbauerdammtheater in Berlin. By the time the Munich Theatermuseum held a retrospective of his work in 1969, he already had 147 productions to his credit at theaters in Berlin, Vienna, Frankfurt, Cologne and Stuttgart, as well as 37 films and television productions. While primarily occupied in legitimate theater, Mr. Weyl's opera and operetta credits include Strauss' *Eine Nacht in Venedig* in 1948 at the Leipzig Volksbühne, where the following year he designed productions of Offenbach's *Die schöne Helena* and *Die lustige Witwe*; *Il Trovatore* at the Hessisches Staatstheater in Wiesbaden in 1950; *Die Zauberflöte* (Mainz Städtisches Theater, 1952),

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
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Offenbach's *Die listigen Frauen* (Berlin Metropoltheater, 1960), *Il Tabarro* (Vienna Volksoper, 1967), *Elisabeth Tudor* (Munich Staatsoper, 1973) and *Otello* (Zurich, 1974). His work with director Dietrich Haugk goes back to 1962, since which time they have collaborated on works by Anouilh, Shakespeare, Wedekind, Gibson and Tennessee Williams, among others.




THOMAS MUNN

In his fifth year as lighting designer/director of the San Francisco Opera, Thomas Munn creates the lighting designs for the new productions of *Samson et Dalila* and *Don Pasquale*, and for all the other 1980 productions except *Simon Boccanegra* and *Arabella*. In 1979 he was responsible for lighting *La Gioconda*, *Il Prigioniero*, *La Voix humaine* and *Roberto Devereux*, and designed the scenery for the Donizetti opera and for *Pelléas et Mélisande*. In past seasons he has also created special effects for the Company's productions and has served as supervising set designer for *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Faust* and *Billy Budd*. Since 1976 he has designed the lighting for the new productions of *Billy Budd*, *La Bohème*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Thäis*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci* and the world premiere of Imbrie's *Angle of Repose*. He created the scenery and lighting for the Netherlands Opera productions of *Macbeth* and *Lulu*, and early this year designed the lighting for *Tristan und Isolde* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* with the Washington Opera Society. In December he received critical praise for his production of *The Nutcracker* with the Hartford Ballet. He has designed numerous regional opera productions in addition to his work in television, film and the legitimate theater throughout the country.

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In a single chord Wagner created a totem so powerful that its briefest evocation can conjure a world of magic and love and death.

By MICHAEL STEINBERG

An attractive widower, not yet old, but no longer young, is wooed by a passionate, unsettled girl, not yet a grownup, but no longer a child. No, he says, no, he knows a sad play about Tristan and Isolde, and he wants none of King Mark's fate. And as he speaks, the orchestra stabs us—quietly, but to the heart—with a chord unlike any we have heard in the three hours of music through which the story has unfolded so far.

A teen-age boy, pathetic, repressed, afraid, is slipped his first drink by two friends who count on a jigger of rum to be the key to his liberation. As the mysterious and unfamiliar essence invades his head, the same chord fills the orchestra like spreading smoke.

In a tour de force of musical cryptography, a string quartet becomes a love letter to a woman whose place in the composer's heart none must guess. Suddenly, in its lamenting finale, the four strands of sound sort themselves out into that chord.

In a carol to "lovely and soothing Death," when poet and musician . . . joyously sing the dead,
 Lost in the loving, floating ocean of thee,
 Laved in the flood of thy bliss,
 O Death,
 that chord ghosts for a moment through the room.

That chord is the first chord of *Tristan und Isolde*; it is also Wagner, quoting himself in the third act of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; Benjamin Britten, injecting it into the comedy of

poor Albert Herring's coronation as Albert the Good; Alban Berg, setting it as a secret reference in the *Lyric Suite* he wrote for Hannah Fuchs-Robetten; and Roger Sessions, alluding to it in his setting of Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" with a reticence that assumes the most attentive ear. All could be sure that they were making a reference that would be understood instantly and unmistakably.

