

Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

1981

Saturday, September 19, 1981 8:00 PM  
Friday, September 25, 1981 8:00 PM  
Tuesday, September 29, 1981 8:00 PM  
Thursday, October 8, 1981 7:30 PM  
Sunday, October 11, 1981 2:00 PM  
Saturday, October 17, 1981 11:00 PM (Broadcast)

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# SAN FRANCISCO OPERA



## Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

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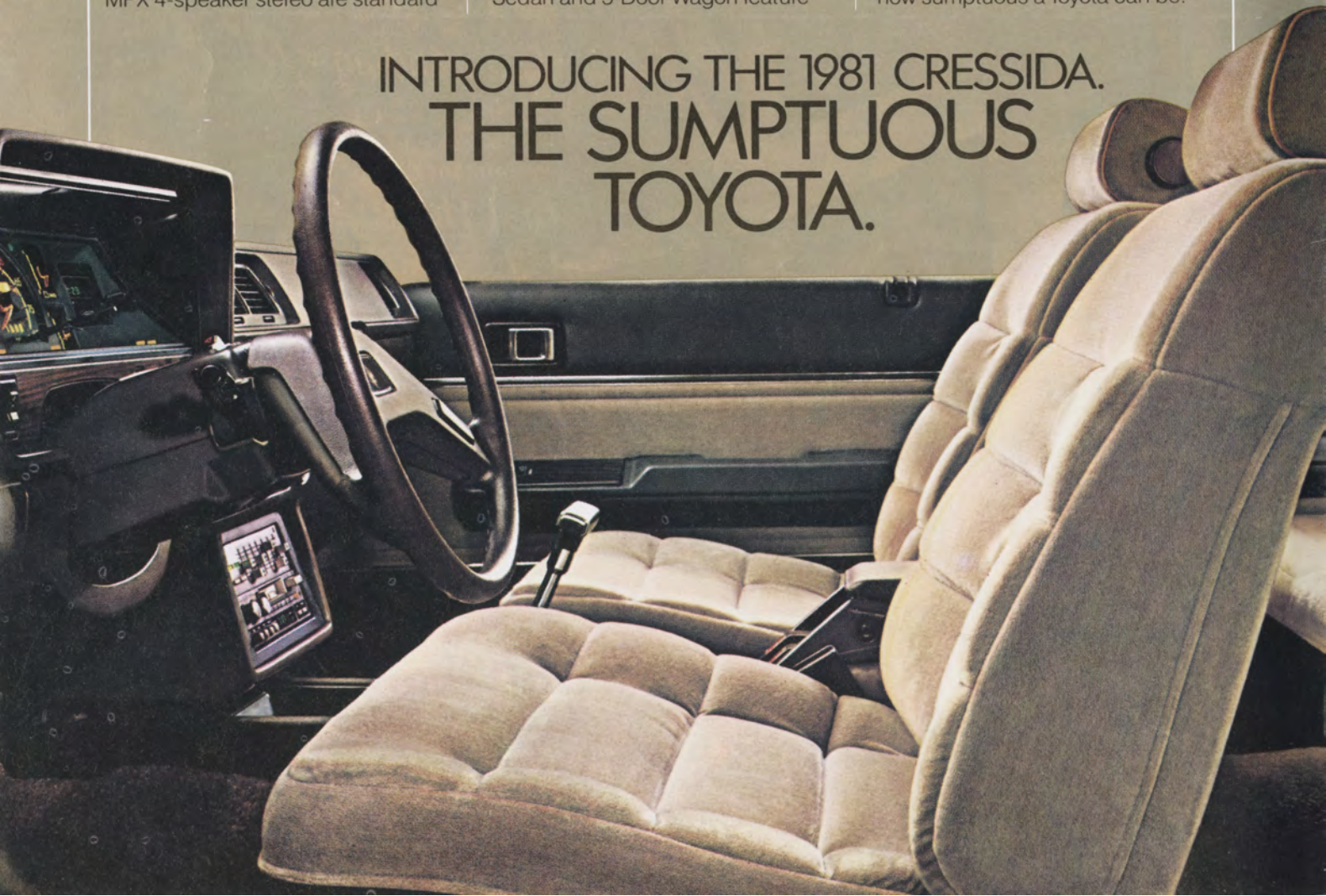
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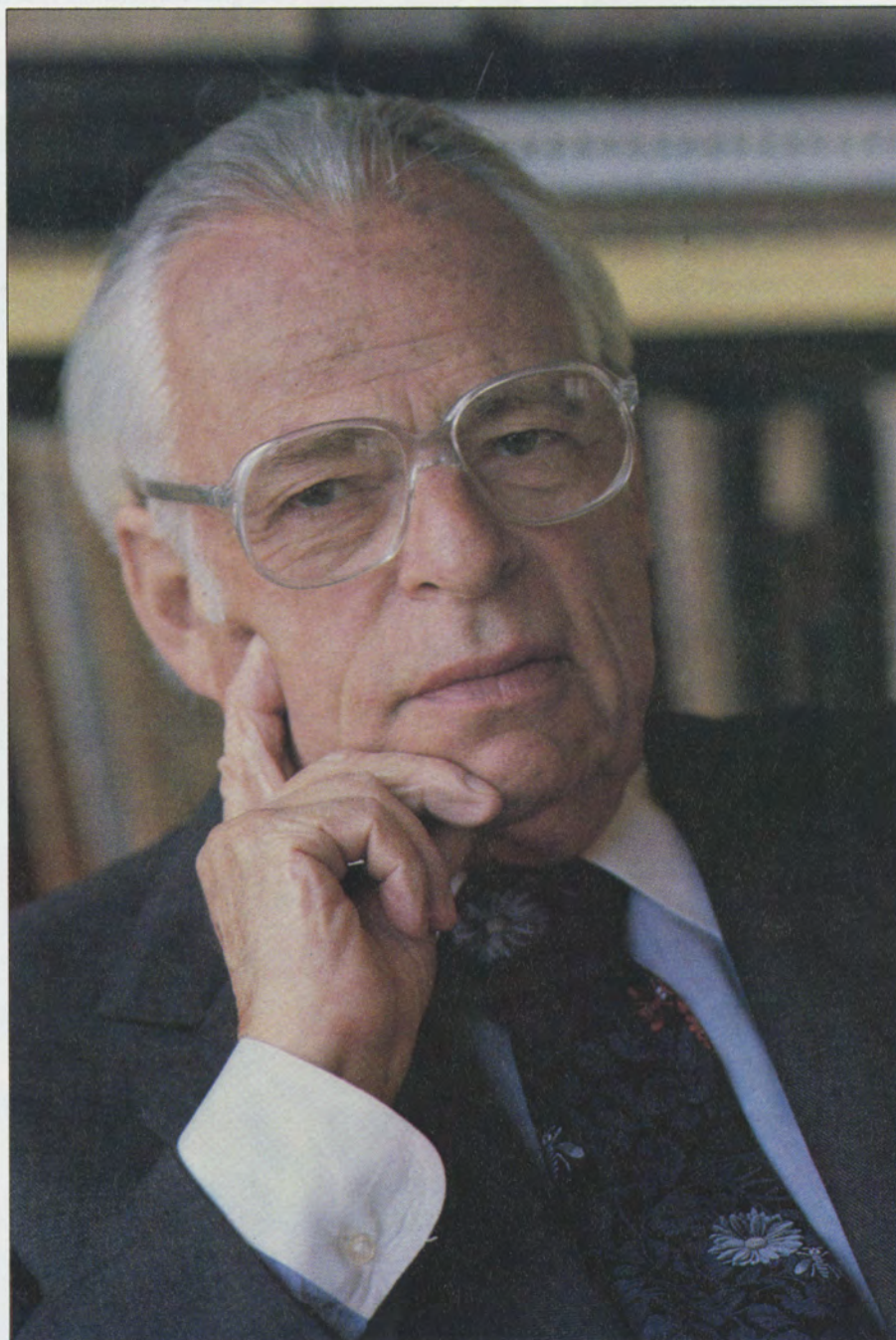
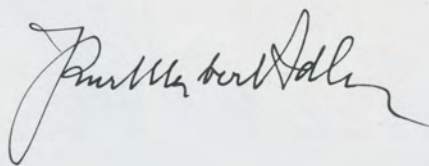
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A warm welcome to our 59th annual Fall Season, which climaxes the busiest year in the history of San Francisco Opera. We welcome back a host of dear friends of the Company and of mine, and we are also happy to introduce a number of exceptional artists new to San Francisco. Two of the most popular works in all opera — Verdi's *Aida* and Bizet's *Carmen* — receive new productions, while three works are presented here in premier 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 to be 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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# 13



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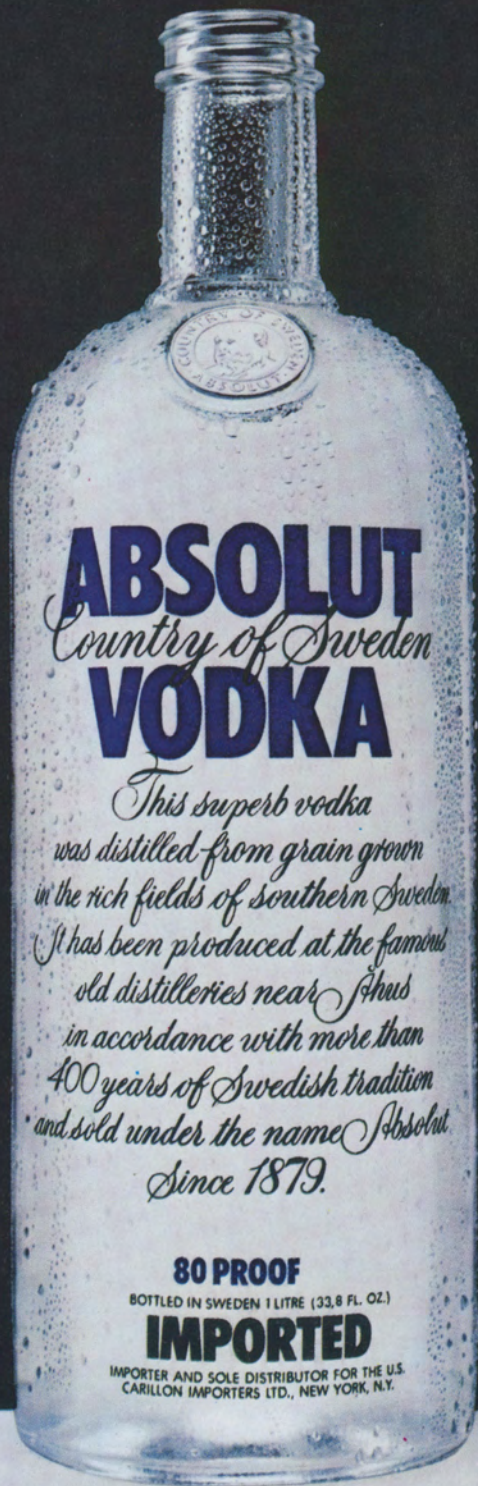
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## LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK/1981

### FEATURES

#### The Politics of *Lady Macbeth*

by Harlow Robinson 27

Shostakovich's only full-length opera offers a case history of the interaction between politics and art in the Soviet Union.

#### The Two Versions of *Lady Macbeth*

by Jeremy Noble 36

In 1956 Shostakovich revised his opera, toning down its explicit sexuality while providing greater musical continuity between its scenes.

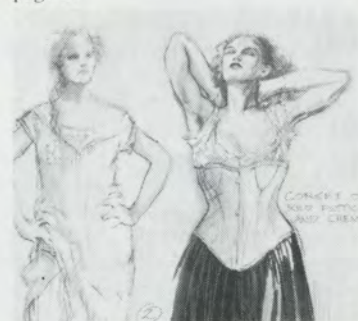
#### Dmitri Shostakovich: The Career of a Soviet Composer

by Walter Frisch 60

Though the spirit of protest resonates through his work, Dmitri Shostakovich was the only major Russian composer to write entirely under the Soviet system.



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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.

*LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK*: "Lady at the Window," oil painting from Russia, 1886, by Valentin Serov.

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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, Marl Young; the Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Mayor of San Francisco; Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas; the City and County of San Francisco; the War Memorial Board of Trustees and the San Francisco Opera Guild for their invaluable support of the San Francisco Opera.

Enjoy the season!

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**Merry Widow Bows  
with Benefit**

Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow* will receive its first San Francisco Opera performance on Saturday, October 3, with a gala benefit premiere sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Association and the San Francisco Opera Guild. Tickets for this non-subscription performance, which features Joan Sutherland in the title role, are available now through the Opera Box Office. Prices range from \$13 to \$75, and a portion of all ticket prices is tax deductible.

The international cast joining Dame Joan Sutherland includes Canadian mezzo-soprano Judith Forst as Valencienne and three artists who are making their Company debuts: Swedish baritone Håkan Hagegård as Danilo, New Zealand tenor Anson Austin (also making his American debut) as Camille, and Canadian tenor Phil Stark as Baron Zeta. Richard Bonyngé conducts, Lotfi Mansouri directs, sets are by Murray Laufer, costumes are by Suzanne Mess and choreography is by Margo Sappington for this Canadian Opera Company production, which is sung in English.

A Premiere Party, on the stage of the Opera House, immediately follows the performance. Patrons who purchase tickets for the performance will receive an invitation to the party, for which there is an additional charge of \$50.00 per person. Those who choose to attend the party will be invited to "Maxim's," on the stunning Art Nouveau set of the final scene of *The Merry Widow*, to toast Miss Sutherland and other members of the cast with champagne and wine.

**Film Masterpiece  
Napoleon at Opera  
House**

As a special event the San Francisco Opera, in conjunction with Francis Ford Coppola, will present Abel Gance's 1927 film masterpiece *Napoleon* at 7 P.M. on October 23 and October 25 at the War Memorial Opera House. Carmine Coppola will conduct members of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra in his score, which accompanies the epic silent film.

*Napoleon*, which broke house records for attendance in New York and Los Angeles earlier this year, was hailed by Vincent Canby of the *New York Times* as "the best film event of the year." Charles Champlin in the *Los Angeles Times* recently called *Napoleon* "the measure of all other films, forever." With the advent of sound movies, *Napoleon* became one of the great lost masterworks of film history. Reconstructed through detective work by the English film-maker and historian Kevin Brownlow and others who used fragments and archival versions, *Napoleon* has now been restored to an almost complete version of the original.

Repeat showings are scheduled for next January 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Tickets are available now through the Opera Box Office.

**Films of Interest**

In conjunction with the 1981 Fall Season of the San Francisco Opera, Pacific Film Archive has scheduled showings of two film classics: Andrzej Wajda's *Siberian Lady Macbeth* (1961), based on Nicolai Leskov's short story, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*; and Werner Herzog's *Woyzeck* (1978), based on Georg Büchner's play and starring Klaus Kinski in the title role. *Siberian Lady Macbeth* is shown on Monday, September 28, at 7:30 P.M. and *Woyzeck* on Friday, October 30, at 7:30 and 9:00 P.M. at the University Art Museum in Berkeley, 2615 Durant Avenue.





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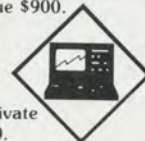
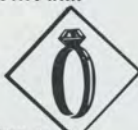


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# The Politics of *Lady Macbeth*

Shostakovich's only full-length opera offers a case history of the interaction between politics and art in the Soviet Union.



By HARLOW ROBINSON

Few composers in our century have received more attention — both wanted and unwanted — than Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich. By the time he died at age 68, in August 1975, he had been showered with honors both at home (he was the first Soviet musician to be named a "Hero of Socialist Labor") and abroad. He was rapidly becoming the most frequently performed 20th-century symphonic composer in the world. An enormously prolific, nearly obsessed, worker, he produced 15 weighty symphonies and 15 complex string quartets, not to mention concertos, film scores, songs, piano music, cantatas and incidental music of all kinds — and, of course, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, his lone full-length opera and one of the very few operas written since 1920 to become truly popular in the international repertoire.

But Shostakovich has been celebrated almost as much for political reasons as for musical ones. Indeed, a Soviet musician friend joked to me not long ago, as we walked bundled-up along a frozen Moscow street, that Soviet newspapers had delayed in announcing Shostakovich's death because a fierce political debate was raging among the editors over whether to call him a "great" or merely "outstanding" Soviet composer. The anecdote is unverifiable, one of those countless politically motivated jokes with which Soviet citizens poke fun at their singularly humorless government, but is still an accurate reflection of the sensitive political position that Shostakovich occupied throughout his life — and even after death. The furor caused two years ago by the publication in America of *Testimony*, Shostakovich's supposed memoirs, only made that position more uncertain.

---

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975).



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Shostakovich with Solomon Volkov, the author of *Testimony*, in 1965.

