Carmen

1982

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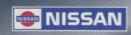
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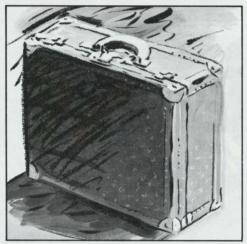
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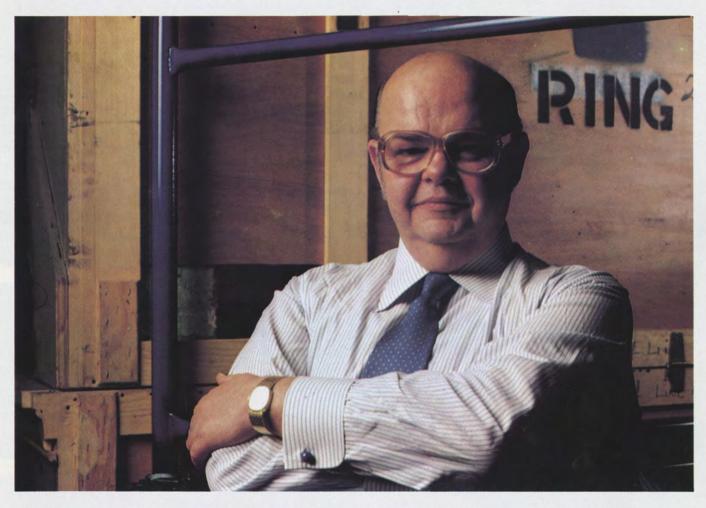
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General Director's Message



Welcome to the San Francisco Opera Summer Festival, which is this year dedicated to the memory of Nancy Hanks, the extraordinary woman who so brilliantly headed the National Endowment for the Arts for eight years. (A tribute to this very special lady appears in the Così fan tutte issue of the San Francisco Opera magazine.)

This year is a very special one for all of us at the Opera House, because we are undertaking a project that is the grandest and certainly the biggest challenge in the world of opera. The beginning of our new *Ring* can be a historical landmark for this company.

The planning for San Francisco's new *Ring* began in 1979, and watching it grow has been unbelievably exciting for every one of us in the San Francisco Opera family. I have long admired the technical staff of this Company, but the quality of workmanship and the devotion that has gone into the creation of *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* are something I shall never forget. I truly believe this is the finest opera company in the world and that our produc-

tions have a quality and consistency that is matched nowhere else.

I wish every one of you had watched the glorious settings take shape or had attended the musical rehearsals from their inception, to see how every member of our wonderful team has been so inspired by the leadership of Edo de Waart, Nikolaus Lehnhoff and John Conklin. This is the beginning of the *Ring* that I wanted. If you love it, as I think you will, I will be happy. If you don't, then your ideas about the piece and mine differ. But that's also one of the exciting aspects of any artistic undertaking.

In our excitement about the new Rheingold and Walküre, we must not forget that this summer we also have the beautiful Bohème from the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's justly famous productions of Carmen and Così fan tutte. Last year's summer was festive, colorful and exciting for all of us. This year's promises to be even more so.

Enjoy.

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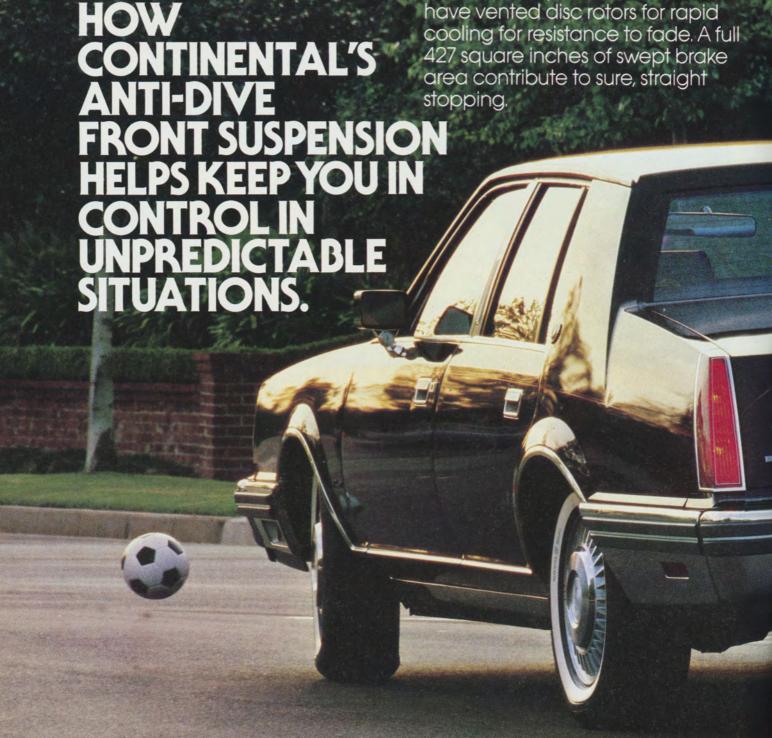
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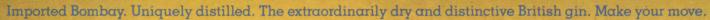
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San Francisco Opera Opera

