

Die Walküre
(The Valkyrie)

1981

Friday, November 20, 1981 7:00 PM
Wednesday, November 25, 1981 7:00 PM
Saturday, November 21, 1981 (Radio broadcast)
Saturday, November 28, 1981 7:00 PM
Tuesday, December 1, 1981 7:00 PM
Sunday, December 6, 1981 1:00 PM
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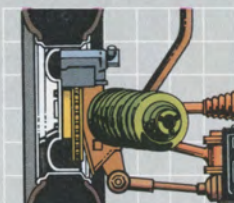
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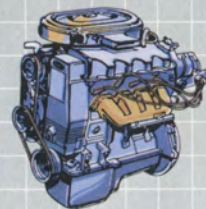
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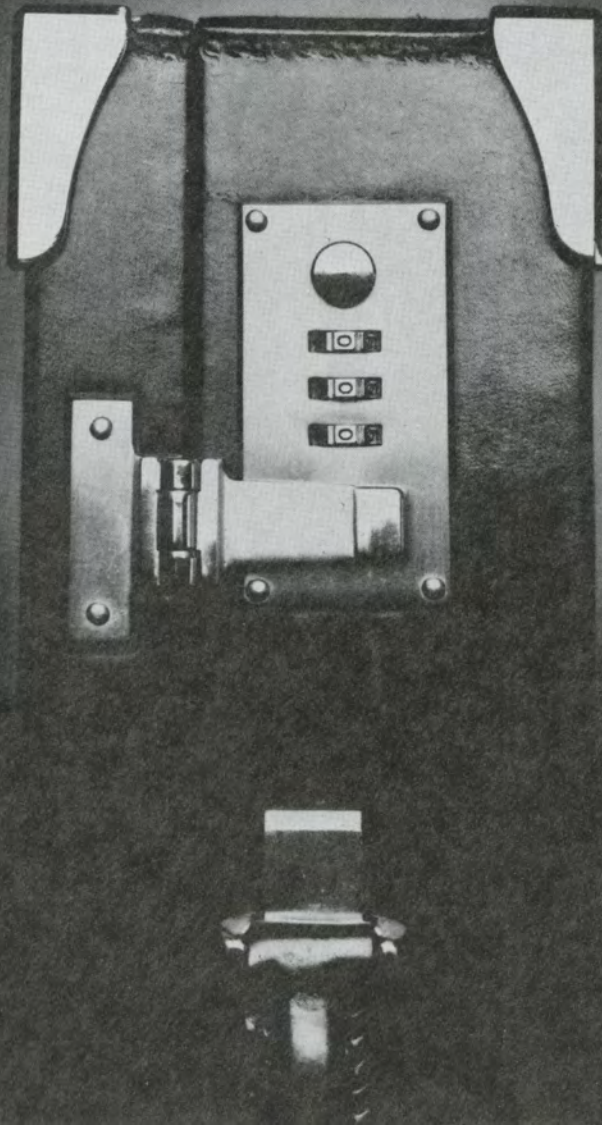
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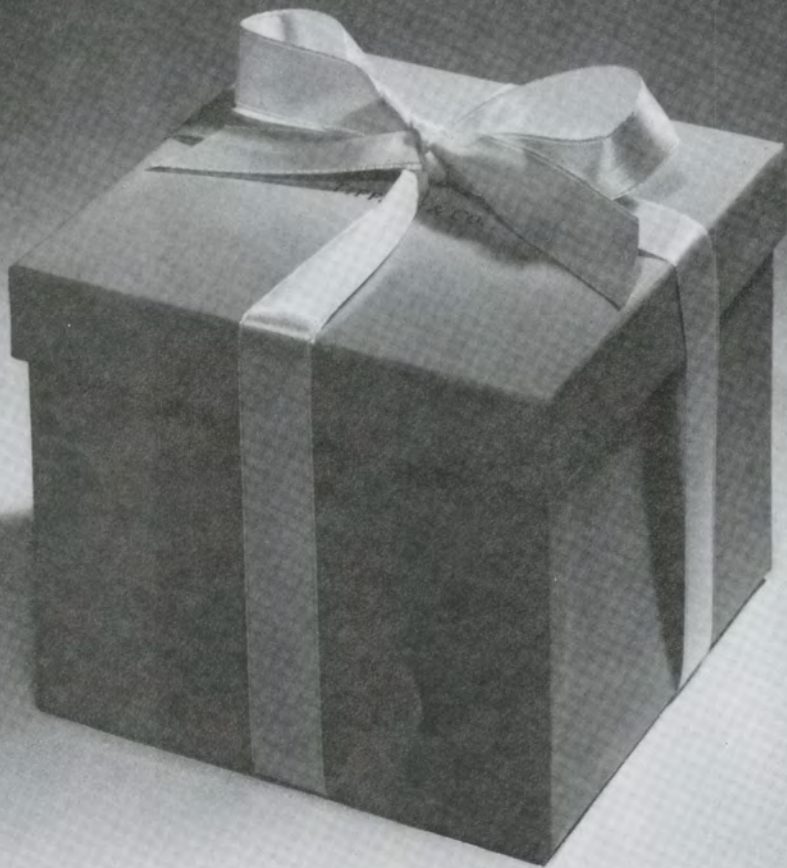
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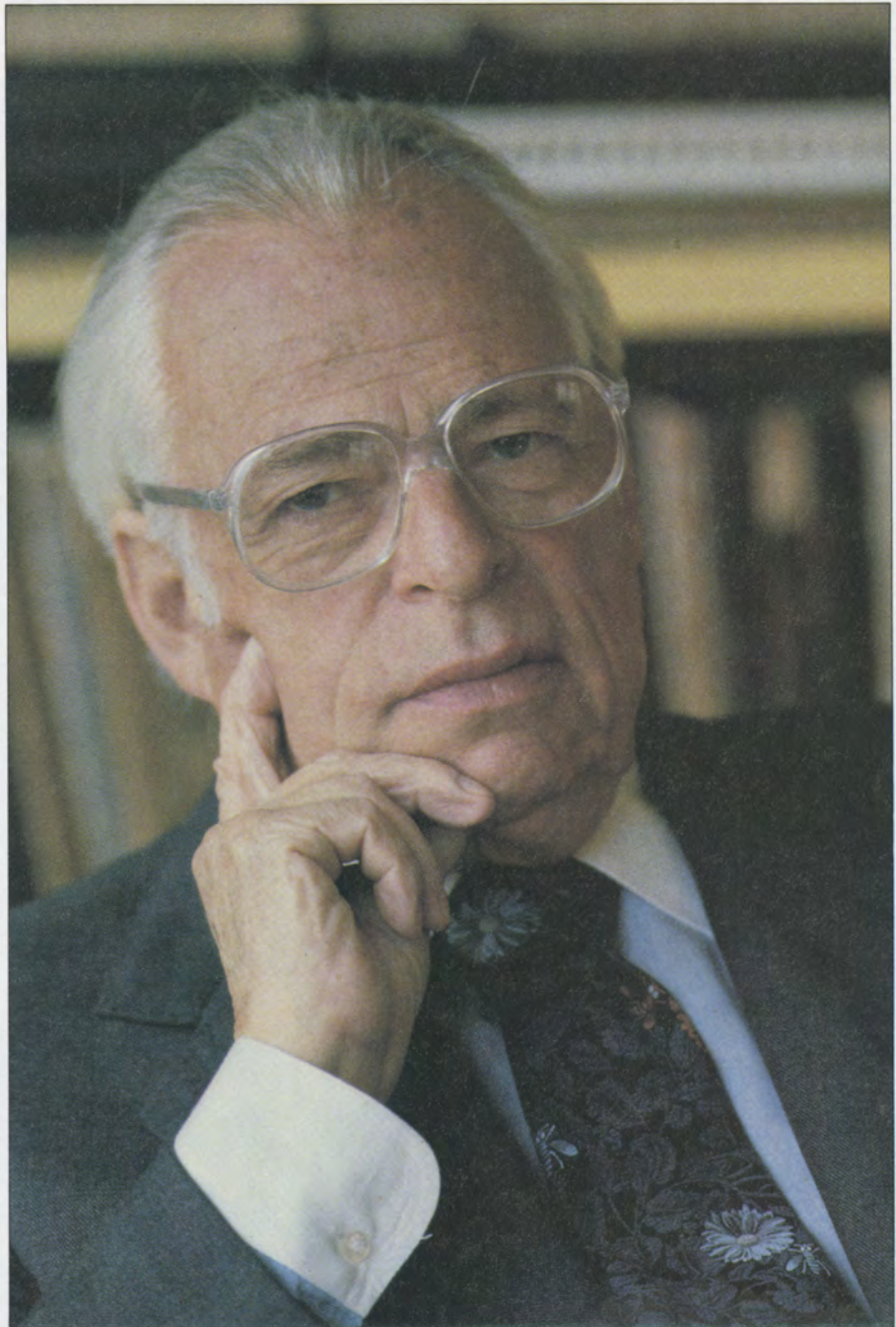
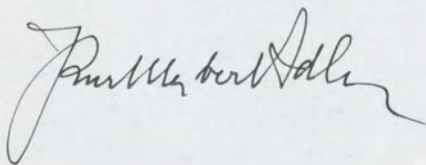
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A warm welcome to our 59th annual Fall Season, which climaxes the busiest year in the history of San Francisco Opera. We welcome back a host of dear friends of the Company and of mine, and we are also happy to introduce a number of exceptional artists new to San Francisco. Two of the most popular works in all opera — Verdi's *Aida* and Bizet's *Carmen* — receive new productions; the new *Aida* is San Francisco Opera's contribution to San Francisco's city-wide celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis of Assisi, the City's patron. Three works are presented here in premiere performances: Rossini's *Semiramide*, Massenet's *Le Cid* (which has never before been heard in the American West) and Lehár's *The Merry Widow*. Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, the original version of *Katerina Ismailova*, is heard for the first time in 45 years in the United States. After this season, I will step down from the position of general director of the Company, having enjoyed 38 years of association with San Francisco Opera. Together with you, our audiences and faithful supporters, we have built an opera company of international renown. In 1954, when I assumed directorship, there were five weeks of grand opera in San Francisco; this year, we are proud to present a total of twenty in the War Memorial Opera House. With inauguration of the Summer Festival, an extended Fall Season and the activities of our affiliates, opera is now a permanent part of the vibrance that makes San Francisco such an enviable place to live. I hope this new season, and many more to come, will bring you the artistic satisfaction you desire. Thank you, and may you enjoy our sincere efforts.



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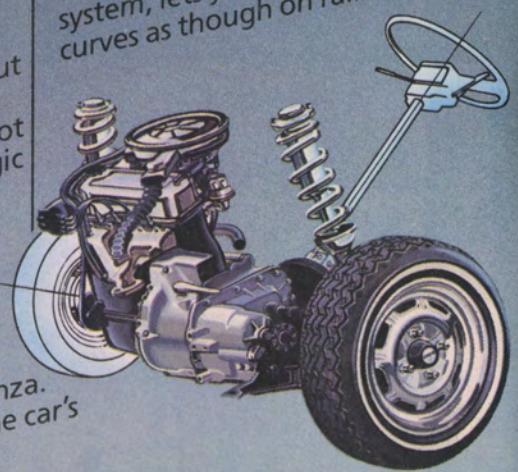
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Pictures in the Fire by Jerry Floyd 36

Story books and illustrations for English-speaking children have wrought some fanciful adaptations of Wagner since the late 19th century.



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The Wagnerian Orchestra by David Hamilton 45

In *Die Walküre* Wagner used contrasts of register and range in his enlarged orchestra to articulate and characterize the drama.



page 45

Wagner and the Female Mind by Speight Jenkins 78

The three heroines of *Die Walküre* — Sieglinde, Fricka and Brünnhilde — show Wagner's surpassing understanding and respect for women and their concerns.



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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.

DIE WALKÜRE: "Brünnhilde," an illustration by Arthur Rackham (1910) for Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelung*, translated by Margaret Armour.

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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



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

I would like to extend our continuing gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts and its chairman, Livingston L. Biddle, Jr.; the California Arts Council and its chairman, Karney Hodge; the Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Mayor of San Francisco; Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas; the City and County of San Francisco; the War Memorial Board of Trustees and the San Francisco Opera Guild for their invaluable support of the San Francisco Opera.

Enjoy the season!

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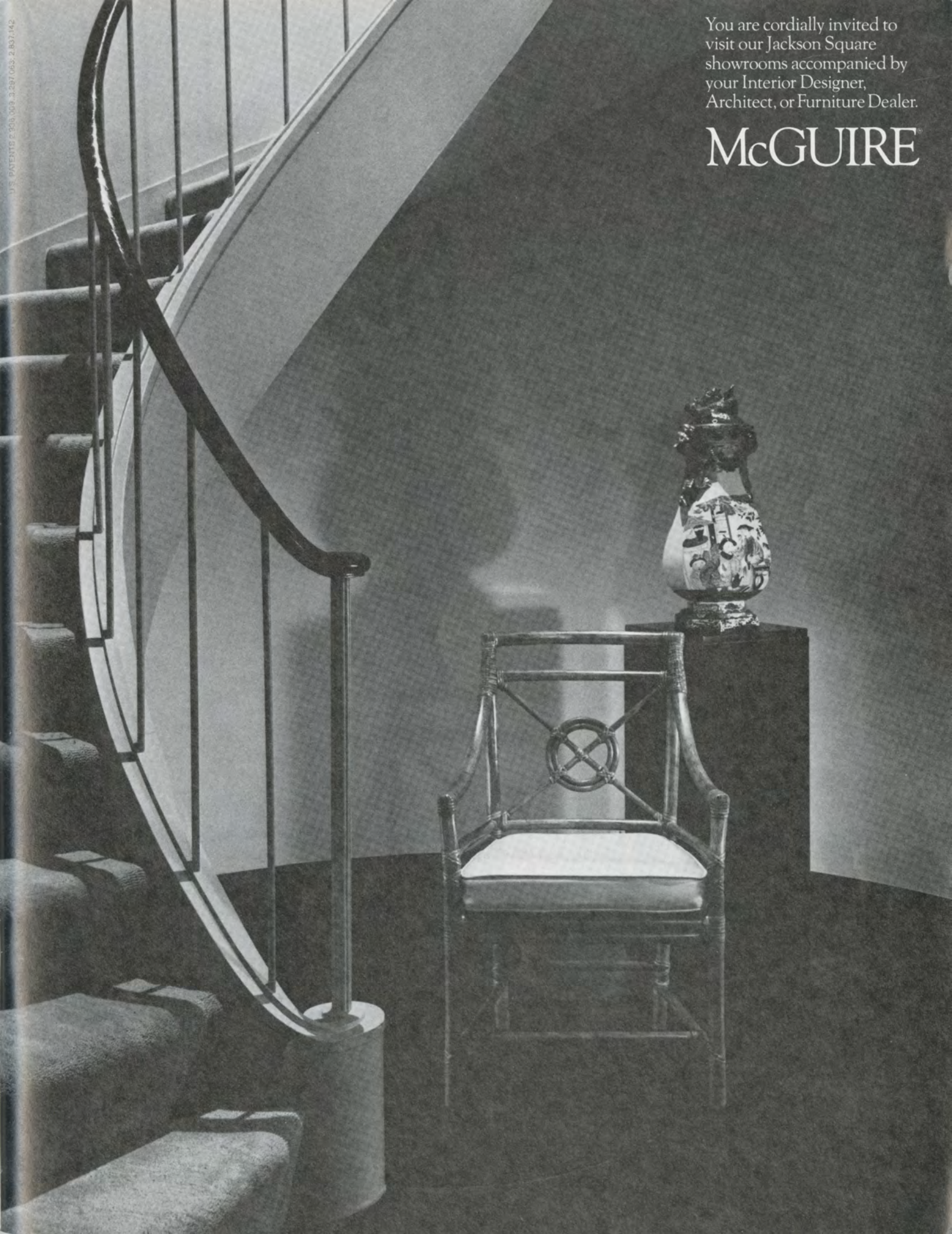
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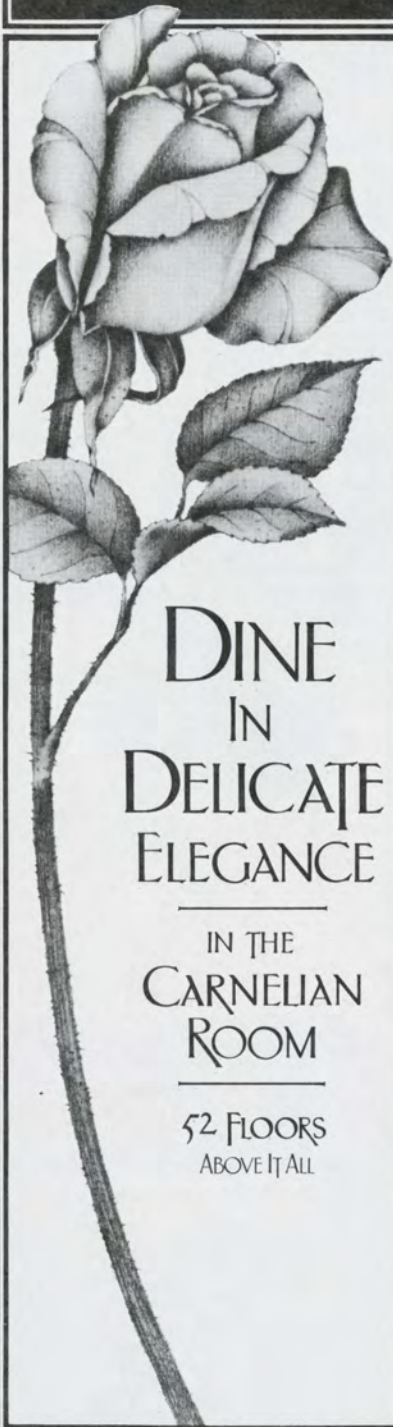
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Iris Boudart	Linda Moody	Edgar C. Harris
Lael Carlson	Susan Sheldrake	David House
Teresa Colyer	Lorice Stevens	Conrad Knipfel
Lisa Louise Glenister	Winther Andersen	Henry Metlenko
Theodotia Hartman	Mamoru Arimoto	Steven Meyer
Gloria Holmby	John Beauchamp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

