

Aida

1981

Thursday, November 12, 1981 8:00 PM
Sunday, November 15, 1981 12:00 PM
Wednesday, November 18, 1981 7:30 PM
Saturday, November 21, 1981 8:00 PM
Tuesday, November 24, 1981 8:00 PM
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Aida

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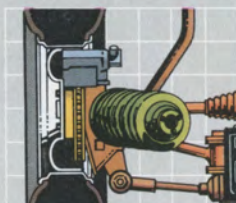


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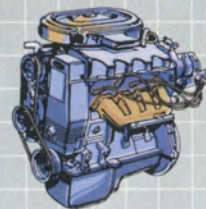
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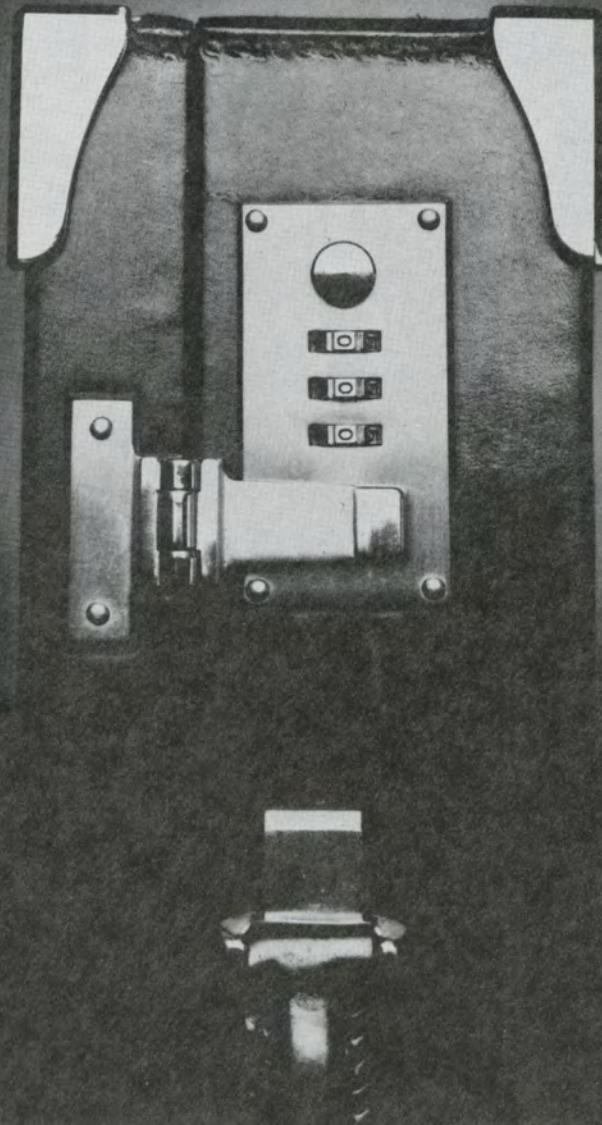
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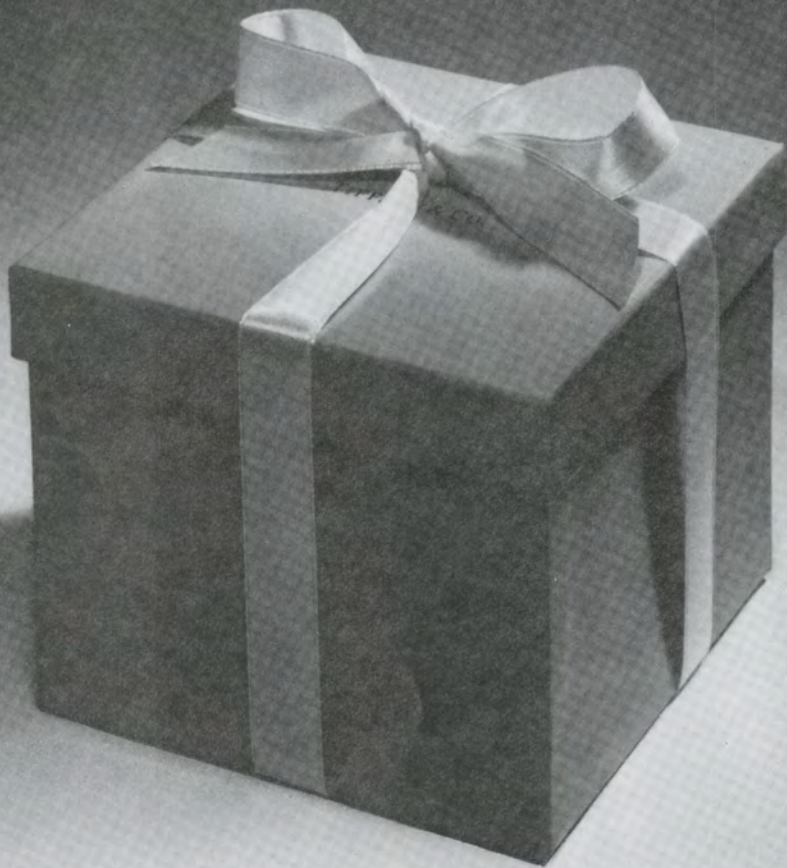
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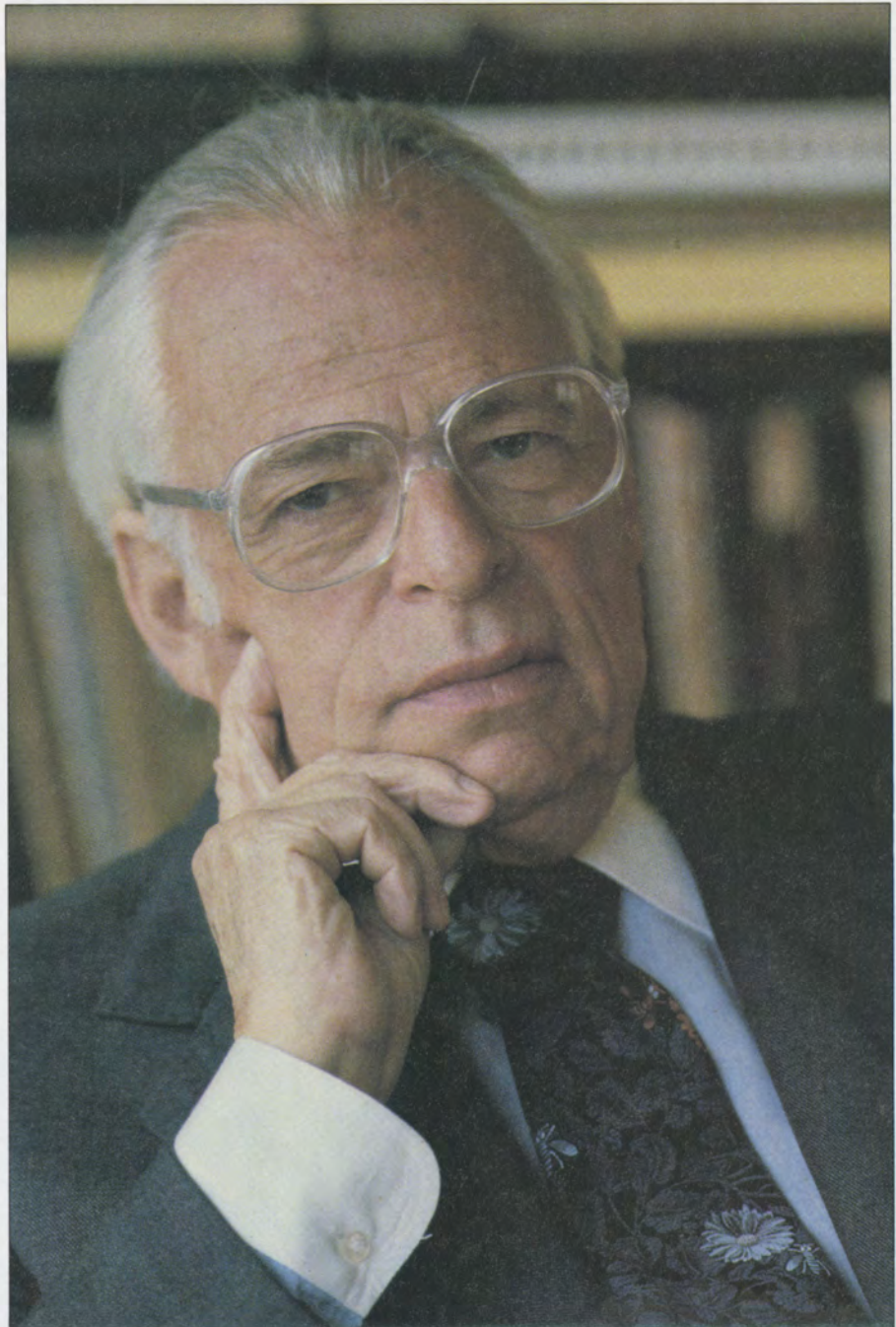
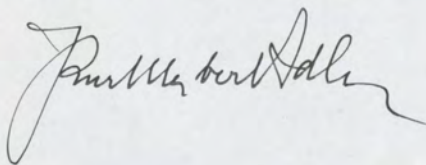
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A warm welcome to our 59th annual Fall Season, which climaxes the busiest year in the history of San Francisco Opera. We welcome back a host of dear friends of the Company and of mine, and we are also happy to introduce a number of exceptional artists new to San Francisco. Two of the most popular works in all opera — Verdi's *Aida* and Bizet's *Carmen* — receive new productions; the new *Aida* is San Francisco Opera's contribution to San Francisco's city-wide celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis of Assisi, the City's patron. Three works are presented here in premiere performances: Rossini's *Semiramide*, Massenet's *Le Cid* (which has never before been heard in the American West) and Lehár's *The Merry Widow*. Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, the original version of *Katerina Ismailova*, is heard for the first time in 45 years in the United States. After this season, I will step down from the position of general director of the Company, having enjoyed 38 years of association with San Francisco Opera. Together with you, our audiences and faithful supporters, we have built an opera company of international renown. In 1954, when I assumed directorship, there were five weeks of grand opera in San Francisco; this year, we are proud to present a total of twenty in the War Memorial Opera House. With inauguration of the Summer Festival, an extended Fall Season and the activities of our affiliates, opera is now a permanent part of the vibrance that makes San Francisco such an enviable place to live. I hope this new season, and many more to come, will bring you the artistic satisfaction you desire. Thank you, and may you enjoy our sincere efforts.



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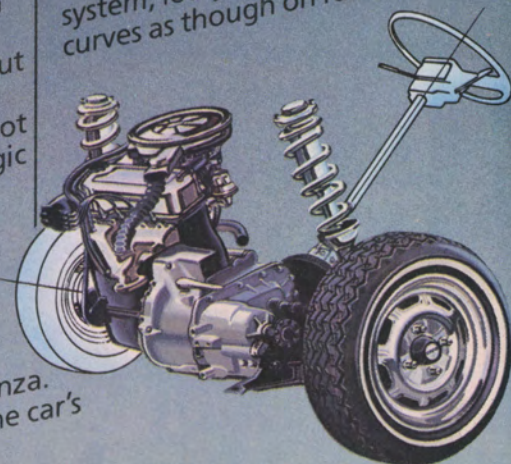
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AIDA/1981

FEATURES

Verdi as Stage Director by Andrew Porter 36

The detailed production book for *Aida* gives modern opera companies the chance to study Verdi's precise intentions for staging his opera.

Pride and Self-delusion in *Aida* by Arthur Kaplan 45

Aida focuses on the interplay between love and pride in the three principal characters and the self-deceptions that lead to tragedy.

Producing Verdi's *Aida* 69

Toeing the Line in Opera by Thomas O'Connor 78

Two of San Francisco Opera's choreographers discuss the unique demands that opera makes on their special craft.



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THE COVER

All 11 works in the 1981 Fall Season take their names from central characters. The covers for the magazines focus on non-operatic depictions of these title heroes and heroines, as seen through the filter of various other artistic media.

AIDA: Portrait of an elegant lady from the Tomb of Menena at Thebes, Egypt (XVIIIth Dynasty).

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

When Kurt Herbert Adler lays down his baton after conducting the final performance of this 59th annual Fall Season, he will retire after nearly three decades as general director of the Company. It is characteristic that his last year in charge is a spectacular one of unparalleled activity and ambition. After launching a new San Francisco Summer Festival, he has assembled a fall opera season that, in breadth of repertoire and caliber of artists, is quite simply the dream of every opera lover.

We are deeply indebted to Mr. Adler for his development of San Francisco Opera to become one of the leading opera companies of the world. I know that all patrons of San Francisco Opera wish him good health and happiness in his retirement during the years to come, a retirement he has earned and richly deserves.

As I am sure you know, Terry McEwen takes on the responsibility of leading the Company this coming winter. He is committed to maintaining the exceptional standards of quality that have characterized the Adler years, and we are fortunate to have someone of his ability, determination and vision.

As mentioned in previous letters, costs of producing operas of the quality for which we are famous are staggering, and ticket revenues cover

only 55-60 per cent of the costs, even with sold-out houses. Further, the expenses of developing our new Summer Festival are significant and, of course, the ravages of inflation wreak particular havoc with our finances since we are a labor-intensive enterprise. As a result, our need for contributions to the annual fund drive is greater than ever. It is vital that we materially increase our contributed revenues this year if we are to maintain our financial health, which we must do if we are to continue our artistic strength. If you are one of our thousands of donors, I hope you will seriously consider increasing your contribution this year; if you are not, won't you please join them? We offer a host of attractive benefits to contributors, and a number of useful deferred giving plans have been developed. Please let us know how we can help you to help the San Francisco Opera, and please act now.

A number of the beautiful productions you see this fall are special gifts: *Semiramide* through a grant from the San Francisco Foundation, and the new *Aida* through the generosity of a friend of San Francisco Opera. *Manon* was made possible in 1971 through the sponsorship of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and a gift from James D. Robertson, while our *Lucia di Lammermoor* was created in 1972 thanks



RON SCHERL PHOTO

Walter M. Baird
President and Chief Executive Officer
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to a gift from Cyril Magnin. We are also delighted this fall to present the Canadian Opera Company's production of *The Merry Widow*.

I would like to extend our continuing gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts and its chairman, Livingston L. Biddle, Jr.; the California Arts Council and its chairman, Karney Hodge; 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 invaluable support of the San Francisco Opera.

Enjoy the season!

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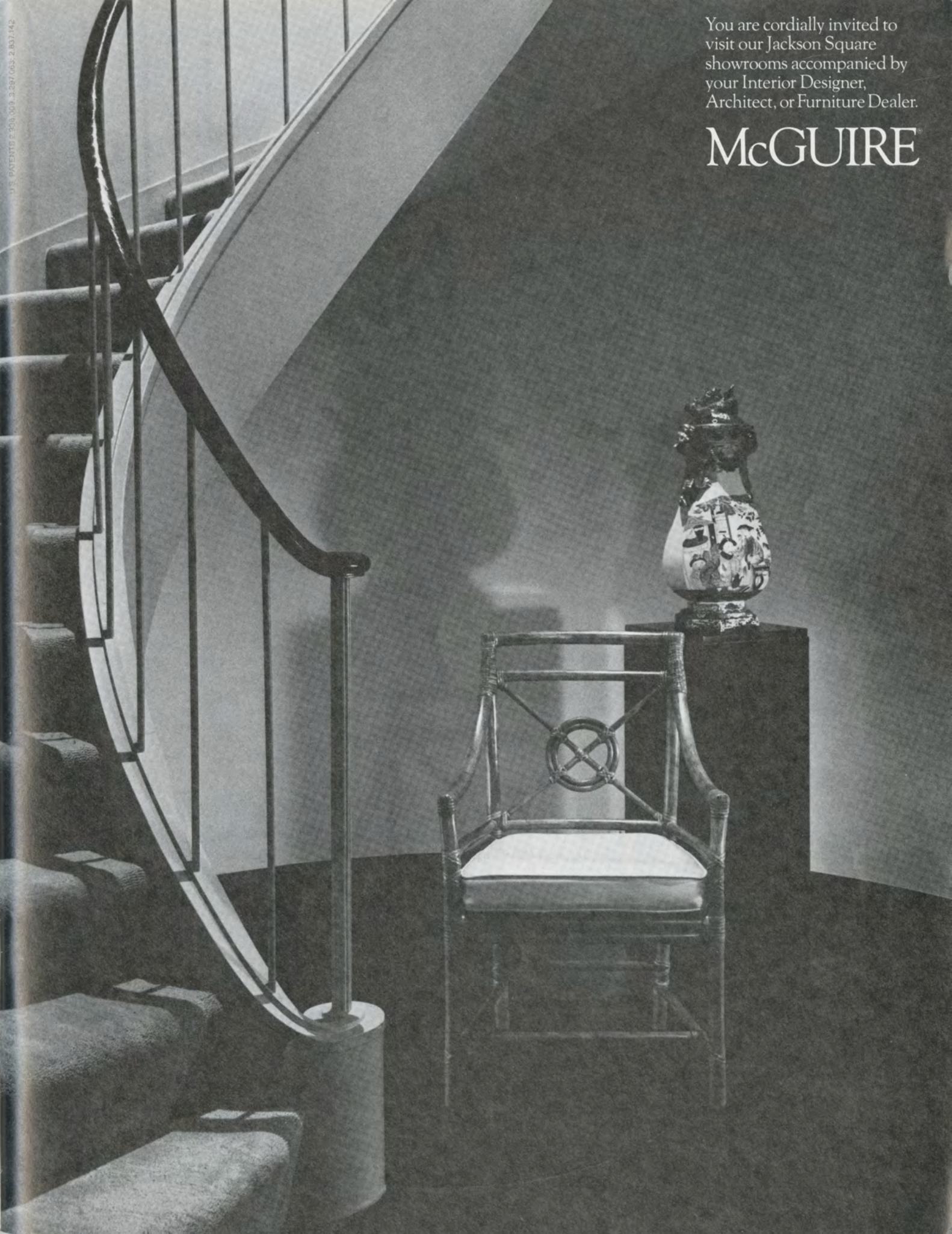
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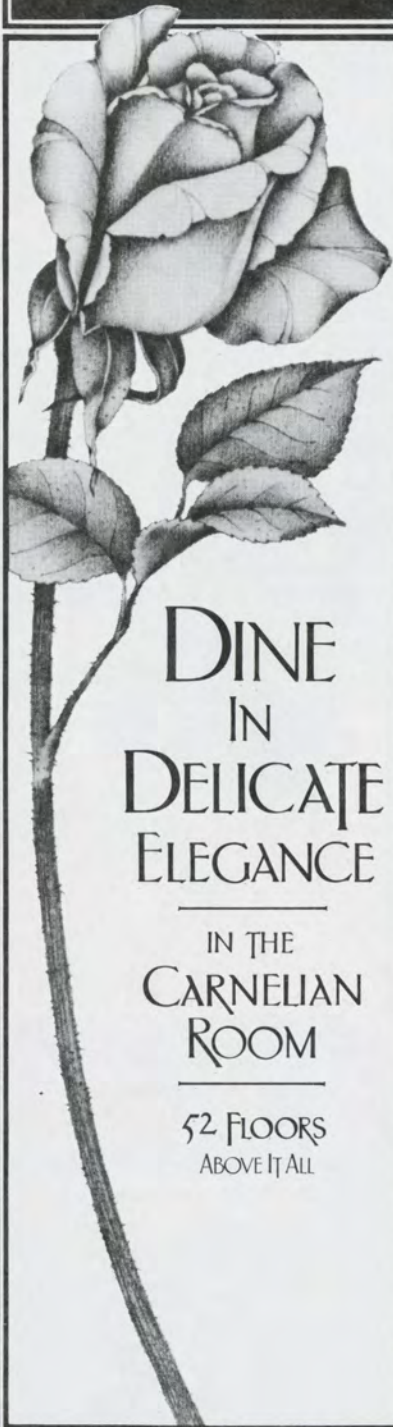
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Lael Carlson	Susan Sheldrake	David House
Teresa Colyer	Lorice Stevens	Conrad Knipfel
Lisa Louise Glenister	Winther Andersen	Henry Metlenko
Theodotia Hartman	Mamoru Arimoto	Steven Meyer
Gloria Holmby	John Beauchamp	Eugene Naham
Anne Huffington	Manfred Behrens	Stephen Ostrow
Liya Kushnirskaya	Raymond Chavez	Autris Paige
Marena Lane	Thomas Clark	Robert Philip Price
Lola Lazzari-Simi	Angelo Colbasso	Robert Romanovsky
Cecilia MacLaren	David Durrett	Kevin Skiles
Roberta Maxwell	Dale Emde	Micaele Sparacino
Susan McClelland		James Starkey
		James Tipton