It is difficult for most Americans — or for most Westerners — to understand how composers, those apolitical and cerebral creatures who in most societies have as much to do with politics as Parliament does with the state of the modern novel, can, in Soviet Russia, be subject to political control and be expected to produce music adhering to the party line of the moment. What does that mean? Is a C minor chord less ideologically correct than a C major chord? As recently as November 1980, at the Sixth All-Union Congress of Composers (all Soviet composers, if they hope to be performed or published, must join the Composers' Union) in Moscow, seven living composers were sharply criticized for excessive infatuation with "Western bourgeois" techniques of composition — serialism, electronics — that appeal to a supposed artistic elite rather than to the "broad masses" of Soviet listeners.

Shostakovich's career, especially since it stretched through the regimes of Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, and since it was spent entirely in Russia, is an instructive case history in the interaction of politics and art in the Soviet Union. One of the more illustrative and bizarre chapters in that history is the matter of Shostakovich's operatic masterpiece, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (also called, at various times and for varying reasons, *Katerina Ismailova*). The opera's political fate, like the composer's, has zigged and zagged with a willful, at times capricious, violence worthy of the heroine's namesake.

When Shostakovich began writing *Lady Macbeth* in 1930 at age 24, he was already a famous composer. His First Symphony, first performed in 1926, had been an immediate success, and he was hailed by enthusiastic critics as the first "Soviet" composer. His Second Symphony, given 18 months later, was less successful, but began what was to become a habit with Shostakovich: politically programmatic symphonies. The poet

Bezimensky provided verses for the Second Symphony that clearly demonstrate Shostakovich's acute awareness of the political situation in which he was living:

October! — the happiness of  
fields and working tables.  
It is the banner of living  
generations.  
October,  
The Commune,  
And Lenin.

Similarly, his Third Symphony was dedicated to international May Day. In fact, Shostakovich was always aware of political realities, and was never an advocate of art for art's sake, as his comments in an interview published in *The New York Times* in December 1931 indicate:

There can be no music without ideology . . . We, as revolutionaries, have a different conception of music. Lenin himself said that "music is a means of unifying broad masses of people." It is not a leader of masses, perhaps, but certainly an organizing force! For music has the power of stirring specific emotions . . . Music is no longer an end in itself, but a vital weapon in the struggle. Because of this, Soviet music will probably develop along different lines from any the world has ever known.

From the very beginning, Shostakovich was an engaged artist; it is misleading to portray him, as many West-

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## Shostakovich was hailed as the first "Soviet" composer.

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ern critics have done, as an apolitical artist with his head in the musical sand. He may have disagreed with the Soviet cultural bureaucracy on political principles — though he was usually silent about such differences — but he never really objected to the idea that music was, in its own way, political.

The 1920s — which coincided with Shostakovich's own twenties — were a period, especially in retrospect, of relative freedom in newly Soviet Russia. The chaos and devastation of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the long civil war that followed had led Lenin to declare a period of free enterprise (The New Economic Policy) intended to revitalize the struggling economy. It was a time of wheeler-dealing, speculation and corruption. Artists of all kinds, exuberant at the prospect of a new world opening before their eyes, freed from centuries of Tsarist stupidity, broke into scores of political and artistic factions, each issuing manifestoes, one more enthusiastic than the other. Lenin's death in 1924, while unexpected, did not immediately change this fluid





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Joseph Stalin at the bier of Kirov, after whom the famous Leningrad Theater was named. Kirov's murder, under Stalin's order, marked the beginning of an era of purges and a stifling of dissent.

situation. A scramble for power ensued in which Joseph Stalin, a one-time seminarian turned bureaucratic megalomaniac, eventually gained the upper hand. For the moment the more pressing questions of national survival — industrialization, collectivization, foreign policy — prevented Stalin and his disciples from paying much attention to artistic issues.

That Shostakovich's only other completed opera, *The Nose*, could have been produced in Leningrad in 1930 is proof that the situation in the arts was still relatively open and free. This eccentric and sarcastic one-act work, based very loosely on a short story by 19th-century Russian writer Nikolai Gogol in which a civil servant wakes up one morning to find his nose gone and running around town with fashionable ladies, is typical of the sometimes wild experimentation in which writers, composers and visual artists indulged until the early 1930s. The opera, which has no coherent story line, has 78 characters. The part of the nose is written to be sung with stopped-up nostrils. The music is rarely tonal, consisting instead of a weird mixture of recitative, screaming and rude noises. The orchestra is chamber size and heavy on percussion effects. After this 1930 production, *The Nose* dropped out of sight for decades, but reappeared a few years ago in Moscow in a witty and virtuoso production at the Musical Chamber Theater, where it is currently in the repertoire.

Encouraged by his early success, Shostakovich set to work on a serious full-length opera, which he intended as the first in an operatic tetralogy on

Russian women. *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, taken from a short story by 19th-century Russian writer Nikolai Leskov, was to portray the woman of 1840; the other three would be concerned with women of 1860, 1917, and the Soviet present. Shostakovich never got beyond 1840.

*Lady Macbeth* was finished by 1932, the same year the composer married Nina Varzar, and was first staged in Leningrad on January 22, 1934, followed by a production in Moscow on January 24. (In Leningrad the opera was called *Lady Macbeth of*

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*Lady Macbeth* was intended as  
the first in an operatic  
tetralogy on Russian women.

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*the Mtsensk District*, but in Moscow it was called from the beginning *Katerina Ismailova*, after the heroine.) The critics were universally enthusiastic. *Lady Macbeth* was called "the result of the general success of Socialist construction, of the correct policy of the Party," an opera that "could have been written only by a Soviet composer brought up in the best traditions of Soviet culture." Samuil Samosud, the distinguished conductor who led the premiere, went even further: "I declare *Lady Macbeth* a work of genius, and I am convinced that posterity will confirm this estimate. One cannot help feeling proud that, in a Soviet musical theater, an opera has been created that overshadows all that can possibly be accomplished in the operatic art of the capitalist world.



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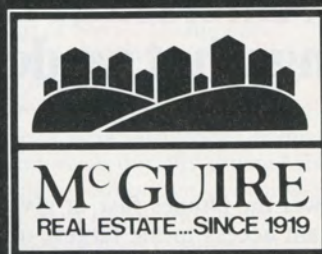
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Shostakovich with Yevgeni Yevtushenko in 1962, the year of the composer's controversial 13th Symphony, subtitled "Babi Yar," with texts by the poet.

Here, too, our culture has indeed not only overtaken, but surpassed the most advanced capitalist countries."

And yet backstage — offstage — the political tide was turning, flooding artistic fields. Stalin had now firmly consolidated himself in a position of total leadership. Freed from worrying about potential rivals, he turned his dictator's attention to other matters. The collectivization of Soviet agriculture, a bloody and often ruthless process of government takeover of private farms, begun in 1928, was already largely accomplished by the early 1930s. The first Five-year Plan, to determine the development and output of every sector of the Soviet economy, was followed in 1932 by the Second Five-year Plan. The chaos of Lenin's New Economic Policy gave way to a totalitarian approach that spread its control into every aspect of Soviet life, including art and artists.

### The critics were universally enthusiastic.

As it turned out, 1932, the year Shostakovich finished *Lady Macbeth*, and 1934, the year it was first performed, were watershed years in the regimentation of music, literature and art. During the 1920s writers, composers and artists, while encouraged to address themselves to the difficult issues of a developing socialist society, were more or less free to express themselves as they chose. Numerous organizations of artists were born, each with its own political — or even apolitical — line. In 1932, however, the Communist Party published a resolution — "On the Reconstruction of Literary and Artistic Organizations" — that signaled an end to diversity. Single, all-inclusive unions were to be

established in each field of the arts; all "Soviet" artists would be required to belong.

The first of these to be established was the Union of Soviet Writers. Writers have always been the first to be regimented and punished throughout Soviet history; by comparison, composers have had it easy, probably because the undeniable technical basis of music is less comprehensible to cultural bureaucrats than the printed word. At the first All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934, various party and cultural figures impressed upon the assembled authors the need to write about issues that advanced the high cause of Soviet Communism. "Socialist Realism" was the new battle cry. But what was most sinister in the proceedings was a strident tone of intolerance; clearly, deviations from the doctrine would not be tolerated.

It took somewhat longer for the situation in music to crystallize. The two organizations of composers that had existed in the 1920s, the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians and the Association for Contemporary Music, were replaced by the monolithic Union of Soviet Composers, which began to publish its own journal, *Soviet Music*, in 1933. It is still published today and is still the official mouthpiece of policy on music. Ironically, Shostakovich initially greeted the formation of the union with enthusiasm, as did most of his colleagues, since they saw in it an elimination of the petty in-fighting that had gone on in the preceding decade, and overlooked the inherent possibilities of regimentation. Socialist Realism now became the password for composers, too. The critic Gorodinsky defined musical Socialist Realism in this way in 1935:



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The main attention of the Soviet composer must be directed towards the victorious, progressive principles of reality, towards all that is heroic, bright and beautiful. This distinguishes the spiritual world of Soviet man and must be embodied in musical images full of beauty and strength. Socialist Realism demands an implacable struggle against folk-negating modernistic directions that are typical of the decay of contemporary bourgeois art, against subservience and servility towards modern bourgeois culture.

Heady words, these — and vague ones. What did they mean in practice? How could the new policy be applied to individual compositions? The official response to *Lady Macbeth* would, unfortunately for Shostakovich, provide some of the answers.

*Lady Macbeth* was very popular in Moscow and Leningrad in the two years following its premiere. It had an unusually large number of performances for a new opera: 83 in Leningrad and 97 in Moscow. It had also become known abroad, with American performances in Cleveland, New York (at the Metropolitan) and Philadelphia in

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### Social Realism became the password for composers.

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early 1935, and in European capitals during the next few seasons. Shostakovich's fame and prestige grew; he was not yet 30.

And then suddenly, with the terrifying speed that was to become so frighteningly familiar in succeeding years, Shostakovich's star fell. Stalin attended a performance of the opera. There is some disagreement as to exactly when he went to see *Lady Macbeth* at the Stanislavsky-Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater in Moscow: either in late December 1935 or in early January 1936. There is no disagreement that he didn't like what he saw. So little did he like it that soon after, on January 28, 1936, an unsigned article entitled "Chaos Instead of Music" appeared in *Pravda* directly attacking Shostakovich and his opera. That the article appeared in *Pravda*, which almost never comments on music in any way, only indicates how important Stalin and his entourage considered the issue.

"From the first moment, the listener is shocked by a deliberately dissonant, confused stream of sound," the article proclaimed. "Fragments of melody, embryonic phrases appear —



Tikhon Khrennikov, who attacked Shostakovich at the first Composers' Congress.

only to disappear again in the din, the grinding and the screaming . . . This music is built on the basis of rejecting opera . . . The danger of this trend to Soviet music is clear . . . And 'love' is smeared all over the opera in the most vulgar manner. The merchant's double bed occupies the central position on the stage. On it all 'problems' are solved . . ."

The opera was immediately withdrawn from the repertoire; it would return to the Soviet stage only in 1962. Shostakovich was transformed from prodigy to prodigal son in the course of a day.

Why was Stalin so offended by *Lady Macbeth*, which had already been running for two years? There are several interpretations. Stanley Krebs, author of *Soviet Composers and the Development of Soviet Music*, believes that "arch-puritan Stalin was grossly offended by the sexuality of the work and, musically, by the rape scene, whose brilliantly realistic orchestral accompaniment led one Western writer to coin the word 'pornophony.'" It is true that the 1930s were a period of "new respectability" in Soviet life. After the political and sexual experimentation of the 1920s, Soviet society was becoming more conservative, conventional and self-conscious. It is also possible that Stalin was showing his true xenophobic colors. Since the opera had become so popular in the decadent bourgeois West, there must be something wrong with it, as the *Pravda* article said: "*Lady Macbeth* enjoys great success with audiences abroad. Is it not because the opera is absolutely unpolitical and confusing that they praise it? Is it not explained by the fact that it tickled the perverted tastes of the bourgeoisie

with its fidgety, screaming, neurotic music . . .?"

Another interpretation, more plausible in my view, cites developments in the domestic political climate. On December 1, 1934, Kirov, mayor of Leningrad (after whom the Kirov Theater was named) was assassinated on the orders of Stalin, who feared his power. With this murder began the era of the purges that came to a hysterical climax in the years just preceding World War II. Stalin's response to *Lady Macbeth* would, then, be simply a reflection of the tightening political situation, the squeezing out of any incipient dissent.

It is also entirely possible that Stalin and his cultural henchmen seized upon *Lady Macbeth* as a test case proving state control over the arts, an opportunity to state more clearly what was expected of Soviet creative workers. That Shostakovich was world-famous would, in this sense, only be an asset: by cracking down on him, the Soviet government would make an international statement of intentions. Supporting this view is the fact that at the same time that Shostakovich and *Lady Macbeth* were criticized, another composer and his opera were praised.

Around the same time he saw *Lady Macbeth*, Stalin also saw *Quiet Flows the Don* by Ivan Dzerzhinsky, based on the epic novel of the same name by Mikhail Sholokhov, a basically optimistic tale of the coming of Soviet rule in rural southern Russia. Its characters are much more positive and "Soviet" than the brooding, destructive bourgeois types depicted in *Lady Macbeth*. Similarly, Dzerzhinsky's musical language is more simple and conventionally melodic, using folk tunes without the sarcastic twist that Shostakovich adds. It was held up as a model for what Soviet opera should be, and became the prototype for "song opera," based on clearly recognizable and separable tunes, preferably of folk origin.

Now that he had suddenly become an opera specialist, Stalin submitted his findings to other "specialists" called in for discussion on January 17, 1936. What we are looking for, he pronounced, is a "libretto with a Socialist topic, a realistic musical language with stress on a national idiom, and a positive hero typifying the new Socialist era." At first, in 1934, when *Lady Macbeth* had been praised by Soviet critics, it had been justified on the grounds that it pointed out the failings of Tsarist Russia. That was no longer enough; one had to point out how wonderful Soviet Russia was.

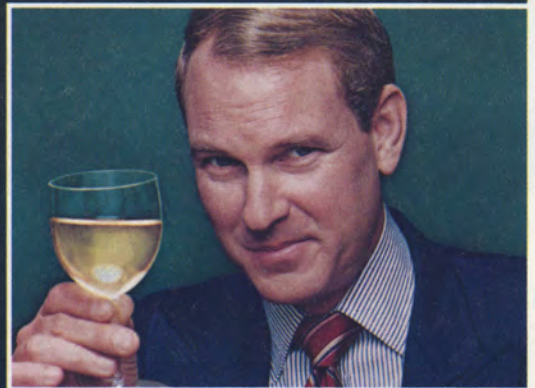
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Costume sketches by Larry Casey for Anja Silja as Katerina Ismailova in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*.

# The Two Versions of *Lady Macbeth*

In 1956 Shostakovich revised his opera, toning down its explicit sexuality while providing greater musical continuity between its scenes.

By JEREMY NOBLE

Operas are complex creatures with unpredictable life cycles. Reconciling the conflicting needs of drama and music makes very special demands on their composers — and the better the composer, the greater the demands. The story, the situations, the theme must excite him, of course, must get his creative juices flowing, but that is no guarantee that he can give the result a musical shape that matches and enhances the drama in performance.

Even for Wagner, librettist and composer both, there were problems, usually caused by his continuing development between the conception of a work and its execution. How much more, then, for composers who have had to wrestle their texts out of writers who could share their vision only partially, and who were hampered both by their own habits and preferences and by those of censors, official and unofficial? Small wonder that the history of individual operas tends to be one of protracted struggle, of revisions

spanning years, even decades, in an attempt to give the material its definitive shape, in which all the needs of both music and drama are met, or at least balanced.

Should we assume, then, that the composer's final version is the "best," the one we can take as standard? Things are not always so simple. With *Fidelio*, it is true, we are probably right to prefer the tautness Beethoven achieved with the cuts he made after the first performances, and the sublimity of his 1814 additions. The more





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ample, luxuriant, symphonic first version is less effective in the theater, though it is salutary to listen to it once in a while and remember that it is the work of a composer who had already achieved full maturity with the "Eroica." But what about *Tannhäuser*? Wagner's post-*Tristan* revision of the Venusberg scene gives it an erotic intensity that was quite outside his range 15 years earlier, but that in itself tends to put the work's dramatic impact off balance. Is *Don Carlos* strengthened more by the passages Verdi later reworked, or weakened by the cuts he made and the disparities of style he introduced? And how about *Carmen*? It is surely impossible to feel that Bizet's considered intentions are to be found either in the once-standard published scores or in Fritz Oeser's 1964 edition, which all too gullibly opens every cut. The truth is that there can be no rule of thumb. All we can do is examine variant versions on their own merits with as much open-minded scholarship and humble sympathy as we can muster, and see which contribute most to the work's central core of meaning and expression.

Shostakovich (as quoted in Solomon Volkov's *Testimony*) has described the opera that he and Alexander Preis adapted from Leskov's short story *The Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* as "tragic-satiric," combining admiration and empathy (one might say love) for its central character, Katerina, with a fiercely sardonic attitude to the society which surrounds and ultimately destroys her.