CARMEN

SUMMER FESTIVAL 1983

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We are pleased to welcome you to the third San Francisco Opera Summer Festival. Our innovative summer season of international grand opera continues to flourish: Ticket sales for the 1982 Festival increased dramatically over the first Summer Festival of 1981, and ticket sales this year are significantly higher than last. Your support represents to us a welcome validation of our efforts to bring the San Francisco community — and our summer visitors — more opera of the highest quality.

This summer San Francisco audiences will see five productions, including three of the most popular works in the repertoire: Bizet's *Carmen* and Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, using our own productions; and Puccini's *La Bohème*, in a beautiful production borrowed from the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

More exiting to us, of course, is our embarkation on the most enormous project an opera company can undertake, of which the first two segments, Das Rheingold and Die Walküre, open this year's Festival. The immensity of this undertaking is staggering on every level, from casting and set design to construction, rehearsing and — inevitably — funding. In this latter capacity we are fortunate to be recipients of the generosity of three foundations: The L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, which has contributed funding toward the production of Das Rheingold; and the BankAmerica Foundation and The Carol Buck Sells Foundation, both of which have given grants toward the support of the Ring project.

Our plans are to continue forging our *Ring* with *Siegfried* during the 1984 Summer Festival and the complete *Ring*, including *Götterdämmerung*, constituting the 1985 Summer Festival. For these plans to reach fruition, we will need continued financial support. We turn with confidence to our long-time friends who have helped us in the past, and we hope that many of you who have never been involved as donors before will be enticed by the magnificence and grand proportions of this venture to add your assistance. The personal satisfaction to be garnered is great; the artistic benefits to our audiences and our Company's reputation, immeasurable.

We note with pleasure that more people attended San Francisco Opera in 1982 than in any previous year, and that record will likely be broken again in 1983. It is immensely rewarding to reach ever-greater numbers of opera-lovers. Your aesthetic pleasure is our ultimate goal; your assistance is our means of achieving it.

In addition to the above-mentioned sponsors, we would like to extend our gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the Hotel Tax Fund, Mayor Dianne Feinstein, Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas, the City and County of San Francisco, the San Francisco Opera Guild, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees. Our appreciation for their assistance is profound. —WALTER M. BAIRD



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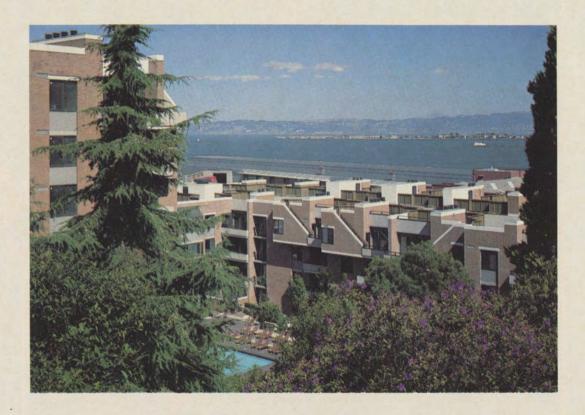
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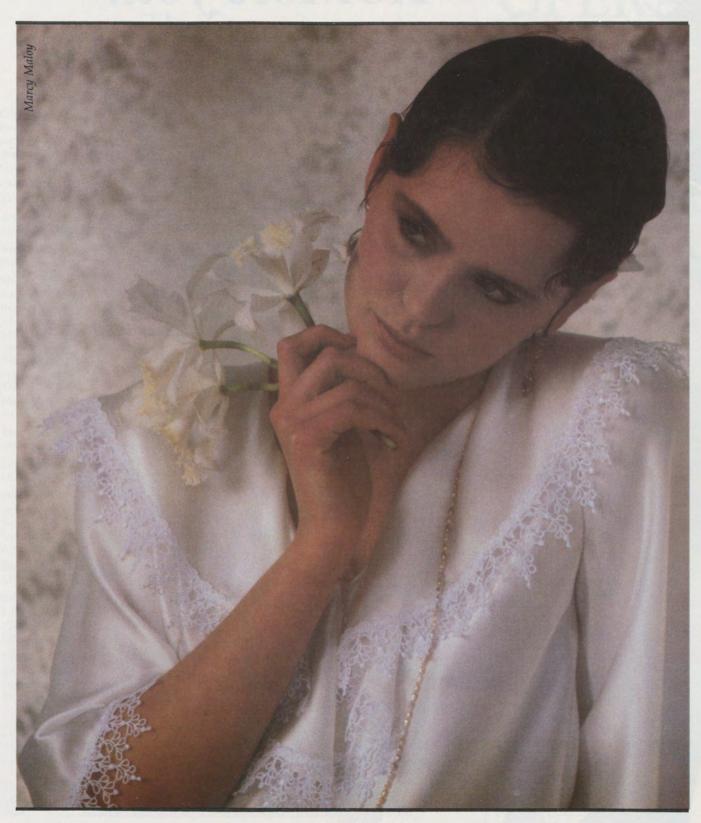
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Wagner, Das Rheingold New Production