Girls Chorus

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

Boys Chorus

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

Dancers

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

Actors

Alan Blumenfeld	Colin Harvey	Claudia Siefer
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continued on p. 24

The New Classic from Klaus Murer

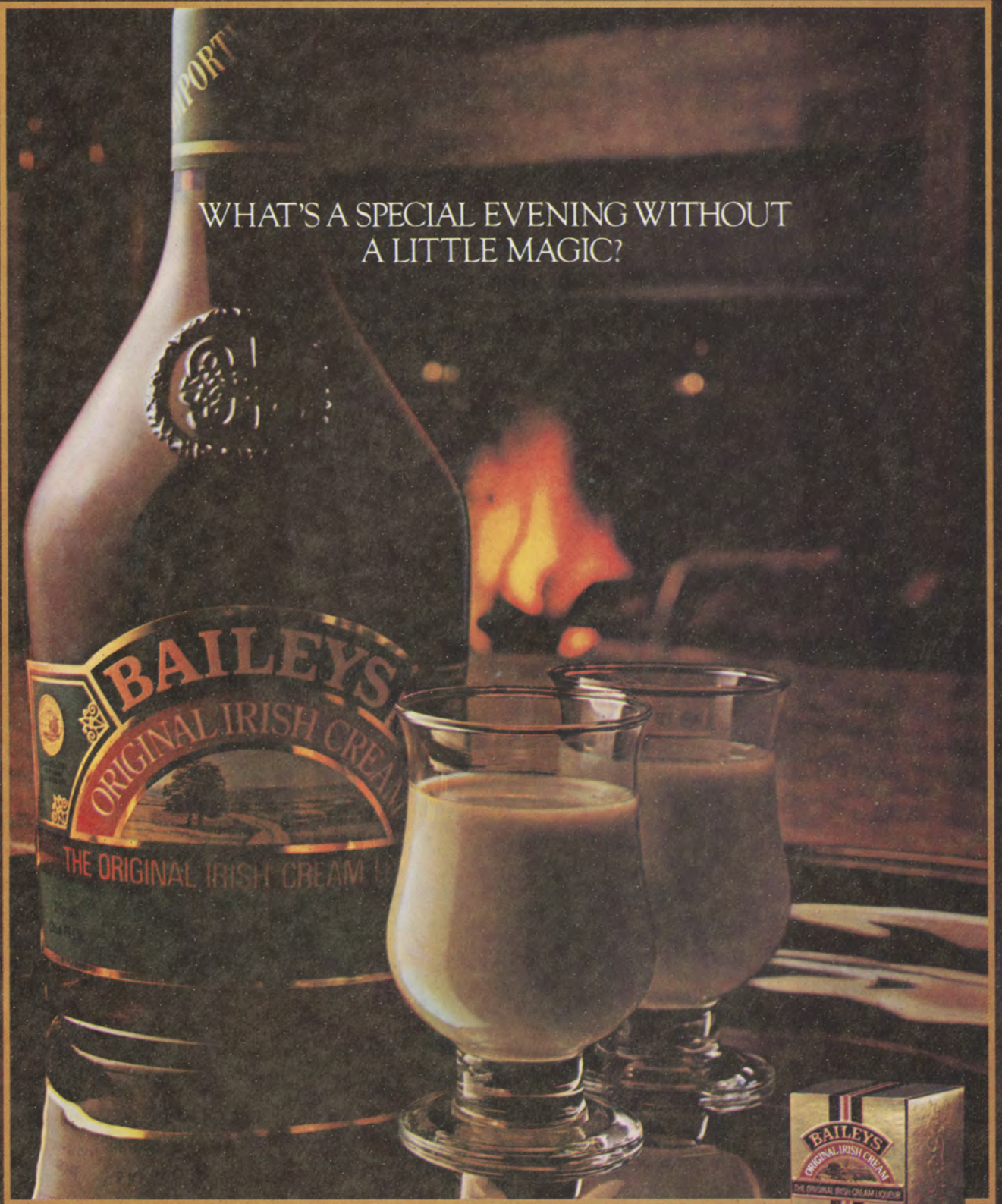


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1981 SEASON

Kurt Herbert Adler, General Director

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Semiramide

In Italian
Rossini

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

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

Bonyngé/Pizzi*/Pizzi

Manon

In French
Massenet

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

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

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

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk

In Russian
Shostakovich

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

Simmons/Freedman/Skalicki-Colangelo

San Francisco Opera Premiere

The Merry Widow

In English
Lehár

Production from the Canadian Opera Company

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

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

New Production

Carmen

In French
Bizet

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

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

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

Adler/Ponnelle/Ponnelle-Juerke*

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

December 4, 7, 10, 13 (mat)

Adler/Ponnelle-Hope*/Ponnelle-Juerke

San Francisco Opera and West Coast Premiere

Le Cid

In French
Massenet

(Stylized Concert Version)

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

Rudel/Frisell

Wozzeck

In English
Berg

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

Rennert/Evans/Bauer-Ecsy—Mason

Lucia di Lammermoor

In Italian
Donizetti

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

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

Agler/Frisell/Toms

Popular-priced performances in Italian

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

Bradshaw/Farruggio/Toms

New Production

Aida

In Italian
Verdi

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

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

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

Die Walküre

In German
Wagner

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

Suitner/Hager/Skalicki

Il Trovatore

In Italian
Verdi

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

Steinberg**/Mansouri/Skalicki-West

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

*San Francisco Opera Debut
**American opera debut

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

2nd VIOLIN

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

VIOLA

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

CELLO

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

BASS

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

FLUTE

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

PICCOLO

James Walker

OBOE

James Matheson *Principal*
Deborah Henry
Raymond Dusté

ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Dusté

CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*
Joanne Burke Eisler
Gregory Dufford

BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

BASSOON

Rufus Olivier *Principal*
Jerry Dagg
Robin Elliott

CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

FRENCH HORN

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

TRUMPET

James Miller *Principal*
Edward Haug
Timothy Wilson

TROMBONE

McDowell Kenley *Principal*
Donald Kennelly
John Bischof

TUBA

Robert Z.A. Spellman

TIMPANI

Elayne Jones

PERCUSSION

Peggy Lucchesi
Richard Kvistad
Danny Montoro†
David Rosenthal†

HARP

Anne Adams *Principal*
Marcella de Cray

LIBRARIAN

Lauré Campbell

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Thomas B. Heimberg

†Additional players

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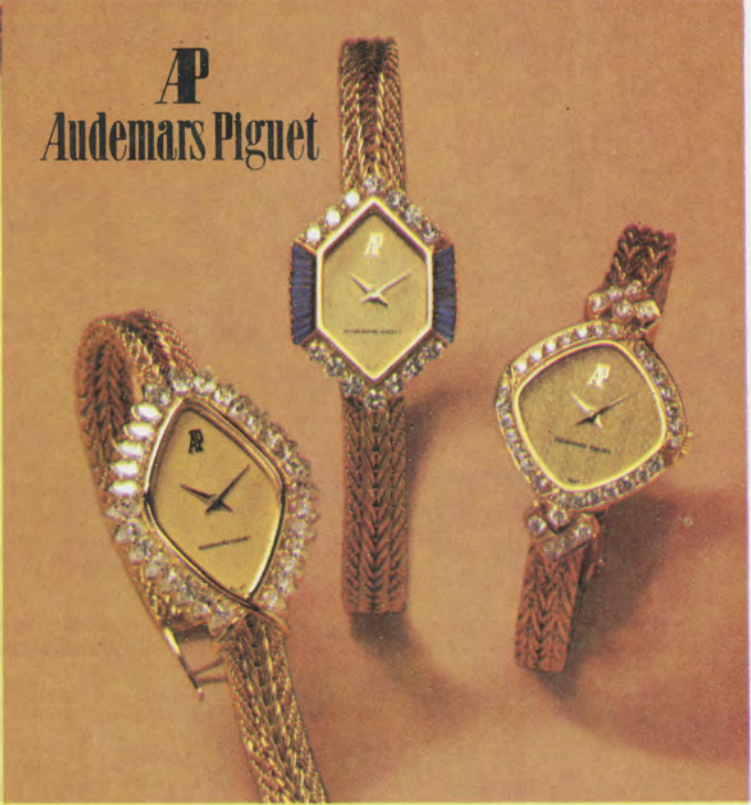
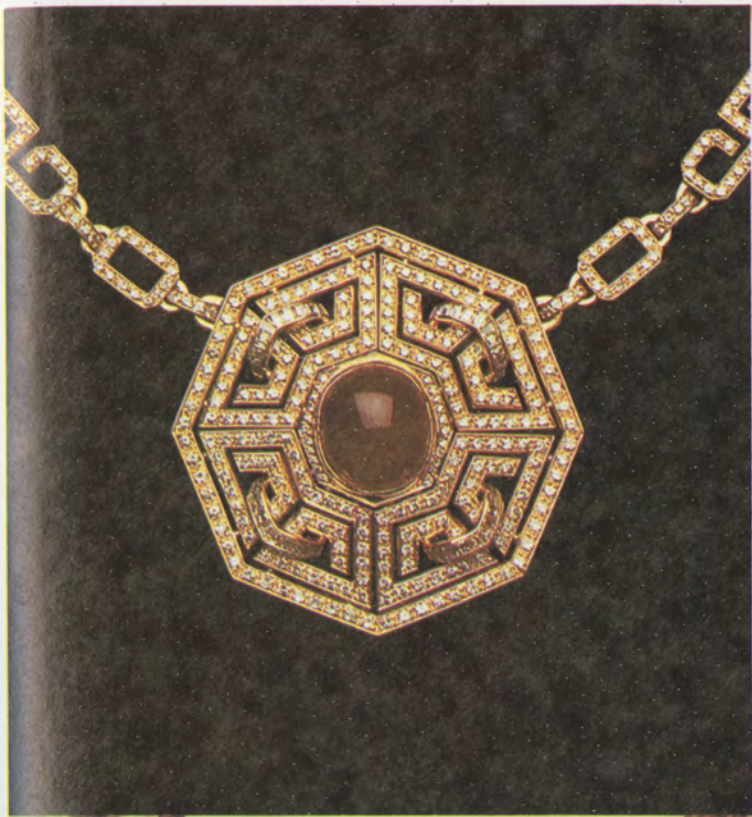
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ARTISTS

Supernumeraries

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



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PRELUDES



Martin Welcomes Adler to 'Over Easy'

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

Western Opera Theater Tours Again in Feb.

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

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

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


Arts Center Seeks Guides

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



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PRELUDES

DAVID POWERS PHOTO

Samson Telecast Nov. 23

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



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

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



Chinese Stagecraft Team Visits

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

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

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

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1

"EARLY-BIRD" DRAWING — TWA PARIS TRIP!

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

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

2

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

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

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

3

BONUS DRAWING — VIP CHINA TRIP!

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

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1981 PREVIEW SERIES

1981 OPERA PREVIEWS

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

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

MARIN

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

DIE WALKÜRE
Henry Holt 11/19

NORTH PENINSULA

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

DIE WALKÜRE
Henry Holt 11/16

FRIENDS OF THE KENSINGTON LIBRARY PRESENTS GENERAL LECTURE ON VERDI

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

PIEDMONT ADULT EDUCATION OPERA PREVIEW SERIES

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

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

IL TROVATORE
Arthur Kaplan 11/23

NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES

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

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

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

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

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

AIDA
Arthur Kaplan 11/5

DIE WALKÜRE
Michael Barclay 11/10

IL TROVATORE
Arthur Kaplan 11/16

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

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

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

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

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

DIE WALKÜRE
Henry Holt 11/10

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Pictures in the Fire

Storybooks and illustrations for English-speaking children have wrought some fanciful adaptations of Wagner since the late 19th century.

By JERRY FLOYD

"At last we can see something in the fire," American author/narrator Henry Frost tells a female companion on the frontispiece of his 1894 *Wagner Story Book*, one of the earliest of numerous turn-of-the-century books, usually illustrated, that adapt Richard Wagner's operas for youthful, non-opera-going audiences and even for Wagner devotees.

Though most of these books (Arthur Rackham's illustrations for Margaret Armour's still-praised Ring cycle translation are a notable exception) are now long out of print, there is still interest in even the most fanciful Wagner, evidenced in recent Ring adaptations by Philip Caggiano (a 90-minute children's performing version) and Ul de Rico's illustrated, folio-sized *The Ring of the Nibelung*, both published in 1980.

Frost's frontispiece is sketched by Sydney Richmond Burleigh in the late 19th-century American school of illustration that derived from Winslow Homer and antedated Norman Rockwell. But Burleigh's fire-gazing turn-of-the-century preppies undermine Frost's claim that his narrator-persona recounts Wagner-derived stories to a mere child, although Frost's reason for his storytelling, which eventually includes all 10 standard repertory Wagner pieces (the operas composed beginning with *The Flying Dutchman*, concluding with *Parsifal*), seems initially creditable: "If boys and girls do not find out while they are young all about the strange, mysterious, magical life, it is 10 to one they never will."

A painting by Ul de Rico for *The Ring of the Nibelung*, showing Siegfried and Brünnhilde at the top and Hagen fantasizing on Siegfried's death at the bottom (Thames and Hudson, 1980).





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Sydney Richmond Burleigh's illustration of the narrator and his listener for William Henry Frost's "Firelight Tales of the Great Music Dramas" (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894).

Having thus justified spending evenings with a "young girl," Frost uses fire and fireplace imagery as a framework for his narratives, visualizing Wagner's dramas in leaping, curling flames. And firestarter Frost is quite candid about his affinities:

When I see a house on fire, I am afraid my pleasure in watching it is greater than my sorrow for the people who are losing their property or home. I do not want houses to burn, but if they must burn I want to see them.

Not quite so straightforward is Frost's retelling of Wagner, as in this excerpt from "The Daughter of the God" (or *Die Walküre*) chapter, describing the upbringing of Siegmund and Sieglinde:

A boy and a girl lived together in the woods. Neither of them had any mother, but the boy's father [Wotan, in disguise] lived with them and took care of them.

They were very happy there together, all three of them, and the father always thought that the girl would sometime grow up and be his son's wife.

As Frost later explains it, Sieglinde had only *promised* to marry Hunding; thus the Act II encounter between Fricka and Wotan over the Volsung twins' misbehavior occurs because "Fricka cares nothing at all about heroes, but to her a promise is a promise." Such expurgation, character-

istic of turn-of-the-century primness, continues throughout Frost's book. By the time he gets to his version of *Tristan und Isolde*, the so-called little girl has snuggled up to the narrator, who admits, "We scarcely need the fire tonight."

Frost's *Tristan* narrative is linear, as are those of most of the Wagner adapters, who thereby avoid the composer's own awkward flashback monologue. Very early in "The Love Potion" (Frost's title), the narrator does achieve a bit of pre-Anna Russell pithiness in describing the instant Isolde holds Tristan's sword up to kill him, then lets it drop. "If only Tristan would fall in love now, it might save a good deal of trouble afterwards." Despite Frost's narrative-ending hope that his retellings of Wagner's tales may enable his youthful friend to be "a little better, a little happier, a little wiser, perhaps," another motive seems clear in "The Love Potion." Frost hearkens back to the Ring and its heroine Brünnhilde, "a goddess till her father kissed her, and then she was

Frost visualizes Wagner's dramas in leaping, curling flames.

nothing at all until her lover [Siegfried] kissed her, and after that she was a woman, which was the best thing she could possibly be."

Brünnhilde, a favorite subject of Wagner-book illustrators, is for artist Burleigh a traditionally teutonic-looking "Daughter of the God." His *Jugendstil*-inspired valkyrie is surrounded by a pseudo-Gothic frieze depicting Ring cycle events — Siegfried lopping off Mime's head, for instance. The swastika in the portrait's lower left-hand corner is a reminder that this symbol was regarded as a Germanic totem well before the Nazis misappropriated it.