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### Shostakovich described the opera as "tragic-satiric."

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This is a view that is already implicit in Leskov's story, but presented there with much more ironic detachment. Even the title is part of Leskov's distancing technique: the local gentry, he tells us, had dubbed Katerina "the Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk district." We sense their superciliousness at the idea of a tragic heroine in such humdrum circumstances ("the Peoria Hamlet," as it might be), and it is significant that for his 1956 revision of the opera Shostakovich replaced that title with a straight *Katerina Ismailova*, as if giving her back her individual dignity. As Leskov tells the story, Katerina does gradually take on a sort of elemental grandeur that commands our respect, but he spares us nothing of her ferocity. It is she, not her lover, who clubs her husband with a heavy candlestick, she who smothers the infant heir to the Ismailov business. And when, at the very end, she and



Nikolai Leskov (1831-1895), on whose short story the Shostakovich opera is based.

Sonyetka are struggling in the water, she falls on the young girl "like a pike on a soft-finned minnow."

But a novelist's or playwright's detachment comes much less easily to a composer, and Shostakovich seems from the start to have been a little too much in love with his heroine to present her in quite so harsh a light. (Something similar occurred when Berg took Wedekind's Lulu as his heroine.) Sergei, not Katerina, wields the lethal candlestick; the whole episode of the child's murder is suppressed. And, above all, the composer lavishes on Katerina music of a purely lyrical quality that sets her quite apart from the gallery of grotesques which surrounds her and drags her down.

None of this is changed between the 1932 score and the revision Shostakovich made during Khrushchev's "thaw" a quarter of a century later. What is changed, though, is the frankness of Katerina's sexuality as expressed in the original libretto. Even in her opening aria, the later version shifts the emphasis from her indolence to the boredom that is the cause of that indolence, as if helping the audience to understand would help it to pardon. Her blunt references to her husband's impotence, present in the original libretto, had already disappeared by the 1935 vocal score, presumably in deference to Soviet prudery, but the 1956 revision carries the process much further in the third scene of Act I. Here Katerina's perfectly explicit longing for a man is changed into yearning for a rather unspecific "freedom." She is no longer undressed and in bed when Sergei arrives, and the broad innuendo when

he tells her that if she wants a child she'll have to do something about it is replaced by an innocuous exchange about reading as a cure for boredom.

All these are merely verbal changes. As such they can obscure the work's main thrust, but scarcely alter it, since it is carried above all by the music. Far more important is the replacement of the orchestral episode that represents with startling vividness Katerina's and Sergei's first bout of love-making with a much shorter and more decorous passage to accompany a single passionate embrace. Since this is one of only three major musical changes in the revised version,

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### The composer lavishes on Katerina music of a purely lyrical quality.

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we can postpone the question of whether or not it is an improvement, noting for the moment that it is at least in keeping with the verbal bowdlerizations, including one that comes shortly before the end of the same scene. In the original version Sergei tells Katerina not to mention her marriage to him, and she replies that he is now her husband; in the revision he urges, "You don't really love your husband," and she begs him not to make her break her vows. No wonder the preceding sex music had to go. It would have made all too clear that those vows had already been broken.

Apart from retouchings of the vocal line, the changes in the first scene of Act II are again mainly verbal, designed to remove the clear implication that when Katerina's monstrous old father-in-law, Boris, spots Sergei climbing out of her room, he is on the point of going to console her sexually himself. The second bedroom scene, after Boris had been disposed of, is once more sanitized. In the later version Katerina and Sergei are not in bed together; she wakes him up not for sex but in order to tell him how much she loves him, from the relatively safe distance of a bedside chair. When Boris' ghost appears, she can no longer exorcise it by telling it to watch her and Sergei in bed together, but only shoo it away. When, a little later, her suspicious husband Zinoviy arrives, her taunts about his impotence are weakened to a mere "they made me marry you."

With one exception that needs to be looked at separately, the verbal changes in the two remaining acts are quite minor. One may ask what motives Shostakovich had in de-eroticizing the text of his opera in its 1956



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version. Did it represent a genuine shift in his own taste, an attempt to carry still further the process, already begun in the 1932 version, of making Katerina more "sympathetic"? Or was it merely a sop to the Cerberuses of the Soviet musical establishment (which has always been more nervous about seditious words than seditious notes), in order to get the work put on with its music essentially intact? On the publicly available evidence there seems no way of being quite sure, but the latter explanation seems to me more likely. Katerina's sexuality, first imprisoned, then liberated, is not a weakness that undermines her, but her central strength, one that raises her above her surroundings and almost excuses her crimes. To quote Shostakovich again from *Testimony*: "Sollertinsky believed that love was the greatest gift and the person who knew how to love had a talent . . . In that sense Katerina is a genius . . .".

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### Katerina's sexuality is her central strength.

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If this was really Shostakovich's view (and there seems little reason to doubt it) the verbal changes in the 1956 revision seem something of a betrayal of the original concept — though not perhaps a very serious one, since a good director can do much to restore the meanings which the words themselves obscure. All things being equal, the verbal text of the 1932 version seems clearly preferable. But what are we to make of the musical changes? Most of them are quite minor, and to my mind clearly improvements since they produce more comfortable or effective vocal lines. Some of Katerina's quiet high notes disappear, and some of the Shabby Peasant's low ones (even his hiccups have been transposed into a more effective register). The extremes of Boris' range have been narrowed, with an uncomfortably high-lying passage transposed down a semitone. We may choose to argue that this polishing of rough edges detracts from the original version's impact, but it is hard to see that Shostakovich can have consulted anyone's taste but his own in making such detailed adjustments, or have seen them as anything but improvements.

Rather more significant are the musical changes that have evidently been introduced for the sake of continuity. For instance, the stealthy music that accompanies Boris' entrance and exit in the first scene of the opera is more developed in the revised version.



Marie Collier in the title role of *Katerina Ismailova*, the opera's revised version that received its American premiere at the War Memorial Opera House in 1964.

Clearly the Shostakovich of 1956, with the experience of 10 symphonies behind him, wanted to avoid some of the abrupt transitions, or rather non-transitions, so characteristic of his early style. The clearest examples of this are the newly composed entr'actes he places between the first two scenes of the opera, and between the scene at the police station and the ensuing wedding party. In each case a rather diffuse piece of music, full of the kind of contrasts that suggest cinematic montage, has been replaced by something much more homogeneous in rhythm and continuous in development. And in each case the new entr'acte has been designed to prepare us for the music of the following

scene. The sardonic descending scale of the first entr'acte becomes, at twice the speed, the phrase that the boorish workmen are singing as they watch Aksinya being manhandled in the yard; the entr'acte after the police-station scene continues the Keystone Cops' hurry music, but gradually juxtaposes it with the theme of the fugue that begins the following scene. In both cases it is perfectly clear that Shostakovich has made an aesthetic choice in favor of development and continuity — "transition" in the Wagnerian sense — as against the expressionistic discontinuity of his earlier style, of the methods of the Tenth Symphony as against those of the Second and Third.



Once again it is possible to make a case against accepting Shostakovich's mature second thoughts, and to feel (though I personally do not) that at 23 he had more creative vitality than he did in his late fifties. Possible, but to my mind rather perverse. Shostakovich's case, after all, is quite different from that of Prokofiev, whose rewritings, in his last, sick years, of such earlier works as the Cello Concerto and the Fourth Symphony really were capitulations to prevailing official taste. Shostakovich in the late 1950s was stimulated by the scent of new freedoms: there is no evidence that most of the musical changes in *Katerina Ismailova* (as opposed to the bowdlerizations of the text) were motivated by anything other than a desire to improve the work in the light of the composer's own experience.

Only one of those changes seems to fall in the same category as the verbal bowdlerizations, and that is the excision of the notorious orchestral episode that accompanies Katerina's and Sergei's strenuous coupling in Act I. Here, for once, the young Shostakovich seems to have got his tragic and satiric wires crossed, and undercut whatever sympathy we might be feeling for his heroine. If the violence of the music no longer shocks us (as it

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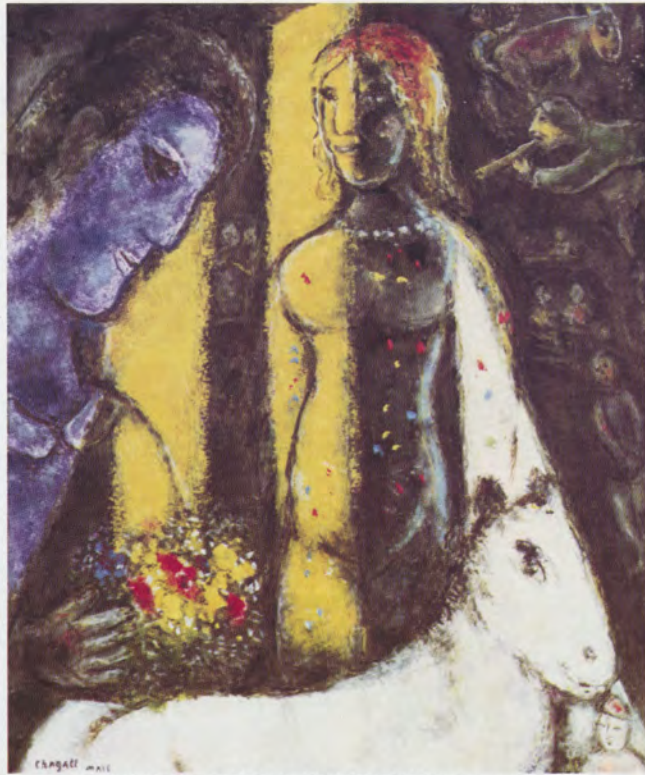
**The verbal text of 1932 seems clearly preferable.**

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certainly shocked both Russian and Western critics in the 1930s), the detumescent trombones at the end, the inverse of the horn whoops in the *Rosenkavalier* prelude, will surely make us smile. And yet, for all its crassness, this passage does speak to the central core of the work in a way that the shorter and more decorous measures with which Shostakovich replaced it do not.

And just as there is this one glaring exception to the general rule that the musical readings of the later version are preferable, so there is one verbal change that it is hard not to accept, since it was clearly not made to please the authorities. At the very end of the work, after Katerina and Sonyetka have been swallowed up in the waters of the Volga, and the convicts resume their weary march towards Siberia, Shostakovich added a few extra lines for the Old Convict, to be sung over the voices of the chorus. "Oh, why is our life so dark and terrible? Was it for such a life as this that

continued on p.70



Chagall, PROFILE EN BLEU, JAUNE ET BLANC, oil on canvas, 1977

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# PROFILES



## ANJA SILJA

Internationally acclaimed singing actress Anja Silja performs the title role in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Born in Berlin, Miss Silja was singing publicly by the age of 10 and five years later made her operatic debut at Braunschweig as Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Appearances at Stuttgart preceded her discovery by Wieland Wagner in the 1960 Bayreuth auditions. She became the focus for many of the famed director's most important productions, portraying Senta (1960), Salome (1962) and Lulu (1966); in these, as well as the principal female roles of *Fidelio*, *Elektra* and *Tannhäuser*, she has been acclaimed by audiences in her native land as well as in Geneva, Amsterdam, Barcelona, London, Vienna, Brussels and other opera centers. She has been applauded as Verdi's *Lady Macbeth*, *Médée*, *Carmen* and *Brünnhilde* in *Die Walküre*, which she sang at Japan's Osaka International Festival. Her repertoire ranges from standard operas, including *Turandot*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Les Troyens*, *Otello* and *Eugene Onegin*, to such 20th-century works as *The Fiery Angel*, *Wozzeck*, *Erwartung* and *Mabagony*. She made her American debut with the San Francisco Opera in 1968 as Salome, a role she repeated here in 1970. In 1971 she returned as Lulu, and during the 1976 Fall Season she appeared as Emilia Marty in the American premiere of *The Makropulos Case*. Her Chicago Lyric Opera debut was in 1970 as Senta, and in 1972 she bowed at the Metropolitan Opera in *Fidelio*. Miss Silja has made numerous recordings on the London, Philips and Angel labels.



## NELDA NELSON

Following her triumph in the title role of John Eaton's *The Cry of Clytaemnestra* during the 1981 Spring Opera season, dramatic mezzo-soprano Nelda Nelson makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Sonyetka in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and sings Margret in *Wozzeck*. She created the role of Clytaemnestra in her husband's opera at Indiana University and repeated it at the work's New York premiere with the Brooklyn Philharmonia. She has also portrayed Ida in Eaton's *The Lion and Androcles*, seen on national television in 1978, and Gabrielle in his *Danton and Robespierre*. Miss Nelson made her New York City Opera debut the following year as Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and in 1980 first appeared with the Houston Grand Opera as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*. She made her European opera debut as Rosina in *Il Barbiere de Siviglia* in Barga and Florence in 1973. The following year she was a winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Auditions, received a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Rome and made a concert tour of South America and Mexico. She has been heard in concert extensively in Southern California and the Middle West and in such European music capitals as Vienna, Salzburg, Munich, Heidelberg, Rome, Naples and London. Under the baton of Eve Queler she portrayed the title role in *Tancredi* with the Opera Orchestra of New York in 1978 and the Detroit Chamber Orchestra in 1979. Recent engagements include the title role in *Carmen* and Prince Orlovsky in *Die Fledermaus* with the Peoria Civic Opera.



## EVELYN DE LA ROSA

Soprano Evelyn de la Rosa, who made her San Francisco Opera debut as the Celestial Voice in *Don Carlo* in 1979 and was heard in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* last season, sings Aksinya in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. This spring she portrayed Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Spring Opera and subsequently appeared as Diana in the world premiere of Henry Mollicone's *Emperor Norton* with Brown Bag Opera. In May 1980 she created the role of Dorine in the American Opera Project's world premiere production of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe*. During the 1979 Merola Opera Program she was heard as Ännchen in *Der Freischütz* and Colombina in Wolf-Ferrari's *The Inquisitive Women*, and received both the first-place Gropper Award at the Paul Masson Mountain Winery and the Leona Gordon Lowin Award at the Grand Finals of the San Francisco Opera Auditions. The lyric soprano has appeared in Nevada Opera Guild productions as Marguerite in *Faust*, the First Lady in *The Magic Flute*, Clorinda in *Cinderella* and Marie in *The Daughter of the Regiment*. Miss de la Rosa is the Sears Roebuck Foundation Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artists-Opera Program.



# PROFILES



## SARA GANZ

Soprano Sara Ganz was first heard with the San Francisco Opera as Jano in *Jenůfa* during the 1980 season and appeared as the page in *Rigoletto* during the first Summer Festival. Her current Fall assignments are a servant in *Manon*, Sylviane in *The Merry Widow* and a Female Convict in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. As a member of the 1980 Merola Opera Program she performed the roles of Lisette in *La Rondine* at Stern Grove and Emmie in *Albert Herring* at the Paul Masson Mountain Winery, and received a Merola Award in the Grand Finals of the San Francisco Opera Auditions. Earlier this year she toured with Western Opera Theater as Adina in *The Elixir of Love* and Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, and made her Spring Opera debut as Wanda in *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*. Miss Ganz sang Clorinda in *Cinderella* and Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* with the Opera Guild of Southern California and portrayed Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* with Orange County Opera. She has been heard as Marzelline and Zerlina at the Carmel Bach Festival. A member of the 1979 Lyric Opera of Chicago School, Miss Ganz performed Laurette in Bizet's *Doctor Miracle* and Musetta in *La Bohème*.



## WILLIAM LEWIS

Versatile tenor William Lewis portrayed Kent in the American premiere of Aribert Reimann's *Lear* during the first Summer Festival and was heard last fall as Steva in *Jenůfa* and Matteo in *Arabella*. In 1979 he repeated the dual roles of Erik and the Steersman, which he created in the 1975 Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of *Der Fliegende Holländer*. Two years earlier he was heard as Boris in Janáček's *Katya Kabanova* and in 1976 sang Albert Gregor in that composer's *The Makropulos Case*. In the space of five months during the 1976-77 season, Lewis participated in three important premieres at as many internationally renowned opera houses. After creating the role of Frank Sargent in the world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose* with the San Francisco Opera in November, he sang Aron in Schönberg's *Moses und Aron* at La Scala in February and Alwa in Berg's *Lulu* at the Metropolitan Opera in March. A stalwart at the Met since his 1958 debut as Narraboth in *Salome*, Lewis has appeared there in such varied assignments as Aeneas in *Les Troyens*, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*, Arrigo in *I Vespri Siciliani*, Dmitri in *Boris Godunov*, Hermann in *Pique Dame* and the Drum Major in *Wozzeck*, in addition to the standard French and Italian repertoire. His credits include the American premieres of Stravinsky's *Tbreni* and Orff's *Antigonae* and *Prometheus*, and the New York premiere of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Lewis recently performed the title roles in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Salzburg Festival, in Florence and in Philadelphia, and *Idomeneo* in Vienna. He

recorded the title role in Strauss' first opera, *Guntram*, conducted by John Pritchard, and just released by London Records.