Musicians—and not only musicians—know it as "the *Tristan* chord." Is there another composition so identified with a single sound? The historians discovered that Wagner got it, like so much else, from Franz Liszt. The point is that Wagner perceived that what had been a colorful detail in his future father-in-law's song could become the motor, the heartbeat, of a drama in music more intense, more erotic, more abstract, more involved intellectually, more allusive than anything ever before set on a stage.

Is there another composition so identified with a single sound?

The *Tristan* story, as Wagner distilled it from many strands of legend and literature, is nearly devoid of external event. Two people drain a cup of drugged wine, a hunting party returns unexpectedly early, and twice, tempers and ideals collide so that a physical melee erupts briefly. But those are mere mechanisms in and of the real story, which is one of two people caught in hopeless love. Perhaps "hopeless" is by

Richard Wagner (1813-83) in a pastel by Franz von Lenbach.



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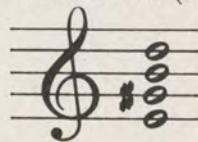
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one degree too extreme a word, for what Tristan and Isolde come to realize is that there is indeed a place where their love, their great yearning, can find fulfillment, and that is in the Land of Death.

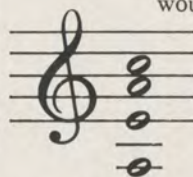
He begins his dramas with the first note of music.

For this story, so plain and so baffling if we imagine dealing with it by means of ordinary stagecraft, Wagner found a stunningly simple musical metaphor. He constructed a network of dissonance whose resolution into consonance would occur only at the moment when Tristan and Isolde are joined in death. (*Dissonance*, I should perhaps explain, is not synonymous with *discord*; rather it is, in tonal harmony, the term for any chord that sets up the expectation or the need of resolution to another, more stable chord.)

Here is how *Tristan* begins. "Slow and yearning," says Wagner, and the cellos, *pianissimo*, heave themselves up so as to begin a slow, gradual descent. On the third note of that descent, a few woodwinds add their voices to produce that poignant and aromatic dissonance, the *Tristan* chord. Wagner treats it as a dissonance, as a sound that wants to move on to another sound. He does not, however, resolve it into consonance; the voices fan out until they reach that most familiar and most restless of dissonances, the one known in the trade as the dominant seventh chord. Our expectation, when we hear a dominant seventh, is that it will lead to a consonance. (This particular chord,



would normally resolve to

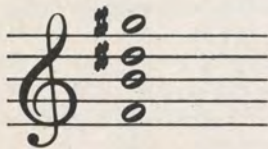


a chord of A minor.) Instead, Wagner lets it dissolve into silence and, after a pause that few conductors have the nerve, patience and sense of rhythm to hold through its proper duration, he begins the whole process again, a step higher. He repeats the phrase again, more intensely than before, and this time the prolongation of the "dying" by means of ever more tenuous repetitions of ever shorter fragments serves notice that the expected consonance will not come, at least not yet. The prelude to *Tristan* touches many chords and with

many degrees of emphasis, but one thing Wagner studiously avoids is anything like settling on the chord of his unstated tonic (or "home" key).

Wagner was working long past the time when an opera overture was simply a pleasant bustle designed to cover the noise of an audience settling down. Almost from the beginning of his career, he begins his dramas with the first note of music. As for *Tristan*, we know well what is coming—even if our acquaintance is limited to the popular concert excerpt, the "Prelude and Love-Death" (an expedient authorized and practiced by Wagner himself at a time when opportunities to see and hear a complete *Tristan* were about as plentiful as chances of seeing Sessions' *Montezuma* today). But even the original audience in Munich on June 10, 1865, must have perceived that a musical gesture so striking in itself and presented with so many marks of emphasis was bound to have consequences.