Jugendstil and other rebellious continental art schools had their English counterpart in the pre-Raphaelites, which, in Wagner illustrating, culminated in Rackham's 1910 Ring sketches. Rackham's still-dazzling work seems quite modern when contrasted to a 1909 "Wotan's Farewell," another frontispiece for an English-language Wagner adaptation, Oliver Huckel's version of *Die Walküre*. The musculature, artist unknown, of both Brünnhilde and Wotan seems more late-Victorian Michelangelesque than pre-Raphaelite, but this illustrated kitsch is appropriate accompaniment for Huckel's missionary reversifying of Wagner, artistic styles and literary justification, explained below, both typical of the period.

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Burleigh's drawing of Brünnhilde for Frost's tale "Daughter of the God."

Dr. Huckel's first Wagner libretto reworking, *Parsifal*, was published in 1903, coincident with the Metropolitan Opera's famed bootleg *Parsifal* production that violated Bayreuth copyright laws in spirit if not in fact. Perhaps buoyed by the *Parsifal* sensation, Huckel eventually published an

There is still interest in even the most fanciful Wagner.

11-volume series of libretti/narratives, including even *Rienzi*, completed just before World War I. At that time Germanic artworks abruptly became unfashionable in most English-

speaking countries, ending the spate of late-Victorian-inspired Wagner storybooks.

Huckel's bibliography also includes *Mental Medicine: Some Practical Suggestions from a Spiritual Standpoint* and *The Melody of God's Love*, an interpretation of the 23rd Psalm, and he is certainly one of the most fervent of the early 20th-century Wagner storytelling evangelists. In a preface identical to those in each of the four Ring libretto adaptations, Huckel asserts his version's aim is "to be faithful to Wagner's text, and, at the same time, clear in thought." Huckel's goal is "to transfuse into English the very spirit of Wagner's lofty thought." But the *Walküre* incestuous mating of Siegmund and Sieglinde, clearly identified as such even in

the 1910 Margaret Armour translation Rackham illustrates, becomes, in Huckel's lines, "the dastard twain/Of rash and recreant souls who scorn my [Fricka's] way/And break the sacred laws of home and hearth." Earlier in Huckel's version Siegmund had justified the twins' love by exclaiming, "We are the last of the Volsungs and must live/Each for the other, and our god-like sire." The closest Huckel comes to reconciling the Ring's incest with personal religious beliefs is the preface, where he asserts, "*The Valkyrie* is a parable of the punishment of violated laws. There is a reign of law in the world. Who so offends must suffer. It is inevitable." Huckel does not indicate, however, which of the offenses in *Walküre* is severe enough to justify such Old Testament retribution.

Equally perplexing is H.A. Guerber's 1895 *Stories of the Great Wagner Operas*. At the conclusion of Guerber's Act I *Walküre*, as Siegmund

The swastika in the lower left-hand corner is a reminder that this symbol was regarded as a Germanic totem well before the Nazis misappropriated it.

and Sieglinde "gaze enraptured upon each other, they still fail to recognize each other as kin" and "steal away softly, hand in hand, to go and seek their happiness out in the wide world." So much for Wagner's libretto as well as his wildly exultant scoring at the very end of the act, for it is Fricka, scolding Wotan in Act II, who indicates the public may now officially acknowledge that incest has been committed.

Before examining Rackham's illustrations and those of a modern-day Ring illustrator counterpart, Ul de Rico, the uniqueness of English-language turn-of-the-century Wagner adaptations should be stressed. There was, of course, great interest in America in the composer because of the Met's emphasis on Wagnerian repertory during the company's early years. Several prominent critics, Henry E. Krehbiel of the *New York Tribune*, for example, were Germanophiles who particularly championed Wagner's operas (Frost's *Wagner Story Book* is dedicated to Helen Krehbiel); and, as the 1903 *Parsifal* episode proved, Americans weren't especially intimidated by threats of retribution from Bayreuth and Cosima Wagner, fears that tempered even British adaptations, and especially Continental Wagneriana. According to a 1981 Bayreuth Festival spokesman, there are simply



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An illustration of Wotan's Farewell for *The Valkyrie*, a free translation of Wagner's dramatic poem by Oliver Huckel (Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1909).

no German counterparts to the books published in the United States. Even George Bernard Shaw placed his *Perfect Wagnerite* within very clear social and economic contexts (primarily Fabian Socialism), and Armour's translation is of such fidelity that it inspired modern-day Wagnerians. The importance of Armour's contribution can be understood by comparing three translations of Fricka's explosive questioning of Wotan in *Die Walküre*:

Who has ever heard
of brother and sister as lovers?
(Margaret Armour, 1910)

When was it allowed that love
should
Exist 'twixt relations?
(Crown Publishers,
New York, 1938 —
translator unknown)

When came it to pass
that brother and sister were
lovers?
(Andrew Porter, 1976)

Yet without the Rackham illustrations to accompany her translation, even Armour's version might have long ago been forgotten, rather than serving as inspiration for Andrew Porter and other contemporary Wagner translators.

Rackham's pre-Raphaelite drawings, with their superimposed rectangular and triangular geometric forms, are regarded as perhaps the best illustrations ever inspired by Wagner's operas, and the two-volume Rackham/Armour collaboration was

Rackham's still-dazzling work seems quite modern . . .

reissued in 1976, the centennial year of the Bayreuth Festival. One of Rackham's most striking illustrations is his Brünnhilde, standing atop a rock, leaning forward and grasping her spear [see front cover of this issue]. As Armour has inspired contemporary versifiers, Rackham has likewise been a model for modern visual artists such as Ul de Rico, whose 1980 oil paintings accompany a Ring text translated from German by Katherine Talbot. Ul de Rico's fantastic realism is apotheosized in a double frieze in which Siegfried and Brünnhilde make love in the painting's bright upper section and Hagen fantasizes of Siegfried's death in a darkly erotic lower segment. While Ul de Rico's curvilinear fire is obviously Rackham-inspired, even more derivative are his two angular spears thrust into Siegfried's chest.

Full-sized tracings of the angles formed by Rackham's Brünnhilde and her arm grasping the spear, and the Ul de Rico spears would indicate that though artistic styles may mutate, basic visual principles can remain the same. Ul de Rico's angular composition is larger in reproduction because of the difference in text sizes. Rackham's work is confined to 33 square inches (7" x 4 3/4") but Ul de Rico's folio-sized book (13" x 9 1/2") allows him 123 square inches of illustration space.

In addition to Ul de Rico's artistic adaptation of the Ring, Rackham also has influenced literary adapters of the Ring saga. In a 1979 *Opera News* article, Philip Caggiano, author of *The Ring: Four Plays for Children*, performed multiple times in New York and published last year by the Metropolitan Opera Guild, cites both Rack-

continued on p. 73



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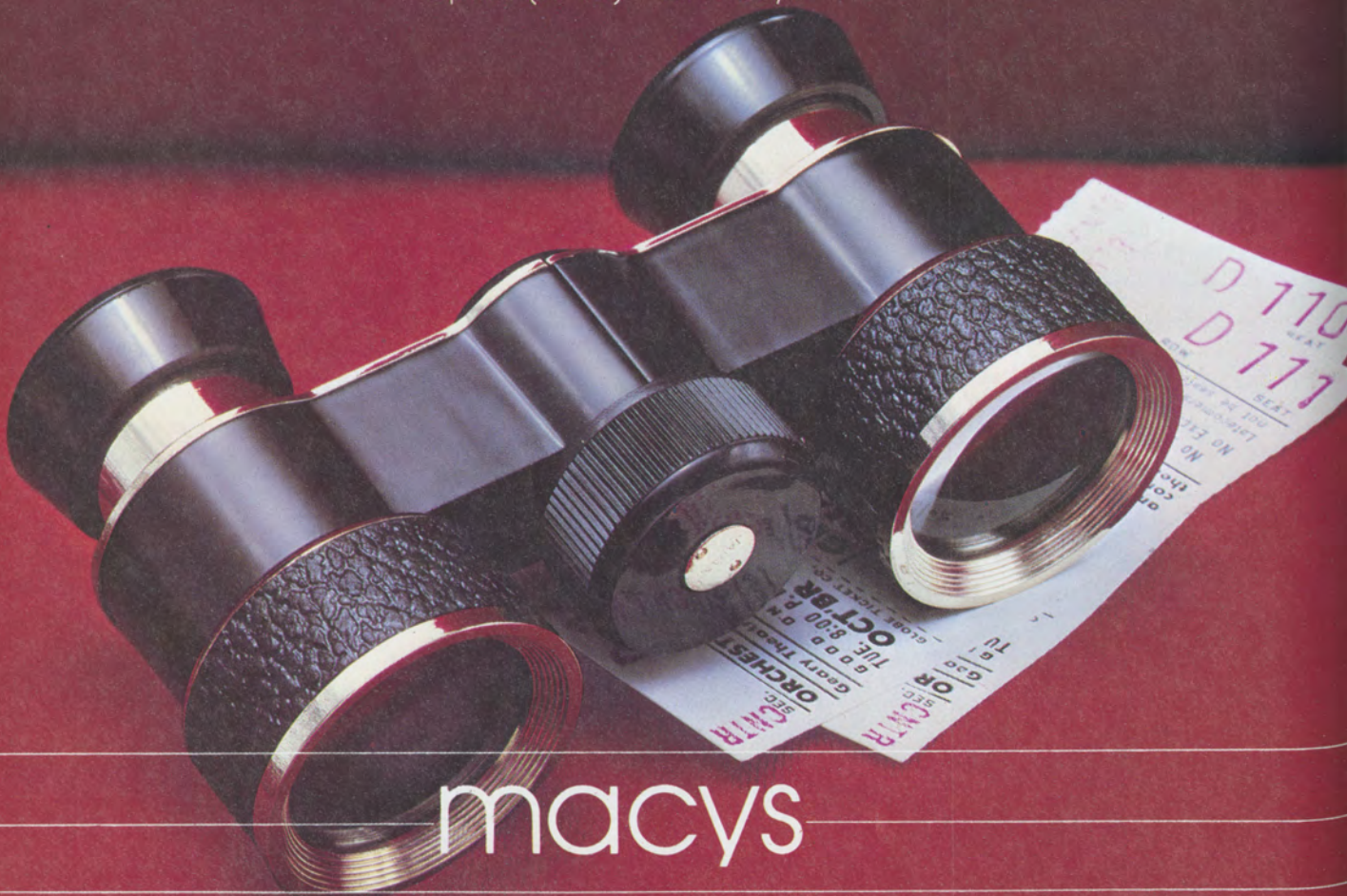
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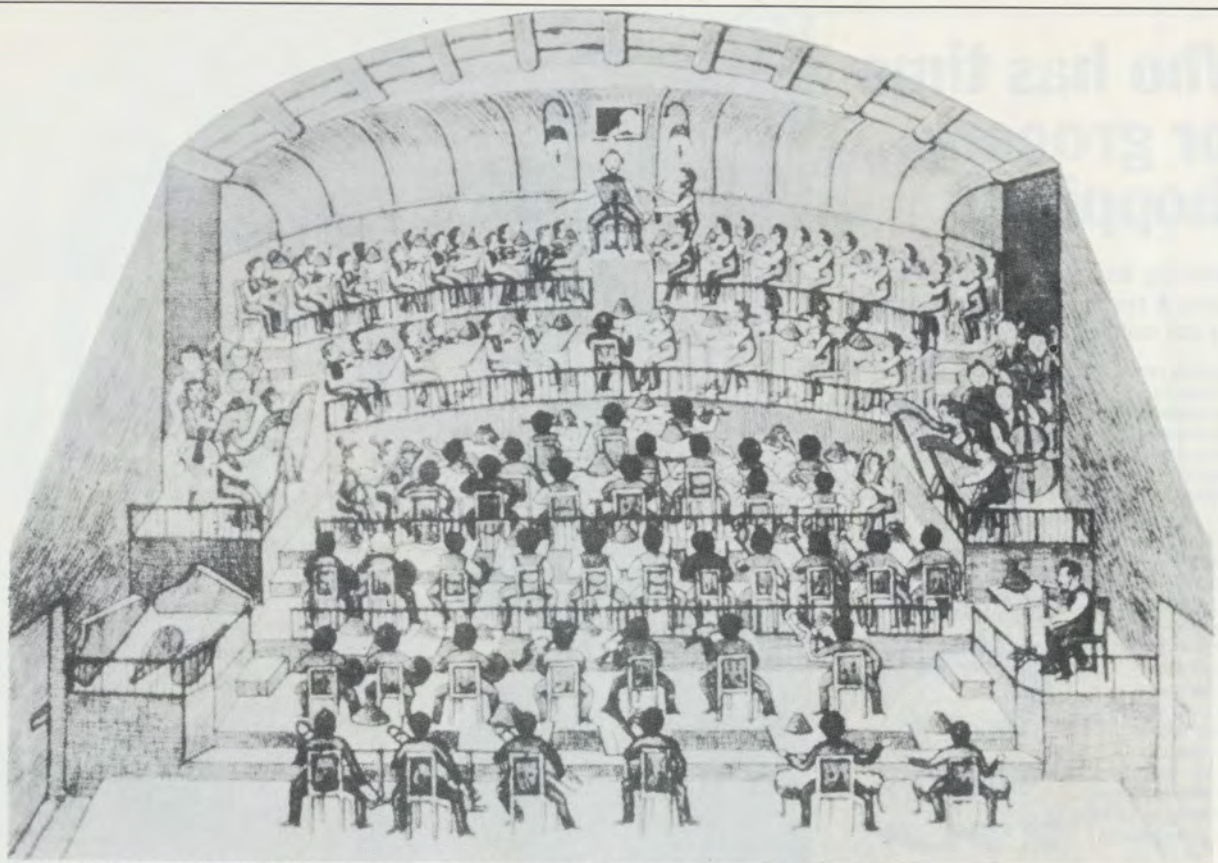
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Wagner looks in on a *Parsifal* rehearsal through a window in the hidden pit of Bayreuth's festival theater.

The Wagnerian Orchestra

In *Die Walküre* Wagner used contrasts of register and range in his enlarged orchestra to articulate and characterize the drama.

By DAVID HAMILTON

Time was when Richard Wagner figured prominently as an orchestral composer in our musical life, and the "all-Wagner concert" was a regular fixture in the seasons of major orchestras. Such evenings were not filled with Wagner's concert works for orchestra, however — not the early Symphony, the *Faust Overture* or the *Siegfried Idyll* (really for chamber orchestra, in fact). Rather, the principal fare was purple passages from the Ring cycle, lifted from context and

furnished with artificial beginnings and conclusions. At a time when few cities could boast opera companies capable of staging the works, and when radio and recordings were not yet making the sound of the Ring widely available, such concerts offered a taste of Wagner's mastery of orchestral panoply and tone painting.

More recently, the "all-Wagner concert" has been on the wane; if it turns up at all, it is now usually devoted to a complete act or other lengthy sequence from one of the operas, in its original form with voices. With multiple, complete

recordings of the cycle available (and more on the way), and of course performances in the opera house, we have ample opportunity to hear Wagner's orchestral writing in its original context, to appreciate its full range of effectiveness.

That effectiveness extends considerably beyond its power to set the listener's ears on end, for Wagner used the orchestra, as he used every other musical resource, to articulate and characterize the drama. He went about the composition of an opera somewhat differently than his predecessors: instead of breaking a story down into a

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Richard Wagner (1813-1883) in a painting by Franz von Lenbach.

series of episodes suitable for lyrical treatment and then connecting them with narrative elements set to very simple music (recitative), Wagner sought to make each act a continuous sweep of music — with, naturally, rising and falling tensions, but no full stops. The music dramas still include "set pieces" — the equivalents of arias and ensembles in earlier opera — but now these are smoothly embedded in the ongoing fabric of sound.

That fabric flows principally in the orchestra. The shift of the musical center of gravity, from the voices to the orchestra, is an essential aspect of Wagner's technique. It is in the orchestra that he introduces his themes and develops them, giving form and atmosphere to the less lyrical episodes, building the associations

between these themes and dramatic elements, and, at the climaxes, transfiguring the melodic line with glowing colors and potent vocal gestures. In the *Ring*, *Tristan*, *Meistersinger* and *Parsifal*, the orchestral continuity is constantly varied, shaped by tempo, meter, rhythm, harmony, texture, dynamics and color; separately and in combination, these elements generate sudden contrasts or gradual transitions, tensions and relaxations, points of arrival temporary or definitive.

Orchestration is not the least among these shaping factors in Wagner's musical drama, and the composer gave special attention to the constitution of the orchestra in the *Ring* cycle to increase its resourcefulness. Much has been made of the size of this orchestra, which anti-

Wagnerians once took to be evidence of the composer's megalomania or of his vulgar fascination with sheer volume of sound. However, the most important fact about Wagner's large orchestra is not its size, but rather the variety of independent tone colors that it encompasses.