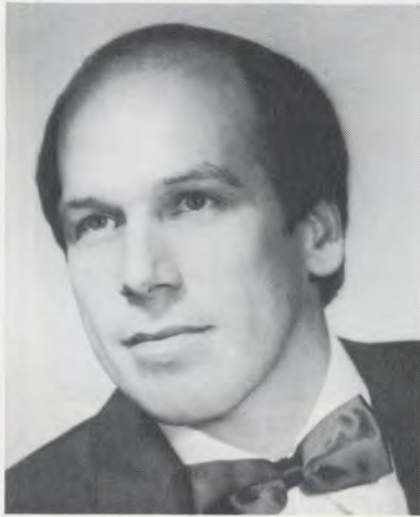


## CHESTER LUDGIN

A longtime favorite of San Francisco Opera audiences, baritone Chester Ludgin recreates his portrayal of Boris Ismailov, which he performed in the American premiere of *Katerina Ismailova* in 1964, in the original version of that work, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. He numbers three other American premieres among his many appearances with the Company: Janáček's *The Makropulos Case*, Gunther Schuller's *The Visitation* and Aribert Reimann's *Lear*, in which he sang the role of Gloucester during the first Summer Festival. In 1976 he created the role of Lyman Ward in the world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose*. Well-known for his interpretations of contemporary opera, Ludgin has participated in many world premieres, including Richard Owens' *Mary Dyer*, Abraham Ellstein's *The Golem* and Robert Ward's *The Crucible*, which he later performed with Spring Opera. Bay Area audiences will also remember his performances in the title roles of *Boris Godunov*, *Rigoletto* and *Macbeth*; Iago in *Otello*, Barnaba in *La Gioconda*, Jack Rance in *La Fanciulla del West*, and Telramund in *Lobengrin* are also among the 23 roles he has performed with the Company. Ludgin has appeared with nearly every major opera company in America and with leading symphony orchestras. Recent engagements include Horace Tabor in *The Ballad of Baby Doe* with the New York City Opera and Emile de Becque in *South Pacific* in Cincinnati.



Other musical comedy roles he has undertaken during the past summers include Hajj in *Kismet*, Tony in *The Most Happy Fella* and Charlie Anderson in *Shenandoah*.



**JACQUE TRUSSEL**

Following an acclaimed San Francisco Opera debut as Edmund in the American premiere of Reimann's *Lear* during the first Summer Festival, tenor Jacques Trussel sings Zinovy Borisovich Ismailov in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. In 1973 he portrayed Don José in the Spring Opera production of *Carmen*, a role he has recently sung with the New York City Opera and in a new English version with spoken dialogue for the Houston Grand Opera. Trussel has been heard with such other leading opera houses in this country as the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Opera Company of Boston, Dallas Civic Opera, Santa Fe Opera and Philadelphia Lyric Opera. He opened the inaugural season of Spoleto USA as Hermann in *Pique Dame*, a role for which he had won praise at the Spoleto Festival in Italy and has subsequently sung in Ottawa. He has appeared in the world premieres of Carlisle Floyd's *Bilby's Doll* and Thomas Pasatieri's *The Seagull*, and sang the title role in the American premiere of Vaughan Williams' *Hugh the Drover*. In 1980 he opened the fall season of the New York City Opera in the title role of *The Student Prince*, which he repeated this summer. Other 1980-81 highlights include Shuisky in *Boris Godunov* in Chicago, Alfredo in *La Traviata* in Fort Worth and his debuts with the opera companies of Baltimore and Washington in two new roles: Sam in *Susannah* and Avito in *L'Amore dei Tre Re*. This summer in Ottawa he sang the title role in a new production of *Idomeneo*.



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# PROFILES



## 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.



## JONATHAN GREEN

After winning critical raves for his portrayal of the title role in Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik* with Spring Opera in 1980, tenor Jonathan Green made his San Francisco Opera debut last fall as the First Priest in *The Magic Flute*, the Shepherd in *Tristan und Isolde* and Beppe in *I Pagliacci*. A frequent performer with the New York City Opera, he bowed there as Don Basilio in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 1977 and sang 12 other roles that season. Highlighting the following season were performances as Lippo Fiorentino in Weill's *Street Scene*, telecast last year over PBS, the creation of the role of Raymond Pocket in the world premiere of Dominick Argento's *Miss Haversham's Fire*, both with NYCO, and a debut with the Cincinnati Opera as the Abbé in *Adriana Lecouvreur* and as Goro in *Madama Butterfly* with the Milwaukee Symphony. The last role served for his Lake George Opera Festival debut in 1980 following an appearance in Offenbach's *Monsieur Choufleuri* at the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. Other engagements during the 1980-81 season included *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Falstaff* with the Opera Company of Philadelphia, and *Manon* and *La Belle Hélène* with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. This summer at the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. he repeated *Monsieur Choufleuri* and added Gluck's *L'Ivrogne corrigé*, which he also performed at the Spoleto Festival in Italy. Green's fall season assignments are Mitrane in *Semiramide*, the Teacher in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Vicomte Cascada in *The Merry Widow*, Don Arias in *Le Cid* and the Fool in *Wozzeck*.



## GARY HARGER

After two years of touring with Western Opera Theater in such roles as Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Eisenstein and Blind in *Die Fledermaus*, Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love* and Romeo and Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*, tenor Gary Harger made his San Francisco Opera debut this summer in *Die Meistersinger* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, and portrays the Shabby Peasant in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Pritschitsch in *The Merry Widow*, Andres in *Wozzeck* and Normanno in the student and family matinee performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor* during the Fall Season. This year with Spring Opera he was heard as Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*. Harger began his career as an apprentice with Santa Fe Opera. In New York he appeared as Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* and Captain Dick in *Naughty Marietta* for Eastern Opera Theater. Other New York credits include Belmonte in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* for the Bronx Opera, Pedrillo in the same work for the Chautauqua Opera Association, and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* for the Brooklyn Lyric Opera. Originally trained as a musical theater performer, he has starred in numerous musicals across the country and was featured in the original cast of the Tony Award-winning musical *Shenandoah*.





### CARL GLAUM

Bass Carl Glaum appears in three roles this fall: l'hotelier in *Manon*, a guard and a millhand in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and Don Alonzo in *Le Cid*. A member of the 1981 Western Opera Theater company, he sang Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love* and Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*, and later made his initial appearance with the San Francisco Opera as Hans Schwarz in *Die Meistersinger* and Marullo in *Rigoletto* during the first Summer Festival this year. He was also heard in the Spring Opera productions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Il Ballo delle Ingrate*. Glaum began his career with the Illinois Opera Theater and the Lake George Opera Festival in 1971. He made his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in the 1974 production of *Peter Grimes* and remained a member of that company for six years. In 1978 he portrayed the title role in the Chicago Opera Theater's production of *Don Pasquale* and was a resident artist with the Minnesota Opera Company, where he sang Don Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro* and created the role of Colonel Blagden in the world premiere of Robert Ward's *Claudia LeGare*. With Skylight Comic Opera of Milwaukee he recently performed in Donizetti's *Viva la Mamma*, Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* and Blitzstein's *Regina*. Last June Glaum sang the role of Morton in the Midwest premiere of Thea Musgraves's *Mary, Queen of Scots*.



### ERIC HALFVARSON

Bass-baritone Eric Halfvarson, who sings Oroe in *Semiramide*, the Inspector in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and the Comte de Gormas in *Le Cid*, made his first appearance with the San Francisco Opera this summer as Hermann Ortel in *Die Meistersinger* and Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*. Since joining the Houston Grand Opera in 1976, he has been heard there in productions of *Arabella*, *Norma*, *Aida*, *Tosca*, *Jenufa*, *Werther*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Die Meistersinger*. During the 1980-81 season he appeared with that company as Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* and Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*. Other recent engagements include the Comendatore in *Don Giovanni* in Birmingham, il Principe in *Adriana Lecouvreur* in New Orleans, the Grand Inquisitor in *L'Africana* and Tom in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Caracas, and his New York debut as the Ghost in Thomas' *Hamlet* at Carnegie Hall. Halfvarson made his professional debut at the 1973 Lake George Festival in *The Barber of Seville* and has since been heard there in *The Magic Flute*, *Manon*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Summer and Smoke* and *Don Giovanni*. In 1979 he made his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*.



### KEVIN LANGAN

Following a variety of roles during his debut season with the San Francisco 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*.

continued on p. 56



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# Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

(in Russian)

*Conductor*

Calvin Simmons

*Stage Director*

Gerald Freedman

*Set Designers*

Wolfram Skalicki  
Thomas Munn

*Lighting Designer*

Thomas Munn

*Sound Designer*

Roger Gans

*Chorus Director*

Richard Bradshaw

*Musical Preparation*

Susanna Lemberskaya  
Susan Webb

*Russian Language Preparation*

Susanna Lemberskaya

*Prompter*

Susan Webb

*Assistant Stage Director*

Preston Lovell Terry

*Stage Manager*

Gretchen Mueller

*Scenery constructed in*

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*Miss Silja's costumes designed by*

Lawrence Casey

*Organ courtesy of*

Baldwin Organs

*First performance: Leningrad, January 22, 1934*

(Revised version, *Katerina Ismailova*, received its American premiere at San Francisco Opera, 1964)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 AT 7:30

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11 AT 2:00

*Lady Macbeth* radio broadcast on October 17 at 11 A.M.

*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.*

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

CAST

<i>Katerina Lvovna Ismailova, wife of Zinovy Borisovich</i>	Anja Silja
<i>Boris Timofeyevich Ismailov, a merchant</i>	Chester Ludgin
<i>Zinovy Borisovich Ismailov, his son</i>	Jacque Trussel
<i>Millhand</i>	Carl Glaum
<i>Sergei, a new hired hand</i>	William Lewis
<i>Aksinya, a maid</i>	Evelyn de la Rosa
<i>Coachman</i>	Colenton Freeman*
<i>Village Drunk</i>	Gary Harger
<i>Porter</i>	Thomas Woodman
<i>Shop Man</i>	Timothy Noble
<i>Three Workmen</i>	Daniel Entriiken
	Robert Waterbury
	Karl Saarni
<i>Priest</i>	Gregory Stapp
<i>Police Inspector</i>	Eric Halfvarson
<i>Policeman</i>	Winther Andersen
<i>Local Nihilist</i>	Jonathan Green
<i>Old Convict</i>	Kevin Langan
<i>Guard</i>	Carl Glaum
<i>Sonyetka, a convict</i>	Nelda Nelson*
<i>Female Convict</i>	Sara Ganz
<i>Officer</i>	Timothy Noble
<i>Drunken Guest</i>	Colenton Freeman

*Workpeople, wedding guests, policemen,  
male and female convicts, soldiers*

\*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: Mid-19th century Russia

ACT I	Scene 1	The bedroom of Katerina Lvovna
	Scene 2	The courtyard of the Ismailovs' house
	Scene 3	The millyard of the Ismailovs' house
	Scene 4	The bedroom of Katerina Lvovna

INTERMISSION

ACT II	Scene 1	Night. The courtyard of the Ismailovs' house, some days later
	Scene 2	The bedroom of Katerina Lvovna
	Scene 3	The courtyard, near the cellar entrance
	Scene 4	The district police station
	Scene 5	The wedding party

INTERMISSION

ACT III	On the banks of a river on the way to Siberia	
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# SYNOPSIS

## Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

Time and Place: 1865, Russia

### ACT I

SCENE 1 — Katerina, the wife of the rich merchant Zinovy Ismailov, is bored and depressed sitting around the house with nothing to do. Her father-in-law, Boris, berates her for not producing a child after four years of marriage.

SCENE 2 — Zinovy must go away on business, and Boris makes Katerina take an oath on an icon that she will be faithful to her husband.

SCENE 3 — The servants have cornered the buxom cook Aksinya and are amusing themselves by making ribald comments while pawing her all over. Katerina puts an end to their fun and stands up for womanhood in general. When she is introduced to the handsome new worker, Sergei, who has the reputation of being a great womanizer, he squeezes her hand with such force that she pushes him away violently. He then playfully challenges her to a wrestling match and throws her to the ground, falling on top of her. Her father-in-law enters and threatens to tell his son everything.

SCENE 4 — Katerina feels lonely as she prepares for bed. Sergei knocks at her door on the pretext of borrowing a book. He recalls their fun wrestling and proposes a rematch. She protests, but when he seizes her in an embrace, her resistance slowly subsides and they fall into each other's arms.

### ACT II

SCENE 1 — Unable to sleep, Boris prowls the millyard. He sees a light in Katerina's window and catches her saying goodbye to Sergei, who has been her lover for a week. Boris seizes Sergei and calls in the other workers. Punishing the "thief," he whips Sergei until he draws blood. Katerina rushes to defend Sergei, who is subsequently locked in the storeroom. When Boris demands that Katerina fix him some of his favorite mushrooms, she puts rat poison in them. A priest is summoned as Boris dies in terrible spasms, declaring that his death is not natural and pointing to his daughter-in-law, but the crowd thinks he is raving in his delirium.

SCENE 2 — After making love, Katerina promises Sergei that she will make him a merchant and marry him. As he falls asleep, she sees the ghost of her father-in-law, who accuses her of murder and curses her forever. Katerina's husband returns and interrupts the love idyll. Sergei hides, but Zinovy spies his belt. He accuses Katerina of infidelity and begins beating her. As Zinovy goes to call the villagers, Katerina pushes him to the ground and, with Sergei's help, strangles him. They hide his body in the cellar.

SCENE 3 — A drunken peasant has seen Katerina standing by the cellar door and breaks in to taste the vodka he believes is stashed there. He smells a terrible odor and discovers Zinovy's rotting body.

SCENE 4 — At the police station the policemen complain of their lot: no graft and nothing to do. They are annoyed at not having been invited to the wedding of Katerina and Sergei. As they are taunting the local teacher about his nihilism, the peasant staggers in and announces he has found a corpse in the Ismailov cellar. The police are delighted at this pretext to attend the wedding feast.

SCENE 5 — The guests toast the bridal pair. Katerina notices that the lock to the cellar has been broken and, panic stricken, suggests to Sergei that they flee. But it is too late. As the policemen arrive, Katerina holds out her hands to be handcuffed and begs forgiveness of Sergei, who is led away with her.

### ACT III

SCENE 1 — A column of convicts, among them Katerina and Sergei, are being marched through Siberia. They stop for the night on the banks of a river. By bribing a sentry, Katerina is able to approach Sergei on the men's side of the compound. Tired of her, he accuses her of ruining his life. He moves toward a pretty young convict, Sonyetka, who asks him to prove his avowal of love by getting her some new woolen stockings. He cajoles Katerina into giving him hers to protect his legs bruised by the iron fetters. When she sees him giving them to Sonyetka, she tries to rush at him, but is stopped by the women convicts, who jeer at her for her hopeless passion. In despair, Katerina pushes Sonyetka off the bridge and then throws herself into the dark waters of the rushing river and drowns.