Girls Chorus

Elizabeth Ashton	Samantha Graff	Alissa Kingsbury
Deidre Atkinson	Karla Haeberle	Rachel Lopez
Malieka Bundy	Martha Hicks	Jennifer Marshall
Anne Coriston	Julia Hunt	Kristin McCarthy
Teresa Davis	Ann Huppert	Stefanie Naifeh
Sharon D'Cunha	Anna Marie Jegers	Amy Sharp

Boys Chorus

Kevin Barry	Patrick Egly	Ian Luce
Paul Bemesderfer	Michael Folk	David Martin
Brian Butler	Andrew Fredericks	Eric Marty
Adam Colety	Timothy Genis	Peter McKean
Jonathan Couchman	George Graham	Torin Newsome
Brian Darby	Kenyan Hopkins	Daniel Potasz
James Datri	Gary Jones	David Roberts
John Datri	David Kersnar	Aaron Shapiro
Justin Dudley	Thor Klippert	Carl Smith
Geoffrey Dunn	Christopher Lev	William Weber

Dancers

Peggy Davis	Diane Rothenberg	David Jones
Anne Elizabeth Egan	Marika Sakellariou	Alonso King
Carolyn Houser	Katherine Warner	Daryl Lloyd
Marti Kennedy	Peter Childers	William Sanner Ramsdell
Cecilia Marta	Hassan Al Falak	Pete J. Shoemaker
Elvia Marta	Greg Gible	John Sullivan
Kathryn Roszak		Charlie West

Actors

Alan Blumenfeld	Colin Harvey	Claudia Siefer
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continued on p. 24

The New Classic from Klaus Murer

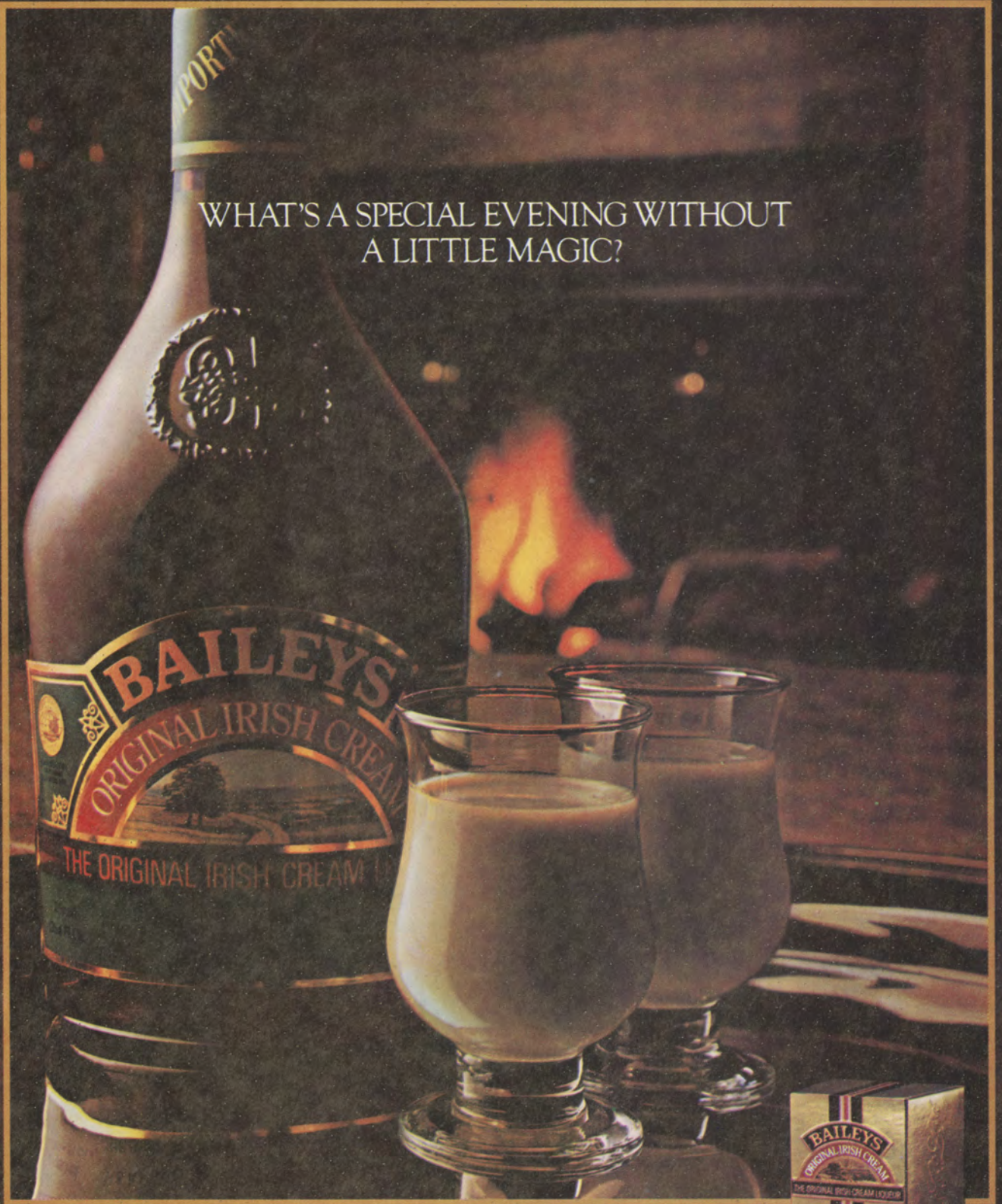


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1981 SEASON

Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Semiramide

In Italian
Rossini

This production of *Semiramide* was made possible through a generous and much appreciated grant from the San Francisco Foundation.

Caballé, Horne/Gonzales, Morris*, Halfvarson, Green, G. Stapp

Bonyngé/Pizzi*/Pizzi

Manon

In French
Massenet

This production of *Manon* was made possible, in 1971, through the sponsorship of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and a gift from James D. Robertson.

Grist, South, P. Hunter*, Quittmeyer, Ganz/Burrows, Duesing, Malta, Castel*, Gardner, Noble, Glaum

Rudel/R. Levine*/Mitchell-George/Sakellariou

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

In Russian
Shostakovich

Silja, Nelson*, de la Rosa, Ganz/W. Lewis, Trussel, Ludgin, Langan, Halfvarson, Harger, G. Stapp, Green, Freeman*, Glaum, Noble, Woodman

Simmons/Freedman/Skalicki-Colangelo

San Francisco Opera Premiere

The Merry Widow

In English
Lehár

Production from the Canadian Opera Company

Sutherland, Forst, P. Hunter, Ganz, Olsson*/Hagegard*, Austin**, Stark*, Isaac*, Green, Woodman, Harger, Wexler, Del Carlo

Bonyngé/Mansouri/Laufer*-Mess*/Holder*

New Production

Carmen

In French
Bizet

This new production of *Carmen* was made possible in part through the generosity of friends of Kurt Herbert Adler as a tribute to the unique contribution he has made to the San Francisco Opera.

Berganza, Cook, South, Quittmeyer/Bonissolli, Estes, Eisler, Gardner, Langan, Noble

October 10, 14, 18 (mat), 22, 26, 30, November 3

Adler/Ponnelle/Ponnelle-Juerke*

Schwarz, Mitchell, South, Quittmeyer/Domingo, Carlson, Eisler, Gardner, Langan, Noble

December 4, 7, 10, 13 (mat)

Adler/Ponnelle-Hope*/Ponnelle-Juerke

San Francisco Opera and West Coast Premiere

Le Cid

In French
Massenet

(Stylized Concert Version)

Neblett, Ringo*/W. Lewis, Furlanetto, Noble, Halfvarson, Green, Glaum, G. Stapp, Woodman

Rudel/Frisell

Wozzeck

In English
Berg

Martin, Nelson/Evans, Cox*, R. Lewis, Kennedy**, Harger, Green, Langan, Woodman

Rennert/Evans/Bauer-Ecsy—Mason

Lucia di Lammermoor

In Italian
Donizetti

This production of *Lucia di Lammermoor* was made possible, in 1972, by a generous and deeply appreciated gift from Cyril Magnin.

Putnam*, Richards/Shicoff*, Carlson*, Furlanetto, Eisler, Freeman

Agler/Frisell/Toms

Popular-priced performances in Italian

Ringo, Richards/Morales*, Gardner, G. Stapp, Freeman, Harger

Bradshaw/Farruggio/Toms

New Production

Aida

In Italian
Verdi

This new production of *Aida* was made possible by a friend of the San Francisco Opera.

M. Price, Toczyska, Quittmeyer/Pavarotti, Estes, Mróz*, Langan, Freeman

Navarro**/Wanamaker*/Schmidt-Casey/Sappington

Die Walküre

In German
Wagner

Nilsson (11/20, 25, 12/1), Kovács* (11/28, 12/6, 12/12), Rysanek, Denize*, P. Hunter, Cook, Olsson, Quittmeyer, Morgan*, Richards, Rice*, Shaulis*/King, Schenk*, Rydl

Suitner/Hager/Skalicki

Il Trovatore

In Italian
Verdi

L. Price, Cossotto, Richards/Lamberti, Brendel, Rydl, Freeman, G. Stapp, Lakes*

Steinberg**/Mansouri/Skalicki-West

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

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**American opera debut

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1st VIOLIN

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Adolf Bruk *Assistant Concertmaster*
Ferdinand Claudio
William E. Pynchon *Assistant
Principal*
William Rusconi
Agnes Vadas
Mafalda Guaraldi
Barbara Riccardi
Jeremy Constant
Tanya Rankov
Robert Galbraith
Celia Rosenberger

2nd VIOLIN

Roy Malan *Principal*
Virginia Price
Felix Khuner
Lev Rankov
Eva Karasik
Leonid Igudesman
Gerard Svazlian
Lani King
Linda Deutsch
Rise Patt†
Sarah Ushert†

VIOLA

Rolf Persinger *Principal*
Natalia Igudesman
Lucien Mitchell
Asbjorn Finess
Jonna Hervig
Ellen Smith
Alison Avery
Patrick Kroboth†

CELLO

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

BASS

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

FLUTE

Walter Subke *Principal*
Alice F. Miller
James Walker
Mary Hargrove†

PICCOLO

James Walker

OBOE

James Matheson *Principal*
Deborah Henry
Raymond Dusté

ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Dusté

CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*
Joanne Burke Eisler
Gregory Dufford

BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

BASSOON

Rufus Olivier *Principal*
Jerry Dagg
Robin Elliott

CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

FRENCH HORN

William Klingelhoffer *Principal*
David Sprung *Principal*
Carlberg Jones
Brian McCarty
Paul McNutt
Lawrence Ragent†

TRUMPET

James Miller *Principal*
Edward Haug
Timothy Wilson

TROMBONE

McDowell Kenley *Principal*
Donald Kennelly
John Bischof

TUBA

Robert Z.A. Spellman

TIMPANI

Elayne Jones

PERCUSSION

Peggy Lucchesi
Richard Kvistad
Danny Montoro†
David Rosenthal†

HARP

Anne Adams *Principal*
Marcella de Cray

LIBRARIAN

Lauré Campbell

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Thomas B. Heimberg

†Additional players

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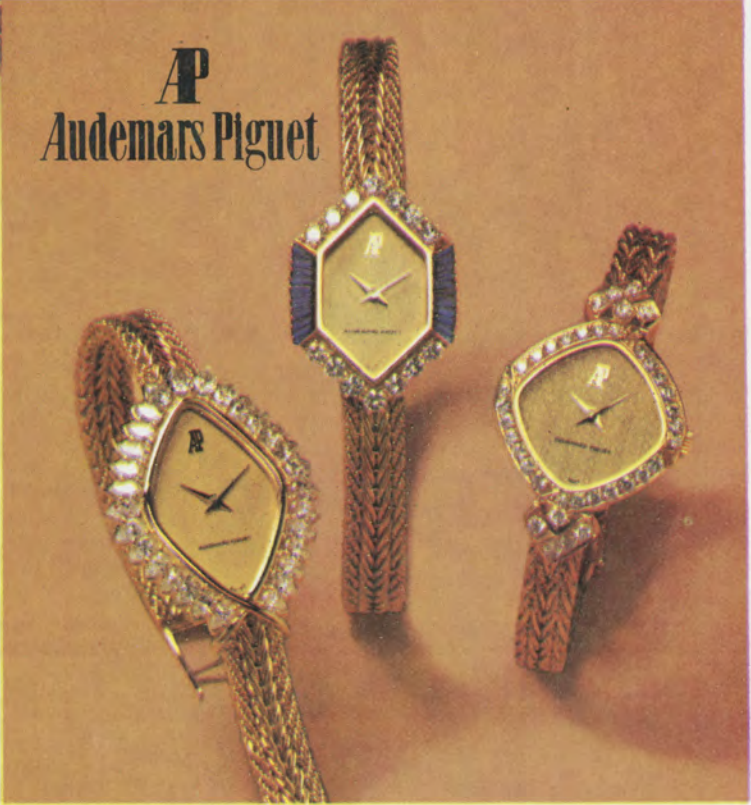
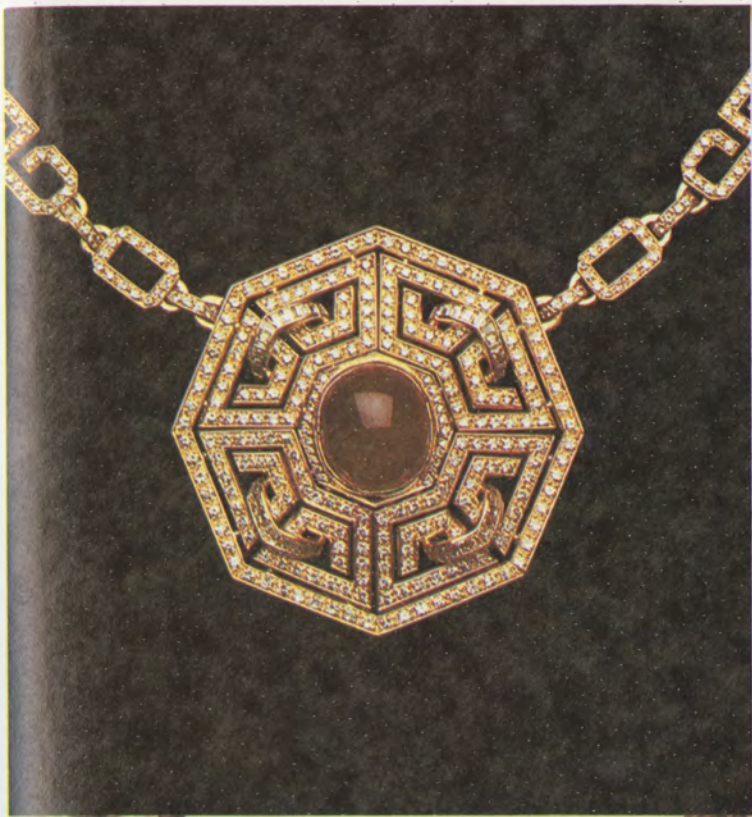
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ARTISTS

Supernumeraries

Patricia Angell	Tom Carlisle	Darryl Marick
Joan Bachrach	Roy Castellini	Greg Marks
Dorothy Baune	Gil Chun	Roger Marquardt
Elke Behrens	David Clover	Donald Martin
Dottie Brown	Rudolph Cook	Wendell Maunula
Barbara Clifford	Bill Coppock	Berri McBride
Janet Dahlsten	Robert Corrick	Rodney McCoy
Betty Davis	Don Crawford	Kenneth McDonald
Renee DeJarnatt	Tom Curran	Joseph Menzel
Joan Henry Detessan	Chas Dargis	Lawrence Millner
Christina Fox	Mark Dean	Steven Moawad
Diane Graham	Dick Deval	Steve Mongillo
Leishen Hartman	Eduardo Dominguez	Gary Morgret
Mary Joyce	Julio Dorigoni	Edwin Morse
Kahlila Kramer	Owen Dougherty	Stewart Morton
Karen Moawad	W.J. Drummond	James Muth
Alta Moody	Hilbert Duperrior	Neil Nevsny
Jan Moody	Bill Easley	Paul Newman
Holly Morrison	Jack Eiman	Mark Nichol
Janet Morse	Allan Ellis	David R. Nowicki
Ellen M. Nelson	Richard Eस्कilsen	Chip Olson
Barbara Norton	Peter Felleman	Theodore Pappas
Marianne Petroni	Humberto Fitch	Raul Picardo
Miriam Preece	Robert Flax	Michael Piccini
Katherine Prongos	Joel Fort	Michael Pitkin
Nathalie Rubens	Mickey Frettoloso	Joel Posner
Louise Russo	Lyn Gardella	Paul Price
Ellen Sanchez	Cliff Gold	Paul Ricks
Nikki Scofield	Rex Golightly	Christopher Riley
Sally Scott	Dennis Goza	Warren Schmalenberger
Susie Scott	Larry Grail	Robert Schmidt
Bess Sherman	John Grimes	Harry Lee Semme
Stella Tatro	Louis Handler	Robert Serian
Marcia Tusting	Guy Harrison	William D. Shaw
Carolyn Waugh	Joe Hay	Chris Sheffield
Janet Weil	Phillippe Henry	Ronald Sickman
Susan Weiss	Michangelo Hernandez	Roy Siniard
	Gary Hill	Rick Skarolid
Andrew Alder	Mark Huelsmann	Patrick Smith
Paul Allerton	Richard Hughes	Kent Speirs
Gene Angell	Donald Jack	Jonathan Spieler
Sky Bamford	James Jackson	Jerry Steimle
Gene Barnes	Stephen Jacobs	Bill Stephens
Jack Barnich	John Janonis	Christopher Thoma
Gilbert Bates	Clinton Jennings	Briar Tomlinson
Steve Bauman	Dean Johnson	Barry Tucker
Doug Beardslee	Dean Jones	Allen Tusting
Michael Boehm	William Joyce	Eric Van Johnson
Stephen Boughanough	Julius Karoblis	Doug Varchol
Joseph Bowen	Joseph Kelley	John Vassalo
Peter Bray	Terrance Kyle	Don Wagner
Gerald Breen	Ted Langlais	Richard Weil
William Brenner	Russell Lombard	David White
William Burns	Al Lucchini	Steven White
Allyne Butcher	Reese Lund	Joseph Willis
John Cailleau	Bill Maley	Bill Xenos
		Art Zigas



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PRELUDES



Martin Welcomes Adler to 'Over Easy'

Mary Martin welcomes San Francisco Opera general director Kurt Herbert Adler to the nationally televised program *Over Easy* on Thursday, December 3, at 7:00 PM on KQED-TV 9 and the same evening at 9:30 PM on KQEC-TV 32. The two are seen during taping of the program earlier this fall.

Western Opera Theater Tours Again in Feb.

Western Opera Theater takes to the road in February for its 16th consecutive season. San Francisco Opera's touring and educational affiliate will present fully staged and costumed performances, in English, of Puccini's *La Bohème* and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. The company will also mount a special one-hour version of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* for student audiences. WOT will travel to communities in 10 Western states (California, Arizona, Washington, Oregon, New Mexico, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Nevada) and, by popular demand, will again head east for orchestra performances in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

The 1982 artist roster, selected through national auditions, includes WOT returnee Joan Tirrell; former Merola Opera Program participants Charlotte Ellsaesser, Peter Atherton

and Richard Haile; two current San Francisco/Affiliate Artist-Opera Program members, Evelyn de la Rosa and Thomas Woodman; and newcomers Nikki Hartlieb, Kathyne Jennings, Dianne Iauco, Gregory Kunde, Randolph Locke, David Kline, John Matthews and Stephen Smith. Returning for his second year as music director is Mark D. Flint. When the company winds up its tour at the end of April, it will have recorded 15,000 miles and been seen by 75,000 opera enthusiasts.