The Ring orchestra includes woodwinds by fours: that is, three flutes and a piccolo (one player sometimes switching to give two of each), three oboes and an English horn (who sometimes doubles as a fourth oboe), three clarinets and a bass clarinet — though, for some reason, only three bassoons, without a contrabassoon. With four instruments in each subsidiary wind family, Wagner could score a complete four-note chord in a uniform color, instead of having to rely on mixtures when he wanted to write complex harmonies.

To achieve a similar flexibility and timbral coherence in the brass, Wagner added new instruments to the usual complements. First, he enlarged the existing sub-families. The horns

"Set pieces" are smoothly embedded in the ongoing fabric of sound.

were increased from four to eight; to three normal trumpets, a bass trumpet was added; and the standard three trombones (alto, tenor and bass) were filled out with a contrabass instrument. To add a fourth timbre, he conceived the so-called "Wagner tubas," somewhere between horns and trombones in sound, inspired by some novel brass instruments he had seen in the Paris workshops of Adolphe Sax (inventor of the more durable saxophone). Wagner had these built in two sizes, tenor and bass, and used two of each in the Ring; they are played by the same musicians who play the second quartet of horns. As foundation for the brass, there is one contrabass tuba — a true tuba, this, unlike the Wagner tubas, which are really more like horns.

Worth mention at this point is the fact that the addition of valves to instruments of the brass family during the earlier 19th century was an essential prerequisite for Wagner's extensive use of brass. Under the old system of interchangeable crooks for playing in different keys and hand-stopping to get intermediate notes, the kind of fluent chromatic harmony characteristic of Wagner's style would have been extremely difficult to achieve.

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ample string section to balance the winds and brass (he asks for 16 first and 16 second violins, 12 violas, 12 cellos and eight double basses), Wagner had an orchestra that he could play upon like an organ, using colors in isolation or in blends, dividing and subdividing his choirs to set up a rich hierarchy of possibilities. Given the time spans that he was working with, such variety was less a luxury than sheer necessity.

Having the instruments available is only the beginning, of course; putting them together in combinations that sound well and achieve the appropriate effect is another skill —

Wagner sought to make each act a continuous sweep of music.

which Wagner had in abundance, fortunately. No doubt his years as musical director of the Dresden Opera had given him the most intimate familiarity with the orchestra and its potential. Still, it remains a remarkable fact that when he undertook the Ring cycle, he had not yet even heard his *Lohengrin* (complete in 1848), and he would not hear *Das Rheingold* or *Die Walküre* until years after their completion. Yet what he wrote for this unprecedented orchestral ensemble appears to have required no significant correction. He even understood the limitations of the



The eight horns and the four Wagner tubas of the Vienna Philharmonic during a recording of *Das Rheingold*.

as-yet-unheard Wagner tubas: at the end of Act II of *Die Walküre*, he omits them from the last two punchy chords, even though they have figured prominently in the texture up to that point, because they would be too heavy for

the sharp, staccato effect desired.

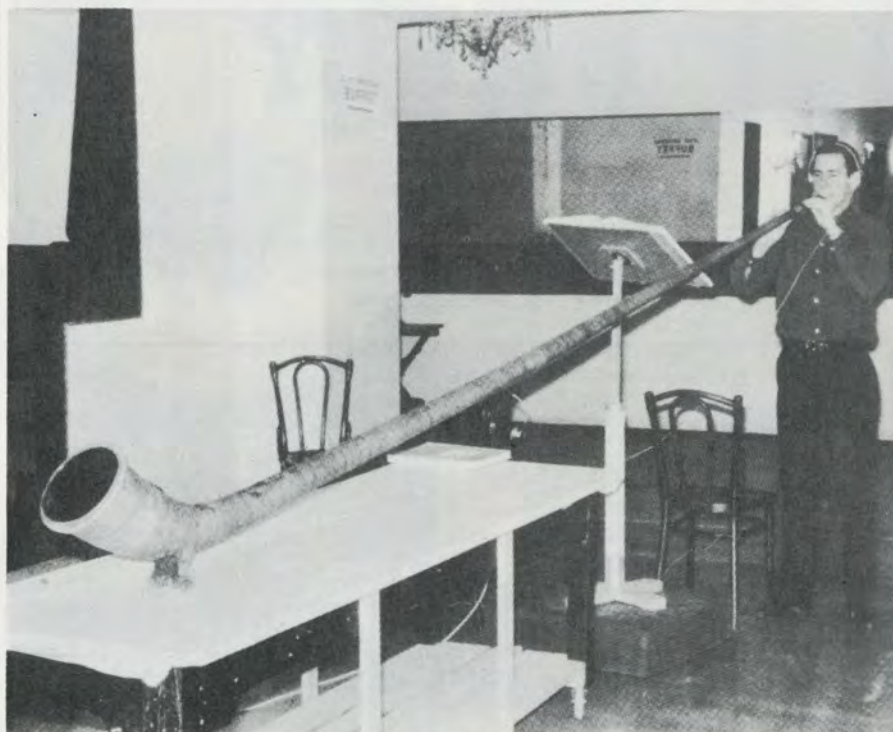
Another, more obvious aspect of Wagner's instrumental mastery was his understanding of individual instruments and their expressive capacities. One might cite, for a single example, the always grateful and apt writing for the clarinets, whether alone (the solemn bass clarinet solo when Brünnhilde begs Wotan to explain his anguish, in Act II), in pairs (in the early scenes of Siegmund and Sieglinde, where they alternate with pairs of oboes), in threes (in the ominous motive of "Annihilation," towards the end of Wotan's narration), and in combinations with the

It is in the orchestra that he introduces his themes and develops them.

other winds (at the beginning of Brünnhilde's plea in Act III, "War es so schmachlich, was ich verbrach"). Cooler flutes, drier oboes and liquid clarinets are often alternated and blended for expressive contrasts.

Over and above individual details, one of the most important roles that the orchestra plays in *Die Walküre* is a long-range one, for Wagner uses contrasts of register and range to articu-

continued on p. 75



The alphorn used for the offstage calls announcing the approach of Hunding at the end of Act II of *Die Walküre*.



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BIRGIT NILSSON

Renowned as one of the great singers of the century, Swedish dramatic soprano Birgit Nilsson returns to the San Francisco Opera to sing the role of her 1956 American debut at the War Memorial, Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre*, for three performances of the Wagner opera. Other appearances with the Company were as Turandot and Leonora in *Fidelio* in 1964, Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde* in 1970 and 1974, Brünnhilde in the Ring cycle in 1972 and her first American performance as the Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* last season. In November of 1979 she made a triumphant return to San Francisco in a Wagner-Strauss concert conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler. Miss Nilsson made an unexpected operatic debut as Agathe in *Der Freischütz* in 1946 and her formal debut as Lady Macbeth at the Stockholm Opera the following year. Her first major engagement outside Sweden was at Glyndebourne in 1951 as Elettra in *Idomeneo*. Other important debuts include the Vienna State Opera in 1954, La Scala in 1958 as Turandot and the Metropolitan Opera in 1959 as Isolde. The two roles with which Miss Nilsson has been most frequently associated in recent years are Elektra and the Dyer's Wife. She has performed the former in Paris, London, Vienna, New York, Munich and Hamburg. She first portrayed the Dyer's Wife at the Stockholm Opera in 1975 and has since been heard in the role in Vienna, Munich, Berlin, Hamburg and, most recently, New York. Last spring at the Met she was heard in two all-Wagner concerts on two consecutive days, singing duets from *Tristan und Isolde*, *Götterdämmerung* and *Die Walküre*. A frequent concert and recital artist, Miss Nilsson appeared in concert on tour in the Far East in 1980 and in the fall of 1979 in

various North American cities. Among the soprano's many recordings are two complete versions each of the Ring cycle, *Tristan und Isolde* and *Turandot*. In addition to being accorded the honorary title of Hovsångerska, the Swedish Court Singer, she recently received the Leonie Sonning Prize, Denmark's foremost honor in the field of the arts, and the title of Kammer-sängerin and Life-Member of the Vienna State Opera.



ESZTER KOVÁCS

Hungarian dramatic soprano Eszter Kovács makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre*, a role she has sung in Catania and Dusseldorf, at the Kennedy Center in her 1974 American debut in a production directed by George London, and in Hungary, where she has also sung the *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* Brünnhildes. Upon graduation from Budapest's Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, Miss Kovács was immediately contracted by the Budapest State Opera, where she has been a regular member ever since and with which she has been heard in Germany, Italy, Austria, the Soviet Union, Poland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark. In 1968 she sang the role of Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle* in Prague, where she has also been heard in *Fidelio*. During the 1973-74 season she sang the *Götterdämmerung* Brünnhilde in Duisberg and Dusseldorf, and has since sung the role in Lyons, Geneva, Basel and, in June 1981, in Florence under Zubin Mehta. Other Wagner roles she has performed in Hungary include Venus, Elisabeth, Senta and Sieglinde, a role she sang in 1975 at Covent Garden under Colin Davis. In 1980 she appeared in Santa Fe as Chrysothemis in *Elektra* and undertook the title role the same year for the first time in Fort Worth. She was recently heard as Senta at the

Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg and is scheduled to appear in the same role in Hamburg and Fort Worth in the near future. Miss Kovács was a prizewinner at the 1970 Tchaikovsky International Singing Competition in Moscow.



LEONIE RYSANEK

Acclaimed throughout the world as a soprano without peer, Austria's Leonie Rysanek returns for her 10th season at the War Memorial in one of her most famous roles, Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. She first portrayed Sieglinde locally during her American debut season here in 1956 and sang it again in 1976. During her first year here she was also heard as Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer* and in the title role of *Aida*. Subsequent appearances in the Italian repertoire included Turandot, Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Lady Macbeth and Aida in 1957, Leonora in *La Forza del Destino* in 1958 and the title role in *Tosca* in 1976. Hailed as one of the greatest Strauss singers of this century, Miss Rysanek has been cheered locally as Ariadne in 1957, as the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in 1960, 1976 and 1980, as Chrysothemis in *Elektra* in 1973 and 1979, as Salome in 1974 and as the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1978. Her other Wagnerian role in San Francisco has been Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* (1958 and 1973). In 1976 Miss Rysanek received the San Francisco Opera medal on the 20th anniversary of her Company debut. Other honors include the title of Kammer-sängerin by both the Bavarian and Austrian governments. On the occasion of her 25th year in opera in 1974, she was made an honorary member of the Vienna State Opera and in 1979 was unanimously chosen by the artists of that company to receive the Lotte Lehmann ring as its reigning soprano. Recent additions to her repertoire



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include Medea at the Vienna State Opera, Kundry in *Parsifal* at the Hamburg State Opera and Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Bavarian State Opera. Engagements during the 1980-81 season included Salome and Chrysothemis in Tokyo with the Vienna State Opera, the Marschallin, the Empress and Santuzza in Vienna and Berlin, Tosca and Ariadne in Hamburg, Santuzza in Munich, Salome in Capetown and concerts in Paris and at the Flanders Festival. Miss Rysanek recently completed filming the title role in *Elektra* in collaboration with the late Karl Böhm, and was heard as Ariadne in Chicago. Next summer she will sing Kundry in the Bayreuth Festival performances commemorating the 100th anniversary of *Parsifal*.



NADINE DENIZE

Mezzo-soprano Nadine Denize makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Fricka in *Die Walküre*. Upon her graduation from the Paris Conservatory in 1965, she was engaged by the Paris Opera, where she appeared as Marguerite in Berlioz' *La Damnation de Faust* and Charlotte in *Werther*. In 1971 she began to appear in other European cities as well as the other major theaters of France. She sang her first Kundry in *Parsifal* for Rolf Liebermann's new regime at the Paris Opera in 1974, at which time she also became a regular member of the Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg, where her roles included Eboli in *Don Carlo*, Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Fricka in *Die Walküre*, Marina in *Boris Godunov*, Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Kundry. She also appeared as Fricka at the festival in Orange. Since 1977 Miss Denize has been heard at the Vienna Staatsoper, the Hamburg Staatsoper, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Munich Nationaltheater, La Scala, the Deutsche Oper am Rhein and the houses in Geneva

and Budapest. Her American debut was as Cassandra in Berlioz' *Les Troyens* at the Ravinia Festival in 1979 with the Chicago Symphony under James Levine. During the 1979-80 season her performances included Kundry in Munich, Charlotte at La Scala, Kostelnicka in *Jenufa* in Paris, and both Cassandra and Didon in *Les Troyens* at Marseilles. This year she was seen as Venus in *Tannhäuser* in Berlin and was a soloist in Mahler's Eighth Symphony with the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome.



REBECCA COOK

First place winner in the Grand Finals of the 1978 San Francisco Opera Auditions, soprano Rebecca Cook sings Micaëla in *Carmen* and Gerhilde in *Die Walküre*. She made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1979 as the Fifth Maidservant in *Elektra* and Fiordiligi in the student matinee and family-priced performances of *Così fan tutte*. Last season she appeared in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and sang Barena in *Jenufa*, the First Lady in *The Magic Flute* and a Fortuneteller in *Arabella*. Miss Cook made her professional debut as Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* with Hidden Valley Opera and repeated that role as a member of the 1978 Merola Opera Program at Stern Grove. During the 1979 Spring Opera season she performed in the ensemble of *Death in Venice* and sang Mary Seaton in Thea Musgrave's *Mary, Queen of Scots*. She returned in 1980 as Katherine de Vauxelles in *The Vagabond King* and this year was heard as the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro*, a role she also sang at the Carmel Bach Festival in 1980. The soprano studied with Margaret Harshaw at Indiana University, where her roles included Violetta, Tosca, Cio-Cio-San, Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and the title

role in Floyd's *Susannah*. As a recitalist, she has appeared with the symphony orchestras of Indianapolis, St. Louis, Omaha and Fort Wayne, at the Carmel Bach Festival and, most recently, at U.C. Berkeley in the Verdi Requiem. For two years Miss Cook participated in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artists-Opera Program. In 1980 she portrayed Mariane in the world premiere of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe* with the American Opera Project.



PHYLLIS HUNTER

In her debut season with the San Francisco Opera, soprano Phyllis Hunter sings Javotte in *Manon*, Olga in *The Merry Widow* and Helmwige in *Die Walküre*. Earlier this year she was heard as Iphigeneia in John Eaton's *The Cry of Clytaemnestra* and as a Heartless Lady in Monteverdi's *Il Ballo delle Ingrate* with Spring Opera Theater. After two years as an apprentice with Santa Fe Opera, she toured with Western Opera Theater, performing such roles as Musetta in *La Bohème* and Inez in Cherubini's *The Portuguese Inn*. A specialist in the dramatic coloratura repertoire, she recently made her debut with Chattanooga Opera as Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and with the Houston Grand Opera as the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*. Miss Hunter has also been heard with the Fort Worth Opera and Cincinnati Opera and in oratorio with the New York City Choral Society, the San Antonio Symphony and the Corpus Christi Symphony.

BEVERLY MORGAN

American mezzo-soprano Beverly Morgan makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Siegrune in *Die Walküre*. She appeared as Hansel in a 1975 production of *Hansel and Gretel* at the New England Conservatory, and that same year was soloist with the



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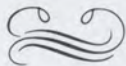
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Boston Pops Orchestra under the late Arthur Fiedler. In the fall of 1976 she debuted with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa in a performance of De Falla's *Three-Cornered Hat*, which was repeated at Tanglewood the following summer. In February 1977 she sang with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and she was heard in a performance of Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* at the Library of Congress in spring of 1978. That summer she appeared as Cherubino in the Boston Summer Opera Theater's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and made her New York recital debut at Carnegie Hall in February 1979 as a winner of the Concert Artists Guild competition. During 1979 she was apprentice artist with the Wolf Trap Opera Festival, and in April of that year performed the title role in Rorem's *Miss Julie* with the New York Lyric Opera. She appeared as Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* with the Pennsylvania Opera Theater in December 1979 and in Spring of 1980 was heard as the 2nd Lady in *The Magic Flute* with the Opera Company of Philadelphia. That summer she performed at the Marlboro Festival, and has been a frequent recitalist in the New England area. A specialist in new music, Miss Morgan created the role of Kasturbai in the world premiere of Philip Glass' *Satyagraha*. In January of this year she portrayed Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* with the Asolo Opera Company of Florida. She has recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, Columbia, New World Records and CRI.

INGRID OLSSON

Soprano Ingrid Olsson makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Praskowia in *The Merry Widow* and later sings Ortlinde in *Die Walküre*. Originally a mezzo-soprano, she made



her operatic debut in *The Consul* at New York City Opera in 1974. She has since been engaged by companies including the Opera Society of Washington, the National Opera Orchestra, the Lincoln Center Musical Arts Club, the St. Paul Light Opera and New York's Bel Canto Opera, and has participated in performances at the New York YMHA and Alice Tully Hall. She has sung roles in *Die Walküre*, *Oberon*, *Suor Angelica*, *Arabella* and *Aida*, among others, and has made numerous concert appearances in New York, London and Philadelphia in such works as *Messiah*, the *St. John Passion*, Verdi's Requiem, *Elijah*, the *B Minor Mass*, the *St. Matthew Passion* and Mozart's Requiem. She has been the recipient of awards from the Ford Foundation and Metropolitan Opera Studio.