Performed in German

Hanna Schwarz, Mary Jane Johnson*, Reinhild Runkel**, Nancy Gustafson, Jean Herzberg*, Laura Brooks Rice / Michael Devlin, Walter Berry, William Lewis, David Gordon, Hans Tschammer*, Erich Knodt* (May 27; June 2, 5, 10), James Patterson (June 18), John Del Carlo, Walter MacNeil*

Conductor: Edo de Waart*

Set and Costume Designer: John Conklin

Production: Nikolaus Lehnhoff Lighting Designer and Special Effects: Thomas J. Munn

May 27 at 8 p.m., June 2 at 7:30 p.m., June 5 at 2 p.m., June 10 and 18 at 8 p.m.

Wagner, Die Walküre New Production Performed in German

Jeannine Altmeyer* (May 28; June 3, 8), Gwyneth Jones (June 12, 16), Leonie Rysanek, Helga Dernesch, Nancy Gustafson, Jean Herzberg, Susan Quittmeyer, Luana DeVol, Donna Bruno*, Leslie Richards, Laura Brooks Rice, Reinhild Runkel / Peter Hofmann, Thomas Stewart, Hans Tschammer

Conductor: Edo de Waart

Set and Costume Designer: John Conklin

Production: Nikolaus Lehnhoff Lighting Designer and Special Effects: Thomas J. Munn

May 28, June 3 and June 8 at 7 p.m., June 12 at 1 p.m., June 16 at 7 p.m.

Puccini La Boheme New Production Performed in Italian

Ilona Tokody**, Mary Jane Johnson / Luis Lima, J. Patrick Raftery,* Timothy Noble, Kevin Langan, Stanley Wexler, Robert Tate, James Patterson,* Jacob Will*

Conductor: García Navarro Stage Director: Irving Guttman* Set and Costume Designer: Pier Luigi Pizzi Lighting Designer: Joan Sullivan

Production from Chicago Lyric Opera

June 4 at 8 p.m., June 9 at 7:30 p.m., June 11 at 8 p.m., June 19 at 2 p.m., June 24 at 8 p.m., June 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Bizet Carmen Performed in French

Victoria Vergara, Barbara Daniels, Evelyn de la Rosa, Susan Quittmeyer / William Johns, Michael Devlin, Jeffrey Thomas, William Stone*, Kevin Langan, Timothy Noble

Conductor: Pierre Dervaux* Production: Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

Set Designer: Jean-Pierre Ponnelle Costume Designer: Werner Juerke Stage Director: Vera Lucia Calabria* Lighting Designer: Thomas J. Munn

June 17 and 22 at 8 p.m., June 26 at 2 p.m., June 29 at 7:30 p.m., July 2 at 8 p.m.

Mozart Così fan tutte Performed in Italian

Pilar Lorengar, Tatiana Troyanos, Norma Burrowes* / Gösta Winbergh, Tom Krause, Donald Gramm

Conductor: Andrew Meltzer Production: Jean-Pierre Ponnelle Stage Director: Sonja Frisell

Set and Costume Designer: Jean-Pierre Ponnelle Lighting Designer: Thomas J. Munn

June 23 at 7:30 p.m., June 25, 28 and July 1 at 8 p.m., July 3 at 2 p.m.

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M C V S

CONSIDERING CARMEN

Improvisations on Bizet's Opera by Composer-Diarist Ned Rorem

OME of my best friends are Carmens—starting with my father. When I was old enough to get around the keyboard I used to accompany him in Bizet's airs, ideal for amateur baritones. And Father chaperoned my first cultural outing, a Chicago Carmen starring one Coe Glade, with whom I fell in love.