Arts Center Seeks Guides


Tour guides and receptionists are needed for Monday tours of the Performing Arts Center (Davies Symphony Hall, the Opera House and the Herbst Theater). Training will begin on Monday, January 18. For further information, phone 552-8338.



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PRELUDES

DAVID POWERS PHOTO

Samson Telecast Nov. 23

The San Francisco Opera's 1980 production of *Samson et Dalila* will be seen nationwide on PBS television stations Monday, November 23, at 8 P.M. on WNET-TV's *Great Performances* series. The much-acclaimed new production of Saint-Saëns' opera, which opened the 1980 Fall Season in the War Memorial Opera House, starred Placido Domingo and Shirley Verrett in the title roles, with Wolfgang Brendel as the High Priest. Julius Rudel conducted. The visually spectacular production was created by stage director Nicolas Joël and by designers Douglas Schmidt, Carrie Robbins and Thomas Munn. Taping of the production was partially funded through the generosity of a friend of San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Opera Guild, and was supervised by television director Kirk Browning. The opera production itself was made possible by and produced through the cooperation of the Gramma Fisher



Samson et Dalila, 1980: Shirley Verrett, Placido Domingo.

Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa, the Lyric Opera of Chicago and San Francisco Opera.



Chinese Stagecraft Team Visits

The Chinese Stagecraft Study Team of the People's Republic of China, led by Minister of Culture Wu Xue, visited the United States in July of this year for an eight-city tour originating in New York and ending in San Francisco. At the invitation of the U.S. International Communications Agency, the study team participated in a program designed to provide its members with a broad understanding of the current technology of stagecraft in this country.

In addition to their scheduled tour of the Performing Arts Center and other Bay Area groups, the team made

a special request to be given a demonstration of the techniques of the San Francisco Opera's Wig and Make-Up Training Program, the first professional training school of its kind in the United States. Under the direction of company wigmaster Richard Stead (shown at left, placing the bald pate on apprentice Lotta Ulfung) and with the assistance of Steve Anderson, also a member of the school, Miss Ulfung was transformed into King Lear, using the same process for Thomas Stewart's make-up and wig for the American premiere of *Lear* during the San Francisco Opera's first Summer Festival. The visiting group followed the demonstration with great interest and appreciation.

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1

“EARLY-BIRD” DRAWING – TWA PARIS TRIP!

First, an “Early-Bird” Special Drawing for everyone who beats the deadline of October 15, 1981. The prize is a fantastic one-week TWA Paris roundtrip for two — including

charming hotel on the Left Bank, dinner at Maxim's, lunch at Tour d'Argent, tickets to the Folies Bergeres and the Crazy Horse Saloon, and more.

2

OPERA RAFFLE DRAWING – \$10,000 DIAMOND, 7 TRIPS AND 500 PRIZES!

The Opera Raffle major drawing for the \$10,000 Diamond Ring and the full panorama of trips and other prizes will be held on December 21, 1981.

All you do is complete the Official Entry Card and mail it in with as many raffle tickets as you wish.

3

BONUS DRAWING – VIP CHINA TRIP!

Return all 12 raffle tickets and you are eligible to participate in this special Bonus Drawing to win a once-in-a-lifetime prize — an unbelievable VIP Mainland China Trip, two weeks for two people!

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OCTOBER–NOVEMBER, 1981



OISEAU SOLAIRE, 1966, bronze sculpture, edition 5, 62½x94½x54 ins. (158x240x137 cm)

A fully illustrated color catalogue is being published on the occasion of this exhibition and is available for \$15 postpaid from the gallery.



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1981 PREVIEW SERIES

1981 OPERA PREVIEWS

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.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

MARIN

Previews held at Park School Auditorium, 360 East Blithedale, Mill Valley; refreshments served at 7:30 p.m., previews at 8:00 p.m. Series registration is \$17.50 for 6 previews (\$15.00 for students and seniors). Single tickets are \$3.50 (\$3.00 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 565-6432.

DIE WALKÜRE
Henry Holt 11/19

NORTH PENINSULA

Previews held at William Crocker School, 2600 Ralston Ave., Hillsborough. Lectures begin at 7:30 p.m. Series registration is \$15.00; single tickets are \$4.50. For further information, please call (415) 342-8674 or (415) 343-7620.

DIE WALKÜRE
Henry Holt 11/16

FRIENDS OF THE KENSINGTON LIBRARY PRESENTS GENERAL LECTURE ON VERDI

A general lecture on the operas of Giuseppe Verdi, with an emphasis on *Il Trovatore* and *Aida*, will be given by Michael Barclay on Thursday, November 5 at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Avenue, Kensington. The lecture will begin at 7:30 p.m. and admission is free. For further information, please call (415) 526-3043.

PIEDMONT ADULT EDUCATION OPERA PREVIEW SERIES

Previews will be held at the auditorium of Piedmont High School, 800 Magnolia Avenue, Piedmont, at 7:30 p.m. on two Tuesday and ten Monday evenings. Lectures will be given by San Francisco Opera Magazine editor Arthur Kaplan and Opera Education International director Michael Barclay. Series registration is \$45; \$40 for Piedmont residents. Single tickets are \$5.00. For further information call (415) 653-9454 or 658-3679.

AIDA
Arthur Kaplan 11/2
DIE WALKÜRE
Michael Barclay 11/16

IL TROVATORE
Arthur Kaplan 11/23

NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES

For the ninth year there will be a ten-week course called ADVENTURES IN OPERA in Napa. The course, which accompanies the Saturday and Sunday series at the San Francisco Opera, will be held on Wednesday nights from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1917 Third Street, in Napa. Ernest Fly will again teach the course. Cost for the entire series will be \$18.00. Individual lectures will be \$3.00. For further information, please call Mr. Fly at (707) 224-6162.

AIDA 11/4
DIE WALKÜRE 11/11
IL TROVATORE 11/18

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of all the operas of the 1981 season will be given by Arthur Kaplan, editor of the

San Francisco Opera Magazine; Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International; and James Keolker, editor of *Opera Companion*. All lectures are given in the auditorium of the Dr. William Cobb School, 2725 California Street, between Scott and Divisadero, at 7:30 p.m. Free parking is available in the schoolyard outside the auditorium. Discount series tickets for all 11 lectures, including Barclay's discography "The 1981 Season on Records," is \$45. Individual admission is \$5. For further information call (415) 526-5244.

AIDA
Arthur Kaplan 11/5

DIE WALKÜRE
Michael Barclay 11/10

IL TROVATORE
Arthur Kaplan 11/16

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

Previews will be held at the Saratoga Civic Theater, 13777 Fruitvale Ave., Saratoga; November 9 lecture at West Valley College Theater. Series is open to the public at a cost of \$3.00 per lecture, \$2.00 for students and senior citizens (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild members). For further information, please call (408) 741-1331.

AIDA
James Keolker 11/6, 10 a.m.

DIE WALKÜRE
Henry Holt 11/19, 7:30 p.m.

SOUTH PENINSULA
Previews held at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road, at 8:00 p.m. Series registration is \$15.00; single tickets are available. For further information, please call (415) 941-3890.

DIE WALKÜRE
Henry Holt 11/10

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AIDA 11/6
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The Triumphal Scene from the 1963 production of *Aida* at La Scala, designed by Lila de Nobili and directed by Franco Zeffirelli, a staging that attempted to take the opera back to the time of its Italian premiere.

Verdi as Stage Director

The detailed production book for *Aida* gives modern companies a chance to study Verdi's precise intentions.

By ANDREW PORTER

There are some opera composers who seem to conceive of words, music and actions as an indivisible unity. Alban Berg is perhaps the extreme example. In the score of *Lulu*, action is notated as if it were one of the elements, along with pitch, duration and timbre, that make up the music. The stage directions are not, as usual, simply put in parentheses and dropped in more or less where they are supposed to occur. They form a staff, or staves, in the system, timed to exact beats. And the stage director of *Lulu* ignores them at his peril. Berg's music can become meaningless if it accompanies other

actions: one might as well change his words or his notes as change the actions he prescribes.

Lulu is perhaps an extreme case, but there are plenty of other examples of composers insisting that stage action is tied to the music. Take Wagner's directions for enacting the Flying Dutchman's monologue:

At the low B-minor trumpet chords at the close of the introduction, the Dutchman has come down the gangplank. The first note of the *ritornello*, the double basses' low E, accompanies his first step on land. His rolling gait, natural to people who have been

long at sea and now step ashore, is accompanied by the wave-like figure of the second violins and the violas. On the first quarter-note of measure 3 he takes his second step; his third and fourth steps at measures 8 and 10.

And so on. With such clear directions in front of him, any child could stage *The Flying Dutchman*. That's exactly the phrase Verdi used when, in 1855, he sent Piave the "production book" (*disposizione scenica*) of his largest and most spectacular opera to date, *Les Vêpres Siciliennes*, composed for the Paris Opera. Verdi didn't have time to come to Venice himself to

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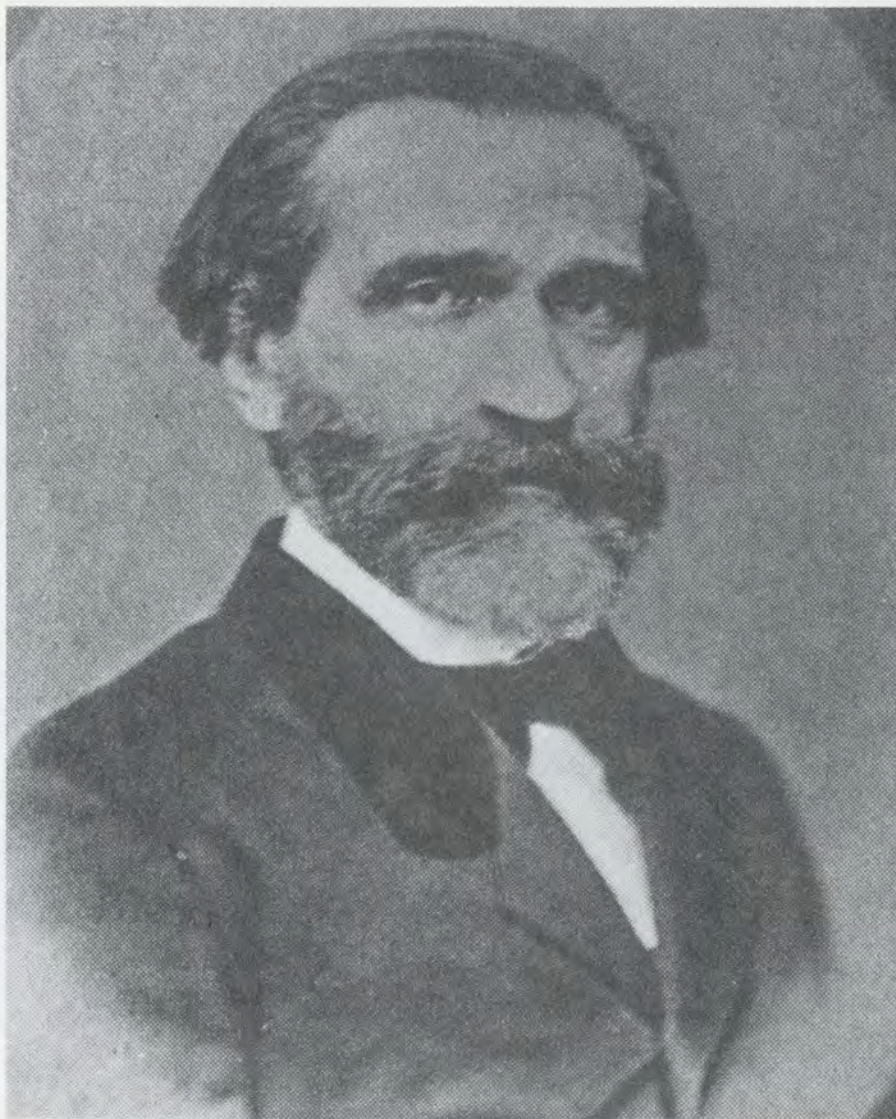
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Giuseppe Verdi in 1872, the year of the Italian premiere of *Aida* at La Scala.

supervise a production there, so he sent Piave this printed *livret de mise-en-scène*. "It's very fine," he said, "and after reading this pamphlet attentively any child could stage the opera . . . The *mise-en-scène* must be followed."

Production books in one form or another go back a long way. The preface to Marco da Gagliano's *Dafne* (1612) contains hints on how to hide players behind the scenery so that

"After reading this," said Verdi, "any child could stage the opera."

Apollo appears to be playing his own lyre, and (with measurements, etc.) on how to prepare a branch of stage laurel so that it can be plucked and woven into an "instant wreath." (One is reminded of that often mirth-provoking remark of Aennchen's in

Der Freischütz as she takes some white roses from a vase: "Why, they seem to twine themselves into a wreath of their own accord!") But production books as an attempt to standardize staging were a Paris specialty, and a long series of them was compiled and published in Paris by the stage manager Louis Palianti. It was he who produced the *Vêpres* book.

And it was Verdi, it seems, who introduced the idea into Italy. The *Vêpres* book, translated into Italian, was published by Ricordi, and for each of Verdi's subsequent operas through *Otello* there is a Ricordi-published official production book. One was also prepared for *Falstaff*, but whether it appeared or not we don't know. Ricordi records say it was sent to the printer six months after the opera's premiere, but so far no one has found any trace of it.

The *Vêpres* book is quite short, hardly more than "basic blocking," with stage plans and moves shown, along with costume descriptions. So is

the *Ballo in Maschera* book that followed; it solves several tricky problems of movement, action and balance — particularly in the Gallows Scene, where Renato must not recognize his own wife — rather more convincingly than many directors do. Next comes *La Forza del Destino*, a little fuller and occasionally a little more technical. It relates, for example, how in the final scene Don Alvaro disappears for a moment behind a high rock and pushes a dummy of himself down into the abyss below (for this is the first version of *Forza*, which ends with Alvaro's suicide). Next, *Don Carlos*, that elaborate and spectacular opera with which, Verdi said, he deliberately set out "to reform our theaters." Notable here is the very careful description of the *auto-da-fé* procession — troops, ambassadors, trumpeters, scholars of the university, etc., by numbers and in order, with their paths plotted on the stage plans. Here, too,

It was Verdi, it seems, who introduced production books into Italy.

appear some "motivations." From the score alone, we could not tell that Elizabeth's final cry is not of despair but of joyful relief that Carlos has been saved from the Inquisition. And here we discover more about lighting than in the generalized accounts of the earlier books. There is a specific lighting cue. At the gong crash, when the Emperor appears to save Carlos, "his figure is lit by a ray of electric light." Ever since the celebrated electric sunrise in Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* — which occasioned Wagner's famous remark about "effects without causes" — the Paris Opera had made a specialty of sudden blazes of electric lime-light adding new brilliance to the gaslit scenes.

There's a big jump between the *Carlos* book of 1867 and the *Aida* book of 1873. These were the years when Verdi consciously formulated his belief that in *Forza*, *Don Carlos* and now *Aida* he had created a new kind of opera. He called those works "modern operas . . . made with ideas, not made up of cavatinas, duets, etc." Every detail, musical and scenic, was significant, he said. If he'd composed a ballet, it wasn't to show off a ballerina's legs but because the musico-dramatic structure called for a ballet at that point. Nothing should be changed, and nothing should be cut. And in bringing these pieces to performance, one single directing intelligence should take responsibility for *all* details, musical and scenic.

HERBERT VON KARAJAN



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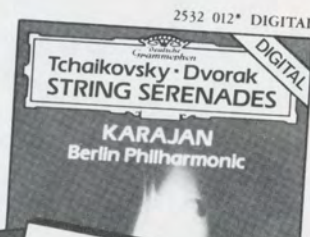
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The title page of the Ricordi-published official production book for *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the music library, U.C. Berkeley.

The *Aida* book is very much more detailed than its predecessors. It begins with thumbnail character sketches. Amneris is "20 years old; she is animated, impetuous and impressive" — which suggests something a little less grandiose or majestic

The *Aida* book is very much more detailed than its predecessors.

than the princesses one usually sees. (The first Italian Amneris, Maria Waldmann, played Aennchen as her next role of the season.) Aida is also

20; her complexion is an olive, dusky-rose color; "love, submissiveness and sweetness are her chief qualities." Amonasro is 40, "an indomitable warrior, filled with patriotism, impetuous, violent." And so on.

The instructions for scenery and staging are much more elaborate. There are not only numerous stage plans and blocking plans but also little line drawings to illustrate just how, for example, the priests in the second scene should hold their hands, and in exactly what attitude of adoration they should bow to the effigy of the god as they sing the second "Noi t'invochiam." There are practical instructions: where to hide a harmonium

behind a pillar to keep the priestesses of the final scene in tune; where to station three relay conductors. When Amneris comes on at the close, covered from head to foot in a black veil, she must be careful to keep that veil clear of the gas jets, and not catch fire, as once happened in a provincial theater. Better to extinguish two or three of the jets closest to the steps she must climb to reach the temple. And finally there comes this:

In concluding these scenic directions, I cannot resist advising all those concerned with the production that they should not be departed from in the slightest particular, however insignificant it may seem. With contemporary advances in music drama, every action has its reason for existence, and the old stage traditions can no longer be allowed.

The director should distribute the libretto in good time to all the

The Paris Opera made a specialty of sudden blazes of electric limelight.

artists, so that they can form an exact conception of the drama, and it would also be desirable for the artists to obtain the production book and study it in advance, thus saving themselves, the director and chorus much trouble later.

Before rehearsals begin, the director should give the chorus members a general idea of the opera; and as a result, realizing how very important they are and taking pride in themselves, they will more easily and zealously carry out the director's instructions.

In the final paragraph, the author moves from recommendations to imperatives:

The stage director must not permit the slightest departure of any kind, on whatsoever pretext, on the part of the soloists, the chorus and the dancers, from the costumes, the props, the jewelry, all of which must be made to the prescribed designs, which were carefully researched and carried out by eminent artists with scrupulous historical authenticity.

Above, I refer to "the author." The *Aida* production book is described as "compiled by Giulio Ricordi," but it bears the stamp of Verdi's ideas on every page. Several of its phrases echo



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Maria Waldmann, the Amneris in the premiere of *Aida* at La Scala, in costume for the role.

phrases in his letters. There is an *Aida* libretto (now in the Morgan Library) marked up in his hand as a production book whose manuscript indications tally closely with those of the printed book. Along with the production book, Ricordi supplied authorized set designs and costume designs. *Aida* had indeed been prepared attentively. Bearded or mustachioed tenors aspir-

In Verdi's day, as in Handel's, the house curtains did not close in the middle of an act.

ing to Radames were instructed to shave; likewise male choristers playing Egyptians. Special straight trumpets for the Triumphal Scene were manufactured, since ancient Egyptians could not be seen blowing modern valved instruments.

The *Otello* book is longer and more detailed still. It begins with full character studies written by Boito, and these are introduced by Hamlet's

Advice to the Players: (more or less backtranslating from the Italian) "Speak the speech as I spoke it, but in your own natural voice . . . Don't saw the air with your arms, be sober in gesture and accent . . . Suit the action to the word and the word to the action." Memorize these lines, Boito says. And then comes an almost measure-by-measure account of the action, in great psychological, physical and practical detail. Specifications for a rolling backcloth in Scene 1 suggest that someone had been to Bayreuth's *Parsifal* in 1882. *Otello*'s final entry is so complicated — cued to each of the double-bass entries — that a hidden prompter onstage is needed. The general instruction is this:

It is *absolutely* necessary that the performers should have an exact knowledge of the production book and should conform to it.

Which, of course, raises the question: Should we try to conform to it

today? In *Otello*? In *Aida*? My answer would be: yes, in spirit; no, perhaps, in some details. If we did conform (says A.), productions would be the same all over the world, which might save a lot of rehearsal time but would be very dull! No (B. retorts), although we all conform to Verdi's notes, not all performances of *Aida* are musically identical. So why should conformance with his actions preclude similar interpretative differences? (There's a relevant passage in the *Otello* book which says, in effect: "Learn these right moves, as you learn the right notes — but only *after* you've learned them does the real business of interpretation begin.")