Anja Silja



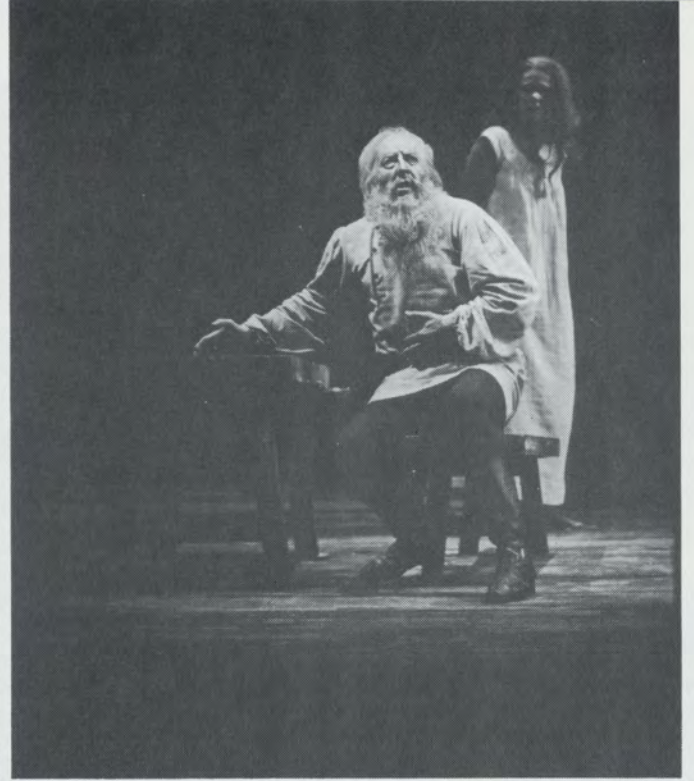
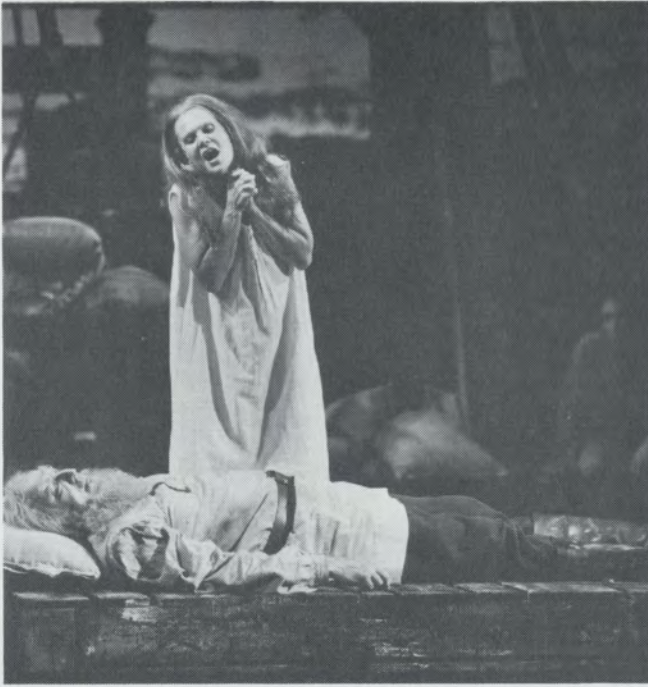
Anja Silja, William Lewis

# Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

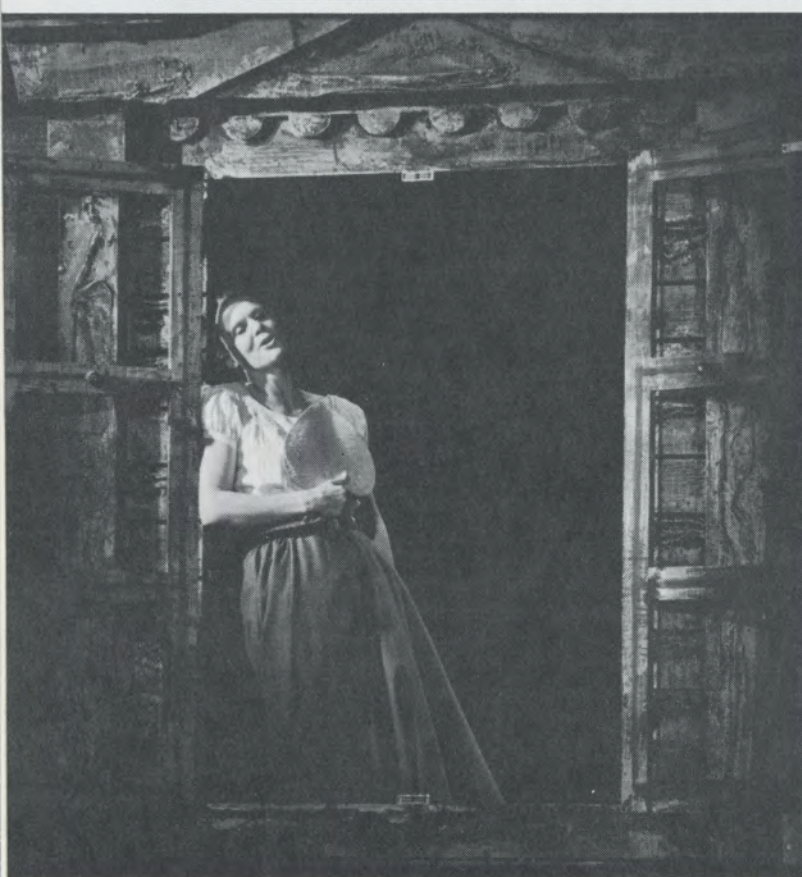
Photos taken in rehearsal by David Powers



Anja Silja, Chester Ludgin



Chester Ludgin, Anja Silja



Anja Silja



Nelda Nelson, William Lewis



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William Lewis



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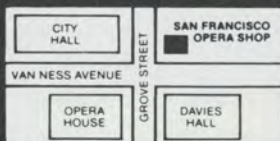
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# PROFILES

continued from p. 47



### TIMOTHY NOBLE

Following his debut with Spring Opera Theater as Agamemnon in *The Cry of Clytaemnestra*, a role he created at the work's world premiere at Indiana University, baritone Timothy Noble made his first appearance with the San Francisco Opera as Albany in Reimann's *Lear*, which inaugurated the first Summer Festival. He returns this fall as a sergeant in *Manon*, a shop man and an officer in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Morales in *Carmen* and the King of Spain in *Le Cid*. As a student at Indiana University, Noble also appeared as Michele in *Il Tabarro*, the four villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Robespierre in John Eaton's *Danton and Robespierre*, and in the title roles of *Rigoletto* and *Don Giovanni*. He has sung Schaunard in *La Bohème* with the Indianapolis Opera and has been heard with the symphony orchestras of Indianapolis, Atlanta and St. Louis. Noble recently performed Germont in *La Traviata* with Colorado Summer Opera and was soloist in a Rodgers and Hammerstein concert with the Chicago Symphony at the Ravinia Festival. He makes his European debut in March 1982 as Miller in Verdi's *Luisa Miller* in Nancy, France.



### GREGORY STAPP

Following appearances as Hans Foltz in *Die Meistersinger* and an Usher in *Rigoletto* during San Francisco Opera's first Summer Festival, bass Gregory Stapp sings five roles during the Fall Season: the Ghost of Nino in *Semiramide*, the Priest in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, St. James in *Le Cid*, Raimondo in the student and family matinee performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor* and a Gypsy in *Il Trovatore*. He made his company debut last fall in *The Magic Flute* and *La Traviata*, and was heard with Spring Opera this year as Pluto in *Il Ballo delle Ingrate*, Ajax in *The Cry of Clytaemnestra* and Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*. A graduate of the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, he has appeared with both the symphony orchestra and opera company of that city. In 1980 he sang the role of Charlemagne in the American premiere of Schubert's *Fierrabras* with the AVA Opera Theater. In April of this year he appeared as soloist in an evening of opera excerpts with the Los Angeles Chorale conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler. A prize winner in several important vocal competitions in recent years, Stapp is in his second year as the Atlantic Richfield Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artists-Opera Program.





### THOMAS WOODMAN

Baritone Thomas Woodman, recently heard in *Die Meistersinger* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, sings four roles this fall: the Porter in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Raoul de St. Briche in *The Merry Widow*, the Moorish Envoy in *Le Cid* and the Second Traveling Artisan in *Wozzeck*. He made his Company debut last fall in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *I Pagliacci* and portrayed Prince Paul in the 1981 Spring Opera production of *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*. Woodman sang the title role in the world premiere of Henry Mollicone's *Emperor Norton* in a series of Brown Bag Opera performances given in San Francisco this spring. As a member of the 1980 Merola Opera Program, he was heard as the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* and as Mr. Gedge in *Albert Herring*, and received a Merola Award in the Grand Finals of the San Francisco Opera Auditions. The young baritone made his professional debut with the Connecticut Opera Association in *La Traviata* and *Madama Butterfly*. In 1979 he appeared with Central City Opera in *The Barber of Seville*, *The Merry Widow*, Mollicone's *The Face on the Barroom Floor*, Cadman's *Shanewis* and Susa's *Black River*. A 1980 Metropolitan Opera Council Finalist, Woodman is an Atlantic Richfield Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artists-Opera Program.



### CALVIN SIMMONS

Calvin Simmons, music director of the Oakland Symphony, conducts *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. He began his musical career with the San Francisco Boys Chorus at the age of nine and first conducted the chorus when he was 11. He later studied at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and in 1970 became assistant conductor of the Merola Opera Program. Two years later he was named assistant conductor of the San Francisco Opera, a post he held for three years. During that time he received the Kurt Herbert Adler Award and also served as associate music director of Western Opera Theater. In 1974 he joined the conducting staff of the Glyndebourne Festival and for four years was their youngest and only American conductor. He served as music director of the 1977 Ojai Music Festival, and from 1975 to 1978 was assistant conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and music director of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra. During the 1978-79 season he made his debuts with San Francisco Opera conducting *La Bohème*; the Metropolitan Opera leading *Hansel and Gretel*, and the San Diego Opera, for which he conducted the world premiere of Menotti's *La Loca* starring Beverly Sills. Mo. Simmons became the music director of the Oakland Symphony in 1979, and has guest-conducted the Houston Symphony, American Symphony, National Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Minnesota Orchestra and the Buffalo Philharmonic. This last summer he conducted at the Mostly Mozart Festival and the Toronto Symphony.

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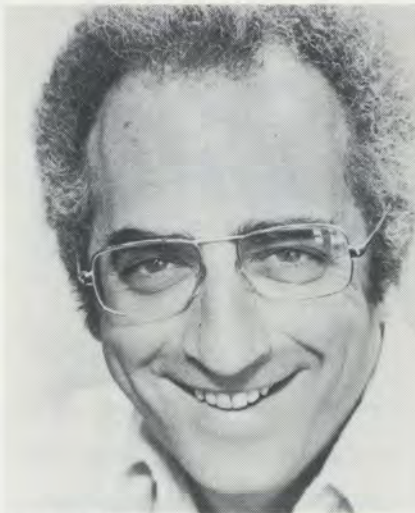
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# PROFILES



## GERALD FREEDMAN

Noted stage director Gerald Freedman returns to the San Francisco Opera for the first time since the 1976 world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose* to direct Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. He received international recognition for his stagings of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, Britten's *Death in Venice* and John Eaton's *The Cry of Clytemnestra*, presented on a double bill with Monteverdi's *Il Ballo delle Ingrate*, for Spring Opera. Freedman directed the world premiere of Ginastera's *Beatriz Cenci* to open the Kennedy Center. Other opera credits include *Die Fledermaus*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and *Idomeneo* for New York City Opera, and *Jenufa* and a synthesis of Molière's *The Would-Be Gentleman* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* — as it was originally conceived by Strauss and Hofmannsthal — for the American Opera Center. He has served as co-artistic director with John Houseman of the Acting Company, for which he directed *The Robber Bridegroom*, *The School for Scandal*, *Love's Labors Lost*, *Camino Real* and *The Italian Straw Hat*. As artistic director of the New York Shakespeare Festival and the American Shakespeare Theater, he was responsible for many stagings of the Bard, and earned an Obie for *The Taming of the Shrew*. Other theater credits include the original Off-Broadway production of *Hair* and the recent revival of *West Side Story*. Freedman directed the award-winning *Colette* with Zoe Caldwell and, for television, Anouilh's *Antigone* with Geneviève Bujold.

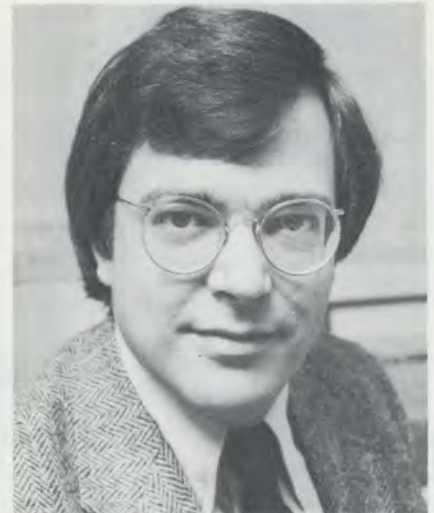


## WOLFRAM SKALICKI

Wolfram Skalicki designed the sets for *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, originally seen here in 1964 as *Katerina Ismailova*. His association with the San Francisco Opera began in 1962, with his designs for *The Rake's Progress*. Other Skalicki settings seen here include *Pique Dame* (1963); *Fidelio* and *Parsifal* (1964); *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1965); *Tannhäuser* and *Les Troyens* (1966); *Faust* and *Das Rheingold* (1967); *Christopher Columbus*, *Royal Palace*, *Il Trovatore* and *Die Walküre* (1968); *Aida* and *Götterdämmerung* (1969); *Siegfried* (1970); *L'Africaine* (1972); and *Andrea Chenier* (1975). A native of Vienna, the stage designer launched his career with the sets and costumes for a production of *Così fan tutte* at the Vienna Academy of Music, and subsequently became associated with the Vienna Burgtheater. With his wife, costume designer Amrei Skalicki, he has collaborated on productions in Vienna, Lyons, Marseilles, Strasbourg, Dortmund, Munich and Geneva, among other cities. His designs have been exhibited in Vienna, San Francisco and New York. Recent productions designed by Skalicki include *Pique Dame* at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; *Lulu* with the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto; *Giovanna d'Arco* in San Diego; *Boris Godunov* in Dortmund; and *Tristan und Isolde* in Graz and Innsbruck.

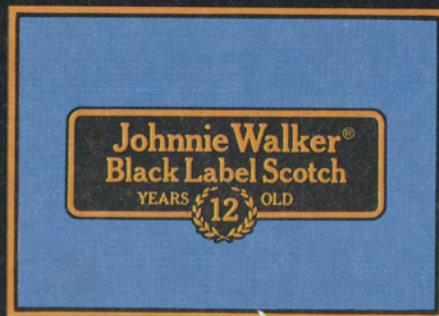
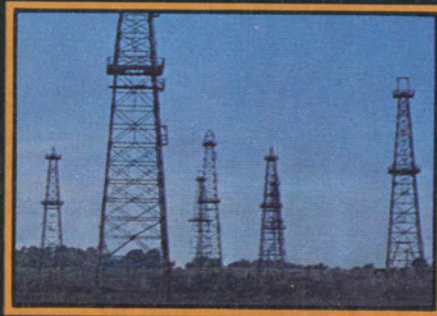
## THOMAS MUNN

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.





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Dmitri Shostakovich, portrait by P. Gartmann.

# Dmitri Shostakovich: The Career of a Soviet Composer

Though the spirit of protest resonates through his work, Dmitri Shostakovich was the only major Russian composer to write entirely under the Soviet system.

By WALTER FRISCH

When Dmitri Shostakovich died in 1975 at the age of 69, he left one of the largest and most varied musical legacies of this century. His works included two operas, four ballets, 36 film scores, 15 symphonies, six concertos, and 15 string quartets as well as

numerous other chamber, orchestral and vocal pieces. Although he twice fell into official disfavor (in 1936 and 1948) and saw his music harshly condemned, Shostakovich nevertheless maintained throughout his career an international reputation as one of the leading composers of the Soviet Union.

Born in St. Petersburg (later Leningrad) in 1906, Shostakovich revealed musical talent at an early age and was given piano lessons by his mother, herself an accomplished musician. In 1919 he entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory, Russia's most prestigious musical academy, where Rimsky-Korsakov had taught



and where Stravinsky and Prokofiev — with Shostakovich, the giants of 20th-century Russian music — had studied. Shostakovich received instruction in composition from Maximilian Steinberg, Rimsky's son-in-law, and in piano from Leonid Nikolaiev.

But his real mentor, and the most powerful influence on his musical development, was the conservatory's director, Alexander Glazunov. Although he found Glazunov's music too conservative, Shostakovich had an enormous respect for the elder man's musicianship and musical taste, and for the selflessness Glazunov displayed on behalf of his students.

From Glazunov he learned to love the music of the Renaissance masters, Josquin, Lassus and Palestrina. In his recently released supposed memoirs, entitled *Testimony* and edited by Simon Volkov, Shostakovich reports that Glazunov could reduce the most complicated orchestral scores at sight on the piano, often playing with a cigar in between the third and fourth fingers of his right hand, yet never

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### Shostakovich twice fell into official disfavor.

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missing a note. Glazunov was also a heavy drinker, and in the days following the revolution of 1917, when liquor was scarce, he relied for his supply on Shostakovich's father, an official in the Institute of Standards.

Many of Shostakovich's early works were written for his own instrument, the piano. But the first composition to have a wide impact was his First Symphony of 1926. Here Shostakovich revealed a flair for colorful orchestration, as well as the musical style he was to employ throughout his career. The piece is rhythmically vital and extremely free in its treatment of dissonance, yet retains a firm basis in traditional tonality. Especially in the dance-like portions, one also finds the satirical tone that is so characteristic of his music.

During the next few years Shostakovich involved himself in a number of dramatic projects. His first opera, *The Nose* (1927-28, produced in 1930), is based on a short story by

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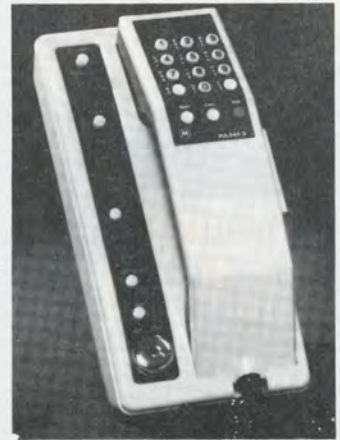
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Composer Alexander Glazunov, Shostakovich's teacher at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.

Gogol in which a nose separates itself from its owner, an army major, and parades about town in uniform, until it is driven to death by hostile townspeople. In 1929 Shostakovich collaborated with his good friend, the director Meyerhold, on the production of a comedy by Mayakovsky, *The Bedbug*. These stage scores show the biting sardonic side of Shostakovich's musical personality.