SUSAN QUITTMAYER

Susan Quittmeyer sings four roles this season: Rosette in *Manon*, Mercédès in *Carmen*, the Priestess in *Aida* and Waltraute in *Die Walküre*. Her performance as Cherubino in the 1981 Spring Opera Theater pro-

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



LAURA BROOKS RICE

Following her appearance as Mistress Page in Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at Stern Grove as a member of the 1981 Merola Opera Program, mezzo-soprano Laura Brooks Rice makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Grimmerde in *Die Walküre*. She studied at Indiana University with Margaret Harshaw and was heard there in *Boris Godunov*, *The Bartered Bride*, *Prince Igor* and *Susannah*. As

continued on p. 66

FELIX DE RECONDO

PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER, 1981



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



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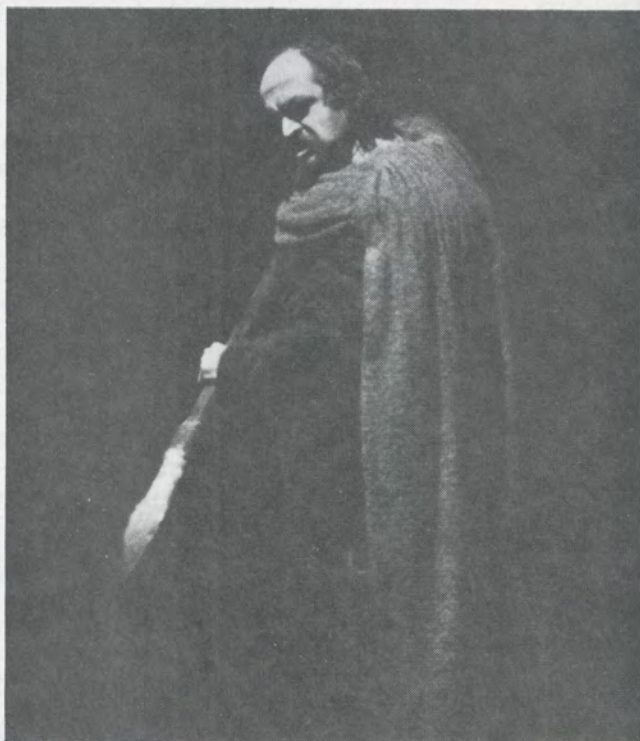
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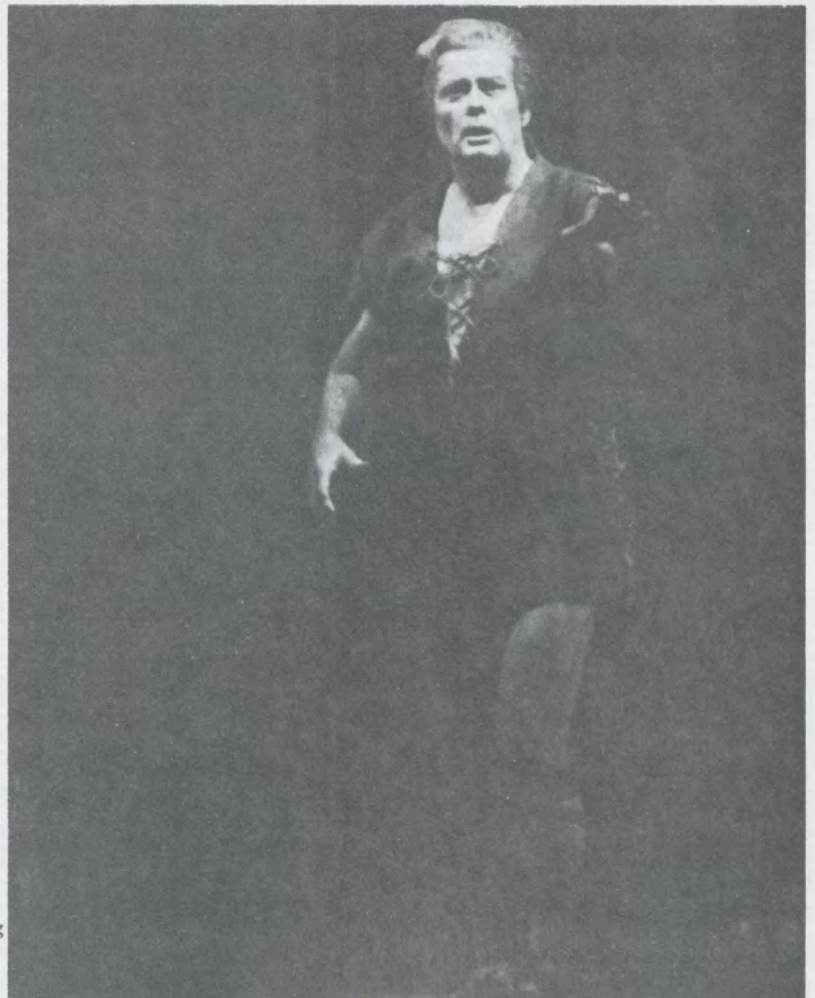


Birgit Nilsson, Manfred Schenk

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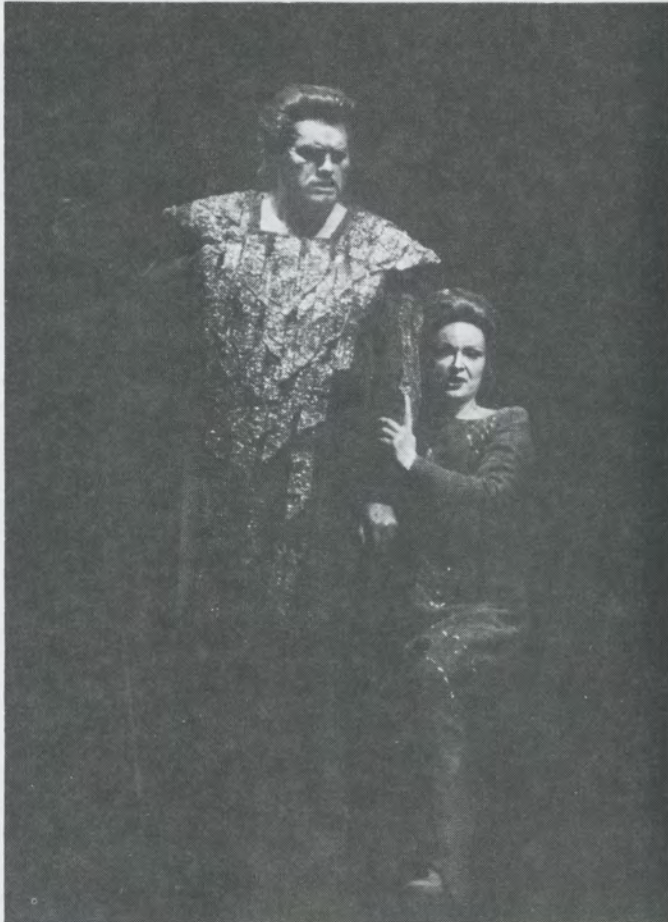
Die Walküre

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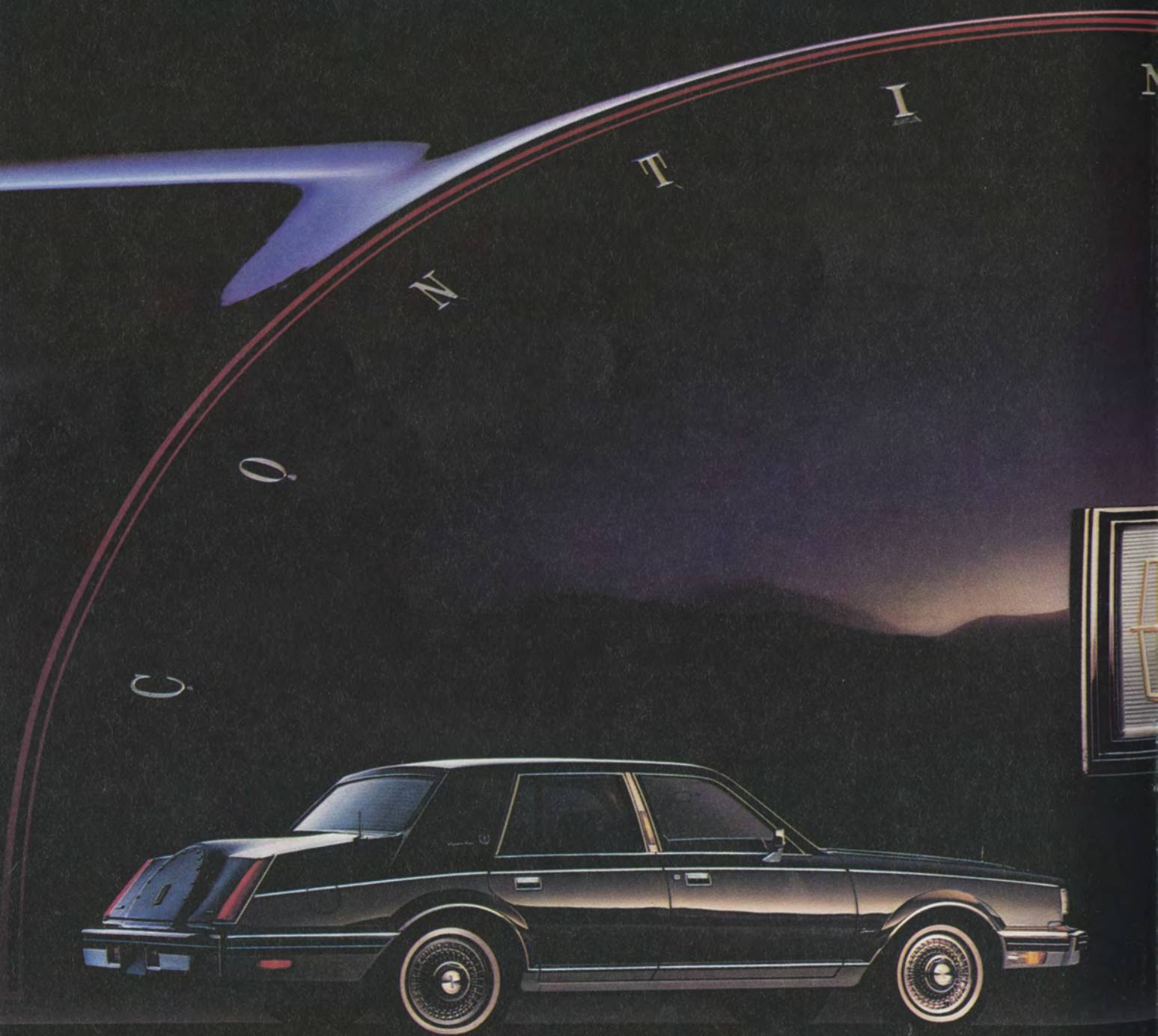


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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Siegmund

Sieglinde

Hunding

Wotan

Brünnhilde

Fricka

Gerhilde

Ortlinde

Helmwige

Schwertleite

Waltraute

Siegrune

Rossweisse

Grimgerde

James King

Leonie Rysanek

Kurt Rydl

Manfred Schenk*

Birgit Nilsson
(Nov. 20, 25; Dec. 1)

Eszter Kovács*
(Nov. 28; Dec. 6, 12)

Nadine Denize*

Rebecca Cook

Ingrid Olsson

Phyllis Hunter

Jane Shaulis*

Susan Quittmeyer

Beverly Morgan*

Leslie Richards

Laura Brooks Rice*

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: Legendary Germany

ACT I Hunding's dwelling

INTERMISSION

ACT II A mountain gorge

INTERMISSION

ACT III The summit of a mountain

SYNOPSIS

Die Walküre

ACT I

Seeking shelter from a storm, Siegmund staggers into Hunding's hut, built around the trunk of a huge ash tree. Hunding's wife, Sieglinde, revives him with a drink, and he awaits the arrival of her husband. When Hunding comes home, he notes the resemblance between the two and asks the stranger to tell about himself. Siegmund calls himself "Woeful" and sketches the sad events of his life which have left him fleeing weaponless from his foes. Listening intently, Hunding observes that he has pursued an enemy all day and finds him in his own house. According to the laws of hospitality, Siegmund can sleep the night but must fight, weapon or no, with Hunding at dawn. Alone, Siegmund calls on his father's spirit to furnish him the sword that had been promised in his hour of greatest need. Sieglinde steals in, saying that she has drugged Hunding; she tells how a sword was placed in the tree at her wedding feast by an old man who frightened everyone but her and that no one had ever been able to pull it out. The outer door flies open to reveal a moonlit night, and Siegmund compares his love for her to the union of spring and love; she answers that he is the spring come to free her from the barrenness of her marriage. In ecstasy, Siegmund pulls the sword, which he names Nothung ("Needful"), from the tree and proclaims Sieglinde as his bride. Learning that his father was Wälse (the name under which Wotan begot the Wälzung race), she identifies herself as his long-lost twin sister, and the two rejoice in the triumph of the blood of the Wälzungs. They start for the forest, pausing in the doorway in passionate embrace.

ACT II

In a rocky pass Wotan, king of the gods, tells Brünnhilde, his favorite Valkyrie daughter, that she will fight that day for Siegmund. They are interrupted by Fricka, Wotan's wife and the goddess of marriage, who strides in berating her husband not only for his two mortal children, Siegmund and Sieglinde, but because he now encourages their incestuous union. Wotan tries to pacify her, but she uses a series of legal arguments against him, finally winning on the point that Siegmund cannot save the gods or win Alberich's ring for them because he has Wotan's own magic sword and is therefore acting as the god's agent. His plans in ruins, Wotan agrees not to fight for his son and to make Brünnhilde fight for Hunding. As the girl returns, Fricka triumphantly sends her to see her father. Morosely, Wotan tells Brünnhilde about Alberich and his curse on the ring, how he, Wotan, fathered her and her sisters by Erda, goddess of the earth, in order to have messengers to carry fallen heroes to Valhalla to prepare for the eventual battle with the Nibelungs, and how his two mortal children were to help in the recovery

of the ring. Wild with frustration, he cries that Alberich won a woman with money and that their child has just been born. To him — the as-yet-unnamed Hagen — he bequeaths all the pain of the world. When he orders the distraught Brünnhilde to fight for Hunding, she tries to refuse. Wotan gives her no choice and leaves her to hide as Siegmund and Sieglinde rush in. Exhausted, Sieglinde goes to sleep in her brother's arms, while in a vision Brünnhilde appears to Siegmund. She tells him that he will soon go to Valhalla — without Sieglinde. He refuses to go and threatens to kill first Sieglinde, then himself rather than leave her. Overwhelmed by his love and valor, Brünnhilde promises to fight for him against Wotan's orders. When the battle with Hunding begins, Brünnhilde shields Siegmund; as he is ready to give Hunding a fatal blow, Wotan appears and Siegmund's sword cracks on Wotan's spear. Hunding stabs Siegmund; Sieglinde, who has witnessed it all, collapses. In the darkness, Brünnhilde scurries around, finding the pieces of the broken sword and swooping Sieglinde onto her horse before riding off in the night. In contempt, Wotan kills Hunding, then remembers Brünnhilde's disobedience, and in a fury rides off after her.

ACT III

The eight Valkyrie sisters of Brünnhilde gather on their rock, from which they set out to Valhalla with fallen heroes. Rushing in with Sieglinde, Brünnhilde asks for a horse for the woman. The sisters are afraid, and Brünnhilde realizes that she must take Wotan's wrath alone. Sieglinde is told that she is pregnant with Siegmund's child, who is destined to become the world's greatest hero, Siegfried. Brünnhilde gives her the pieces of Siegmund's sword and sends the grateful girl off into the forest. Brünnhilde at first hides from Wotan among her sisters, then appears for his sentence: banishment from Valhalla, a loss of godhood and a sleep on the rock from which the first man who comes by can wake her and claim her as his wife. Her sisters ride away and, alone with her father, whose anger is abating, Brünnhilde asks why she should be so punished for doing what he wanted — not what he said he wanted. She describes Siegmund's valor and tells him that Sieglinde is pregnant, gradually appealing to his pride in and love for her. She desperately pleads to be put in a magic circle of flame through which only the bravest man can cross. At first hesitant, Wotan concedes and bids his favorite child a tender farewell, kissing away her godhood and placing her gently on the rock. Then he summons Loge, god of fire, to surround her sleeping place with flames, and finally lays a spell: No one who is afraid of his spear can ever defy the flame. Gazing sadly at his sleeping daughter, the god descends to the valley through the flames.

CROCKER INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE RANKS FIRST.