I am sure someone has counted how many times the *Tristan* chord



appears, literally or in some inversion, transposition or other recognizable variant, between measure two of the prelude and the moment hours later when Isolde has sunk "as though transfigured," lifeless into the arms of her maid, Brangäne, and onto the body of the dead Tristan. I have not, but the number must be far into three figures. *Tristan und Isolde* is

a wondrously multifaceted work, and no one analytical approach will serve to reveal its nature. You could certainly do worse, though, than to trace the unfolding of its events through the appearances of *the chord*.

Claude Debussy, another composer who quoted *Tristan* for humorous effect, was a wonderful critic, and, like all good critics, he was not always innocent of

As Isolde expires, the chord is dissolved in beatific consonance.

hyperbole and distortion. He was conspicuously unkind—and untruthful—when he complained of the behavior of Wagner's leitmotifs. The characters were tiresome, he remarked, the way they insisted on presenting their calling cards monotonously upon each appearance. At best this is true of early Wagner or of a few special cases like the trumpet call associated in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* with the sword Nothung. Wagner soon caught on that these leitmotifs, as well as being often telling associative devices, were wonderfully pliable musical entities with which he could build his unprecedented, far-flung structures. He cared intensely about the firmness of his designs, and he turned to Beethoven's music to learn how to achieve that firmness. It is not surprising to discover that the C-sharp minor String Quartet, Opus 131, so big and at the same time so compacted and rich in cross-reference and allusion, was one of the works he most treasured. *Tristan* abounds in significant recapitulations of its opening



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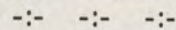
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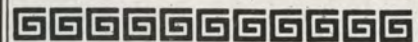


Birgit Nilsson and Wolfgang Windgassen about to drink the love potion in the 1970 San Francisco Opera production of *Tristan und Isolde*.

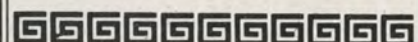
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measures—the drinking of the potion and Tristan's reply to Mark's sorrowful address are two of the most arresting—and their function in the matter of form (Walter Pater defined form as the life history of an idea) is as crucial as their affective weight. By the same token, the span from the second measure of *Tristan's* prelude to the fifth measure from the end is the great crossbeam that holds the immense edifice together.

This is not the place to write the biography of that chord whose sound and further resonance so saturate *Tristan und Isolde*. Who, in any event, would not want to make that voyage of discovery on his own, to let the drama reveal its riches in the theater, at the piano, with records, through some form

Wagner found a stunningly simple musical metaphor.

of long living with it? Let me, however, point to just a few.

The drinking of the potion:

This, near the end of Act I, is the first great peripeteia of the drama. It sets in motion what we think of as the "real" action, but it also closes the chapter begun years before when Tristan slew Isolde's betrothed, Morold. It is the most explicit recapitulation of the opening measures to be found in the score, but, at the same time, how transformed it is! The chord itself enters as a cry of the whole orchestra; the silences are filled in with sounds that speak of racing pulses, of trembling and vertigo and confusion. And the phrase in which the prelude attains its real momentum is transfigured when Tristan and Isolde for the first time address each other by name. (Can our hearing, our understanding of the prelude ever be the same once we have heard Isolde's shaken "Tristan!" and Tristan's passion-flooded response?)

Tristan's response to the King:

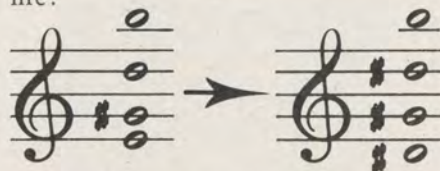
Day has invaded Night, the outer world has intruded into that world that excludes all but Tristan and Isolde. To Mark, crushed by grief, incomprehension



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Theo Adam as Hans Sachs and Arlene Saunders as Eva in Act III of the 1971 production of *Die Meistersinger*.

and shame, Tristan can say only: "O King, I cannot tell you, and what you ask you can never learn." As he speaks, the music of the prelude's opening bars sounds again, but in the chill sonorities of woodwinds and with a subtle change of harmony that substitutes for the dominant seventh with its openness, tension and expectation, a sound that musicians know as the six-four chord, also unstable, unfinal, but without energy or life:



(When Tristan turns from Mark to Isolde, we again hear the warm sound of strings.)