Sam Wanamaker, I know, is directing *Aida* in San Francisco with full knowledge of the *Aida* production book. He said to me a few months ago, "Some things in it are so obviously *right* that it would be absurd not to use them just for the sake of doing something different." Claudio Abbado, when he conducted *Un Ballo in Maschera* at La Scala, said that he'd studied the production book with profit; observing stage plans and the disposition of the principals on them had given him a clearer idea of the balances and textures Verdi had in mind.

The elements I would feel least ready to accept as "gospel" are the authorized set designs and costumes. And in this respect I recall a letter of Verdi's about a forthcoming *Otello* revival at La Scala. The *Otello* book, based on that Scala premiere, carries the same instruction that I quoted from *Aida* about not departing one iota from it or from the designs. But Verdi said the arrangement of space in Act III at that premiere had been distinctly unhelpful to the dramatic action!



A drawing from the *Aida* production book showing the attitude of adoration for the priests in the Consecration Scene.

What I think is beyond question is that directors, conductors, designers and singers should know the books as they know the scores; that they should study *all* the available evidence about the composer's intentions while his characters and his drama come to life in their own minds. And there is one

continued on p. 84



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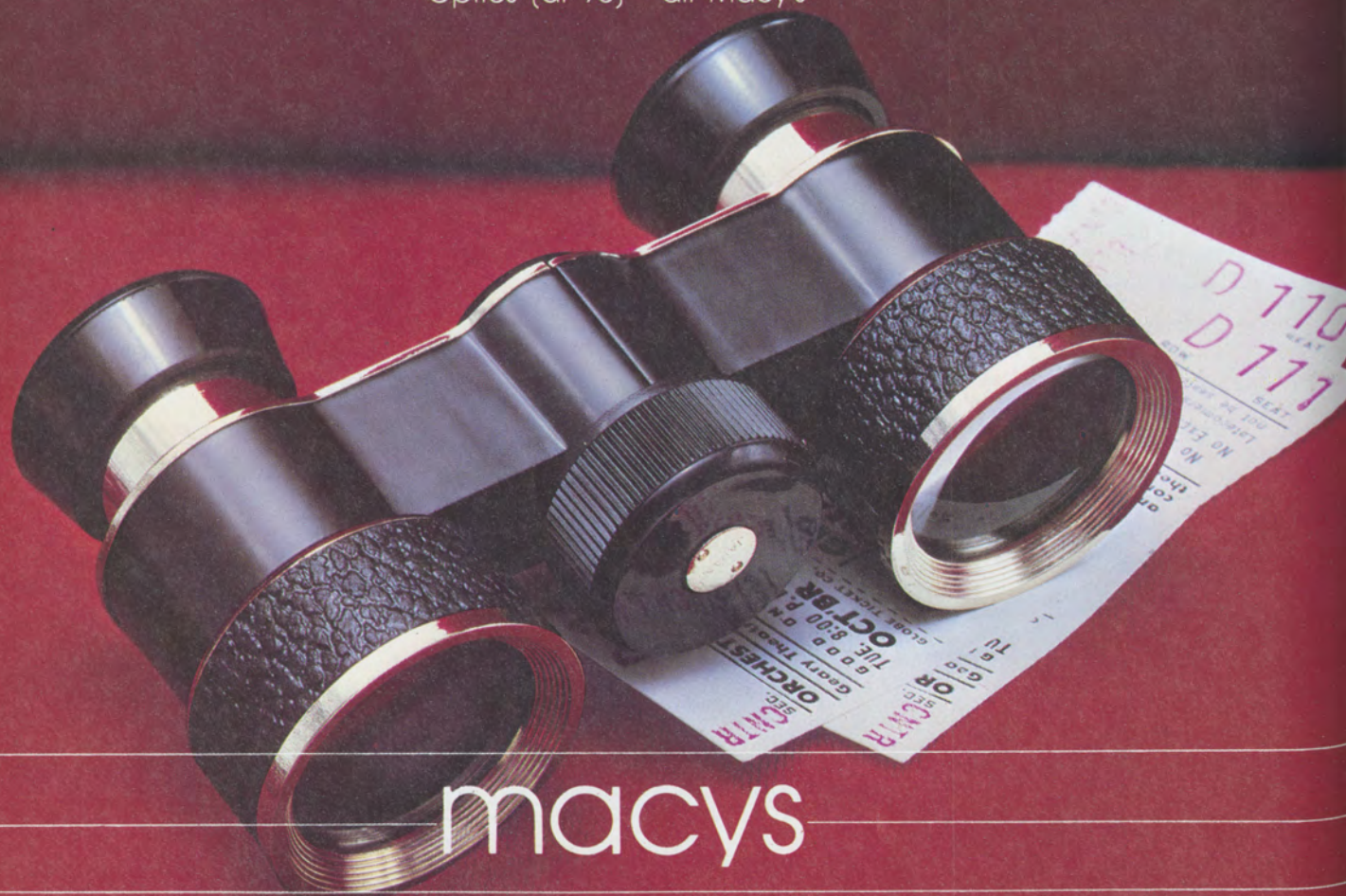
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Pride and Self-delusion in *Aida*

Aida focuses on the interplay between love and pride in the three principal characters and the self-deceptions that lead to tragedy.

By ARTHUR KAPLAN

Although Verdi's *Aida* is universally acclaimed as a musical masterpiece, many critics find it dramatically simplistic and its characters lacking real depth. Part of the explanation for this viewpoint lies in the linear clarity of the opera's plot. The story can be told in a single paragraph without omitting any of its important events. One can scarcely say the same for *Ernani*, *Il Trovatore*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *Simon Boccanegra* or *La Forza del Destino*, to cite a few better-known examples, all of which abound in almost incomprehensible complexities. Of Verdi's 26 operas, only *La Traviata* offers a libretto of equal clarity. Paradoxically, the most exotic and resplendent, the grandest of Verdi's grand operas, *Aida* does not depend on a single prop — with the arguable exception of Radames' sword — for the telling of its story.

Clarity, however, must not be taken as a synonym for simplicity. Although *Aida*'s three principal characters do not offer as fascinating psychological studies as Iago, Violetta, Philip II or Rigoletto, it is inaccurate to dismiss them as two-dimensional puppets. Aida, Radames and Amneris are all motivated principally by love, but in each there is a struggle between this love and a strong, conflicting emotion, namely pride. Furthermore, the power of love is so great that it makes each of them fall victim to a destructive self-delusion that plunges them headlong into tragedy.

Aida is not just a slavegirl in love. Her pride as an Ethiopian princess lies just under the surface at all times, ready to burst forth when exacerbated. She can barely keep from revealing the secret of her royal birth ("il nome illustre che qui celar m'è forza") when Amneris taunts her, "I am your rival,

I, daughter of the Pharaohs!" Later, when Amonasro informs her that he is aware of her rivalry with Amneris, Aida's pride erupts again: "And I am in her power! I, the daughter of Amonasro!" It is eventually this pride which makes her bend to her father's

will and pry the secret of the Egyptian strategy from the unsuspecting Radames, precipitating the final tragedy. Injured pride is the main-spring of Aida's nobility and her actions.

Aida's primary conflict is between



The three principals, Leontyne Price as Aida, Irene Dalis as Amneris and Jon Vickers as Radames in the 1959 San Francisco Opera production of *Aida*.

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Leontyne Price sings "Ritorna vincitor" in the 1963 *Aida*.

love for Radames and love for her homeland. This theme of divided loyalties Verdi had used in such diverse operas as *Nabucco*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Simon Boc-*

"Ritorna vincitor" is the perfect embodiment of Aida's dilemma.

canegra. Yet never had the conflict been so clear-cut or so movingly expressed as in *Aida*. The heroine's great Act I aria, "Ritorna vincitor," is the perfect musical embodiment of her dilemma. With its quick-changing melodies and shifting rhythms that



ROBERT LACKENBACH PHOTO

Mario Del Monaco sings "Celeste Aida" in the 1950 production of *Aida* that marked his American debut.

capture the wavering in Aida's mind between her father and her lover, and its touching final prayer to the gods to put an end to her suffering, the aria presents all of the essential elements of the heroine's plight.

Radames, it is true, would not greatly benefit from a session on the psychiatrist's couch. He is straightforward, upright and basically uncomplicated. As captain of the guards and later commander of the Egyptian army he is, above all, a military man with a soldier's mentality. His patriotic fervor and dreams of glory on the battlefield are common to generals of any time and place. These dreams, however, are very much colored by the thought of his beloved Aida. His foremost desire,



Elisabeth Rethberg as Aida and Faina Petrova as Amneris in the 1931 *Aida* that also featured Giovanni Martinelli and Giuseppe Danise as Radames and Amonasro.

as expressed in the soft, legato lines of the opening aria, "Celeste Aida," is to win the battle in order to free Aida from slavery ("Il tuo bel cielo vorrei ridarti . . ."). This essential fact is usually glossed over in a synopsis of the opera. In performance it gets lost in the lyrical beauty of the aria and the anticipation of the tenor's high B flat. In fact, in the Triumphal Scene, freedom for the Ethiopian prisoners is precisely what Radames requests as a reward for his victorious leadership. This is surely not typical behavior for a conquering hero and sets him apart from the others of his class.

The other aspect of Radames' character that influences his course of action is his deep religiosity. Upon hearing that he has been chosen leader of the Egyptian legions, his initial reaction is to thank the gods for answering his prayers. A "sacred thrill of glory" runs through him as he contemplates the coming battle. In a ceremony of stately piety in the Temple of Vulcan, he receives "the sacred sword tempered by the gods." Radames raises his voice in unison with the priests and priestesses to ask the god Fthà, "master and judge of every earthly battle," to protect and defend the fatherland. The investiture thus represents a solemn and sacred trust for Radames.

The conflicts between love and pride that lie at the heart of the opera reach their musical and dramatic climax in the masterful Nile Scene. Amonasro finally persuades his daughter to trick Radames into revealing the Egyptian battle position, but not without first resorting to scorn, invoking

Injured pride is the mainspring of Aida's nobility and her actions.

her dead mother's curses, and disowning her as "a slave of the Pharaohs." This last insult, the ultimate pique to her pride, breaks her resistance, and she finally agrees to his plot. She realizes the enormity of what she is about to do and, subconsciously at least, is aware of its potentially tragic consequences. In one of the most heart-rending phrases in all opera she cries out, "O patria, o patria, quanto mi costi!"

When Radames appears, Aida must first reassure herself of his love. She has not spoken to him since before the battle, and, the last she has heard, the marriage rites are being prepared for his wedding with Amneris. When he asks how she can doubt that love, Aida replies by enumerating the insurmountable obstacles such a love would face in Egypt: "How do you hope to escape Amneris'

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Leonard Warren as Amonasro and Renata Tebaldi as Aida in the Triumphal Scene from the 1955 *Aida*.

charms, the King's will, the wishes of your people, and the priests' wrath?" In fact, like Romeo and Juliet, Aida and Radames are a pair of star-crossed lovers whose opposing backgrounds and allegiances conspire to destroy their happiness. But the depth of their love makes them blind to the impending tragedy and causes them to grasp

The investiture represents a solemn and sacred trust for Radames.

at illusory straws in search of a solution to their plight.

Aida has allowed herself to be beguiled by her father into believing that she and Radames will find happiness by escaping to Ethiopia ("Rivedrai le foreste imbalsamate"). She

must know that after forsaking his country and a glorious military career, he could never find contentment by living in retirement in a foreign land. When she first proposes flight from Egypt, he recoils in horror at the idea of "abandoning my fatherland and the altar of our gods." Yet, seeing nothing but misfortune ahead for them in his native land, Radames, too, deludes himself with the hope that escape will mean happiness, and he consents to flee with Aida. They voice their dreams for the future in the rapturous cabaletta, "Si, fuggiam da queste mura."

Critics have found this retrogression to an outmoded musical form an apparent lapse of judgment on the part of the mature Verdi. On the contrary, the music is perfectly appropriate, both dramatically and psychologi-

cally. Radames has just made an irrevocable decision. He knows instinctively that it is wrong and that any deliberate reflection will make him change his mind again. The headlong impulsiveness and staccato brilliance with which he launches the cabaletta aptly translate the frame of mind of a man who is set on a foolhardy course and is forcing himself to believe in the impossible.

The dream is soon shattered when Radames discovers that he has unwittingly divulged military secrets to his arch-enemy, Amonasro, King of Ethiopia. He is stunned and can only keep repeating, "No, it's not true, it's not true, it's not true . . . It's a dream, a delirious dream . . . I am dishonored! I am dishonored! For you I betrayed my fatherland!" Although Aida urgently begs him to flee, he knows that it is too late. Escape is futile, for he could never escape from himself.

Aida and Radames are a pair of star-crossed lovers.

He defends Amneris from attack by Amonasro; then, stoically facing the punishment he knows awaits him for betraying his gods and country, he surrenders the sacred sword of which he is no longer worthy to the high priest, Ramfis.

Amneris is surely the most complex of the three principals. She is also the major figure of irony throughout the opera. Although princess of Egypt and theoretically in a position of great power, she is never able to use her influence to change the course of the action. This leads to an increasing sense of frustration and causes her to give vent repeatedly to an implacable desire for vengeance.

Early in the opera she begins to suspect that Aida may be her rival for Radames' affections. She cunningly baits a trap and gains proof of Aida's secret passion by first announcing and then retracting the news of Radames' death. (The ruse may well have been taken by Auguste Marijette Bey or Camille du Locle, who supplied the original French synopsis and scenario, respectively, for *Aida* from Act IV, Scene 5 of Corneille's *Le Cid*.) Her subsequent explosion of jealous rage is all the more violent because she cannot bear the mortification of being rejected in favor of a foreign slavegirl. She menacingly swears vengeance in tones of jagged intensity ("Trema, vil schiava"). Helpless to stamp out a love that torments her, she resorts to brandishing her dominant position like a sword over Aida's head. She foresees Radames' victorious return and gloats,

continued on p. 86



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MARGARET PRICE

Following her triumph as Amelia in Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* last season, Welsh soprano Margaret Price returns to the San Francisco Opera to sing the title role in *Aida* for the first time in this country. She made her American debut here as Pamina in *The Magic Flute* in 1969 and performed Nannetta in *Falstaff* and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* with the Company in 1970. Her ascent to international stardom began in 1962 when, on 18 hours' notice, she appeared as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Covent Garden, the role of her operatic debut with the Welsh National Opera that same year. She was then invited to sing Pamina and Marzelline in *Fidelio* at Covent Garden and to appear in *La Vida Breve* and *Eugene Onegin* with BBC Television. She also made numerous appearances at the Glyndebourne and Aldeburgh Festivals. Since then she has scored successes at La Scala, the Paris Opera, the Vienna Staatsoper, the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Munich and Hamburg State Operas. During the 1976 bicentennial year visit of the Paris Opera to New York and Washington, she was hailed for her performances as Desdemona in *Otello* and the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. She made a debut in the title role of *Norma* during the 1978-79 season in Zurich. During the following season she was heard in Chicago in *Simon Boccanegra* and in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti; in Europe she appeared in the title role of *Semiramide*, as Odabella in Verdi's *Attila*, Elisabetta in *Don Carlo*, the Countess in Munich and Paris, Desdemona in Hamburg and Fiordiligi in Vienna. In great demand as a soloist and recording artist, she just completed a recording of *Tristan und Isolde* with Carlos Kleiber for Deutsche Grammophon and Mahler's Fourth Symphony with Edo de Waart

and the San Francisco Symphony for Philips.



STEFANIA TOCZYSKA

Following her successful American debut with the San Francisco Opera during the 1979 season as Laura in *La Gioconda* and Sara in *Roberto Devereux*, Polish mezzo-soprano Stefania Toczyska returns to portray Amneris in *Aida*. In March of 1980 she performed the role in a new Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of the opera in Strasbourg. Miss Toczyska studied at the conservatory in her native Danzig and made her debut there in the title role of *Carmen*. In 1972 and 1973 she won prizes at the Toulouse and Holland vocal competitions. Since 1974 she has been a leading artist at the Danzig State Opera in such roles as Dalila in *Samson et Dalila*, Azucena in *Il Trovatore* and Leonora in *La Favorita*. She made her successful debut at the Vienna State Opera as Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in 1977 and has since appeared there as Carmen, Azucena, Eboli in *Don Carlo* and, most recently, Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Eboli served as her debut role at both the Munich and Hamburg State Operas. She first appeared at the Arena di Verona in 1980 opposite Luciano Pavarotti in *La Gioconda* and during the 1980-81 season she performed in *Il Trovatore* with the Houston Grand Opera and in a concert version of Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* at Carnegie Hall with the Opera Orchestra of New York. Earlier this year she was heard in Donizetti's rarely performed *Belisario* in Buenos Aires. A frequent concert soloist and recording artist, Miss Toczyska performs Azucena on the recent Philips recording of *Il Trovatore*, conducted by Sir Colin Davis.

SUSAN QUITTMAYER

Susan Quittmeyer sings four roles this season: Rosette in *Manon*, Mer-



cédès in *Carmen*, the Priestess in *Aida* and Waltraute in *Die Walküre*. Her performance as Cherubino in the 1981 Spring Opera Theater production of *The Marriage of Figaro* marked her third consecutive year with SPOT, following appearances in *La Traviata* in 1979 and Susa's *Transformations* in 1980. She portrayed Hermione in John Harbison's *Winter's Tale* and Elmire in Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe* in the two world-premiere productions that inaugurated the American Opera Project. The mezzo-soprano made her San Francisco Opera debut during the 1979 season as La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi* and Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, and during the 1980 fall season was heard in *Simon Boccanegra*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Jenufa*, *La Traviata* and *Madama Butterfly*. She has also appeared with the Asolo Opera Theater in Florida, the Opera Theater of St. Louis and as an apprentice with the Santa Fe Opera in 1978. In 1980 she sang Siebel in *Faust* with the Baltimore Opera. Miss Quittmeyer was the U.S. Steel Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artists-Opera Program, and in March of this year appeared as Giulietta in *The Tales of Hoffmann* with the Mobile Opera. In April she portrayed the Composer in the Los Angeles Opera Repertory Theater production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and in July was heard as a soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

LUCIANO PAVAROTTI

Internationally celebrated Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti sings his first Radames in the new San Francisco Opera production of *Aida*. Now in his 12th year with the Company, he has been a local favorite since his debut as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* during the 1967 season. The long list of career



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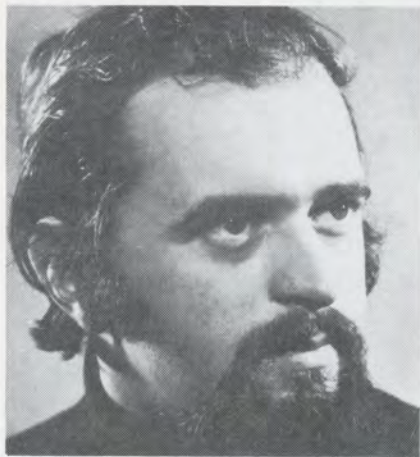
firsts with the San Francisco Opera includes Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1971), Fernando in *La Favorita* (1973), Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* (1974), Manrico in *Il Trovatore* (1975), Calaf in *Turandot* (1977) and Enzo in *La Gioconda* (1979). He has also been cheered here for memorable performances in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Tosca*. Pavarotti made his operatic debut in 1961 as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, which quickly became his signature role and served for his debut at Covent Garden in 1963, at La Scala in 1966 and at the Metropolitan Opera two years later. It was as Rodolfo that he was seen in the first live telecast from the Met in 1977. This season's *Aida* represents the tenor's second live-by-satellite telecast to Europe from the San Francisco Opera, following the *Gioconda* telecast in 1979. The War Memorial Opera House was the site of a SRO Pavarotti recital in February 1977 and in June of last year he gave a recital benefitting the Italian earthquake victims at Civic Auditorium under the baton of Kurt Herbert Adler. With Maestro Adler he has also been featured at three Golden Gate Park concerts, at concerts in Puerto Rico and Iceland and in a Christmas album for London Records, *O Holy Night*. Earlier this year Pavarotti made his first feature film, *Yes, Giorgio*, which will receive its international gala premiere during the summer of 1982. Other engagements this year include *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Chicago and *Rigoletto* in New York, the latter to be seen nationally on television.