American Banker

Thursday, May 28, 1981

Fund Name	Rate of Return with Rank in Parenthesis (First Quarter Omitted)	
	1-Year	5-Years
Citibank NA	51.0 (5)	120.4 (1)
Crocker National Bank	59.2 (1)	119.0 (2)
Morgan Guaranty Trust Co. NY	42.6 (14)	102.9 (3)
Provident National Bank	53.2 (3)	102.6 (4)
First Natl. Bk of Minneapolis	30.0 (65)	102.0 (5)
Northern Trust of Cleveland	49.4 (7)	99.0 (6)

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

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

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

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

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PROFILES

continued from p. 55

an apprentice artist with Central City Opera in 1980 she appeared in Marschner's *Der Vampyr*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Candide*. A winner of the 1981 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, she has been invited to appear as a guest artist at several of the Council's functions and was also asked by the late Rosa Ponselle to sing at her celebrity auction at the "Villa Pace" for the Peabody Institute.



LESLIE RICHARDS

Mezzo-soprano Leslie Richards, who made her Company debut last fall in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *Jenůfa*, sings Alisa in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Rosswisse in *Die Walküre* and Inez in *Il Trovatore*. During the first Summer Festival she was heard as Giovanna in *Rigoletto* and Pallade in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. She created the roles of Mme. Pernelle in the American Opera Project's world premiere of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe* in 1980 and Marla in the world premiere of Henry Mollicone's *Emperor Norton* with Brown Bag Opera in performances throughout San Francisco this spring. As a member of the 1980 Merola Opera Program she appeared as Nancy in *Albert Herring* and Berta in excerpts from *The Barber of Seville*. Last summer she was also featured with the Midsummer Mozart Festival under the baton of George Cleve. The mezzo-soprano participated in the San Diego Center Program and made her debut with that company as Sofia in Verdi's *I Lombardi* in 1979. A national winner in the 1980 Metropolitan Opera Auditions, Miss Richards was recently named Combustion Engineering Affiliate Artist in the San Francisco/Affiliate Artists-Opera Program.



JANE SHAULIS

Mezzo-soprano Jane Shaulis makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Schwertleite in *Die Walküre*. Her first stage appearances were in Philadelphia, as Maddalena in *Rigoletto* at the Academy of Vocal Arts, and as Musetta in *La Bohème* at the Rittenhouse Opera, both in 1969. Other numerous Philadelphia appearances include Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, and Anna in a production of *Maria Stuarda* starring Joan Sutherland that was also seen at the Connecticut Opera. In 1976 she appeared as Mama McCord in *The Ballad of Baby Doe* with New York City Opera, a role she repeated in that company's 1976 telecast "Live from Lincoln Center." Other New York City Opera roles include Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Dame Quickly in *Falstaff*, and Assunta in *The Saint of Bleeker Street*, also televised nationally. She has appeared at such major centers as Robin Hood Dell, the Los Angeles Music Center, and the festivals of Chautauqua, Aspen and Spoleto, U.S.A. This summer she made her debut with the Cincinnati Opera in productions of *Das Rheingold* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Other engagements this summer included Art Park Festival productions of Philip Glass' *Satyagraha*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. This season she also bows at the San Diego Opera, in *Andrea Chenier* and *Susanah*, and at the Pittsburgh Opera in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, as well as making appearances with the Florentine Opera of Milwaukee and New York City Opera. Her many concert appearances have been with such groups as the Buffalo Philharmonic, Savannah Symphony, Westminster Choir and the Long Island Symphony.



JAMES KING

Regarded as one of the leading dramatic tenors now active, James King sings Siegmund in *Die Walküre*, a role for which he is noted around the world, for the first time in San Francisco. Last heard here during the 1980 season as the Emperor in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and Canio in *I Pagliacci*, he made his professional debut with San Francisco's Spring Opera in 1961 as Don Jose in *Carmen* opposite Marilyn Horne. He first appeared with the San Francisco Opera as Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and as Florestan in *Fidelio* during the 1969 season. In 1971 he sang Walther in *Die Meistersinger* and Manrico in *Il Trovatore*, and in 1974 was heard in the title role of *Otello*. He has appeared with the major opera companies of Europe, including La Scala, Covent Garden, the Munich, Hamburg and Vienna State Operas and the Salzburg and Bayreuth Festivals. His repertoire encompasses the Wagnerian roles — Siegmund, Lohengrin, Parsifal, Walther and Tristan — as well as the dramatic tenor roles in the French and Italian repertoires. For several summers King has portrayed Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Salzburg Festival and last fall sang that role during the Vienna State Opera tour in Tokyo along with Aegisth in *Elektra*. Since his appearances in San Francisco during the 1980 season, King has sung Otello at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow; Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Salzburg Festival; Florestan in *Fidelio*, Canio in *I Pagliacci*, the title roles in *Parsifal* and *Lohengrin*, and Siegmund in Munich; Florestan, Canio, the Emperor, Walther in *Die Meistersinger*, the Drum Major in *Wozzeck*, Don José in *Carmen*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* and Aegisth in *Elektra* at the Vienna State Opera; and leading tenor



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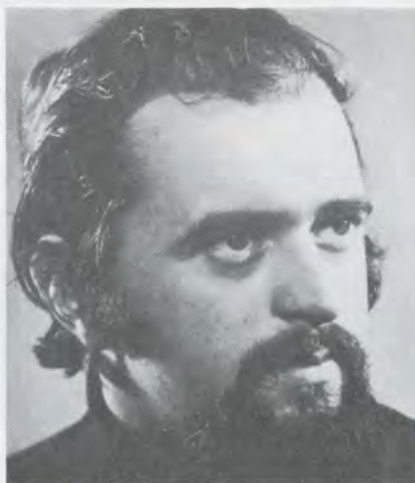
PROFILES

roles in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *Palestrina* in Hamburg. Among the tenor's many recordings are two complete versions of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.



MANFRED SCHENK

German bass Manfred Schenk makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Wotan in *Die Walküre*. Educated in his native Stuttgart, Schenk made his operatic debut in 1960 as Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Regensburg Theater, where he remained as a company member until 1969. That year he joined the Frankfurt Opera, where he has held the position of first bass. His American debut was in 1973 in Portland, and he bowed at the Metropolitan Opera in 1977 as Hunding in *Die Walküre*. Foreign engagements include Toulouse in November 1979, Turin in February 1980 and Bologna in March of the same year as Gurnemann in *Parsifal*. In May 1980 he portrayed Sarastro in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte* at the Frankfurt Opera. He first appeared as Wotan in Portland in March of this year. That same month saw him as King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* in Bordeaux, and in April he debuted at Covent Garden as King Henry in *Lohengrin* under the baton of Colin Davis. He was also engaged by Wolfgang Wagner to appear as Pogner in the 1981 Bayreuth Festival production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Schenk has been seen frequently on German television and has appeared as soloist with the Berlin Philharmonic. He has also participated in the festivals of Glyndebourne, Dubrovnik and Madrid. His upcoming engagements include appearances at the Vienna State Opera as well as in Munich, Berlin, Dresden and Zurich.



KURT RYDL

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

OTMAR SUITNER

A conductor of international distinction, Austrian conductor Otmar Suitner leads performances of *Die Walküre*. Following his Company



debut with *Götterdämmerung* in 1969, he has been on the podium for most of the Wagnerian masterpieces, including the memorable 50th Anniversary season presentation of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, as well as Strauss' *Salome* and *Elektra*. He was last applauded locally for the 1976 revival of *Die Walküre*. Suitner began his musical training with piano studies in his native Innsbruck and at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. Following World War II, he traveled throughout Europe as a concert pianist, ending that career to become chief conductor for the Dresden State Opera, and was associated with that organization until 1964, when he assumed a similar post with the Deutsche Staatsoper in East Berlin. With the Deutsche Staatsoper he has conducted all the company's performances in the Mozart, Wagner and Strauss repertory, among others. He also held the post of Festival Conductor at Bayreuth for four seasons, conducting performances of *Tannhäuser*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Die Meistersinger* and two complete Ring cycles. A guest conductor with both symphonic and operatic orchestras, he has performed in Vienna, Milan, Stockholm, Buenos Aires and Moscow, where he led the first German-language performances of *Die Meistersinger* at the Bolshoi Opera. Recent concert engagements have taken him to Japan and Scandinavia. Maestro Suitner has been Professor at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna since 1977.

GHITA HAGER

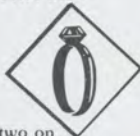
Estonian-born Ghita Hager, who directs the revival of *Die Walküre*, was the first woman to stage an opera for the San Francisco Opera when she debuted with *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in 1968. She began her career as a dancer and performed important solo roles

1981 SAN FRANCISCO OPERA RAFFLE

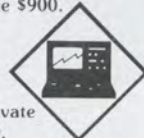
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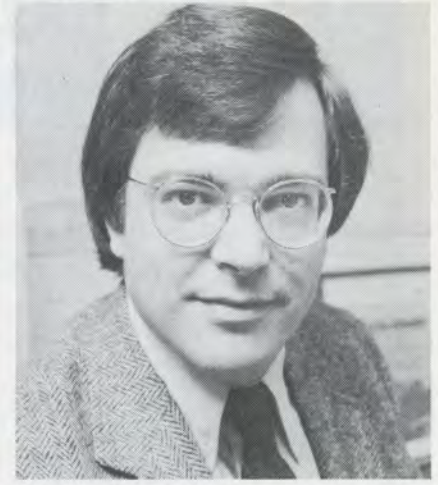
PROFILES



with the Bavarian State Opera from 1945 onward, later marrying its then assistant director, Paul Hager. With him, she acted as choreographer, assistant stage director and eventually co-producer for numerous opera houses in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy. Associated with the San Francisco Opera since 1954, Miss Hager joined Western Opera Theater at its founding in 1967, directing such works as *La Bohème*, *The Crucible* and *The Elixir of Love*. Credits as stage director for several productions of Spring Opera Theater preceded her fall season debut. Following *Il Barbiere*, she returned in 1969 for *Ariadne auf Naxos* and in 1970 was co-director (with Geraint Evans) of *Falstaff*. Subsequent assignments included *Carmina Burana* (1971), *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1972), *La Bohème* (1973), *Parsifal* and *Madama Butterfly* (1974), *Die Walküre* and *Il Barbiere* (1976), *Das Rheingold* and *Ariadne* (1977), *Don Giovanni* and *Der Rosenkavalier* (1978), and *La Forza del Destino* and *Tancredi* (1979). Miss Hager has directed several works for Portland Opera, including the American premiere of Krenek's *Life of Orestes* in 1975, *La Cenerentola* and *Die Meistersinger* in 1977, *Daughter of the Regiment* in 1979, and *Fidelio* in 1980. She is responsible for all of the current season's productions in Portland, where she has already directed *Rigoletto* and *Eugene Onegin* and will later direct *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and *Manon Lescaut*. She staged *Falstaff* for the San Antonio Opera, *Nabucco* for San Diego Opera during the 1980 Verdi Festival and earlier this fall directed the same work in its New York City Opera premiere.



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 Teatro Colon 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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Pictures in the Fire

continued from p. 42

ham's drawings and Armour's translation as inspiration.

Caggiano's reason for adapting Wagner seems an updating of Henry Frost's 1894 rationale:

It was my overall intention that *The Ring* would be the ultimate children's play. It tells of magic, heroism, legend, good and evil . . . Children enjoy it as do their parents, and the rest of us who know and revere Wagner's epic masterpiece have a good time, too.

One of Rackham's most striking illustrations is his Brünnhilde . . .

Since Caggiano's reworking comes 85 years after Frost's, there's no welsing about Volsung incest, even though the actors are played by pre-pubescent students:

Siegfried: Could it be that *you* are my long-lost sister?

Sieglinde: Yes, we are the children of the stranger with the sword.

. . . *They rush into each other's arms and flee into the night.*

Caggiano's *Ring* plays are not the first Wagner adaptations for children published by the Met Guild. In 1938 there was a *Lohengrin*, written by Robert Lawrence and illustrated in brilliantly toned watercolors by Alexandre Serebriakoff, part of a four-book series (all written by Lawrence) that helped clarify opera plots for children. Others included *Carmen*, *Aida* and *Hansel and Gretel*. In *Lohengrin*, at least, it is the watercolors ("Elsa of Brabant — appear before judgment," for example) that seem most appealing, especially considering such Lawrence-adapted lines as, "At the sight of the boy [Gottfried, transformed from a swan] Ortrud expires with rage." Of course the 1930s were another period of high Wagnerian achievement in the U.S., both at the Met and in San Francisco, but as Lawrence's verbiage and the brief, earlier-quoted lines from Crown Books' libretto of Fricka's Act II *Walküre* questioning, no great improvement had been made in popularizing Wagner's texts over that of the previous boom era.

In a 1925 preface to Gertrude Hall's unillustrated *Wagnerian Rom-*



Arthur Rackham's curvilinear style is seen in this 1911 illustration showing Siegfried's departure, leaving Brünnhilde surrounded by flames, for Margaret Armour's translation of *The Ring of the Nibelung* (Abaris Books).



"Elsa of Brabant — appear for judgment!" an illustration by Alexandre Serebriakoff for Robert Lawrence's adaptation of *Lohengrin* (Grosset & Dunlap, 1938).



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ances, originally published in 1907, novelist Willa Cather declares, "I know of only two books in English on Wagner that are at all worthy of their subject; the *Perfect Wagnerite* and *The Wagnerian Romances*." Cather explains that she first read Hall's explication while living in New Mexico, "far enough from the Metropolitan Opera House. I read the first chapter of *Parsifal* with increasing delight. I was astonished to find out how vividly it recalled to me the best renderings of that opera I have ever heard."

The Victorian-inspired spate of Wagner storybooks ended abruptly with World War I.

Recalling Oliver Huckel's preface to his Ring libretti, written during the same decade as Hall's 1907 *Parsifal* observations, it seems Wagner was taken quite earnestly. The following passage is part of Hall's *Parsifal* chapter that so appealed to Willa Cather:

One can suppose in Kundry an intended personification of the abstraction, Eternal Feminine, with two of her broad traits, the best perhaps and the worst: the passion for serving, tending, protecting, mothering, and the passion for subduing man, proving herself stronger by remorseless practice upon his strength.

But Hall wants her readers to fully understand this Wagnerian Delilah:

Kundry has many aspects but when all is said, and before all else, what we are watching is an upward-struggling soul, whose storm-tossed progress could never more move us as it does, did we not feel in her our sister.

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JERRY FLOYD, an opera writer and broadcast commentator, lives in Washington, D.C.



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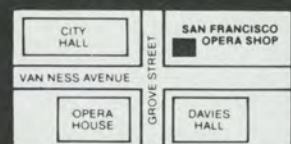
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Wagnerian Orchestra

continued from p. 48

late and characterize the overall progress of his drama. Each act of the opera has its distinctive pattern of timbre and range. Often only part of the large orchestra is used at a time; the full ensemble is drawn upon sparingly and with its coloristic emphasis cannily varied.

In Act I, after the storm that precedes the rise of the curtain, the writing remains remarkably low in range; only briefly, during the first intimations of sympathy between Siegmund and Sieglinde, and later, at the climax of his narration, do the violins make use of their upper strings. From this restricted palette, however, Wagner draws distinctive and memorable effects. In the opening scene, the cellos lead and sometimes are subdivided so that they alone play both melody and accompanying chords, an exceptionally homogeneous and delicate timbre. Later, as the twins await Hunding, the low strings sing the motif of "Wäl-sung's Woe" against a background of gently throbbing chords from four horns.

Wagner understood the individual instruments and their expressive capacities.

With Hunding's arrival, one first hears the brutal motif in the Wagner tubas that remains associated with him, though it is also used in other contexts. Most of the subsequent scene is carried on in a kind of recitative, accompanied principally by string chords, punctuated and varied by interjections — accents, motivic phrases — from the winds; when Siegmund tells of the disappearance of his father, Wälse, the choir of trombones softly intones the "Walhalla" motif. Again, the prevailing range remains low.

Siegmund is left alone with low strings and brass, the horns ominously repeating the rhythm of Hunding's motif; even when his voice rises to the sustained high G flat and G natural of his cries to Wälse, the orchestra remains below him, for Wagner is building up to a sudden and striking contrast. At the moment when the glow from the fire illuminates the sword in the ash tree, the orchestra, previously sounding only in the depths, suddenly becomes all high sounds: against bright winds and tremolo strings, the "Sword" motif, previously adumbrated in the somber voice of the bass trumpet and the melancholy ones of oboe and English horn, shines out in the gleaming C trumpet.



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Gradually, as the firelight fades, this airy texture, filigreed by the first appearance of the harp, returns to its starting point, preparing the entrance of Sieglinde. In the duet that follows, the full range of the orchestra, not merely the bottom or the top, comes into play. The textures become more continuous and active, especially through the proliferation of string scales and arpeggios, of rapidly pulsating chords in both winds and strings. Notice how, even at the biggest climaxes, such as when Siegmund pulls the sword from the tree, Wagner makes "windows" in the big orchestral sonorities so that the vocal phrases can make themselves heard: the brass weigh in between, not during, Siegmund's lines beginning, "Siegmund den Walsung siehst du Weib."