In 1930 Shostakovich embarked on his most ambitious dramatic effort, the opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, based on a story by Leskov. The work was produced in Moscow and Leningrad in 1934, and soon played before audiences in London, New York, Stockholm, Zurich and Copenhagen. It made Shostakovich famous around the

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**He was stunned by the  
criticism in *Pravda*.**

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world. But it also precipitated the first crisis of his professional life.

On January 28, 1936, in the official Soviet newspaper, *Pravda*, appeared an editorial entitled "Chaos Instead of Music." It denounced *Lady Macbeth* as a "deliberately discordant, confused stream of sounds" and called the score "fidgety, screaming, neurotic." A few days later came a second article, this one attacking Shostakovich's ballet, *The Clear Stream*.

Shostakovich was stunned by the criticism, and especially by the echoes and support it received from composers and critics he had felt to be his

friends. But, as he explains in *Testimony*, many artists in Stalin's time were only too quick to point the finger at a fellow artist if it meant they themselves might escape disgrace and possible extermination.

At the time of the attack, Shostakovich was working on his Fourth Symphony, a work for large orchestra. He completed it, but withdrew it during rehearsal. And for the next 18 months he produced little music.

Then, in November 1937, he broke the silence with the Fifth Symphony, which was called "the creative reply of a Soviet artist to justified criticism." He had accepted the official rebuke — publicly, at any rate — and explained that "the theme of my symphony is the stabilization of a personality." In his memoirs, however, he admits that the symphony was also a personal, deeply felt tribute to the many Soviet citizens who had suffered under Stalin's reign of terror.

The Fifth Symphony was triumphantly received, and it immediately reinstated Shostakovich as the leading young Soviet composer. It is still his most popular work today. The score tempers some of the extreme elements of style that the authorities found disturbing, but in no way compromises Shostakovich's own individual musical voice. As one commentator has observed, in this symphony "all his best qualities, meditation, humor and grandeur, blend in perfect balance and self-fulfillment."

Shostakovich now focused his energies on instrumental music, aware that the safest medium for his ideas was music without a text or plot. In 1938 he produced the first of what



were to be 15 works in that purest of instrumental forms, the string quartet. His First Quartet uses the medium comfortably and naturally. Shostakovich did not, like his contemporary Bartók, seek to extend the normal capabilities of the four instruments. Another important chamber work of this period, the Piano Quintet (1940), received the Stalin Prize — evidence of Shostakovich's high standing among Soviet officials.

In 1941 Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. While Leningrad was under attack, Shostakovich composed his Seventh Symphony and dedicated it to the brave inhabitants of the city. The work, whose different movements programmatically evoke aspects of war, was taken up in the U.S.S.R. and around the world as a symbol of resistance to the Nazi aggressors.

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**The Fifth Symphony  
reinstated him as the leading  
young Soviet composer.**

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The leading conductors of the United States — including Toscanini, Stokowski, Ormandy, Rodzinsky and Koussevitsky — all vied for performance rights. Toscanini won out, and a microfilm copy of the score was flown to him from the Soviet Union. On July 19, 1942, he performed the Seventh Symphony with the NBC Symphony Orchestra before a radio audience of millions. At the same time (July 20) Shostakovich appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine: he was depicted wearing a helmet, with a grim, defiant expression behind his characteristic round eyeglasses. He had become an international hero.

After World War II, Stalin again began to tighten ideological and cultural controls within the Soviet Union. He launched a campaign against "cosmopolitanism" and "kowtowing to the West." A series of stern Communist Party resolutions attacked some of the most prominent artists in the country. Among the first were the renowned poet Anna Akhmatova and the writer Mikhail Zoshchenko, the latter a close friend of Shostakovich.

On February 10, 1948, came the official statement that initiated the second crisis of Shostakovich's career. Ostensibly attacking an opera by Vano Muradeli, its real targets were the three most famous Soviet composers, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Khachaturian, "in whose work formalist perversions and antidemocratic tendencies, alien to the Soviet people and its artistic tastes, were particularly glaring."



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The young composer with Vladimir Mayakovsky (standing), for whose comedy, *The Bedbug*, he wrote the musical score, and director Vsevolod Meyerhold (seated right).

This time Shostakovich was not surprised at being among the condemned. In *Testimony* he explains that Titon Khrennikov, head of the Composers' Union, which had engineered the attack, was jealous of the worldwide success achieved by Shostakovich's wartime symphonies, the

**He did not relinquish his private, personal voice.**

Seventh and Eighth. Even Stalin was envious of Shostakovich's fame. Furthermore, Stalin had expected that the Ninth Symphony would be a grand and glorious tribute to him and an apotheosis of the war victory — a sort of latter-day Beethoven's Ninth. When the Ninth, premiered in 1945, turned

out to be one of Shostakovich's most exuberant, light-hearted works, Stalin was enraged — in the composer's words, "deeply offended because there was no chorus, no soloists. And no apotheosis. There wasn't even a paltry dedication. It was just music . . ."

Despite his official disgrace, Shostakovich received a personal telephone call from Stalin in 1949, asking him to represent the U.S.S.R. at the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace in New York. He agreed to go — one did not disobey Stalin without serious, possibly fatal, consequences — and in New York played the scherzo from his Fifth Symphony on the piano before an enthusiastic crowd of 30,000. But he remained frightened about his status back home. "People say it must have been an interesting trip . . . I'm



smiling in the photographs," Shostakovich writes. "That was the smile of a condemned man. I answered all the idiotic questions [from the press] in a daze, and thought, 'When I get back, it's over for me.'"

Shostakovich survived, however, and during these difficult years he produced a large number of highly acclaimed film scores in an accessible, non-controversial style.

After Stalin's death in 1953, cultural restrictions began to loosen. Shostakovich released several works he had withheld after the 1948 decree, including the song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry*, which he had feared would be censored in the anti-Semitic climate of Stalin's regime.

In 1953, eight years after his ill-fated Ninth Symphony, Shostakovich produced his Tenth. Many commentators consider the spacious first movement his finest symphonic creation. "It is the lyricist's perfect answer to the problem of extended form," one has said.

During the more liberal years of Khrushchev's leadership, Shostakovich was restored to official favor. In 1958 a new party resolution removed from him the catchall pejorative label "formalist." The Eleventh (1957) and Twelfth (1961) Symphonies typify

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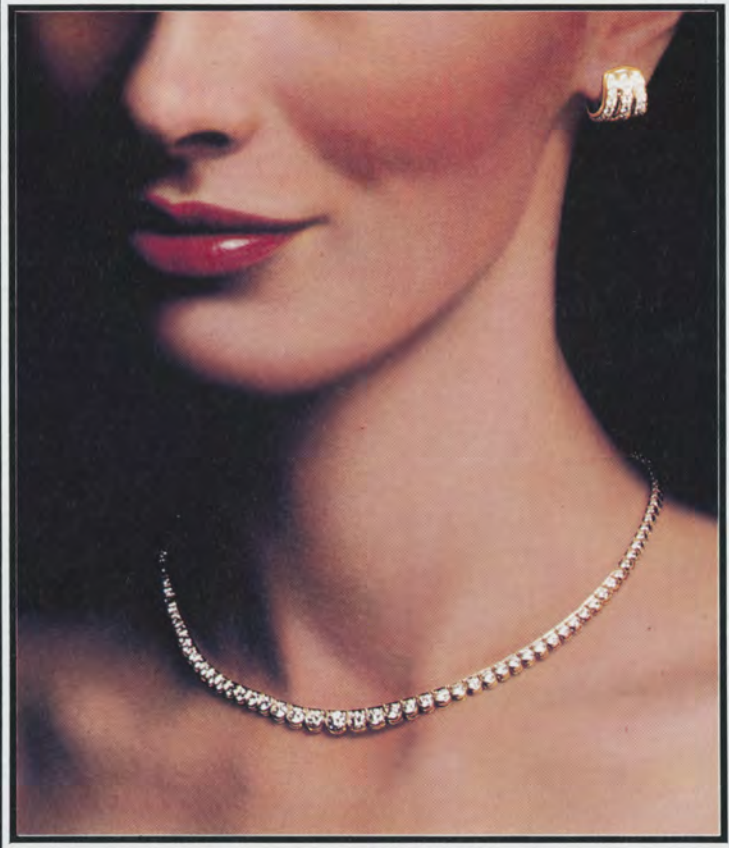
**In 1942 Shostakovich appeared on the cover of *Time* . . . an international hero.**

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Shostakovich's public, more popular style of this period. They constitute a diptych commemorating the Russian Revolution: the first is subtitled "The Year 1905"; the second "The Year 1917."

But Shostakovich did not relinquish his private, personal voice, which speaks most eloquently in the autobiographical Eighth Quartet of 1961. The main theme, which appears in all the movements, is based on the initial letters of the composer's first and last names, D-S-C-H, translated into musical notation as D-E♭-C-B♭ (In European countries E♭ is generally represented as Es, pronounced "S," and B♭ is written as H.) Consisting of an uninterrupted five-movement sequence, the quartet is filled with direct musical references to Shostakovich's earlier works, including the First and Fifth Symphonies and *Lady Macbeth*.

Shostakovich's Thirteenth Symphony (1962), the first in which he used the human voice, was his boldest statement in many years. It is a setting, for bass soloist and chorus, of five poems by the liberal writer Yevgeny Yevtushenko. The first



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movement, "Babi Yar," has as its subject a famous place where Jews were massacred by Germans during World War II, and also makes reference to anti-Semitism in Russia. Because of this the symphony was sharply attacked after its premiere. The score was withdrawn and was released again only after Yevtushenko revised the poem.

During the mid-1960s Shostakovich's health, never very sound, began to decline rapidly; he developed heart disease and arthritis. In his rare public appearances he was accompanied by his young third wife, Irina, who had to help him sit and stand. Shostakovich's music became increasingly occupied with the theme of death, especially the Fourteenth Symphony (1969), which consists of settings of 11 dark poems by European authors, including Apollinaire, Lorca and Rilke. Two solo singers are accompanied by an orchestra reduced to chamber proportions, consisting only of 19 strings and percussion.

Shostakovich admitted that working on this somber piece had a positive effect on his spirits. "I'm all for a

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**One of the most eloquent conservatives of the 20th century.**

---

rational approach to death," he confesses in his memoirs. "We can't allow the fear of death to creep up on us unexpectedly. We have to make the fear familiar, and one way is to write about it."

During his later years Shostakovich received many honors and awards from around the world, including honorary doctorates from Trinity College, Dublin, and Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. To accept the latter award, Shostakovich made his second and final trip to the United States in the spring of 1973.

Shostakovich's last completed composition was a viola sonata (1975); the rich color of the instrument lends the work an appropriate air of autumnal serenity. As one critic has recently observed, "It is a poignant farewell, resigned but not sad."

Resigned — that term might serve to summarize the whole of Shostakovich's career. Despite the abuse he endured, and despite the spirit of protest that resonates in much of his work, he accepted the fate of an artist in a society that dictates and enforces artistic standards. Of the major Russian composers of this century, includ-



# TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE



FRIMAN SHOSTAKOVICH

Composing in a Russian style, Shostakovich's music is a blend of the old and the new.

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Shostakovich on the cover of *Time*, July 20, 1942.

ing Prokofiev and Stravinsky, Shostakovich was the only one to compose entirely under the Soviet system. As his memoirs reveal, he suffered greatly and watched many fellow artists fall victim to Stalin's ruthless purges. Yet he endured and always upheld his duties as a Soviet citizen. He served as a deputy member of the Supreme Soviet, and was a director of the Composers' Union from 1939 to 1948.

Shostakovich was also a devoted teacher, serving on the faculties of the Leningrad and Moscow Conservatories. Like his own teacher, Glazunov, he worked energetically on behalf of his most talented students. When one of his favorite pupils, a composer named Fleishman, died in service during World War II, Shostakovich completed, scored, and organized a production of Fleishman's opera, *Rothschild's Violin*.

As a composer, Shostakovich ranks as one of the most eloquent conservatives of the 20th century. Although he occasionally flirted with the more progressive techniques of his day, such as the 12-tone method, his music remained rooted in a tonal idiom. He composed rapidly and with great facility. He would conceive whole pieces in his head — always away from the piano — and would write them out without many revisions or corrections. Yet his musical craftsmanship remains at a high level, even in his least interesting works.

Like his countryman Stravinsky, Shostakovich felt it was necessary to compose constantly, and not simply wait for inspiration to strike. If his creative juices were not flowing, he would keep in shape by arranging or adapting the works of other composers, especially his favorite, Mus-

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The three great Soviet composers: Prokofiev (left), Shostakovich and Khatchaturian.

sorgsky. During the dark years following the attack on *Lady Macbeth*, Shostakovich spent many hours lovingly orchestrating *Boris Godunov*, a score he felt had not been sufficiently realized either by the composer or by Rimsky-Korsakov. Shostakovich knew the opera by heart, and usually worked without Mussorgsky's score before him.

It is revealing that Shostakovich identified strongly with Mussorgsky's character and artistic personality. "Mussorgsky disregarded the critics, and listened to his own inner voice," Shostakovich is quoted in *Testimony*. "When he was criticized, he kept

quiet, nodded, almost agreed. But the agreement lasted only as far as the door. Once he was inside, he took up his work again, like one of those dolls you can't knock down."

Like Mussorgsky, Shostakovich retained his own artistic integrity, despite political and ideological pressures. Although much of his life was spent in unhappiness, frustration and physical infirmity, his music remains a testament to his remarkably sound spiritual and artistic health. ■

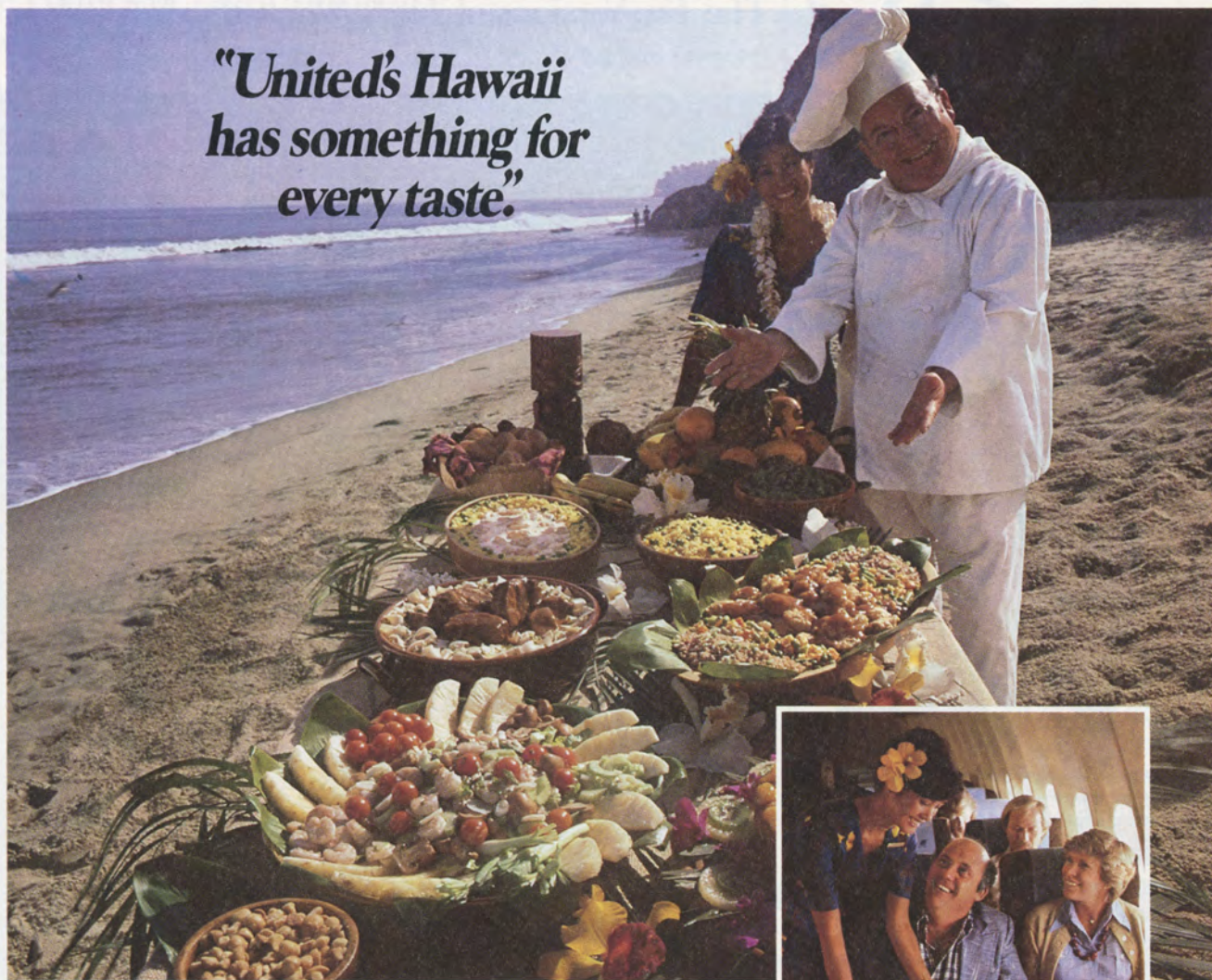
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Shostakovich instructs a class in composition at the Moscow Conservatory in 1943.