SIMON ESTES

Following triumphs as the Flying Dutchman and as King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* during the last two San Francisco Opera seasons, American bass-baritone Simon Estes returns as Escamillo in *Carmen* and



Amonasro in *Aida*. He made his local debut as Carter Jones in the American premiere of Gunther Schuller's *The Visitation* in 1967, also singing Colline in *La Bohème*, and was heard in the 1972 season as Ramfis in *Aida*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Don Pedro in *L'Africaine*. In recent years he has made a series of important debuts: as Orovoso in *Norma* with the Metropolitan Opera, as Arkel in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at La Scala and as King Philip in *Don Carlos* at the Vienna State Opera. He made world headlines as silver medalist in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Competition in 1966, and again in 1978 when he was the first black man to sing at Bayreuth, where he created a sensation in the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer*. He sang the part 18 times in three successive Bayreuth Festivals and elsewhere has performed Wotan in *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried*. Other leading roles in his repertoire include the four villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, the title roles in *Boris Godunov* and *Attila*, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Orest in *Elektra* and Pizarro in *Fidelio*. In 1977 he sang the title role in a historic production of Verdi's first opera, *Oberto*, in Bologna and in 1979 was the Pharaoh in a revival of Rossini's *Mosè* at La Scala. Estes performed William Schumann's *A Free Song* at the gala program inaugurating the Concert Hall at the Kennedy Center, in the 25th anniversary celebration 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.



KURT RYDL

Following his debut with the San Francisco Opera during the first Summer Festival as Pogner in *Die Meistersinger* and Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Austrian bass Kurt Rydl sings Ramfis in the first three performances of *Aida*, Hunding in *Die Walküre* and Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*. He was first heard in this country as Rocco in *Fidelio* under Leonard Bernstein and as Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro* under Karl Böhm during the 1979 tour of the Vienna State Opera. A member of that company, he has recently appeared in Vienna as Pogner, Narbal in *Les Troyens*, Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Pimen in *Boris Godunov*, King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*, Oroveso in *Norma*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and in the title role of Verdi's *Attila*. Since this summer he has been heard as Rossini's Mosè in Perugia, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra* in Salzburg and in *Attila*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Vienna. During the 1980 Salzburg Festival Rydl was featured in the Jean-Pierre Ponnelle productions of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Die Zauberflöte* and later appeared in the director's film version of *Titus*. Earlier this year he sang Rocco in *Fidelio* at the 75th birthday gala honoring maestro Antal Dorati in Detroit. In addition to appearances at the Bayreuth Festival in 1975 and 1976 and at the Salzburg Festival for the past five years, he has also performed throughout Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France and the Iberian peninsula.

FERRUCCIO FURLANETTO

Young Italian bass Ferruccio Furlanetto returns to the San Francisco Opera as Don Diègue in *Le Cid*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Ramfis in the final three performances of *Aida*. He made his local debut as Alvisè in *La Gioconda* in a



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production seen internationally on television. Furlanetto made his professional debut in 1974 as Colline in *La Bohème* in Trieste. Since then he has appeared at all the major Italian opera houses. He has sung Banquo in *Macbeth* at La Scala, the title role of Rachmaninoff's *Aleko* in Turin, Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Felice in Donizetti's *Poliuto* in Venice, Don Giovanni in Turin and Treviso, and the title role in Verdi's rarely performed first opera, *Oberto*, in Bologna, Parma and Ravenna. At the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto he has been heard as the Count in *La Sonnambula* and *Zaccaria* in *Nabucco*. Furlanetto made his American debut in the latter role with the New Orleans Opera in 1978 and subsequently appeared with the Boston Opera Company as Ramfis in *Aida* and with the Metropolitan Opera as the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo*. His festival engagements include performances in Aix-en-Provence in the summers of 1976 through 1978 and at Glyndebourne as Melibeo in Haydn's *La Fedeltà premiata* in 1980 and Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in 1981. This summer he also sang the role of Basilio during the La Scala tour in Japan and was heard there as well as bass soloist in the Verdi Requiem and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*. Other recent credits include King Philip in *Don Carlo* in Kassel, Assur in *Semiramide* in Turin and Genoa, the Count in *La Sonnambula* in Trieste, Méphistophélès in *Faust* with the opera companies of Dayton and Toledo, and his American concert debut as the King in Thomas' *Hamlet* with the Friends of French Opera in Carnegie Hall.

KEVIN LANGAN

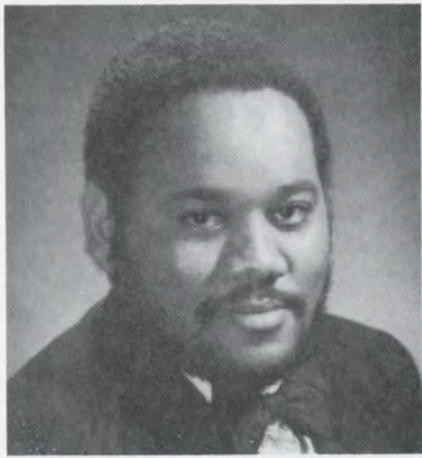
Following a variety of roles during his debut season with the San Fran-



cisco Opera last year, including the Old Hebrew in *Samson et Dalila*, Pietro in *Simon Boccanegra* and Count Lamoral in *Arabella*, bass Kevin Langan sang Masetto in *Don Giovanni* and the Night Watchman in *Die Meistersinger* during the first Summer Festival and returns this fall as the Old Convict in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Zuniga in *Carmen*, the First Traveling Artisan in *Wozzeck* and the King in *Aida*. At Indiana University he performed over 15 leading roles such as Figaro and Dr. Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Daland in *The Flying Dutchman*, Méphistophélès in *Faust* and Pimen in *Boris Godunov*. A protégé of the late Walter Legge and soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Langan made a highly acclaimed recital debut in London's Wigmore Hall in 1979. Recent engagements include Sarastro with the Opera Company of Philadelphia and the Opera Theatre of St. Louis under Julius Rudel. Langan was a member of the Merola Opera Program in 1979 and 1980 and was awarded the Leona Gordon Lowin Memorial Award in the Grand Finals of the 1980 San Francisco Opera Auditions. This summer he was a soloist in the Stern Grove concert conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler. Langan will make his New York City Opera debut next year as Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

COLENTON FREEMAN

Tenor Colenton Freeman sings a variety of roles in his debut season with the San Francisco Opera: a Coachman and a Drunken Guest in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Normanno in the regular series and Arturo in the student and family matinee performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and the Messenger in both *Aida* and



Il Trovatore. Local audiences first heard him as Aegisthus in the Spring Opera production of John Eaton's *The Cry of Clytaemnestra*. He also performed the role at the world premiere at Indiana University in March 1980, and subsequently at the work's New York premiere with the Brooklyn Philharmonia. In his third season with the Atlanta Civic Opera, he recently sang Brighella in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, following appearances in *Carmen* and *La Traviata*. Freeman's roles at Indiana University and with Oberlin Opera Theater included the Duke in *Rigoletto*, the Crabman in *Porgy and Bess*, the Ringmaster in *The Bartered Bride*, Sam in *Susannah* and Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, which he also sang with the Vermont Opera Theater.

GARCÍA NAVARRO

Young Spanish maestro García Navarro makes his American opera debut conducting *Aida*. He made his first conducting appearances at the age of 22 with the National University Orchestra in Madrid, which he founded. In 1967 he won first prize in the International Competition for Conductors in Besançon, France, and in 1969, after finishing his studies in Vienna, he appeared for the first time in that city's famous Musikverein Hall. He was appointed music director of the Valencia Symphony Orchestra in 1970, and during his four years with that organization also served as conductor for the Valencia Opera. His first appearance with the Spanish National Orchestra came in 1972, the same year as his debuts in Holland, Sweden, Toulouse and Barcelona. The following year saw his British debut at the English Bach Festival, his first recordings (with Teresa Berganza and Plácido Domingo) and his debut performance at Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceo, where he led Falla's *Vida Breve*. In 1974 Navarro made his first

continued on p. 66

FELIX DE RECONDO

PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER, 1981



PERSONNAGE ENFONCÉ, 1980, pencil drawing on paper, 26x40½ ins. (66x103 cm)



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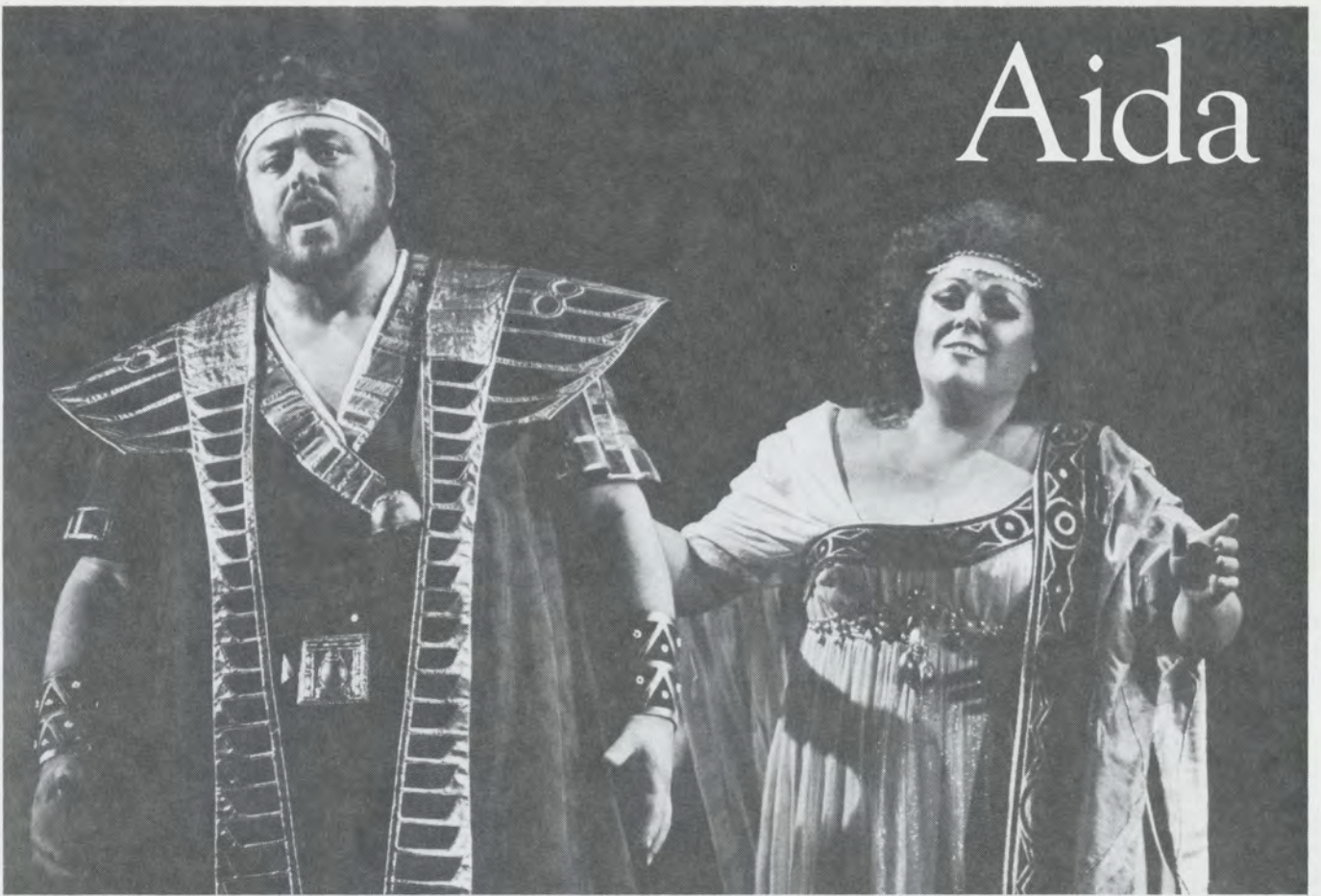
Luciano Pavarotti



Margaret Price

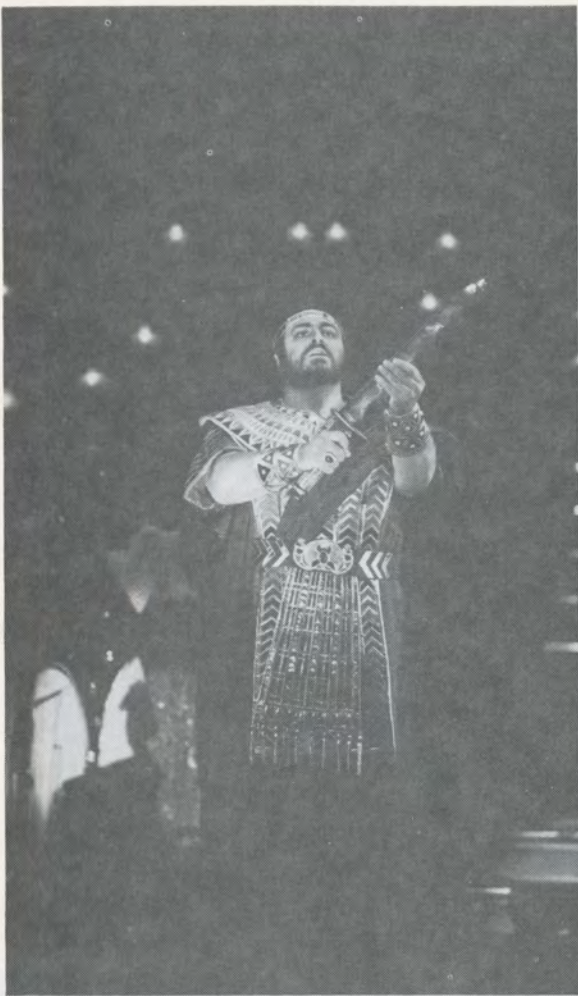
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Aida



Luciano Pavarotti, Margaret Price





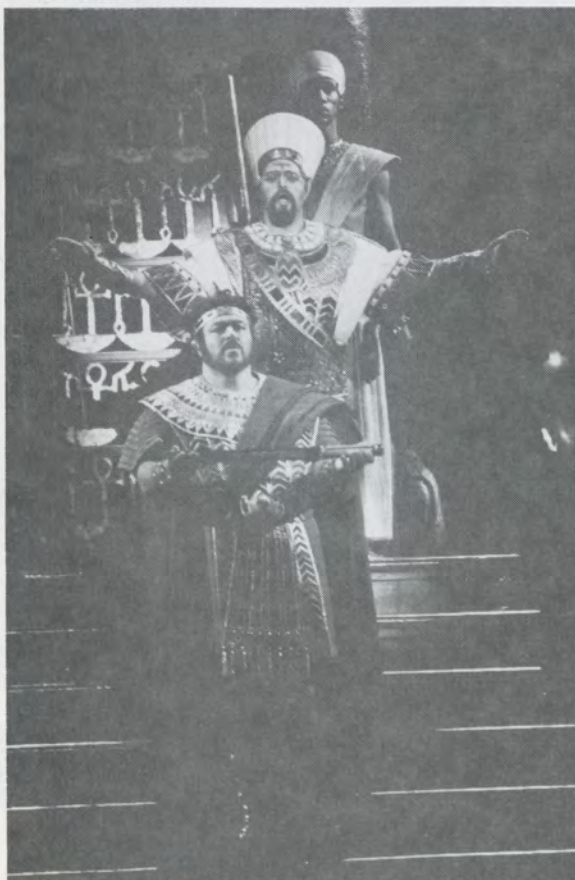
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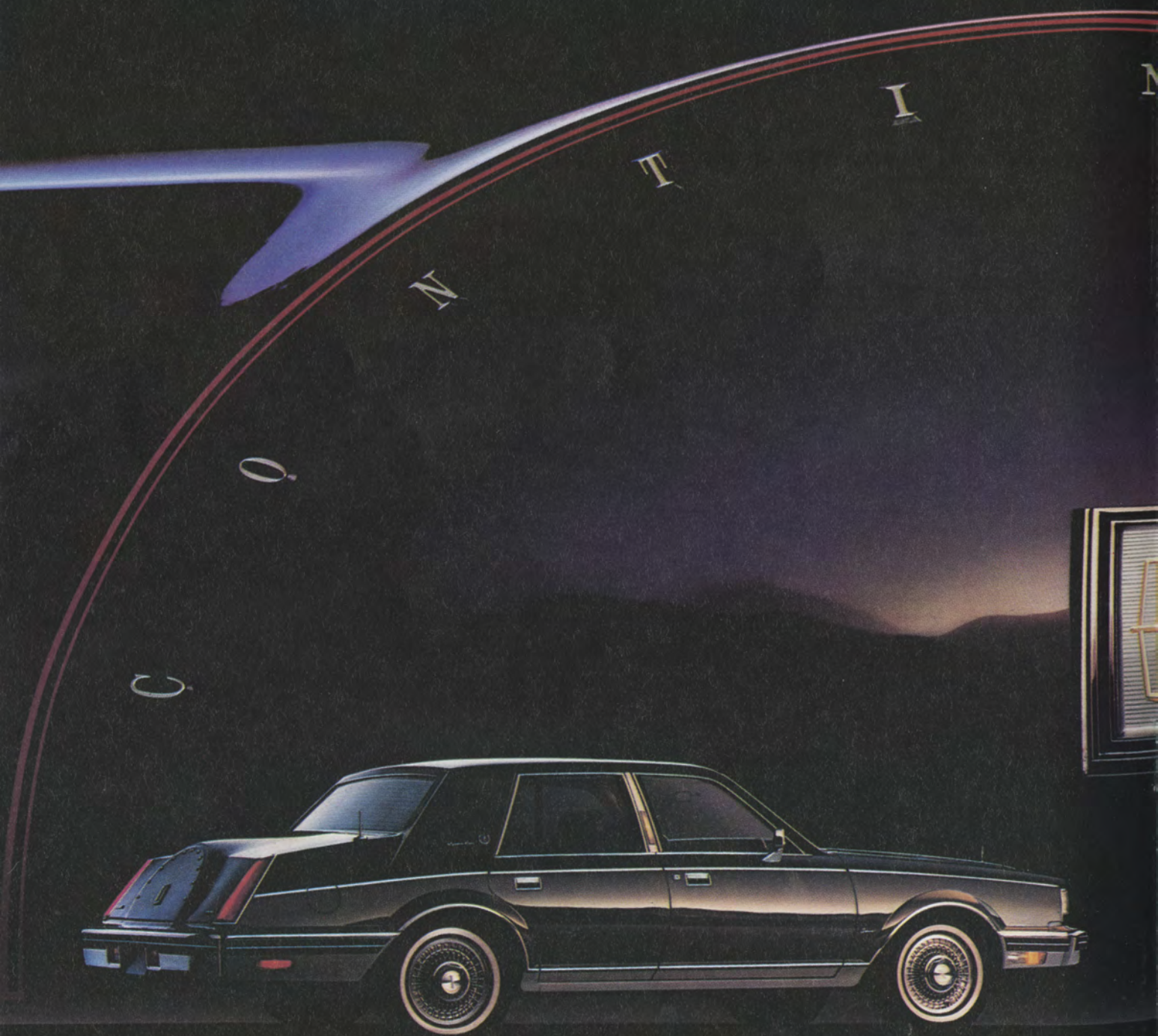


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First performance: Cairo, December 24, 1871

First San Francisco Opera performance:

October 3, 1925

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15 AT 12:00 NOON

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27 AT 8:00

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

Please do not interrupt the music with applause.

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

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Ramfis

Kurt Rydl

(Nov. 12, 15, 18)

Ferruccio Furlanetto

(Nov. 21, 24, 27)

Radames

Luciano Pavarotti

Amneris

Stefania Toczycka

Aida

Margaret Price

The King of Egypt

Kevin Langan

A messenger

Colenton Freeman

A priestess

Susan Quittmeyer

Amonasro

Simon Estes

*Priests, priestesses, soldiers, ministers, officials,
Ethiopian prisoners, Egyptian populace.*

Solo dancer

Christian Holder

Corps de ballet

*Auxiliary chorus in the Triumphal Scene composed of
members of the University of California Berkeley Chorus.*

**American opera debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: Epoch of the Pharaohs; Memphis and Thebes

ACT I

Scene 1 The King's palace at Memphis

Scene 2 The temple of Fthà

Scene 3 Amneris' apartment in the palace,
Thebes

Scene 4 A public square in Thebes

INTERMISSION

ACT II

The banks of the Nile, outside the temple
of Isis

INTERMISSION

ACT III

Scene 1 The judgment hall

Scene 2 A tomb below the temple

This new production of *Aida* is San Francisco Opera's contribution to San Francisco's city-wide celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis, the City's patron.