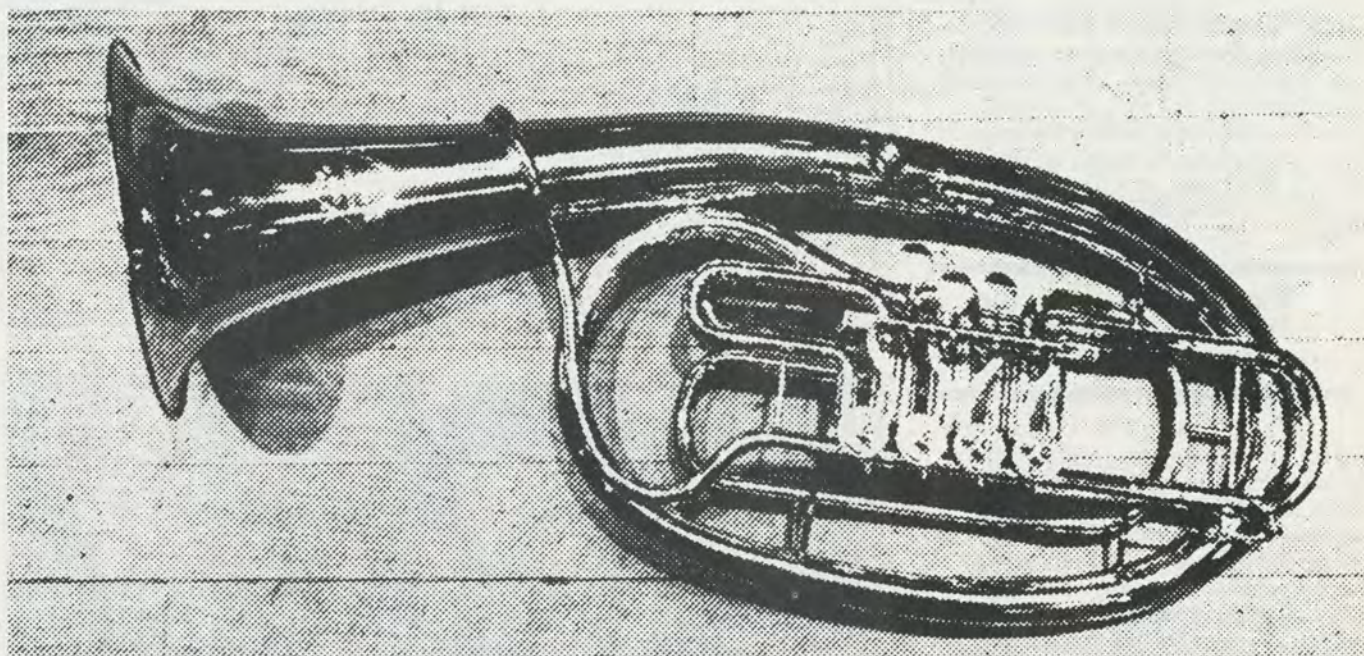
Since the second act will be pre-

power, is doomed to failure. From here, the orchestral range rises in a series of waves, each one cresting and falling back (though never again to this depth) until the end of Act II.

Wagner's control of color in this act is remarkable. For more than a hundred measures after the beginning of Wotan's narrative, the normally omnipresent violins do not play at all, and after that only gradually are the upper ranges reached again. The second wave begins with the arrival of Siegmund and Sieglinde, and subsides before the third, the famous scene between Brünnhilde and Siegmund known as the "Todesverkündigung." Here, Wagner uses his several choirs of brass instruments to impressive effect: the questioning motif of "Fate" in the Wagner tubas is twice answered by the "Annunciation of Death" in

ries" motif, which forms the principal thematic thread of this section, but there is no real bass line under this top-heavy texture — indeed, the double basses play only in the contrasting sections (when the several Valkyries sing back and forth to each other). After this opening, the third act carries on in more normal ranges, shrinking at one point to the center of the pitch spectrum, in Brünnhilde's unaccompanied plea, before expanding once again to the *tutti* that frame "Wotan's Farewell."

At the end of the act, the famous "Magic Fire Music" combines high-pitched writing (of a more euphonious sort than in the "Ride of the Valkyries") with the rich, warm sounds of motivic reminiscences in the lower registers. For this passage, Wagner has held in reserve all evening the tri-



The so-called "Wagner tuba," somewhere between horns and trombones in sound.

dominantly and progressively more somber than the end of the first, Wagner takes advantage of the briefly optimistic opening, as Wotan orders Brünnhilde to aid Siegmund in the imminent battle with Hunding. The prelude begins by picking up the spirit of the exuberant conclusion to Act I, and then introduces the martial rhythms of the Valkyries. But by the end of the Wotan-Fricka encounter the music has sunk to the lowest E flat of contrabass trombone, contrabass tuba and timpani, over which rises the motif of "Alberich's Curse." After a brief outburst of frustration from Wotan, we return to the bottom register. This is, both literally and figuratively, the lowest point of the cycle: Wotan has been made to realize that his great plan, to recover the Ring and put an end to the menace of Alberich's

trumpets and trombones, after which "Walhalla" is intoned by horns (Wagner wants a rich sound here, but four of his hornists are busy with the Wagner tubas, so he fills out the chords with bassoons, a well-known and effective orchestrator's trick: if tucked neatly in among the horns, bassoons blend remarkably well).

Each act of *Die Walküre* has its distinctive timbre and range.

The texture that begins Act III has already been suggested in Brünnhilde's "Battle Cry" at the beginning of Act II: a dry, almost spiky sound made up of high woodwind trills, galloping figures in horns and cellos, rapid flourishes in the higher strings. Soon the lower brass chime in with the "Valky-

angle and glockenspiel, while the six harps that permeate the texture have heretofore been used only for very limited, special purposes, such as the sudden opening of the door in Act I.

Through each act of *Die Walküre*, then, the orchestral stream flows differently: now high, now low, now spreading over the entire available range, now narrowing to only one part of that range. For all of Wagner's genius in the invention of telling details, it is this long-range aspect of his musical powers that makes him unique in the history of opera. ■

DAVID HAMILTON, music critic of *The Nation*, is also a contributing editor of *High Fidelity* and author of the forthcoming book, *The Listener's Guide to Great Instrumentalists*.

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Wagner and the Female Mind

The three heroines of *Die Walküre* — Sieglinde, Fricka and Brünnhilde — show Wagner's surpassing understanding and respect for women and their concerns.

By SPEIGHT JENKINS

The Wagnerian heroine, for all her trials and tribulations, never gets less than respect from the composer. Moreover, many of her feelings and problems are relevant to women today. The topicality of some of her anguish should not be surprising; Wagner composed mythic librettos for his works precisely because myths do not age. The characters onstage may be dressed in Norse, Grecian or even Gay Nineties dress, but their relationships are as modern as today's newspaper.

That Wagner is called a friend to women might be dismissed as nonsense; after all, of the 15 more-or-less major female characters in the 10 works for which he is known, eight die. But death comes naturally in tragedy, and of his works only *Die Meistersinger* is a comedy. It is his

respect for women's minds and his instinctive understanding of their problems that makes the difference. One may discount Venus' prediction that Tannhäuser would find the real world a pale comparison to the Venusberg, because it is in her interest to argue so, but Ortrud leads everyone around by the nose, Isolde thinks far more deeply and more insightfully

***Die Walküre*, of all Wagner's works, best illustrates Wagner's basic feeling for women.**

than Tristan, Eva shows great perception for a sheltered adolescent, and Kundry possesses the wisdom of centuries. If Elsa in *Lohengrin* is often characterized as a "silly goose," the point of view suggests male chauvinism of the worst sort. Elsa, a loving

human, asks Lohengrin questions because his demands on her are inhuman, and he is basically cold and insensitive to any needs but his own.

Of all the Wagner works the Ring best illustrates the composer's estimate of women's superior intelligence. Line up all the men and one finds brains in some of the villains — notably Alberich and Hagen, plus a goodly amount with Loge — but the heroes of the dramas are remarkable for their lack of intelligence. Even Wotan never thinks of the consequence of his anger or the effect of his words. Though not slow witted, he is still impetuous to a point very unhealthy to himself.

The intelligence of the Wagnerian woman often saves male lives.

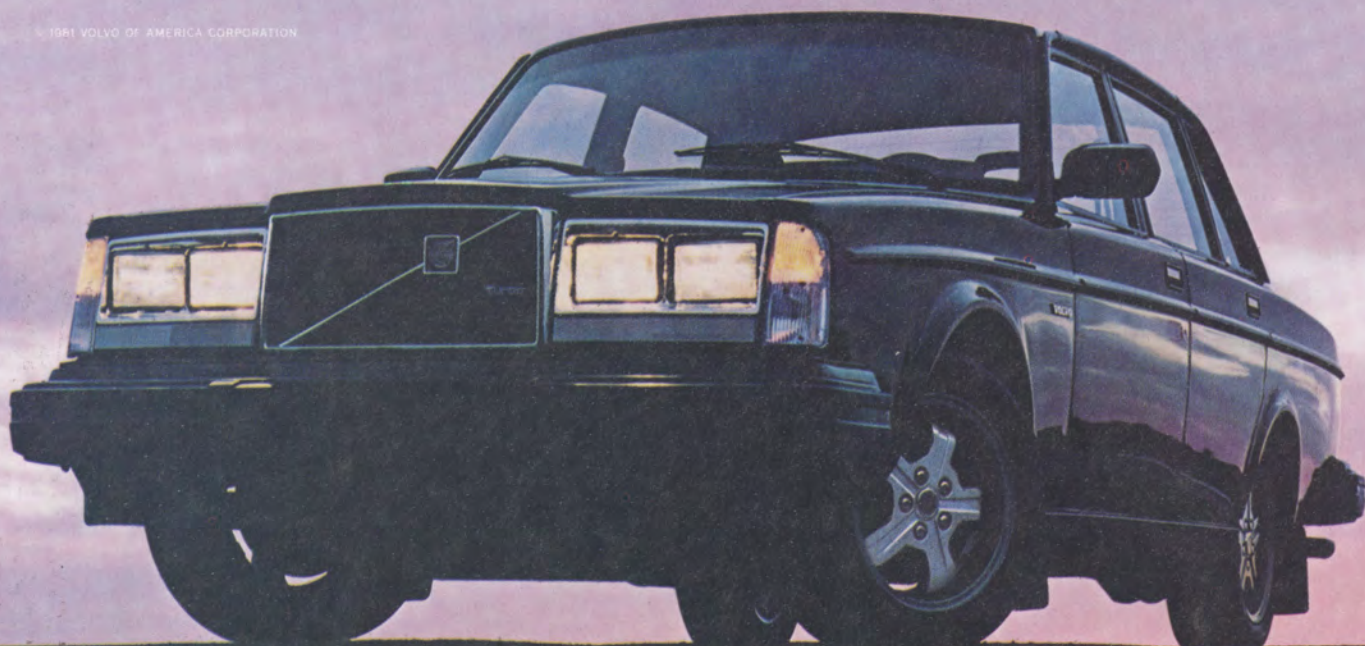
Sieglinde (Leonie Rysanek) saves the life of her brother Siegmund (Jon Vickers) in Act I of *Die Walküre*, from the 1976 San Francisco Opera production.



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Isolde succors Tristan before the drama opens and would surely do so again if he did not take his life out of her hands; Elsa alerts Lohengrin to Telramund's imminent approach, and in the Ring, Fricka, Brünnhilde and Erda all give potent and wise warnings to males. If the Wagnerian heroine continued to supply her wisdom and assistance in the face of consistent male brutishness, she would seem to be a masochistic caricature. Some masochism may be present, but Wagner makes none of his sopranos or mezzos as defenseless in the face of evil treatment as does Puccini. Though the Italian composer obviously loved and cared about each of his heroines, a dark strain of sadism runs through almost all of his operas. Puccini makes us revel in their sorrow. He rarely allows them to object and never to fight back successfully. Cio-Cio-San may be the classic example, but Tosca fits the bill, too. When she does strike back at her attacker, her reward is suicide or incarceration.

Sieglinde gives her all to save two men . . .

Die Walküre, of all Wagner's works, best illustrates his basic feeling for women. There are three major female characters, the only one of his music dramas, save *Götterdämmerung*, with as many. Moreover, each has a vital, distinct and interesting personality. Sieglinde, basically an attractive girl of the German forest, has a direct kinship to all the Wagner heroines who save men through their selfless love. Indeed, the saving of the male figure (Wagner in disguise) through the total love of a woman is at the heart of every Wagner opera except *Das Rheingold* and *Parsifal*. Sieglinde gives her all to save two men — her lover/brother, Siegmund, and her son, Siegfried. In the Act I dialogue between Siegmund and Sieglinde it is she who instinctively perceives their kinship. Though Siegmund, certainly the most attractive and sensitive of Wagner's heroes, is no Pinkerton desiring only sex, his main concern at that moment is his growing passion for her. She, on the other hand, realizes the need to discover the roots of their relationship, the basis of their sexual attraction. It is almost as though, unlike Jocasta with Oedipus, she wants no surprises; what she does, she wants to do consciously.

In Act II Wagner creates a scene sadly relevant to today's woman. Sieglinde, rushing through the dark forest with her brother-husband, is wildly distraught. She repeatedly tells Siegmund that she is unclean, that she is not worthy of him, that he must leave her. On the surface one might believe



The Wälzung twins Sieglinde and Siegmund as portrayed by Leonie Rysanek and James King at the 1969 Bayreuth Festival.



Arthur Rackham's illustration of Sieglinde succoring Siegmund.

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Wagner's first wife, Minna Planer, served as a model for Fricka in *Die Walküre*.

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Rackham's drawing of Fricka with the two rams that traditionally accompany her.

that her terror and concern reflect her reaction to breaking the taboo of incest. Were this her reaction, Wagner would have fit her perfectly into the male-conceived world. But no. Her feeling of uncleanness and her horror come from having yielded to Hunding's advances. That she, hating him, lived with him under forced bondage and gave in to his desires, makes her unworthy of the man she loves. Her reaction is precisely that of most rape victims and, according to many reports, is why so many rapes are not reported. The woman, in a manner usually incomprehensible to most men, feels ashamed that she could not withstand the threat of violence. Wagner grasped the feminine frame of reference and let Sieglinde express it openly. Siegmund, without really understanding her horror, calms her fears.

Wagner used his wife Minna as a model for Fricka in *Die Walküre*.

In Act III, she again desires to live on hearing that she carries Siegmund's child in her womb, and agrees to withstand any trial, even the valley of the shadow of death, to bring forth the hero. It is she, then, who first is given the chance to sing the motif representing the greatest truth of the cycle. As she thanks Brünnhilde for her selflessness and devotion, she intuitively predicts the attraction between the young Valkyrie and her yet unborn son to music of extraordinary radiance. The motif to which she sings the words "O hehrstes Wunder" has always been referred to as the "redemption by love" motif. It is true that Sieglinde's unborn son is redeemed by Brünnhilde's love, and the theme's reiteration in the final pages of *Götterdämmerung* can be taken to mean that the whole world was redeemed by Brünnhilde's love. I believe that this is too pat, indeed too Christian a concept for the clearly pagan Ring. A better reading, as suggested by Michael Tanner in *The Wagner Companion*, is that the theme, when first enunciated in *Die Walküre*, expresses the glory of rebirth, a very pantheistic concept, and one that seems to me at the heart of the Ring. Sieglinde glories in Brünnhilde's saving her from the jaws of Wotan's rage so that a child can be born, and the theme's appearance both in Brünnhilde's Immolation Scene and as the last theme of the cycle proclaims the continuity of nature.

Fricka offers an entirely different perspective on Wagner, one that can be explained biographically. In 1836, Wagner married Minna Planer, a prominent actress in the provincial

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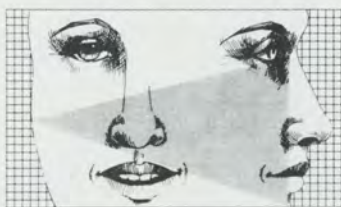
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Birgit Nilsson as Brünnhilde giving aid to Sieglinde (Berit Lindholm) in Act II of *Die Walküre*, from the 1972 production.

German theater. He was a new conductor at Königsburg and had to do more than a little talking to convince her to give up a promising career to hitch her wagon to his virtually unknown, if promising, star. Soon, they were in Riga, and Minna learned that Wagner had no comprehension whatsoever of living within a budget. Money existed to be spent, and when it was not there, it was borrowed.

Each heroine in *Die Walküre* has a vital, distinct and interesting personality.

Though Wagner's attitude again might seem very modern, debtors' prisons in those days made such actions distinctly unwise. Shortly thereafter, Minna, Wagner and their large dog, Robber, were forced to flee from Riga by leaping over a ditch, with Russian border guards on their heels, and thereafter escaped in a small boat on the Baltic. The crossing to England was horrendous (thereby giving us the stormy music of *Der Fliegende Holländer*), but Minna was reportedly brave and

reasonably uncomplaining.

When the two, plus Robber, moved to Paris, the cycle of events — high living, debts, a bail-out by friends, family or even acquaintances — began again, to be repeated for the rest of Wagner's life. Minna's steadfastness in this period, however, won her the right to be installed in the Wagnerian pantheon as Senta.