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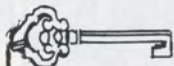




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## The Two Versions of *Lady Macbeth*

continued from p.41



PETE PETERS PHOTO

Jon Vickers and Marie Collier as Sergei and Katerina in the bedroom scene from *Katerina Ismailova* (1964).

man was born?" The individual tragedy has been swallowed up in the collective one, but here the composer surely speaks, as clearly as he conceivably could, for himself. Dramatically corny? Perhaps. But I cannot help wondering whether we have the right

### Musical changes introduced for the sake of continuity

to ignore a protest that Shostakovich had the courage to make.

So where are we with this question of versions? As with so many operas, my own preference would be

for a combination, consisting as far as possible of the musical readings of the later version (with the one major exception of the Katerina/Sergei episode) but restoring the sexually explicit language of the original libretto. Whether any opera house is likely to go to the trouble of making such a version is doubtful, but at least San Francisco has done the next best thing for its patrons, giving them a chance to hear and compare both versions. ■

JEREMY NOBLE teaches musicology at the State University of New York at Buffalo and for many years was a music critic in London.



# The Politics of *Lady Macbeth*

continued from p.34

Interestingly, most American critics got it backwards. They criticized *Lady Macbeth* for being too "leftist." William Henderson of *The New York Sun* stated that "Shostakovich is without doubt the foremost composer of pornographic music in the history of the opera," implying that Soviet composers are by nature pornographic. "So little was Socialist Realism understood at first," Gerald Abraham has rightly concluded, "that *Lady Macbeth* was accepted as an embodiment of it."

Nor had Stalin's men finished with Shostakovich. Two weeks later *Pravda* published yet another unsigned article attacking him, this time for his ballet, *The Clear Stream*, which described life on a mythical collective farm in the Caucasus. The music was deemed inappropriate for the setting. The continuation of the composer's hitherto productive career was suddenly cast into doubt.

Until the American firm Harper & Row published *Testimony*, the supposed memoirs of Shostakovich, two years ago we didn't really know how Shostakovich felt about the *Lady Macbeth* scandal. He was always reticent in his dealings with the press, and

avoided political remarks on his few trips to the West. Even the validity of *Testimony*, which was compiled from Shostakovich's conversations in Russia with a Soviet musicologist and editor, Solomon Volkov, who later emigrated and now lives in New York, has been brought seriously into question. Volkov has been unable to explain entirely his mysterious relationship with the composer, and several scholars have pointed out sections of the book which are nearly identical to other

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## An unsigned article appeared in *Pravda* attacking Shostakovich and his opera.

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previously published articles on Shostakovich. But neither has it been proven that the memoirs are definitely falsified, and there is no denying that they are fascinating reading. A number of my musician friends in the Soviet Union, including some who knew Shostakovich personally, while they have some questions about how Volkov obtained his information, told me they

clearly recognized the composer's voice in *Testimony*.

With such a caveat in mind, this is how Shostakovich describes the *Lady Macbeth* scandal:

Two editorial attacks in *Pravda* in 10 days — that was too much for one man. Now everyone knew for sure that I would be destroyed. And the anticipation of that noteworthy event — at least for me — has never left me.

From that moment on I was stuck with the label "enemy of the people," and I don't need to explain what the label meant in those days. Everyone still remembers that.

I was called an enemy of the people quietly and out loud and from podiums. One paper made the following announcement of my concert: "Today there is a concert by enemy of the people Shostakovich." Or take this example: In those years my name wasn't welcomed enthusiastically in print unless, of course, it was used in a discussion about struggles against formalism. But it happened that I

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was assigned to review a production of *Otello* in Leningrad, and in my review I did not say ecstatic things about the tenor Nikolai Pechkovsky. I was swamped with anonymous letters saying in effect that I, enemy of the people, did not have long to tread on Soviet soil, that my ass's ears would be chopped off — along with my head.

It is difficult to assess how Shostakovich would have developed differently as a composer without this political shock so early in his career, but there is no question that he was affected. For one thing, he never wrote another opera, since he was perhaps afraid that he would once again miss the small target thrown up by the official musical establishment. He also withdrew his enormous Fourth Symphony, a wandering, difficult work in the style of late Mahler, from performance since he felt it would not help him at the moment. Though he finished the Fourth in May 1936, he recalled it after 10 rehearsals. It was performed for the first time in Russia only in 1961.

## Shostakovich was transformed from prodigy to prodigal son.

Instead of responding to the criticism in words, Shostakovich decided to reply in music. He set to work on a new symphony, his Fifth, "a work of clarity and affirmation," which would eventually become his most popular composition both at home and abroad. It acquired the ominous subtitle, "The Creative Reply of a Soviet Artist to Justified Criticism," not, it seems, from the composer himself, as has often been stated, but from a commentator in a Moscow newspaper. Shostakovich did not, apparently, object to the subtitle. With the Fifth Symphony, first performed almost two years after the *Lady Macbeth* incident, in October 1937, Shostakovich brilliantly re-entered active musical life. Universally acclaimed by official and unofficial critics, the symphony erased, for the most part, the taint left on Shostakovich's reputation.

It is an enormous tribute to the strength of Shostakovich's belief in his talent that he dared to continue writing. A lesser man may well have faded away, or even asked to emigrate.

What the *Lady Macbeth* episode demonstrates is how arbitrary and inconsistent Soviet official policy towards the arts has been over the years. *Lady Macbeth* was singled out for criticism less for musical reasons





The first Composers' Congress, which condemned Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khatchaturian and other "formalist" composers.

than for the need, at that particular moment, to find a scapegoat. As Boris Schwarz has pointed out, the condemnation of *Lady Macbeth* was intended as a warning for all the arts, not only music. It was "the first clear demonstration of what Communist totalitarianism in art meant." It is this very capriciousness and uncertainty that so terrifies and debilitates Soviet artists; they never know when the situation will suddenly change.

Overall, official policy towards creative artists in Soviet Russia has significantly improved in the 45 years since the *Lady Macbeth* debacle. After abandoning opera for many years as too risky, Shostakovich eventually returned to revise *Lady Macbeth*; it was renamed *Katerina Ismailova* and a few — relatively minor — changes were made in orchestration and the vocal parts. In this revised form it returned to the Stanislavsky-Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theater in Moscow on December 26, 1962. But even then it was shrouded in controversy. Only a week before, Shostakovich's Thirteenth Symphony, subtitled "Babi Yar" and dedicated to the Soviet Jews who died under Hitler, with strong texts by the poet Yevtushenko, had been performed for the first time and subjected to considerable criticism. Earlier in the same month Khrushchev had thrown a temper tantrum at an art exhibition that included some abstract works; the atmosphere was tense and uncertain.

But this time *Katerina Ismailova* prevailed and remained in the regular repertory. It was well received, with small reservations, by most critics, one of whom was even moved to remark, rather forgetfully, that "There is in the revival of *Katerina Ismailova* yet another important significance. It is yet another fine achievement of our era, still another example of how firmly and irreversibly Leninist norms have again established themselves in

Soviet artistic life."

Ironically, *Katerina Ismailova* (and *Lady Macbeth*) has gone on to gain a reputation as the quintessential "Soviet" opera. There was something familiar in the belated staging of *Katerina* at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, the Soviet Union's most prestigious theater which confers the ultimate stamp of approval, in December of last year. Only now, six years after the composer's death and 45 after his life was nearly destroyed by official stupidity, could this opera, recognized internationally as one of the greatest achievements of 20th-century music, return safely to the Soviet limelight.

Nor are the vilification and belated resurrection of *Lady Macbeth*/*Katerina Ismailova* an isolated instance in Soviet cultural history.

### The condemnation of *Lady Macbeth* was intended as a warning for all the arts.

Many other works of literature, music and art have been similarly "rehabilitated" years after their creators committed suicide, perished in concentration camps or died of frustration and madness, never having seen their best work printed, performed or exhibited. The poet Osip Mandelstam, the director Vsevolod Meyerhold, the novelist Boris Pilnyak: the list is long and bloody. Others are still waiting; Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* remains unpublished in Russia today.

One could almost say that Shostakovich was lucky. ■

HARLOW ROBINSON teaches in the Slavic Department at the State University of New York at Albany and writes for *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *Opera News* and other publications.



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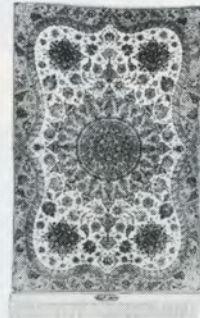
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# ARTISTS

## Extra Chorus

Kathy Anderson  
Elizabeth Anker  
Iris Boudart  
Lael Carlson  
Teresa Colyer  
Lisa Louise Glenister  
Theodotia Hartman  
Gloria Holmby  
Anne Huffington  
Liya Kushnirskaya  
Marena Lane  
Lola Lazzari-Simi  
Cecilia MacLaren  
Roberta Maxwell  
Susan McClelland

Anna McNaughten  
Iris Miller  
Linda Moody  
Susan Sheldrake  
Lorice Stevens

Winther Andersen  
Mamoru Arimoto  
John Beauchamp  
Manfred Behrens  
Raymond Chavez  
Thomas Clark  
Angelo Colbasso  
David Durrett  
Dale Emde

Peter Girardot  
John L. Glenister  
Edgar C. Harris  
David House  
Conrad Knipfel  
Henry Metlenko  
Steven Meyer  
Eugene Naham  
Stephen Ostrow  
Autris Paige  
Robert Philip Price  
Robert Romanovsky  
Kevin Skiles  
Micaele Sparacino  
James Starkey  
James Tipton

## Supernumeraries

Dorothy Baune  
Sarah Castellini  
Renee De Jarnatt  
Diane Graham  
Liza Groen  
Jennifer Heglar  
Jennifer Holmes  
Heather Horsefield  
Candace Kahn  
Donna Martin  
Leslie McCorkle  
Jan Moody  
Tricia O'Brien  
Jessica Poli  
Katherine Prongos  
Gwen Reynolds  
Louise Russo  
Ellen Sanchez  
Janet Weil  
Mary Angela Whooley

Sky Bamford  
Jason Baron-Pinder  
Gil Bates  
William Burns  
Roy Castellini  
Dave Clover  
Chas Dargis  
Daniel De Jarnatt  
Julius Dorijoni  
W.J. Drummond  
Andrew Einkauf  
George Freiday  
Mickey Frettoloso  
Michael Grinnage  
Joe Hay  
Donald Jack  
Stephen Jacobs  
Clinton Jennings  
Julius Karoblis  
Joseph Kelley  
John Kovacs

Lamont Lee  
Al Luchini  
Gregory Marks  
Wendell Maunula  
Berri McBride  
Larry Millner  
Greg Moawad  
Steven Moawad  
Neil Nevesny  
Philip Pena  
Stephen Pinson  
Michael Pitkin  
Dan Prezioso  
Paul Price  
Paul Ricks  
Robert Schmidt  
Rick Skarolid  
John Vassalo  
Lachland Waterbury  
Brett Weil  
Joseph Willis

## Dancers

Peggy Davis  
Anne Elizabeth Egan  
Marti Kennedy  
Cathy Pruzan  
Kathryn Roszak  
Katherine Warner

Peter Childers  
Greg Gibble  
William Sanner Ramsdell  
Pete J. Shoemaker  
John Sullivan  
Charlie West



# 1981 BROAD CASTS

Broadcasts of the San Francisco Opera can be heard nationwide on the member stations of National Public Radio and on other selected stations.

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- 9/12 Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg
- 9/19 Rigoletto
- 9/26 Lear
- 10/3 Semiramide
- 10/10 Manon
- 10/17 Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk
- 10/24 The Merry Widow
- 10/31 Carmen
- 11/7 Le Cid
- 11/14 Wozzeck
- 11/21 Die Walküre
- 11/28 Il Trovatore

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Wednesday, November 4, 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 11, 1:00 p.m.

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

Matinee for Senior Citizens  
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Friday, November 13, 1 p.m.

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# 1981 PREVIEWES

## 1981 OPERA PREVIEWES

Information on opera previews and lectures is always carried in the San Francisco Opera program magazines. To enable patrons to make advance plans, we are printing a list of all previews and lectures which are open to the public.

### SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWES

#### SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD AUXILIARY

Opera "Insights" held in the Green Room of the Herbst Theatre, Veterans' Memorial Building, Van Ness & McAllister, in San Francisco. Lectures are free to the public and feature some of the season's outstanding artists in discussion. Schedule to be announced. For additional information, please call (415) 565-6432.

#### 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.

SEMIRAMIDE  
Arthur Kaplan 9/3

LADY MACBETH  
Speight Jenkins 9/17

CARMEN  
Robert Jacobson 9/24

LE CID  
James Keolker 10/8

WOZZECK  
Dale Harris 10/22

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.

SEMIRAMIDE AND SEASON  
HIGHLIGHTS  
Ramona Rockway and singers 9/8

CARMEN  
Robert Jacobson 9/28

WOZZECK and LE CID  
Arthur Kaplan 10/12

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.

SEMIRAMIDE  
Arthur Kaplan 9/1

MANON  
Arthur Kaplan 9/8

LADY MACBETH  
Michael Barclay 9/14

CARMEN  
Arthur Kaplan 9/21

LE CID  
Arthur Kaplan 9/28

WOZZECK  
Michael Barclay 10/5

LUCIA  
Michael Barclay 10/12

AIDA  
Arthur Kaplan 11/2

DIE WALKÜRE  
Michael Barclay 11/16

IL TROVATORE  
Arthur Kaplan 11/23

#### JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWES

All Junior League opera previews will be held at the Herbst Theater in the Veterans' Auditorium, Van Ness and McAllister. Lectures begin at 11:00 a.m. There is no admission charge. For information, please call Darralyn Saladino at (415) 931-0266.

SEMIRAMIDE  
Arthur Kaplan 9/10

MANON  
Speight Jenkins 9/15

LE CID  
Dale Harris 9/22

WOZZECK  
Michael Barclay 10/4

#### 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.

SEMIRAMIDE 9/9  
MANON 9/16  
LADY MACBETH 9/23  
MERRY WIDOW 9/30  
CARMEN 10/7  
WOZZECK/LE CID 10/14  
LUCIA 10/28  
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 Bar-





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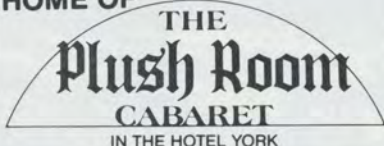
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# 1981 PREVIEWES

clay, 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.

**SEMIRAMIDE**  
Arthur Kaplan 9/2

**MANON**  
Arthur Kaplan 9/9

**LADY MACBETH**  
Michael Barclay 9/17

**CARMEN**  
James Keolker 9/22

**MERRY WIDOW**  
Michael Barclay 9/28

**LE CID**  
Arthur Kaplan 10/7

**WOZZECK**  
Michael Barclay 10/20

**LUCIA**  
Michael Barclay 10/29

**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.

**SEMIRAMIDE**  
Arthur Kaplan 9/11, 10 a.m.

**MANON**  
Speight Jenkins 9/14, 7:30 p.m.

**LADY MACBETH**  
Speight Jenkins 9/17, 10 a.m.

**CARMEN**  
Robert Jacobson 9/25, 10 a.m.

**LE CID**  
Dale Harris 10/2, 10 a.m.

**WOZZECK**  
Dale Harris 10/23, 10 a.m.

**LUCIA**  
Donald Pippin 10/26, 7:30 p.m.

**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.

**LADY MACBETH**  
Speight Jenkins 9/15

**LE CID**  
Arthur Kaplan 9/22

**CARMEN**  
Robert Jacobson 9/29

**WOZZECK**  
Dale Harris 10/20

**LUCIA**  
Donald Pippin 10/27

**DIE WALKÜRE**  
Henry Holt 11/10

There will be a special Champagne Gala Preview of *SEMIRAMIDE* with singers on September 15 at 8:00 p.m., also at the Cultural Center. Admission is \$5.00.

### CHABOT COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES/OPERA FOR EVERYONE

A ten-week series of introductions to the 1981 San Francisco Opera season. Offered by Chabot College and conducted by Eugene Marker, these 10 lectures are open to all, free of charge, and will be given on ten consecutive Thursday evenings. All lectures are from 7:00 to 9:15 p.m. beginning on Thursday, September 10, and are located at the City of San Leandro Community Library Auditorium, 300 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro. For further information, please call (415) 786-6632.