The performance will last approximately three and one-half hours.

SYNOPSIS

Aida

ACT I

Scene 1 — In the royal palace at Memphis, Radames, a young captain of the guard, learns from the high priest, Ramfis, that Ethiopia has again attacked and invaded Egypt's southern border and that a new army commander has been selected by the goddess, Isis. Alone, Radames hopes he is the chosen one, envisioning a glorious victory so he can free his beloved Aida, the Ethiopian slave of Amneris, the King's daughter. Amneris, who loves Radames herself, comes in and questions him shrewdly; her suspicion that he loves her slave increases when Aida enters. The King has urgently called his court together to hear a messenger report that the Ethiopian army, led by King Amonasro, is marching on Thebes. The Egyptian King announces Radames' appointment as Egyptian commander and leads the assemblage in a battle hymn. "Return victorious!" cries Amneris, echoed by the people, and alone Aida repeats the words, appalled that her beloved is going off to battle her father, her family and her people — for Aida is in fact the princess of Ethiopia. Torn by conflicting loyalties, she begs the gods for mercy.

Scene 2 — In the temple of Fthà, Radames is dressed in the sacred armor during a solemn ceremony of consecration to the service of his country. The fate of Egypt is in his hands.

Scene 3 — Radames has beaten the Ethiopians, and on the morning of his triumphal return Amneris is groomed by her ladies-in-waiting and distracted from her romantic daydreaming by a group of court musicians and dancers. At Aida's approach she dismisses her attendants, hoping to confirm her impression that Aida loves Radames. To test her, she claims Radames has died in battle, then says he lives. Certain from Aida's reactions that this mere slave is her rival for Radames' love, Amneris threatens her and leaves for the festivities as Aida follows in despair, reiterating her prayer.

Scene 4 — At the gate of Thebes, the people welcome the returning army bringing captured golden idols and treasures; triumphal dances are performed. Radames is borne in to be crowned with a wreath by Amneris. Ethiopian captives, too, are led in, among them Aida's father, King Amonasro, who remains unrecognized. In an aside he warns her not to betray his rank, then pleads for his fellow prisoners' lives. Ramfis and the priests urge death for the captives, but Radames intercedes, supported by the pleas of

the prisoners and the populace. Since the commander is the hero of the hour, the King releases all but Amonasro and Aida, then presents Radames with the hand of Amneris, dashing Aida's and Radames' dreams of happiness together.

ACT II

On a moonlit bank of the Nile, Ramfis leads Amneris into the temple of Isis for prenuptial prayers. Aida arrives for a secret meeting with Radames; overcome with nostalgia, she laments her conquered homeland. Startled out of her reverie by Amonasro, she learns that her father is plotting a new attack and proposes that Aida trick Radames into revealing the route of the Egyptian army. Horrified at the proposal, Aida nevertheless succumbs to her father's demands. Amonasro hides as Radames appears, ardent with promises to make Aida his bride after his coming victory in the renewed war. She suggests instead that they run off together, asking what route his army will take. No sooner has he answered than Amonasro steps out, triumphantly revealing his identity as king of Ethiopia. Amneris, leaving the temple, overhears the betrayal and denounces Radames. Amonasro lunges at her with a dagger, but Radames shields her and surrenders himself to Ramfis as the two Ethiopians escape.

ACT III

Scene 1 — In a temple of judgment Amneris determines to save Radames. When he is led in, she offers to spare his life if he will renounce Aida. This he says he will never do. Enraged, Amneris sends him on to his doom but immediately repents, listening in despair as the priests three times demand that he defend himself. Three times he is silent. They condemn him, and when they file past, Amneris pleads with them to let him live. When they refuse, she curses them.

Scene 2 — Radames, buried alive in a vault beneath the temple, turns his last thoughts to Aida, who, physically and emotionally spent by the ordeal of her escape and the capture and death of her father, now appears to him, having hidden in the crypt earlier that day to share his fate. Radames tries vainly to dislodge the stone that locks them in. Bidding farewell to earth, the lovers greet eternity while above them in the temple the repentent Amneris prays for Radames' soul.

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American Banker

Thursday, May 28, 1981

Fund Name	Rate of Return with Rank in Parenthesis (First Quarter Omitted)	
	1-Year	5-Years
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Crocker National Bank	59.2 (1)	119.0 (2)
Morgan Guaranty Trust Co. NY	42.6 (14)	102.9 (3)
Provident National Bank	53.2 (3)	102.6 (4)
First Natl. Bk of Minneapolis	30.0 (65)	102.0 (5)
Northern Trust of Cleveland	49.4 (7)	99.0 (6)

basis (59.2%) and on the five-year basis (119.0%) was well ahead of the comparable rates of return for the one-year S&P 500 Index of 40.1% and the five-year Index of 69.4%.

While this article referred to just one of Crocker's many investment vehicles and while past performance provides no guarantee of future results, we feel this example is indicative of the high calibre of Crocker's expertise — and represents the kind of superior performance that can help you fulfill your investment goals.

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In a survey of over 50 of the largest banks in the country, Crocker Bank ranked first in one category of equity investment performance for the year ending March 31, 1981 according to a report made by the *American Banker* on May 28. On a five-year basis, Crocker ranked second.

Furthermore, Crocker's rate of return on the one-year

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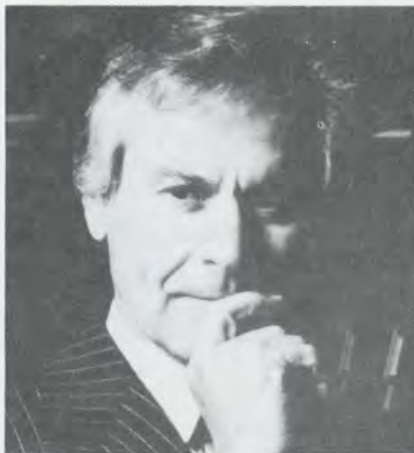
PROFILES



tour of Holland with the Northern Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted the Symphony Orchestra of the Portuguese Radio for the first time. He currently holds the post of music director with both of those orchestras. In the last few years he has made his London debut with the New Philharmonia Orchestra, to which he has returned annually; signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon; bowed with the Warsaw Philharmonic and the Hague Residentie Orchestra; and toured Scandinavia with Teresa Berganza. His Covent Garden debut took place in 1979 with a production of *La Bohème*. Navarro's first American conducting engagement was with the St. Louis Symphony in March 1980, followed immediately by an appearance with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He will conduct those orchestras during the current season.

SAM WANAMAKER

Sam Wanamaker makes his San Francisco Opera debut as stage director of *Aida*. Known as an actor in films since 1949, he has also directed theatrical productions at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, the Duke of York's Theatre, Winter Garden and St. Martin's in London. He turned to opera in 1964 when he directed the world premiere of Tippet's *King Priam* at Covent Garden. The following year he directed *La Forza del Destino* for the same company with Sir Georg Solti on the podium. He was invited to stage the first production at the Sydney Opera House, the Australian Opera Company's production of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*. In 1977 he returned to Covent Garden for another Tippet world premiere, *The Ice Break*. With Christopher Fry, he helped prepare the libretto for Chicago Lyric Opera's 1978 world premiere of Penderecki's *Paradise Lost*. He staged that com-



pany's 25th anniversary gala in October 1979. Wanamaker has also served as director/producer of the summer Shakespeare Globe Theatre productions since 1972, and has produced the annual Shakespeare birthday concerts at London's Festival Hall since 1973. Meanwhile, he has kept active as an actor in films, including *Voyage of the Damned* (1976), *Private Benjamin* (1980), *The Competition* (1980) and the NBC miniseries *Holocaust*, for which he received an Emmy nomination as best actor.

DOUGLAS SCHMIDT

Douglas Schmidt, whose designs for the world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose* in 1976 and for Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* last season were greeted with critical praise, is responsible for the sets in the new production of *Aida*. Spring Opera audiences will remember his set designs for Hans Werner Henze's *Elegy for Young Lovers* in 1978. In New York, Schmidt has been long associated with such organizations as the New York City Opera, the New York Shakespeare Festival and television station WNET. His work for the theater includes award-winning designs for Gorky's *Enemies* for the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center, with which he was resident designer from 1969 until the company disbanded in 1973. He also designed sets for the Richard Foreman/New York Shakespeare Festival production of *The Threepenny Opera*; Andrei Serban's *Agamemnon*, which earned him a Joseph Maharam Distinguished Design Award in 1977; and the Chelsea Theatre Company's production of *The Crazy Locomotive*, for which he won an Obie. On Broadway, Schmidt won Drama Desk Awards for his scenic contributions to the Andrews Sisters musical *Over Here* and Ira Levin's *Veronica's Room*. Recent Broadway credits include scenic designs for



Neil Simon's long-run musical *They're Playing Our Song* and Bernard Slade's *Romantic Comedy*. He designed the original production of *Grease*, which recently concluded its record-breaking run as the longest running Broadway musical in history, as well as this past season's now-legendary spectacular, *Frankenstein*, which broke records for the shortest run in history when it closed after opening night.



LAWRENCE CASEY

Praised for the costume designs he created for the world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose* in 1976, Lawrence Casey returns to design costumes for the new production of *Aida*. This season he was also responsible for creating Anja Silja's costumes for *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. His association with the Company goes back to 1973 when he assisted Jane Greenwood on the premier production of *La Favorita* in 1973. The following year he worked with Beni Montresor on the costumes for *The Daughter of the Regiment*. Casey received acclaim for costume designs in this year's Spring Opera production of John Eaton's *The Cry of Clytaemnestra* and Monteverdi's *Il Ballo delle Ingrate*. He has designed for numerous regional theaters, includ-



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PROFILES

ing the American Shakespeare Theater in Stratford, Connecticut, and the McCarter Theater in Princeton. This spring his costume designs for the dance group Crowsnest were seen on PBS as well as New York's Public Theater. Last year he designed scenery for a production of *Measure for Measure*.



THOMAS MUNN

In his seventh year as lighting designer/director of the San Francisco Opera, Thomas Munn is responsible for the lighting designs for *Manon*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Carmen*, *Wozzeck*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Aida* and *Die Walküre*. He also created additional scenic design for *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Audiences saw his lighting designs for *Lear*, *Don Giovanni* and *Die Meistersinger* during the first Summer Festival and in 1980 for the new productions of *Samson et Dalila* and *Don Pasquale*. In 1979 he won an Emmy Award for the new production of *La Gioconda*, which was seen internationally on television. That year he also designed the scenery for *Roberto Devereux* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*. In past seasons he has created special effects for the Company's productions and served as supervising set designer for *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Faust* and *Billy Budd*. Since 1976 he has designed the lighting for nearly all of the new productions of the San Francisco Opera, including the world premiere of Imbrie's *Angle of Repose*. Munn created the scenery and lighting for *Macbeth* and *Lulu*, and the lighting for *Don Quichotte* with Netherlands Opera. He is currently theater lighting consultant for the Muziektheater in Amsterdam, due to be completed in 1984. In 1980 he designed the lighting for the Washington Opera Society's productions of *Tristan und Isolde* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and early next year will create the

design for the world premiere of Robert Ward's *Abelard and Heloise* for the Charlotte Opera Association. Munn has designed numerous regional productions in addition to his work in television, film, ballet and legitimate theater throughout the country.



MARGO SAPPINGTON

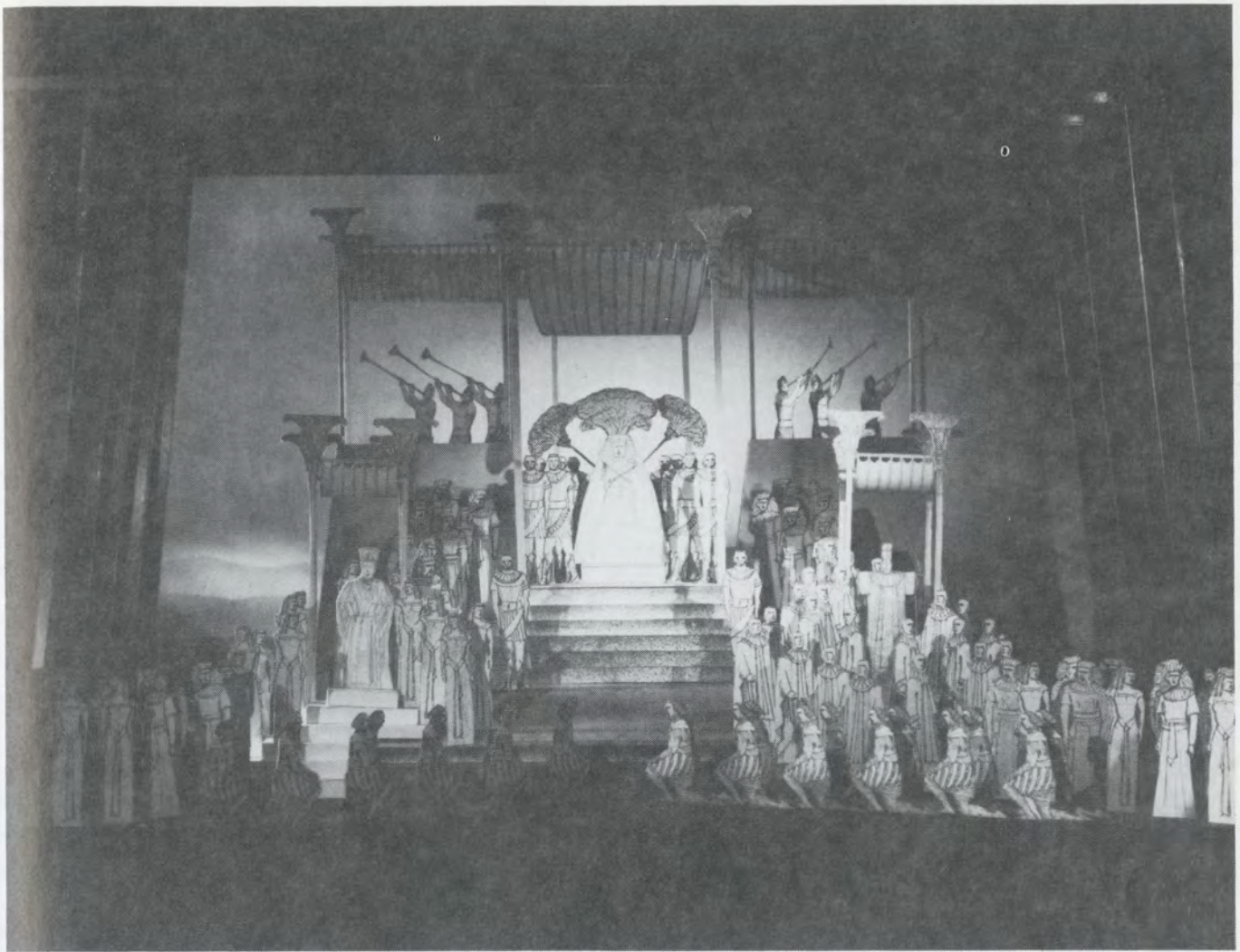
Returning for her third consecutive year with the San Francisco Opera, choreographer Margo Sappington is responsible for the dance sequences in *Aida*. She made her Company debut with the "Dance of the Hours" ballet in *La Gioconda*, seen over international television in 1979, at which time she also created the dances for *La Forza del Destino*. Her work on the Bacchanale from last year's production of *Samson et Dalila* is seen on television this month. Miss Sappington made a triumphant debut with Spring Opera in the 1979 production of Britten's *Death in Venice*. A native of Baytown, Texas, she was invited to join the Joffrey Ballet at an early age. She danced as a member of that company and later performed the role of Eve in her ballet, *Rodin*, as a guest artist with Ballet Caracas in the Venezuelan capital and in Paris. On Broadway, she appeared in *Sweet Charity* and *Promises, Promises*. Her association with producer/director Michael Bennett led her to appear as choreographer and dancer in *Oh! Calcutta!*; she later staged the Los Angeles, San Francisco and London productions of the work, as well as the film version. Her credits include *Weewis*, *Mirage* and *Face Dancers* for the Joffrey Ballet, *Rodin* for the Harkness Ballet, *Under the Sun* for the Pennsylvania Ballet and *Juice* for the Netherlands Dance Theater. In the fall of 1979 she appeared with Dance L.A. in *Juice II*. During the 1978-79 season she created her first work for the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, *Medusa*. She has performed in Northern Italy on tour with

Christian Holder and created *Sfere di Mercurio* for the ATER Ballet in Reggio Emilia. Earlier this year she created the dances for the New York City Opera's premier production of Verdi's *Attila* and conceived *Les Cerises Perdus* for the Pacific Dance Theater in Seattle. Most of Miss Sappington's choreographic credits have been earned in collaboration with composer Michael Kamen and costumer Willa Kim.



CHRISTIAN HOLDER

In his third consecutive year as solo dancer with the San Francisco Opera, Christian Holder is featured in the Triumphant Scene of *Aida*. He was previously seen as the soloist in the Bacchanale from *Samson et Dalila* and in the "Dance of the Hours" sequence from *La Gioconda*. Holder made his choreographic debut with the Company this season with *The Merry Widow*. Known to Bay Area audiences as a principal dancer of the Joffrey Ballet for 13 years, he was seen in such pieces as Gerald Arpino's *Trinity* and *Touch Me*, José Limón's *The Moor's Pavane* and Kurt Jooss' *The Green Table*. Since leaving that company he has danced throughout Europe. His first choreographic effort came in 1975 with *Five Dances* for the Joffrey Ballet. In 1979 he created *Variations for Six* for the North Carolina Dance Theater and made his European debut as choreographer in Paris earlier this year with *Passaggiando*, in which he also danced along with Martine van Hamel and Kevin McKenzie. When not on stage, he designs clothes for himself and rock star Tina Turner, among others. This year he also designed costumes for Margo Sappington's ballet *Les Cerises Perdus* with the Pacific Dance Theater in Seattle. The pair also collaborated on the New York City Opera premiere of Verdi's *Attila*.



A model of Douglas Schmidt's sets for the Triumphal Scene in the new production of *Aida*.

Producing Verdi's *Aida*

The production team for *Aida* has aimed at underlining the intimate quality of Verdi's "grand opera" and its theme of the transcendent power of love.