A few years later, when Wagner was *Kapellmeister* (chief conductor) in Dresden, Minna had begun to get tired of his actions, and she soon became Elsa — full of far too many questions. After the Revolution of 1848, when Wagner had to flee Germany and they lived, courtesy of Otto Wesendonck, in Switzerland, Minna was beside herself with frustration and, eventually, jealousy. Wagner, who had philandered before, was, in 1854, obviously involved on some level with Otto's wife, Mathilde. Minna couldn't prove it yet — that came later — but she knew.

Showered by her constant and annoying complaints, Wagner used Minna as the model for Fricka in *Die Walküre*, a score that has "Blessed Be

Mathilde" on its frontispiece. With his bickerings with Minna as background, did Wagner make Fricka a real shrew, a termagant, equivalent to Barak's Wife in the first scenes of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*? No, because whatever his intentions, Wagner was governed musically by his genius; he simply was compelled to make Fricka a character commanding respect. True, she represents more bourgeois morality than godly hauteur, but Fricka has great integrity. At first she defends marriage, even a marriage that is brutal, forced and without love, and condemns with horror the incestuous mating of Siegmund and Sieglinde. They are, of course, natural objects of her hatred because they were sired by Wotan from a mortal woman. She then confronts Wotan with the fact

Brünnhilde hears the sound of a new kind of love.

that since Siegmund is the god's agent, the young man cannot kill Fafner, the giant turned into a dragon. If Siegmund did so, particularly with a magic sword given him by Wotan, it would be the same as the god's killing Fafner, an act that would break treaties to which Wotan swore, and would effectively end the god's power.

Wagner has Fricka present her argument in expressive music, imbued with the feeling of a wronged wife. Yet his genius really takes over when she has won. Rather than huffing off as an ungracious winner, Fricka explains in music of almost unbearable eloquence and dignity that Wotan is thereby "sheltering the honor of his immortal wife." She extrapolates to the general, pointing out that men everywhere would "jeer" at the gods if Wotan did not defend her honor and if Brünnhilde that day did not revenge the wrongs done to Wotan's wife (an echo of what Brünnhilde will say to Wotan only a few hours later for an entirely different reason). That Siegmund must die for Fricka's honor sounds cold and hard, but Wagner puts the line to music of such nobility and eloquence that the audience is for the moment compelled to listen to Fricka. She has suffered much and deserves this attention. In Wagner's world — despite how he might feel on the surface — man must pay for his wrongs to woman.

The third heroine is the most fascinating of all Wagner's characters: Brünnhilde. In *Die Walküre* she is youthful and appealing. At the very beginning an unchallenged goddess (accentuated by the fiendish difficulty of the seven high B's and four high C's of her war cry), she quickly gains our affection by her honest concern for her father's feelings. That she uses sophis-



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try to get him to tell her his troubles comes not from cleverness but from naiveté. She really believes she is the incarnation of his will and that when he tells her his troubles, he is speaking only to himself. Wotan buys her argument although it is far from true: She may be his wish-maiden, but she is not bound by his constraint vis-à-vis Fricka; she can act according to his true will, not on what he orders her to do. In the opening scene with Wotan she listens and reacts; in the Death Announcement Scene (*Todesverkündigung*) she starts on the long road toward becoming a human being. When she first addresses Siegmund, she is a pure Valkyrie. The mood defines the portentous; its gravity could scarcely be increased. Brünnhilde keeps that mood as she sketches the wonders of Valhalla available to Siegmund. However, when Siegmund flatly refuses to go if he must leave Sieglinde, she is face to face with bravery on a scale unknown to her. And she really listens; she hears the sounds of a new kind of love. Instead of growing angry or simply shrugging her shoulders, she begins to involve herself in the man's feelings. The aura of godhood slips as she develops compassion and realizes the worth of loving and caring on a human level. As she hears Siegmund twice suggest that he will kill Sieglinde, then himself, rather than leave his wife in the world alone, she throws all caution to the wind. In this instance she embodies not only her father's true will but even his fatal impetuosity.

Now committed to a compassionate course, Wagner's heroine transfers her love to another woman, not an unusual action in the real world but uncommon onstage, where constant jealousy between women is the rule. Brünnhilde risks her life not only to save Sieglinde but also to find her a refuge where Sieglinde's child can be born. Her selfless love, the kind so revered by Wagner, is now directed



Wotan and his beloved daughter Brünnhilde in Arthur Rackham's illustration for *The Valkyrie*.



Brünnhilde (Birgit Nilsson) as the wish-maiden of Wotan (Hans Hotter) in the 1956 San Francisco Opera production of *Die Walküre* that marked the Swedish soprano's American debut.

not only toward Sieglinde but toward a whole race threatened with extinction. She cannot be charged with acting out of self interest; when she helps Sieglinde, she has no idea what Wotan might do to her.

Finally, in the last scene, Brünnhilde challenges Wotan and wins. Wagner gives her the brains and energy to triumph over the senior representative of the male world. She does so not only because of her capacity for love and her new compassion, but because she is wiser than he. She intelligently waits out her father's anger; his apoplexy deserves no answer. And when she begins — she knows she has only a short time in court — she does so quietly and sweetly, though with sharpshooter accuracy. She points out how Siegmund won her heart — knowing that every word she says strikes home with Wotan, who loved Siegmund for exactly the same reasons — and then forces him to hear that there is a new Walsung coming, a child who will be a free agent, un beholden to the gods. Wotan claims that he does not want to hear, but despite himself he realizes that Brünnhilde acted on his real desires — and thereby served the true function of the wish-maiden — by defending Siegmund. She and she alone has accomplished what he could only dream about.

Following up on the success of her words, she points out that if she is indeed left on the rock for the next man who comes along to claim her, Wotan would be dishonored (an echo of Fricka's earlier words). To quote Andrew Porter's translation, "O god, forget not that. That other self [meaning herself] you must not dishonor; if you disgrace her, it falls on you: Your fame would then be darkened if I were scorned and despised." She hits home

In the last scene Brünnhilde challenges Wotan and wins.

deeply to the sorrowing Wotan, now more father than god, and lets another idea inflame them both. She knows that Siegfried (whom she has named) will be a fearless hero and so she proposes that she be surrounded by fire and placed in a magic sleep that only a hero can pierce. She turns her punishment into a triumph and makes an act of feeling win over the world of reason, the female consciousness triumphant. ■

SPEIGHT JENKINS, a frequent Bay Area lecturer on opera, is currently working on a book, *Opera Through the Eyes of Singers*, to be published by Alfred A. Knopf.

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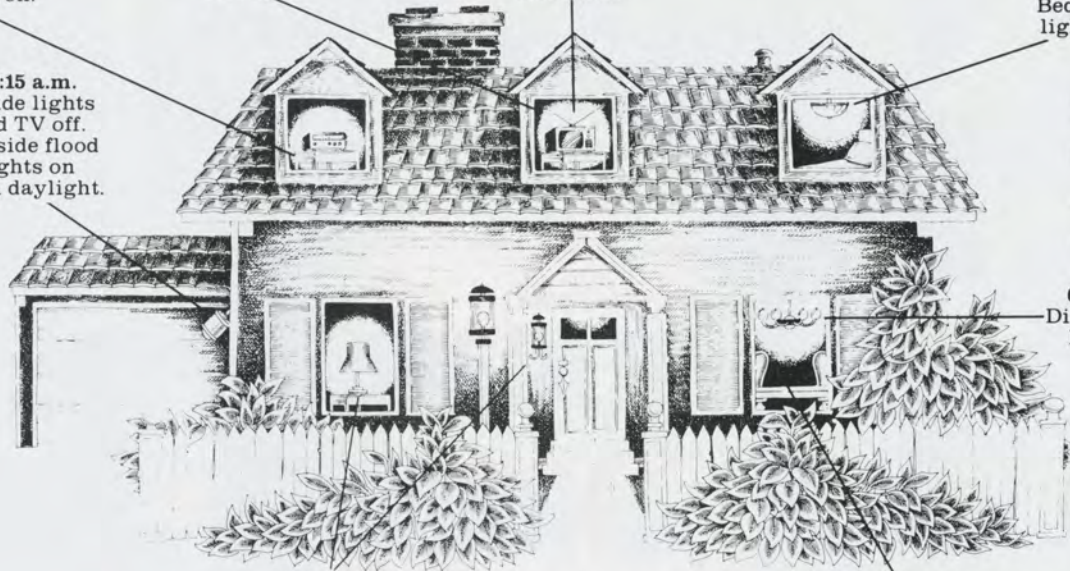
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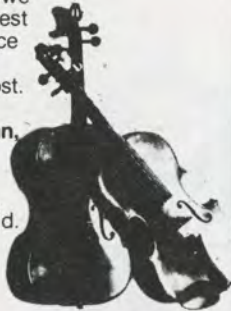
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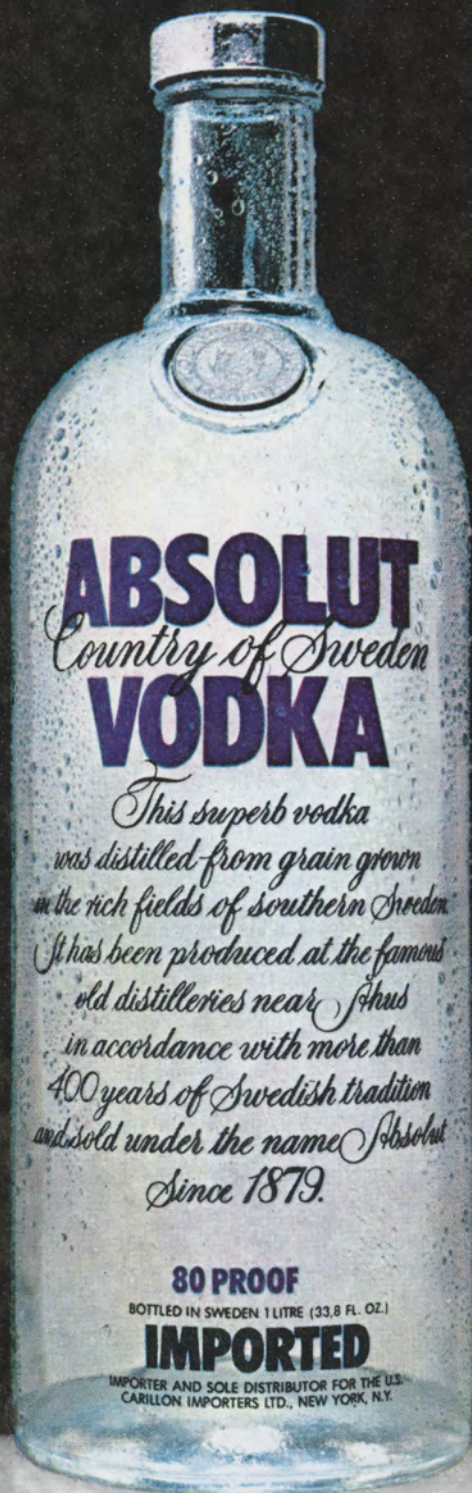
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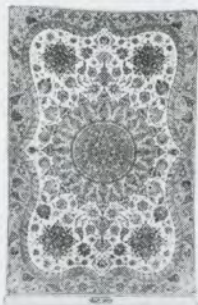
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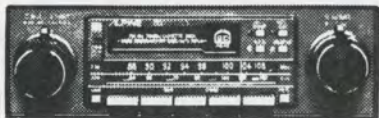
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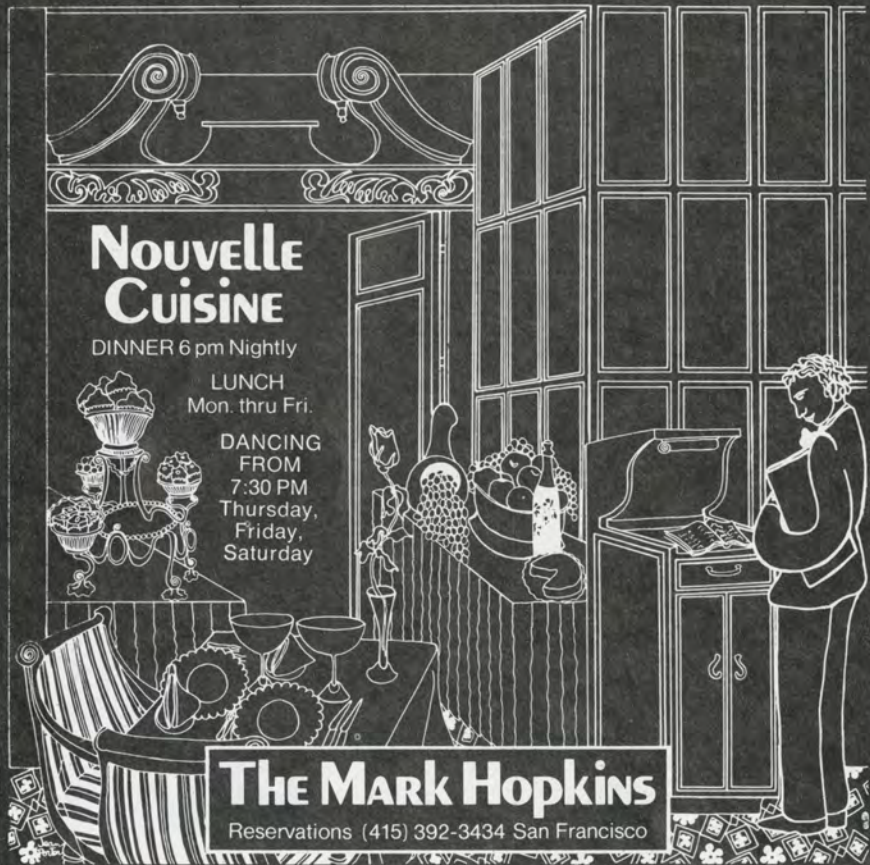
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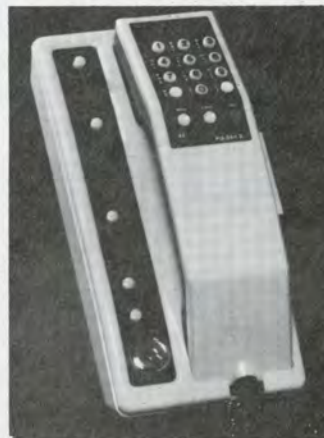
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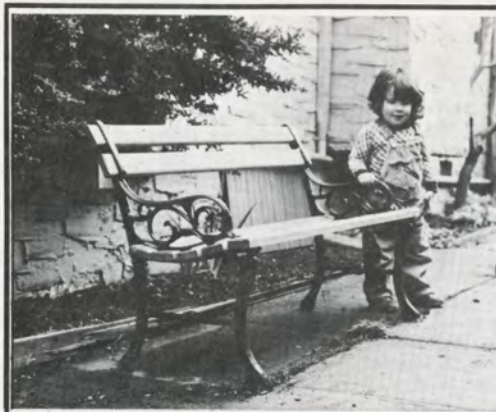
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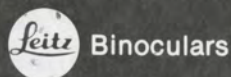
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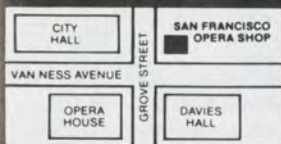
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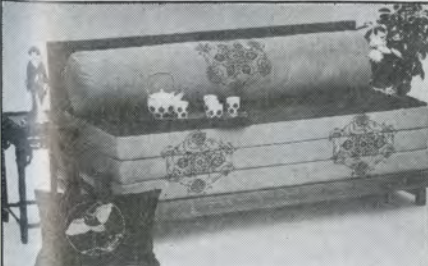


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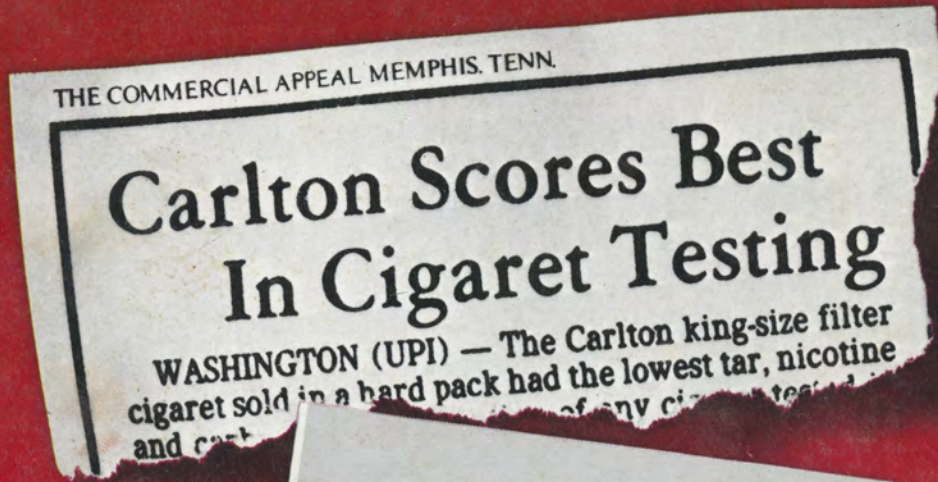
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