**SEMIRAMIDE** 9/10

**MANON** 9/17

**LADY MACBETH** 9/24

**THE MERRY WIDOW** 10/1

**CARMEN** 10/8

**LE CID** 10/15

**WOZZECK** 10/22

**AIDA** 10/29

**DIE WALKÜRE** 11/5

**IL TROVATORE** 11/12

### BANK OF AMERICA PREVIEW SERIES

Previews will be held at the Bank of America, 555 California St., San Francisco, in the A.P. Giannini Auditorium, at 12:05 p.m. The series is open to the public at no cost. For further information, please call (415) 953-1000.

**SEMIRAMIDE** 8/27

**MANON** 9/15

**LADY MACBETH** 9/18

**DIE WALKÜRE** 9/23

**CARMEN** 10/26

**LE CID** 10/8

**LUCIA** 10/27

**AIDA** 11/6

**IL TROVATORE** 11/19

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Eleven illustrated previews will be given by Jan Popper, professor of music emeritus, UCLA (8/31 to 10/5), and Natalie Limonick, professor of music, USC (10/12-11/16). All previews on Mondays (except Tuesday, 9/8) at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the UC Extension Center, 55 Laguna St. (at Market), San Francisco. Series \$65, pre-registration advisable; single previews \$7 at the door if space is available. For more information, please call (415) 642-4111.

**SEMIRAMIDE** 8/31

**MANON** 9/8

**LADY MACBETH** 9/14

**THE MERRY WIDOW** 9/21

**CARMEN** 9/28

**LE CID** 10/5

**WOZZECK** 10/12

**LUCIA** 10/19

**AIDA** 10/26

**DIE WALKÜRE** 11/9

**IL TROVATORE** 11/16





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Wed., Nov. 18 • 8:30 P.M.

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Sun., Jan. 31 • 7:30 P.M.

**Renata SCOTTO** soprano  
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Mon., Feb. 14 • 8:30 P.M.

**Kiri TE KANAWA** soprano  
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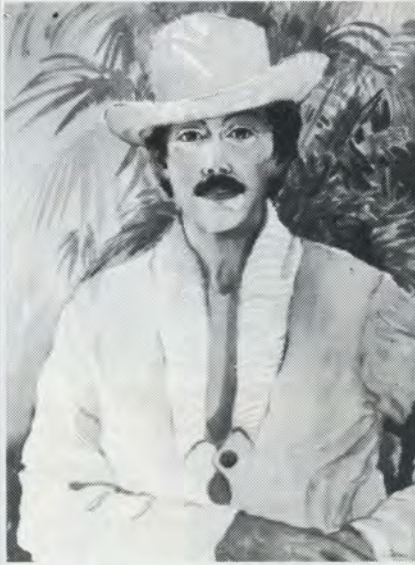
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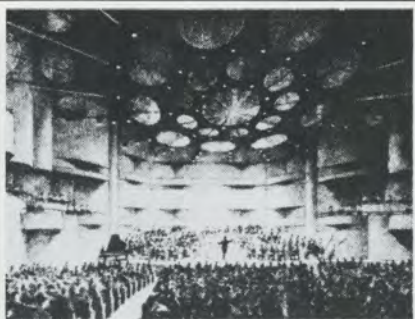


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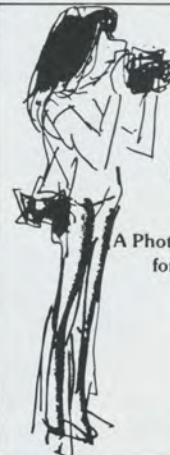
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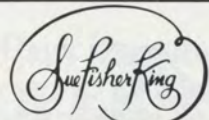


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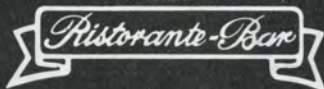
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	Tar Mg./Cig.	Nicotine Mg./Cig.
Benson & Hedges Light 100's	10	0.8
Kent	12	1.0
Marlboro Lights	11	0.8
Merit 100 Menthol	10	0.8
Salem Lights	9	0.7
Vantage 100's	9	0.9
Virginia Slims Lights	8	0.6
Winston Lights	11	0.9

## Carlton is lowest.

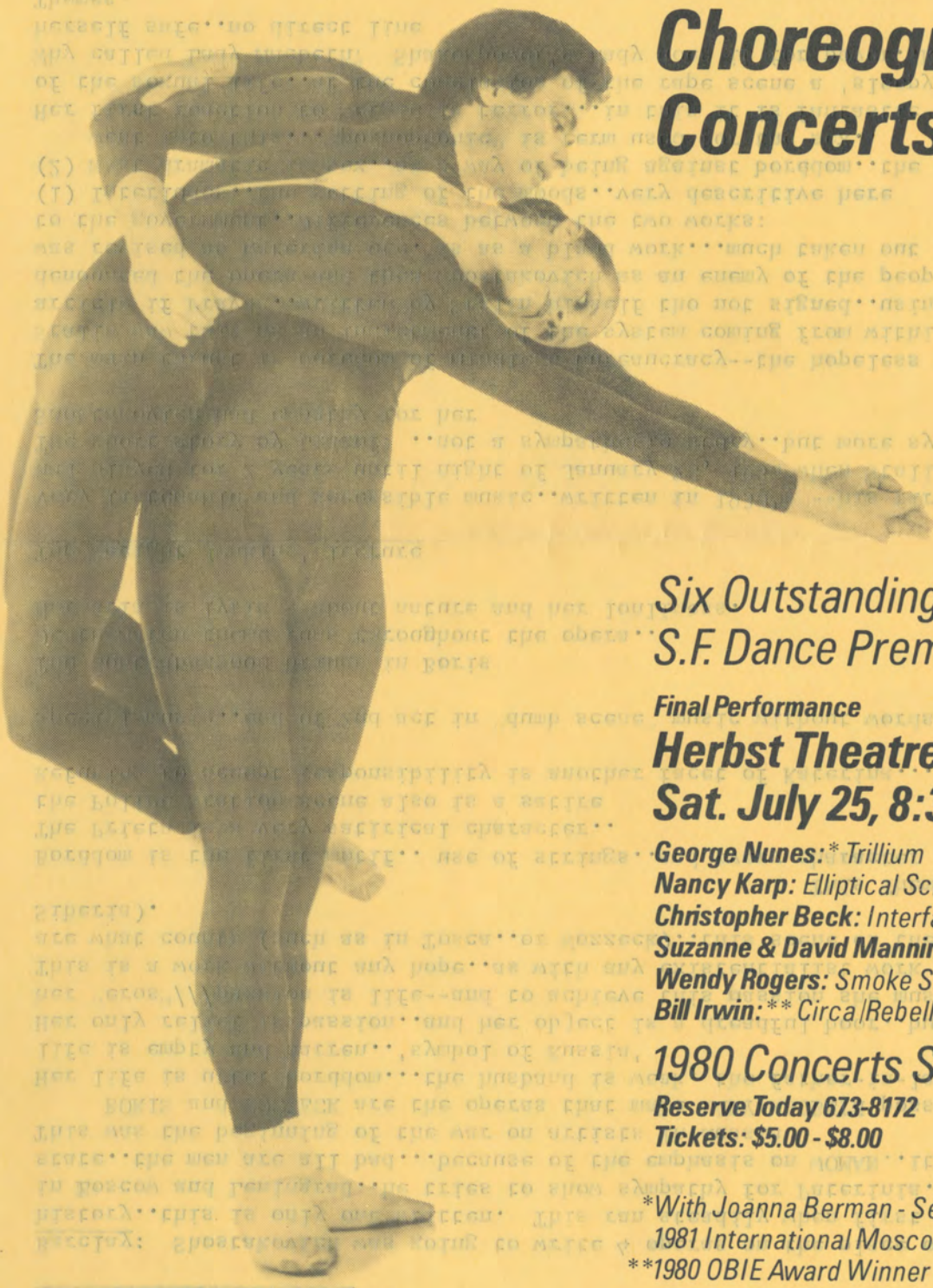
**Carlton Box—lowest of all brands.**

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Box: Less than 0.01 mg. "tar", 0.002 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.  
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# Dance Coalition 4th Annual Choreographers Concerts

*Six Outstanding  
S.F. Dance Premieres*

*Final Performance*

**Herbst Theatre**

**Sat. July 25, 8:30 PM**

**George Nunes: \*Trillium**

**Nancy Karp: Elliptical Scherzo**

**Christopher Beck: Interface**

**Suzanne & David Manning: Discarnate Landscape**

**Wendy Rogers: Smoke Signals/Spit Fire**

**Bill Irwin: \*\* Circa/Rebellion Unnumbered**

**1980 Concerts Sold Out!**

**Reserve Today 673-8172**

**Tickets: \$5.00 - \$8.00**

**\*With Joanna Berman - Semifinalist, ...**

**1981 International Moscow Ballet Competition**

**\*\*1980 OBIE Award Winner**



## LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK...

Barclay: Shostakovich was going to write 4 operas on the place of Russian Woman in history..this is only one written. This ran steadily when first produced...given both in Moscow and Leningrad..he tries to show sympathy for Paterinia..satire on the police state..the men are all bad...because of the emphasis on WOMAN..it was then banned This was the beginning of the war on artists in Russia

BORIS and WOZZECK are the operas that make LADY MACBETH possible.. Her life is utter boredom...the husband is weak, the father-in-law horrible.. life is empty and barren..'symbol of Russia' Her only relief is passion..and her object is a dreadful boor..but passion becomes her "eros"///passion is life--and to achieve this passion she must kill - over and over. This is a work without any hope..as with any existentialist work the last two minutes are what counts (such as in Tosca..or Wozzeck)..this scene of the chain gang walking to Siberia).

This Theme is very Russian in feeling)

Boredom is the first motif.. use of strings..and every character says it...I am so bored' )  
The Prieta is a very satirical character..  
the Police Station scene also is a satire  
Refusing to accept responsibility is another facet of Katerina...

Special music..end of 2nd act in "dumb scene" music without words..and death march

The ContraBassoon brings in Boris  
Death March theme runs throughout the opera..  
Her aria is lyric --about nature and her loneliness.

### The Speight Jenkins' lecture

Very listenable and accessible music..written in 1930's --his first symphony was in 1926 had played for 2 years until night of January 28, 1936 when Stalin heard it and blew up. The short story by Liakof? ..not a sympathetic story..but more sympathy in the opera.. Shostakovich had empathy for her

The main thrust is boredom of mindless bureaucracy--the hopeless drudgery of life.. Stalin saw this as an indictment of the system coming from within and on 1/28/37 in an article in Pravda..written by Stalin himself tho not signed..using word 'muddle' he denounced the opera and then Shostakovich as an enemy of the people....later the work was revised as Katerina etc. is as a bland work...much taken out to make it acceptable to the government..Differences between the two works:

- (1) Interludes..the setting of the moods..very descriptive here
- (2) Most dramatic is sex..as a way of being against boredom..the passion of her own affair went into this..."pornophonic" is term used for the sex..

Her first reaction to Seggie is terror...in this it is fantastic--the music is descriptive of the sexual life..at the conclusion of the rape scene a 'sleepy trombone'

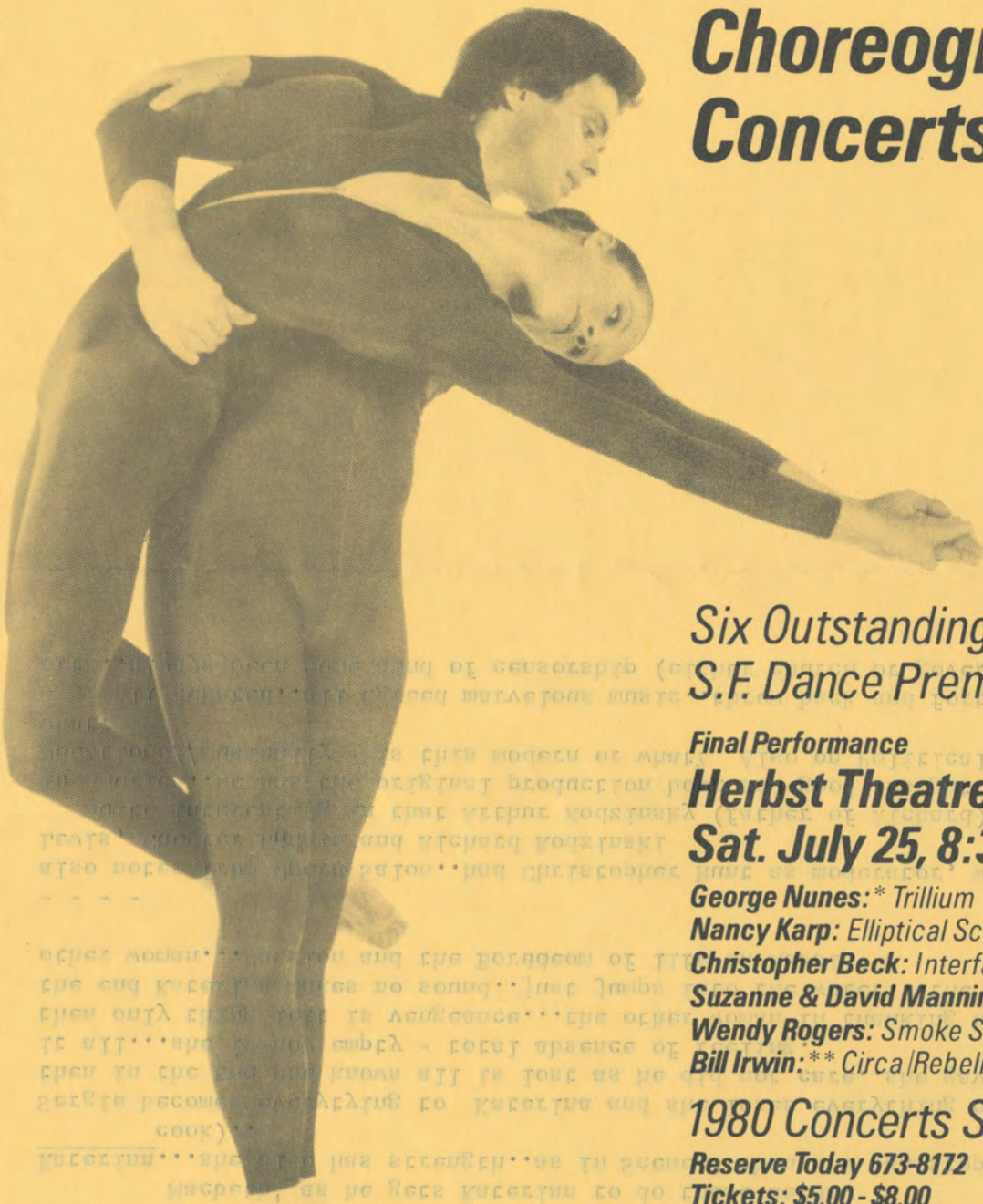
Why called Lady Macbeth? Shakespower's Lady does it for power..Katerian does it to make herself safe..no direct line

### Themes

- \*(1) Boredom..and the results - Cruelty to those who can't fight back in Russia...the women, as shown by attack on the cook
- (2) Cruelty..by the father-in-law in beating Sergie..to satisfy /his own craving.
- (3) Political oppression..not just in the policy scene..this is very "Russian" work and in showing the prisoners, Shostahovich used this particularly..the endless flowing of the prisoners..much as in Boris..kt keeps going on and on..

Shostakovich was a genius at orchestration..especially using individual instruments for ~~xxx~~ effect..watch for violin in scene when they are ~~xxxxxxx~~ asleep in bed..at peace.





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The Peasant is an important character as he represents those who are watching here  
Husband--very weak - possibly sterile or impotent- or both

Boris - cruel man but very Russian..he has power - he lusts after Katerina and is nasty  
to her..brings cruelty and sex together...he is so secure he doesn't believe that  
anyone can do anything to him..after his beating of Sergie, to say he is hungry and  
~~xxxxx~~ eat the mushrooms Katerina brings to him.

Sergie-- must be instantly attractive to women--an opportunity--must be sexually attractive  
There is nastiness also in him..as when he is caught..actually, he is the 'Lady  
Macbeth' as he gets Katerina to do these deeds.

Katerina...she also has strength..as in Scene 3 when she can stop this scene (tormenting the  
cook)..

Sergie becomes everything to Katerina and she loses everything of herself to him...  
then in the end she knows all is lost as he did not care..she gave up everything and lost  
it all...she is now empty - total absence of feeling..

then only thing left is vengeance...the other woman in thanking her makes her snap...in  
the end Katerina makes no sound..just jumps into the water...the screaming is from the  
other woman...Passion and the boredom of life in Russia

- - - -  
also notes from Opera Salon..had Christopher Hunt as moderator, with Cal Simmons, William  
Lewis, Chester Ludgin and Richard Rodzinski

Quite interesting in that Arthur Rodzinsky (father of Richard) did first performances  
in America..he has the original production book and good insight into it..

Questions//musically - is this modern or what? Also on Political..is it Soviet Music or  
what?

All debated..all agreed marvelous music..threw back and forth government in the  
arts..always been some kind of censorship (either church or government)...but music survives.