By ARTHUR KAPLAN

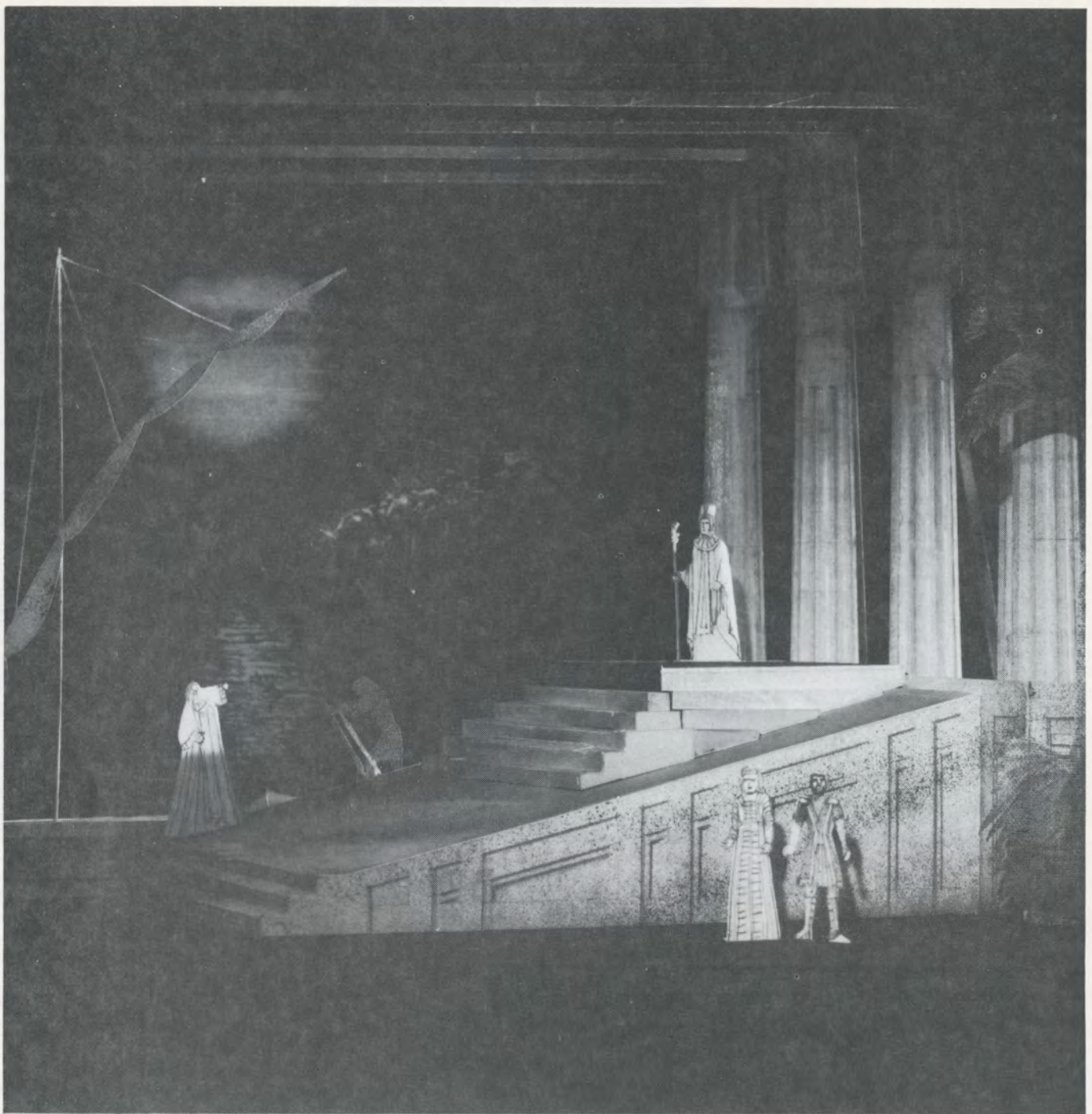
Aida is traditionally viewed as a spectacular opera replete with pyramids, processions, princesses and priestesses — the entire panoply and pageantry of grand opera. The world-famous Cecil B. DeMille-style productions at Italy's Baths of Caracalla in Rome and the Arena in Verona only serve to underscore this epic treatment of the opera.

The creators of the new production of *Aida* at the San Francisco

Opera, while aware of this popular conception of Verdi's most famous opera, have consciously chosen to react against it. "*Aida* is basically a chamber opera as far as I'm concerned," states director Sam Wanamaker. "The story is essentially about three very credible people. It's the quality of intimacy that attracts me to the work. Its grandness was imposed by the forms required in the big opera houses."

Wanamaker's thoughts are echoed by set designer Douglas

Schmidt and costume designer Lawrence Casey. "*Aida* is known as a mammoth spectacular," says Schmidt, "but in fact it's made up of a lot of small, intimate scenes of three or four people. In 'Celeste Aida,' for example, there's one person on the stage singing a very inward, introspective piece of music; to put it on the same set that will later accommodate 250 people is just wrong. So we came up with the idea of a flexible space, one we could close in and open out whenever neces-



A model of Schmidt's set for the Nile Scene in *Aida*, showing the raked central platform and lotus-bud columns, the unifying scenic elements of the new production.

sary by moving around various elements to alter the volume of the playing area. We wanted the scenes to flow as cinematically as possible so that the momentum of the piece is not broken up by dropping the curtain for each scene change. These will be accomplished *a vista*, in view of the audience."

"A designer's ideal *Aida*," adds Casey, "would be to do a simple, small-scale production that completely breaks with tradition. Of course you have two huge scenes to deal with, but most of *Aida* is a very intimate opera. We're not trying to impose a "con-

cept" or to state any important social messages in our designs. The message is inherent in the story and the music."

All three agree that the production should not stress the oppressive

"*Aida* is basically a chamber opera."

or negative aspects of the opera. Schmidt, who did a tremendous amount of research into past productions in addition to studying the arti-

facts of Egyptian antiquity, came away with two basic notions: 1) There is nothing new to be said visually because everyone has seen and used everything there is to be seen from ancient Egypt. 2) There's a direct conflict between the emotional, fiery romantic treatment of the story in the libretto and the music and the almost oriental serenity of Pharaonic Egypt. ("It was virtually impossible to find a warlike demeanor on any statuary from any of the Egyptian periods for the god Fthà in the temple consecration; all the Egyptian statues just sit there and smile benignly.")

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Lawrence Casey's costume designs for Aida, Radames and Amneris for the 1981 production of *Aida*.

The consensus was to form an overall concept that would do justice to Verdi and his librettist Ghislanzoni while presenting a generalized, traditional visualization of ancient Egypt "with details that are universally understood and without being specific to any precise historical period."

Aida's love theme, the opening phrases of the prelude and a recurring motif throughout the opera, is the musical statement to which the production most closely responds. "It was Sam's idea to reaffirm the love theme rather than to emphasize the negative side, the oppressive forces at work in Egyptian society, and Larry and I concurred," says Schmidt. "Without ignor-

are a proud and sophisticated culture comparable to the Egyptians. When they're brought in as captives, they're not a group of scraggly beggars; they're a proud, beautiful race of warriors. Amonasro will look like an African god with all his bronze armor and patterned robes. The only difference between the two peoples — and I've carried this out in the costume designs to a certain extent — is that the Egyptians are more stiff and formal with clearer, desert colors; the Ethiopians are more sensual with livelier, more contrasting colors."

The austerity and formality of ancient Egypt does not, according to director Wanamaker, make for stiff, formal, cardboard characters, as some critics have maintained. "There is a great deal of dimension in terms of the conflicts within each character, which I feel are absolutely credible under the circumstances. I think the three principals are all meant to be quite young and their passionate emotions have a kind of appropriate adolescent quality. If the artists can portray these emotions as genuinely as the music expresses them, there should be no questions about believability. The music certainly says a tremendous amount, but the singing actor has to make specific the content of what he is singing.

"I was at a musical rehearsal with Maestro [García] Navarro, who stopped a singer and said, 'Look. There's more feeling here. What is the character thinking about in this passage?' We both are on the same wave-

length in that respect. Margaret Price said to me that when she started her studies at Trinity College she learned to read the material and talk it through, sounding it out in terms of content, and then work with the music. Many singers do it the other way around, unfortunately. The great opera composers didn't want a mere vocal concert; they wrote in terms of the theater, of their image of movement and action on the stage."

In researching *Aida*, Wanamaker read the Ricordi-published production book prepared under Verdi's supervision from the original La Scala premiere in 1872. "I felt it was only right and fair to the composer to go back to what he wanted. We've had a lot of modern productions that are reinterpreting Verdi's operas in terms of contemporary relevance or some other kind of gimmickry. To try to do something different just for the sake of doing it differently doesn't make any sense to me.

"We wanted the scenes to flow cinematically."

ing the conflicts in the story, we all wanted an attractive, upbeat show."

Casey has designed romantic, idealized costumes for the principals while trying to avoid references to the 19th century. "That's all been done before very successfully. I dressed them appropriately and as beautifully as possible." The only area in which he has made a clean break with tradition is in the visual confrontation between the Egyptians and the Ethiopians. "In all the *Aida* productions I've seen, the Ethiopians always come in dressed in tatters. I've listened to the music and read the libretto and all the evidence points to the fact that they

"The message is inherent in the story and the music."

"In almost every instance, I have found that Verdi was absolutely right in his concept of the staging. If something didn't work out, he changed it, and the final thoughts are what ended up in the production book. He put people in correct relationships on the stage. The moment you try to change



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Casey's costume sketch for Amneris in Act I, scene 3.

those configurations, you find that you're in a trap and it's better to go back to what he'd done.

"While I haven't in any way been slavishly following the production book - our set construction is very different, physically, from Verdi's - his organization of forces on the stage makes a great deal of sense. For instance, I discovered that he marshalled his chorus very distinctly in choral groups, insisting they move as separate bodies according to his musical design. He saw the musical complexity very much in terms of the complexity of movement on the stage."

Schmidt's scenic realization allows for the ebb and flow from

large-scale to small-scale scenes inherent in Verdi's staging ideas on *Aida* (c.f., Andrew Porter's article, "Verdi as Stage Director," page 36). Although each scene has its separate scenic elements and painted drops, there is a sense of unity provided by key components that are employed as a kind of

"The three principals are meant to be quite young."

framing device and visual reference throughout: each scene has the same basic outline from the gold-framed moving panels which define the space.

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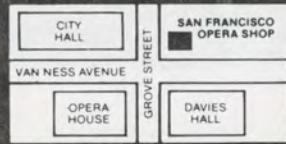
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Casey's costumes sketches for Amonasro and Ramfis.

In addition, there are 30-foot-high moveable columns based on the elegant lotus-bud columns from the temple of Luxor. Consistent with the aim of avoiding the kind of ponderous architecture and statuary that creates an oppressive atmosphere in many *Aida* productions, these columns will

"Verdi was absolutely right in his conception of the staging."

have the ability to glow with a translucent quality reminiscent of alabaster.

The main unit for the new production, which will appear in one guise or another in each of the opera's seven scenes, is a raked central platform, 22 feet wide by 27 feet long, that will serve a variety of functions. During Act I, scene two, it is the temple altar with a huge statue of the god Fthà at the back. In the Triumphal Scene it is the reviewing stand for the king and the state officials. The Judgment Scene with Radames and the

priests takes place behind the altar, with Amneris waiting in front of the rotated ram's-head statue of Fthà. For the final scene of the opera the platform itself revolves to show Radames and Aida down in the tomb below the temple.

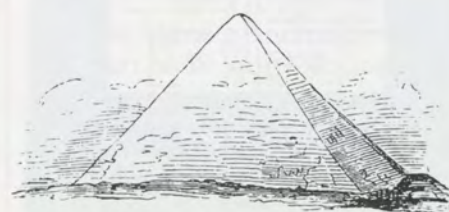
Wanamaker believes the feeling of the Tomb Scene should sum up the theme of the opera: the power of love transcending the great powers of religion, state and society. "With Amneris praying for Radames' soul, we see one example of the power of love, that is, love thwarted. Amneris understands herself and knows that her jealousy has destroyed these other people. She is not a stock villainess; she's a very subtle and complex character. When she goes to the temple of Isis to pray for Radames to love her as much as she loves him, it's a very beautiful moment. Amneris is extremely feminine and at this moment and during the final moments of the opera the audience should feel sympathy for her.

"I see a direct relationship to *Romeo and Juliet* in *Aida*," continues Wanamaker. "Aida and Radames are a

pair of star-crossed lovers; it's a universal theme. Here the lovers win in the end. The tragedy ends in triumph, in a sense. These two people who can't come together happily in life because

"The tragedy ends in a triumph, in a sense."

of the nature of their society, do have their dying moments together. And, since they believe in an afterlife, they know that they will go on being together." ■



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The corps de ballet in the Cours-la-Reine scene of *Manon* (1981).



Christian Holder and the corps de ballet perform the Bacchanale from *Samson et Dalila* (1980), with Shirley Verrett as Dalila.



Christian Holder and Gary Chryst in the "Dance of the Hours" ballet from *La Gioconda* (1979).

Toeing the Line in Opera

Two of San Francisco Opera's choreographers discuss the unique demands that opera makes on their special craft.

By THOMAS O'CONNOR

Scratch a stage director, some people say, and you will find a frustrated singer or actor. Scratch a choreographer and you are likely to find a bona-fide dancer. Scratch an opera choreographer? You should get a dancer *cum* director who thrives on rare challenges.

Experience will show that the first of these entertainment business truisms is, in most instances, anything

but true. And with a little digging, one could probably uncover a graceless dance master here and there.

But the San Francisco Opera's own experience does support the notion that operatic choreography requires more than an individual skilled in dance movement.

"If you're doing your own ballet, you have complete say over everything," says Margo Sappington, the choreographer for San Francisco Opera's new production of *Aida*.

"Music, lights, costumes, sets, you name it. But in opera, you're one of many elements, and you have to coordinate your dancers' work with many elements. It's hard. But that's what makes it fun for me."

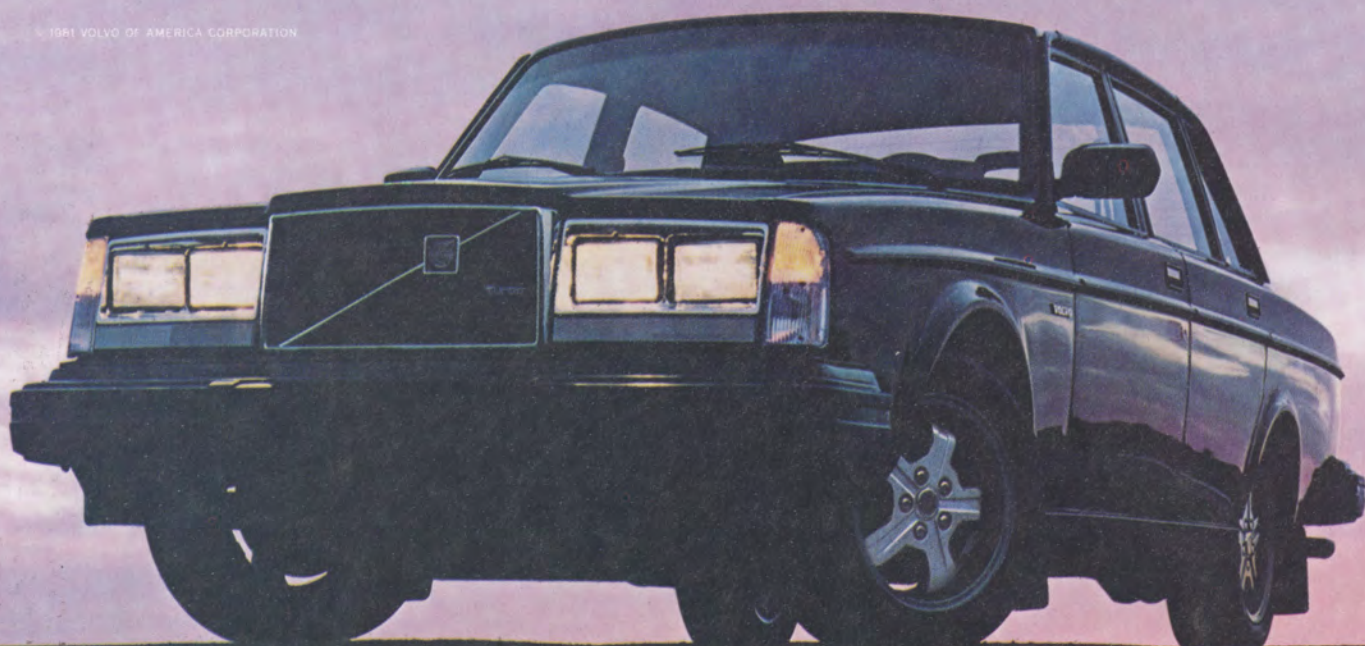
Sappington's work has been among the highlights of several new productions in San Francisco over the last two years, and all of them have earned her considerable acclaim — plus widespread television exposure: *La Gioconda*, her first assignment at



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the War Memorial Opera House, was seen live nationally and in Europe via satellite; *Samson et Dalila*, for which she created the wild, steamy Bacchante dances last year, airs nationally on November 23; and the new *Aida* is being televised to Europe this fall.

Sappington's notion that the integration of ballet into a larger operatic whole is simultaneously the challenge and the delight of her present assignment is echoed by her choreographic colleague within the Company, Marika Sakellariou.

"Working in opera is so all-inclusive," says Sakellariou, who was responsible for *Manon* this fall and *Don Giovanni* during the first Summer Festival, as well as three of the 1981 Spring Opera productions. She doubles as the Company's resident ballet mistress and is herself dancing in *Aida*.

"Opera is theater on such a grand scale," she says. "Crowds of people on the stage, magnificent lights, costumes and scenery; an aural combination of orchestra, solo voice and vocal ensemble. A choreographer who isn't attracted to such a spectacular medium has very little theatricalism in his or her soul."

"I've tried to achieve dance that has a style like an Egyptian frieze."

"There are a lot of special limitations on a choreographer in opera," according to Sappington. "You are controlled by the style of the production, and the music dictates a lot. In *Aida*, in the Triumphal March, I have to work with phrases that don't repeat in the same sequence. This isn't ideal for dancing purposes; it doesn't have enough punch for me.

"I sometimes wonder what the attitude of various composers was towards dance when they decided to include a ballet in their opera. I suspect some had more affection for dance itself than others."

Sappington cites Benjamin Britten, whose *Death in Venice* she choreographed for Spring Opera in 1979, as an opera composer with a clear appreciation of dance. The experience was one of the favorites of her whole career: "Britten had such definite points in mind. The dance was integrated so seamlessly into the whole opera."

"Since the dance elements are not the main thing, some of the conditions under which you have to choreograph in opera are less than ideal," says Sakellariou, a tiny, elegant woman whose name does not belie her origins: she was born in Athens. "The stage space is usually limited and



San Francisco Opera choreographers Margo Sappington and Marika Sakellariou rehearsing a sequence from the Triumphal Scene for the 1981 *Aida*.



A moment from the athletic ballet created by Margo Sappington for the 1979 Spring Opera production of Britten's *Death in Venice*.

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Marika Sakellariou used soloists Sara Ganz (Wanda) and David Eisler (Fritz) in a dance sequence from the 1981 Spring Opera production of Offenbach's *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*.

probably not intended for dance: it may be a raked [gradually sloping] stage or there may be various levels. You have to work around crowds of people — chorus, supers and all — on stage. And it's often important to make the dancers look not like professional dancers but like, well, like real people. That may sound funny, but it's a challenge."

"Opera dancers have to be good actors. They need more training in a variety of periods and styles. They have to be able to make big transitions

"You have to coordinate your dancers' work with many elements."

from night to night, to understand the differences between the style of a *Merry Widow* and an *Aida*, and to be able to communicate those different concepts on stage.

"Some dancers can change just the expression on their face and suddenly appear to be an entirely different character. It's something we work on at the polishing stage of an opera, after the steps are established, trying to graft a particular attitude onto the dancers' steps.

"Dancers like that challenge," Sappington adds. "They don't think of themselves as just an instrument of technique but as interpretive performers. Ultimately, the ability to interpret a character is what distinguishes a good dancer from a bad one."

Together, Sappington and Sakellariou put together the San Francisco Opera's first full-time ballet company last spring, a core of 12 dancers who could handle assignments in both the Festival and Fall Seasons, keeping an

eye out for performers with that ability to handle a diversity of styles and periods.

Sappington was scheduled to choreograph *The Merry Widow* this fall. When a lengthy illness sidelined her, her close friend Christian Holder, who was the featured soloist in the dances she created for both *La Gioconda* and *Samson et Dalila*, took over the assignment for her.

Now recovered and relaxed, Sappington relishes the spectacle *Aida* affords her. "I think of the Triumphant March as a sort of 'halftime' entertainment," which is something of a hometown metaphor for the Baytown, Texas, native who now makes her home in New York. "It's a like a grand parade, with various groups that keep passing in progression."

She and *Aida* director Sam Wanamaker, with whom she first discussed the staging of the opera in June, have agreed on one untraditional dance element. "In the scene in Amneris' apartment, we're not going to have the usual Moorish slaves. We agreed we didn't want all those little children you usually see in that scene. Something unexpected was called for.

"So I did some research, a little digging into Egyptian history," she says, showing no apparent remorse for the pun. "And instead we will have all six of the male dancers doing a tribute to the goddess Anuket. Her symbol was the gazelle, which is the inspiration for the ballet I did. The men perform in these wonderful gazelle masks that Larry [costume designer Lawrence Casey] designed.

"What I've tried to achieve throughout the opera is dance that has a style like an Egyptian frieze, not something that looks balletic or frilly."

Sappington estimates that her work will occupy perhaps 15 minutes of the entire opera when the curtain rises on *Aida*. Yet behind what seems like only moments in the production lie three intensive weeks of rehearsal for the choreographer and dancers.

"It takes me the first week to create the dances, to get the steps down. Once I've got things started, I can find out how my ideas work — whether groupings are too close, or if a movement is awkward within the available space. When I'm planning the dances, I make my own peculiar musical notations; they'd make no sense whatsoever to a musician."

"Opera dancers have to be good actors."