Tristan's death:

An event passionately longed for and with equal passion staved off until the arrival of Isolde. As Tristan sinks slowly to the ground in Isolde's arms, the music of the prelude sounds again, first urgently telescoped, then, with his last

"Isolde!," disintegrating.

Isolde's death:

The Love-Death (which, by the way, was Wagner's original name for the prelude) is a massive recapitulation of the climax of the love music in Act II. As Isolde expires, the chord—for the first and only time—is dissolved in beatific consonance. The drama is over. Tristan and Isolde have found death and each other. The *Tristan* chord has found its resolution.

I wonder how many in the audience at the first performance of *Die Meistersinger* caught the musical quotation that went with the reference to the "traurig Stück" of *Tristan und Isolde*. (In the pit that night was Hans von Bülow, an expert on cuckoldry: His wife had borne the first of her three children by Richard Wagner the day of the first orchestral rehearsal of *Tristan*.) No doubt to some extent Wagner was writing into the future, as it were. It is silly to ask what Wagner would have thought of Alban Berg and Roger Sessions, though it is possible to imagine that he might have approved of the seriousness of purpose behind their *Tristan* quotations. Of course when it came to humor, he had a clear-cut and simple idea that the proper distribution of responsibilities was for him to make the jokes and for others to laugh. But perhaps he would have accepted even Albert's hiccupy coronation insofar as it was evidence that, in one chord, he had created a totem so powerful that the briefest evocation of it could conjure, more surely than a thousand words, a world of magic and love and death. ■

MICHAEL STEINBERG is artistic adviser to the San Francisco Symphony, and his writings on music appear regularly in the program book of that orchestra.



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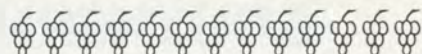
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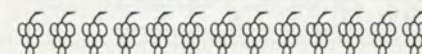
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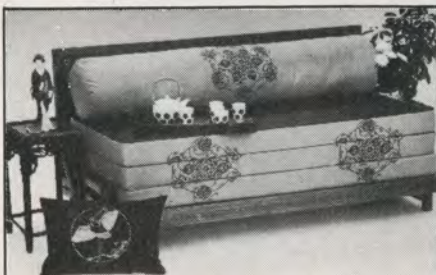
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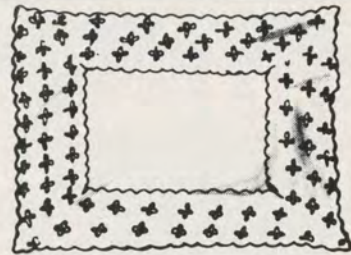
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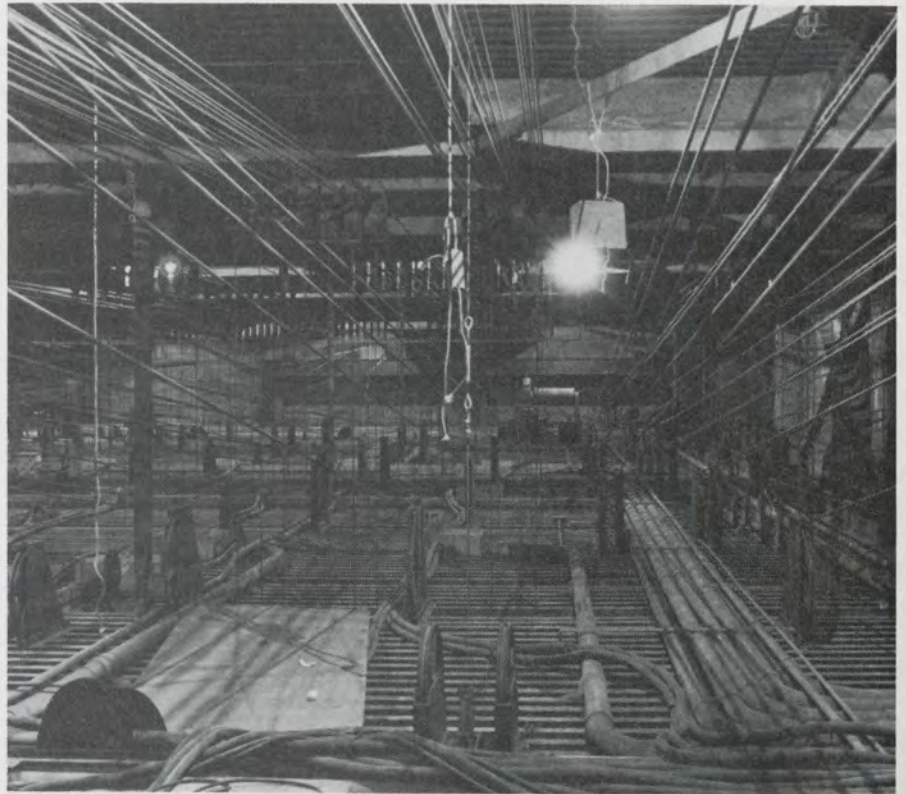
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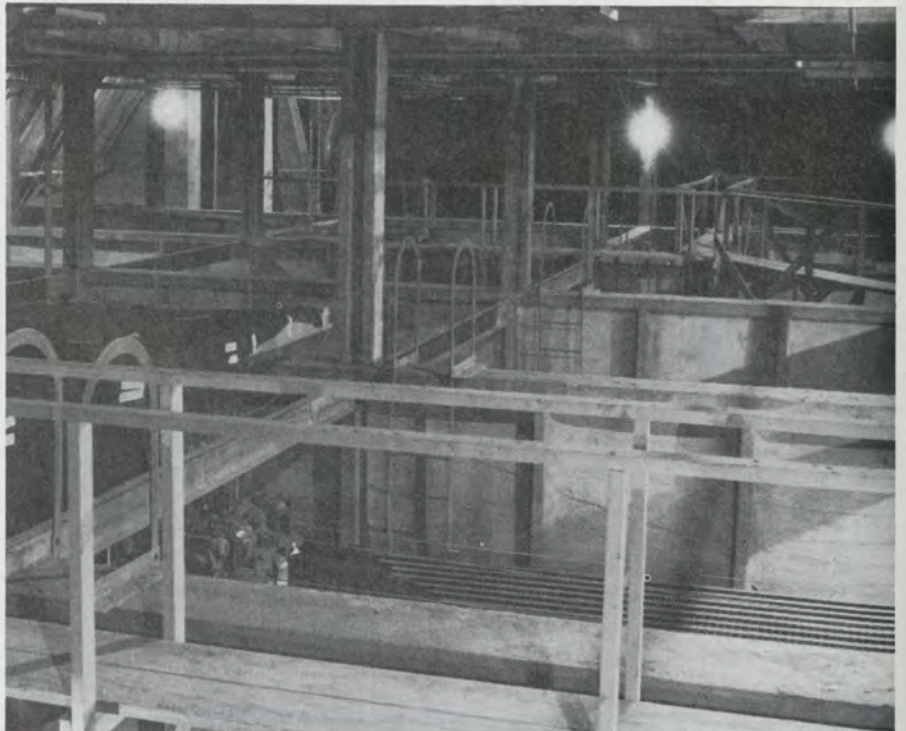
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Functional spaces often possess a startling, fluid beauty all their own. Soaring 116 feet high above the stage floor of the War Memorial Opera House is the complex maze of rope lines, cables, pulleys and steel grids that make up the house's fly rigging system. As part of the massive technical preparations for the American premier production of *Lear*, which will open the first San Francisco Opera

Summer Festival, Opera technical director John Priest recently needed illustrations of the Opera House fly system for a German opera company. Their technical purpose notwithstanding, the series of photos Ron Scherl produced for him demanded to be shared with Opera audiences who might enjoy a glimpse into a never-seen corner of the War Memorial.