Surprisingly, Sappington does not read music. "I did as a child, but not anymore. I don't find it necessary. I start with musical selections in my mind that I flesh out as we go along. There's a lot of improvisation during the rehearsal process."

There are five couples dancing in *Aida*. "I don't know quite why it is, but I've found that an odd number of couples will tend to make the space look more properly filled than an even number.

"When we get into the new rehearsal hall and start working with chorus and principals, I'll find out if this particular scene is too crowded or if in that spot we are going to have to move the chorus. That's when the interplay with the director comes in, when the sense of coordinating one element of the opera with all the others comes to the front. It's particularly helpful to me as a choreographer to have the new Zellerbach Rehearsal Wing, to be able to get on the scaffolding over the rehearsal area and actually see what the dances look like. That's going to save so much time when we get onto the actual Opera House stage."

Like Sakellariou, Sappington's goal is to add a vital, lively element to the experiences of attending the most comprehensive of performing arts forms.

"I don't think the contribution of dance to the opera experience should be scorned. There are companies in which opera ballet has very much a second-class status, though obviously that's not the case here. It's as important as any other element in the opera, and as a choreographer, I am determined that its performance should be just as good. If you succeed, then it will seem as if the dance has been incorporated into the whole, not just inserted there." ■

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Verdi as Stage Director

continued from p. 42



Original costume sketches by Auguste Mariette for Radames and the King in the world premiere of *Aida* in Cairo, showing clean-shaven Egyptians.

practical point that designers of new productions should remember. In Verdi's day, as in Handel's, the house curtains did not close in the middle of an act. Scene changes were effected swiftly in full view. The production books give careful instructions for how this was to be achieved. The first set for *Aida*, for example, is a shallow scene closed by a backcloth. Behind this backcloth is the altar of Ftha and

the heavy, built part of the temple waiting to be revealed when the Scene 1 backcloth flies out and the temple columns drop in. A modern designer might want to manage things differently, but he should bear in mind that music of Act I is continuous across the scene change; the cello line at the end of "Ritorna vincitor" leads directly into the E-flat strumming of the temple harps. (In practice, of course, the

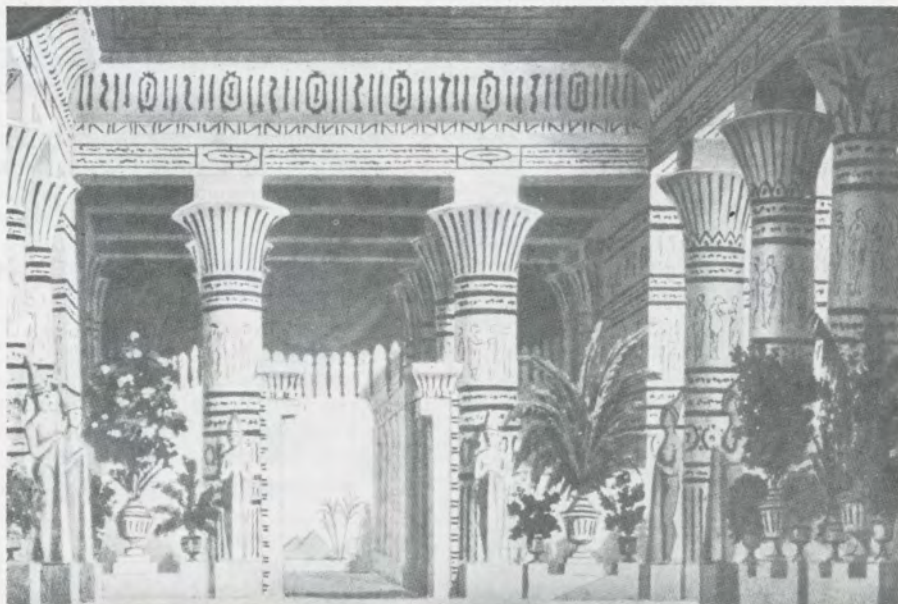


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The set design for the opening scene of *Aida* in the King's palace at Memphis, for the Cairo premiere.

Aida is likely to get some applause, although the score suggests that Verdi didn't intend her to — not here.) A footnote in the *Aida* production book underlines this:

During Aida's "Ritorna vincitor" all the choristers have to dress themselves as priests; as there is not much time for that, their costumes should be ready on the stage, behind the temple back-cloth; many dressers must be on hand to help the choristers with their costume change. The stage director must direct things so that there is no confusion, and the choristers are ready in good time to take up their places in the temple. *A delay in the scene change would spoil all the musical effect.*

Moreover, I believe that the alternation of shallow and deep scenes, playing both a dramatic and an acoustic part in the progress of the opera, is a part of the artistic whole and should be respected. The fashionable modern "unit set" imposes a monotony far from 19th-century composers' thinking, and destroys such contrasts as Amneris' boudoir yielding to the full-stage depth of the Triumphal Scene; or such deliberate effects as a crowd packed into small space, or a solitary, fearful figure — Amelia in the Gallows Scene of *Ballo* — entering alone on a deep, largely empty set. When Verdi *does* prescribe a mid-act curtain, it is for a special (and it must once have been a startling) effect; by such a curtain in Act I of *Rigoletto* he underlines the distance between Rigoletto's life as jester and his life as father.

These important production books, alas, are not very easy to lay hands on. There are plans to republish them, but only the *Aida* is generally available (in English translation), in Hans Busch's valuable *Verdi's Aida: The History of an Opera in Letters and Documents* (University of Minnesota Press, 1978). But there is a run of the whole series in the archives of the American Institute for Verdi Studies, housed in the Bobst Library on Washington Square, New York. There is a *Ballo* in the music library at UC Berkeley. And there are many copies around in private hands. In these days of Xerox, no opera company should find it hard to ensure that their performers *know* the production book — even if they decide not to follow it. ■

ANDREW PORTER is music critic of *The New Yorker* and a director of the American Institute for Verdi Studies. His latest volume of essay-reviews, *Music of Three More Seasons, 1977-80*, has just been published by Knopf.



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Pride and Self-delusion in *Aida*

continued from p. 48

CAROLYN MASON JONES PHOTO



James Farrar as Amonasro, Guy Chauvet as Radames and Gwyneth Jones as Aida in the Nile Scene, from the 1969 production of *Aida*.

"You, prostrate in the dust; I on the throne, beside the king."

Ironically, when Amneris is first seated on the throne during the Tri-

Amneris is the major figure of irony throughout the opera.

umphal Scene, she is anything but triumphant herself. She watches jealously as Radames' eyes blaze with love for Aida. In the depths of despair, "alone, humiliated, rejected," her heart again cries out for vengeance. But for-

tune suddenly shines on her when the king offers her hand in marriage as a reward for Radames' heroism. She exults in her brief moment of triumph, daring Aida to steal her love now. Amneris foolishly deludes herself into thinking that by royal fiat Radames will fall in love with her and consent to be her consort.

On the eve of her wedding she enters the Temple of Isis to pray that Radames may wholeheartedly reciprocate her feelings for him. When she emerges to see her beloved about to flee with Aida and Amonasro, she hurls the accusation "Traditor!" at him with the proverbial fury of a woman

scorned. For if Radames is guilty of betraying his country in the eyes of all Egypt, to Amneris he is guilty only of betraying her love. In fact, when the priests later accuse him of treason, Amneris responds, "Egli è innocente . . . traditor non è."

Rather than being destroyed by the revelation of his treachery, her love merely becomes more reckless and desperate. Hoping against hope that he will change his mind, she asks for one final interview with Radames. In her great Act IV scene, Amneris promises to secure the pardon of the king if only Radames will clear his name and renounce the Ethiopian slavegirl forever. His soldier's honor and his love for Aida make it impossible for him to accede to her entreaties. He calmly but staunchly refuses to accept her terms and says that he will joyfully die for Aida's love. Rejected one last time, Amneris can no longer bear the pain and lashes out in agitated fury, "You have changed to hatred a love which had no equal. Heaven will now fulfill the vengeance of my tears." When he has left, she curses her horrible jealousy that has brought him to the doors of death, using phrases reminiscent of Princess Eboli's great aria, "O don fatale," from *Don Carlo*.

Her desolate sobs and prayers for mercy punctuate the Judgment Scene as Radames refuses to defend himself before the high priests. When the death sentence reserved for traitors is pronounced, inexorably sealing his fate, her pent-up grief, frustration and rage explode. She calls the priests "infamous, bloodthirsty tigers" and curses their "villanous race." Helpless once again, incapable of inflicting any personal retribution, she calls heaven's vengeance down upon their heads.

The Tomb Scene is rightly anticlimactic.

The final Tomb Scene is rightly anticlimactic. It should and does have the feeling of universal calm that comes from the resigned acceptance of the inevitability inherent in the tragic dénouement. The struggle is over. Circumstances and self-delusion on the part of all three principals have ensured a tragic outcome. In their ethereal duet, "O terra addio," Aida and Radames blend their voices in softly ascending spirals and look beyond death to "the light of eternal day." Amneris, in the final irony, prays to Isis to open heaven for Radames, not realizing that the doomed lovers are together in peace at last. ■

RON SCHERL PHOTO



James McCracken as Radames and Fiorenza Cossotto as Amneris in the last act of the 1977 *Aida*.

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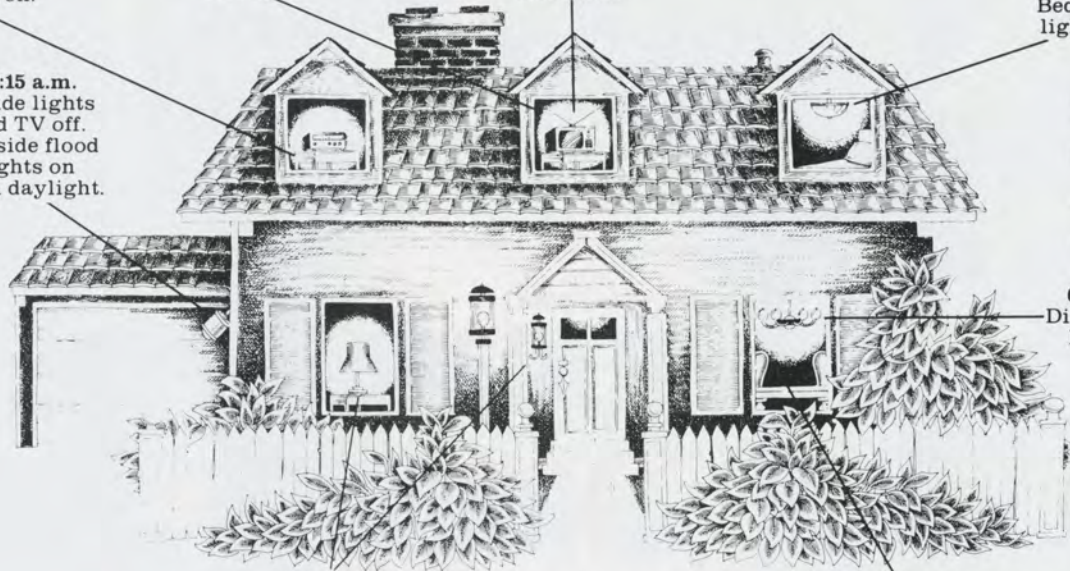
7:00 a.m.
Bedroom
radio on.

11:30 a.m.
Radio off.
T.V. on.

8:00 p.m.
TV on.
Stereo off.

10:00 p.m.
Dining room
light off.
Bedroom
light on.

12:15 a.m.
Inside lights
and TV off.
Outside flood
lights on
until daylight.



6:30 p.m.
Dining room
light on.

9:30 p.m.
Living room light on.
Outside porch light on.

3:00 p.m.
Stereo on.
TV off.

You've been planning this evening for months. But there's one thing you may have overlooked. Protecting your home from burglars while you're away.

But it's not too late. Because BSR has developed a security system so easy to install, you can set it up just moments before you leave.

It's the System X-10. And it lets you protect your home instead of just worrying about it.

80% of burglaries occur during daytime hours.

This incredible, but accurate statistic puts protecting your home in a whole new light. And gives the BSR System X-10 Timer a definite advantage. Because in addition to being able to automatically turn lights on and off, it can do what most other timers can't. Turn television sets, appliances, and

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Most Burglars stay away if they think you're home.

Burglars look forward to your absence, too. Because it gives them plenty of uninterrupted working time. But with the BSR System X-10 you can protect your home for a lot less money than you think.

Since the System X-10 Timer and Modules plug into ordinary outlets and use your home's existing wiring, there's no costly installation of any kind. The System X-10 costs about \$150.00 for an average home. And uses less than 3¢ worth of electricity a day to run. A small price to pay to put your mind at ease when you're away.

Available at Liberty House Stationery/Home Electronics Department.



BSR SYSTEM X-10
The Timer

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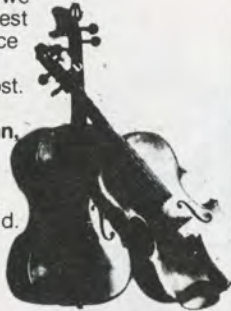
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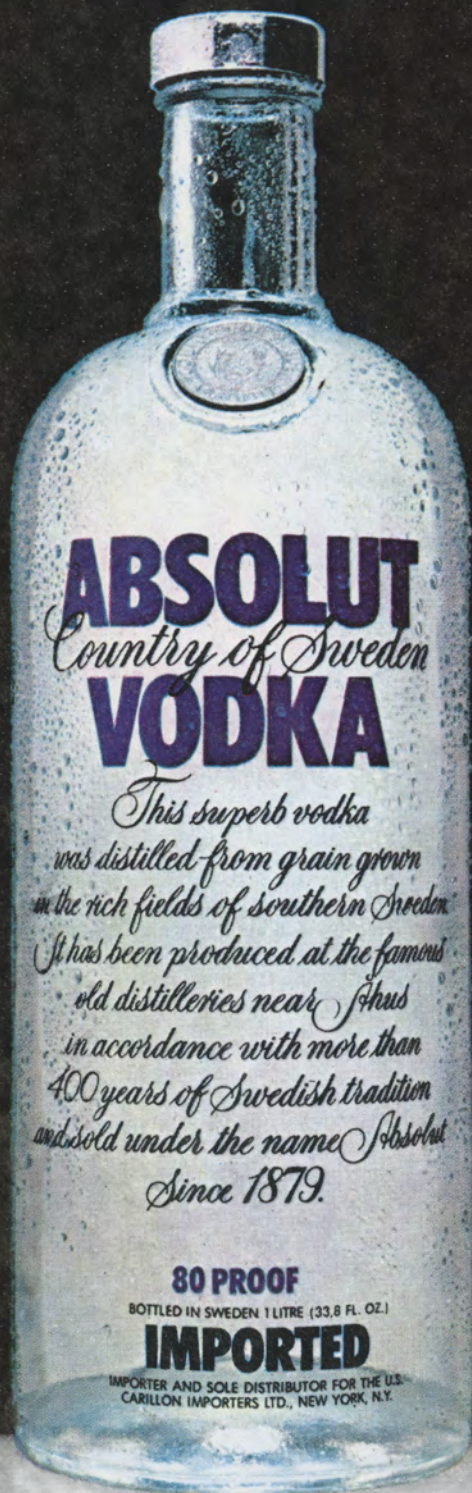
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29 17

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36 21

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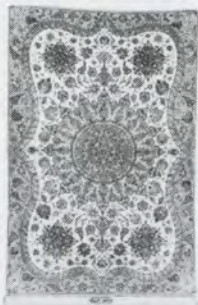
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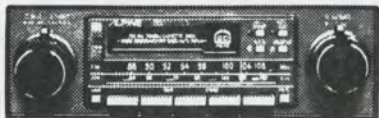
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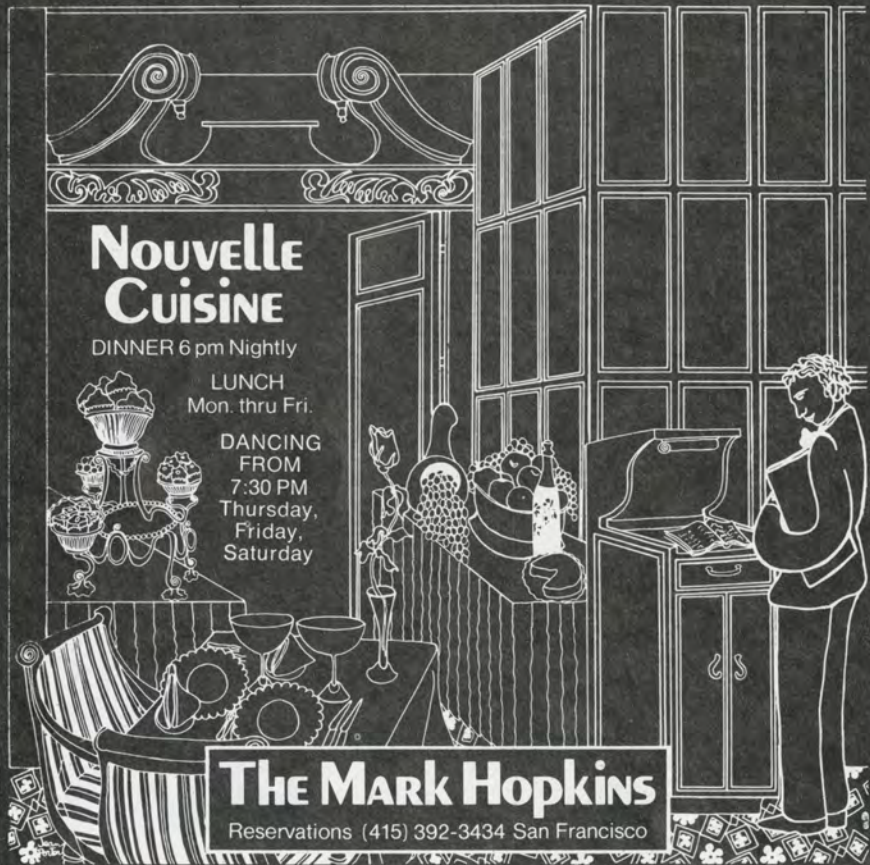
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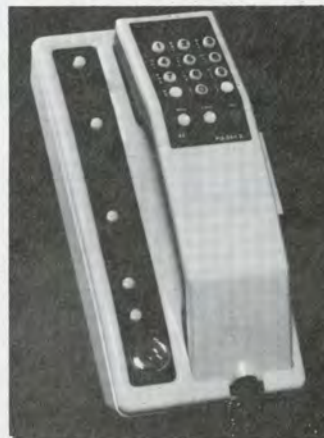
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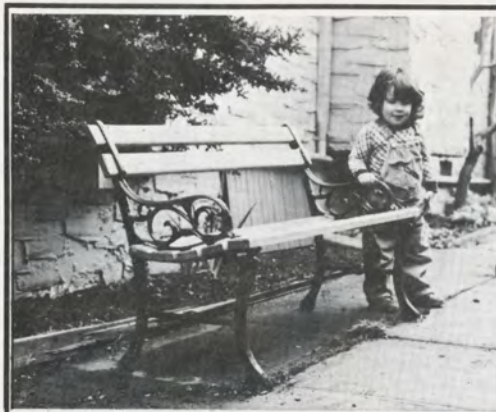
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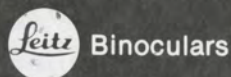
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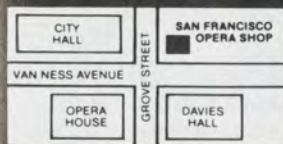
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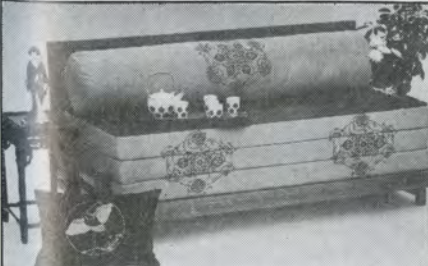


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Saturday, 21 November 1981

AIDA

At this performance, the role of
Ramfis will be sung by Kurt Rydl.

LEONTYNE PRICE

has graciously agreed to sing the title role in tonight's performance of *Aida* in order to give her colleague Margaret Price, who is indisposed, an opportunity to recover before the remaining performances.

At this performance, Ferruccio Furlanetto sings the role of Ramfis.

Wednesday, 18 November 1981