PHOTOS BY RON SCHERL



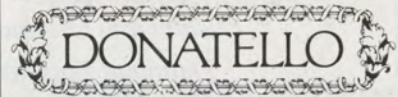


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In Memoriam

The 1980 San Francisco Opera Fair was dedicated to the memory of Jean Bolton (Mrs. Dewey) Donnell, who died June 14. Long an active member of the San Francisco Opera Association Board of Directors, Donnell was also a guiding force on the boards of both the Merola Fund and Spring Opera. It was during a trip to New York, where her son Bruce is a stage director at the Metropolitan Opera, that she conceived the notion for a San Francisco Opera Fair, modeled after the Met's version but created specifically for the San Francisco community. The Fair was launched in 1977 through her determination, creativity and organization, and has grown since to the status of a major annual Bay Area event attended by thousands. She was also a director of San Domenico, International Hospitality Center, and served on the board of St. Luke's Hospital in San Francisco. She leaves her husband, Dewey; son, Bruce; daughters, Nancy and Sandra; her mother, Jean Bolton; and one grandson. A Jean Donnell Memorial Fund has been established to endow an annual Merola singer's position in her memory; contributions can be made through the Merola Fund office.

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

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	Simon Boccanegra 8 pm	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	Arabella 8 pm	14 *G, I		15 J, L	Tristan und Isolde 1 pm	16 M, O
	20	Tristan und Isolde 7 pm	21 *G, H		22 J, K	Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 2 pm	23 M, N
Madama Butterfly 8 pm Thanksgiving	27	**Don Pasquale 1 pm Cavalleria Rusticana & I Pagliacci 8 pm	28 *G, H		29 J, L	Tristan und Isolde 7 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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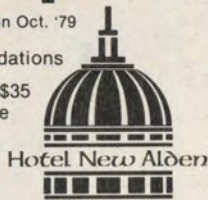
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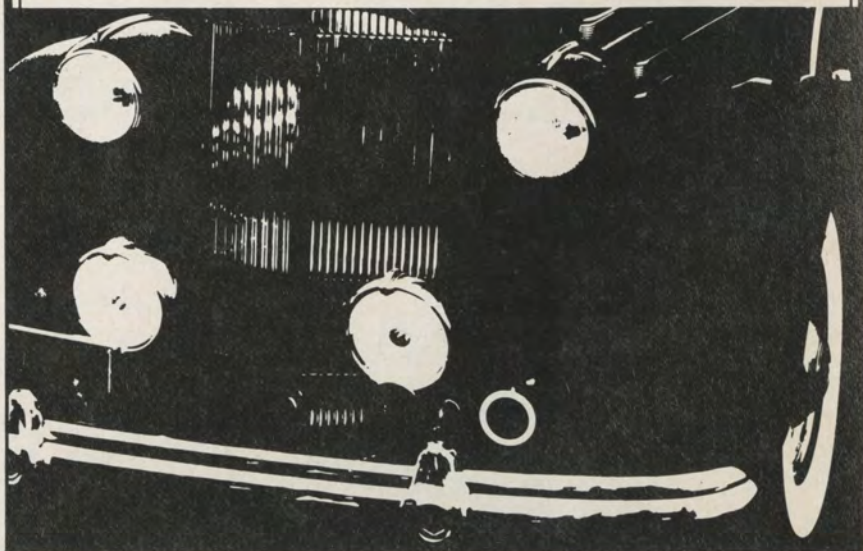
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