These homey facts, waxing into a taste for mezzos, would never have struck me had not Robert Jacobson, over a soufflé at Café des Artistes, recently suggested I "do something on *Carmen.*" Why me? "To avoid type-casting." Indeed, I have never in print examined a pre-modern composer, one not somehow concerned with being new, with changing things through innovation more than through plain excellence. Now, since being new is strictly a hangup of twentieth-century artists, and since I too inhabit the century, my easy task had always been to show that nothing is new. But what do I know of Bizet?

Well, I have known his opera all my life. Still, that knowledge is involuntary: it's the one opera everyone knows. Carmen, the most popular serious piece (or the most serious popular piece) ever penned, has entered the collective unconscious. As it happens, my young education converged perversely—and I believe correctly—around what used to be termed Modern Music. By the onset of puberty I had memorized Petrushka, Pierrot Lunaire and Daphnis et Chloé, not to mention Carpenter's Skyscrapers and Schelling's Victory Ball, yet I wouldn't have recognized a Brahms quartet or even a Bach gavotte. Contempt may breed contempt, but familiarity breeds only familiarity. Except for Carmen, I had to get used to "classics" as others get used to "moderns."

The past is a problem still, for I never turned into an opera buff. Nor do I enjoy pure song for itself rather than for how its composer manipulates the text. Also, like most composers, I'm more involved with my own music than with other people's. (But yes, I would rather hear that music sung by dumb singers with golden echoes than by smart singers with leaden echoes.) So finally I have a narrower knowledge of opera than many an amateur. Yet what I know is my own. As for what I know about *Carmen*, no sooner had Robert Jacobson bid goodbye than associations began streaming.

Northwestern 1940. Despite Father and Coe Glade, it was less a love of voice than of verse which fired my first songs. I made a dozen settings of e.e. cummings before comprehending that these might actually be interpreted. Then one morning, overhearing Carmen practiced in the next studio, I decided to ask the young mezzo to read through my efforts. That she happened to be a mezzo was fortuitous; though my music thus far had been intuitively concocted around my own deepish hummings—vile to some, sweet to me (inside every composer lurks a diva longing to get out)— it was a decade until I learned there were strata to voices, hierarchies and lowerarchies of vocal literature, and that all singers, like it or not, are consigned to tessiturial castes.

The reactions to hearing those early songs emoted by Frances Maralda (where is she today?) set the stage for all my future music.

Philadelphia 1943. Muriel Smith, she of the burning eye, blue burnished hair and butterscotch skin—now brought life to my sonic skeletons, then defected from our Curtis group to bigtime Manhattan as Carmen Jones. (Like Dietrich's Lola, Muriel's Carmen was more sisterly than sinister and, singing in English, lent the role a likability new to Americans.) She was the first to sing my tunes publicly, among them a Cocteau quatrain, "De Don Juan."

Were the French deranged by Spain before Bizet? If the Gallic Iberia is forever as quixotic, at least to Spaniards, as Kafka's Amerika is to us, the teen-age Poulenc with Cocteau in 1919 gave the quixoticism the coup-de-grâce in their chanson hispano-italienne "Toréador," a crazy waltz that depicts a Venetian corrida:

Belle Espagnole Dans ta gondole Tu caracoles Carmencita ...

Jennie Tourel, between rehearsals for *The Rake's Progress*, first sang me those lines at the very site of their inception, Piazza San Marco, the French notion of an elegant bullring.

Ned Rorem, Pulitzer Prize winner for music in 1976, is also the author of nine books, including The Paris Diary and the forthcoming Setting the Tone.

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Below: Scene from Act I of Carmen, San Francisco Opera, 1981. Near right: Jennie Tourel as Carmen at the Paris Opéra Comique. Far right: Act IV of Carmen, San Francisco Opera, 1981.



Ron Scherl





Tanglewood 1946. Before the curtain rises on the U.S. premiere of Britten's opera (for which the composer is present), Koussevitzky mounts the stage and begins to speak. "There is Carmen . . . and there is Peter Grimes." Carmen? Is she an absolute by which to judge Peter? True, Britten may be a finer artist than Bizet, but more than one Brittenism was previewed in Carmen's cards.

New York 1948. So far as my own music went, Nell Tangeman's wise, lush contralto became the defining instrument.

New York 1948. So far as my own music went, Nell Tangeman's wise, lush contralto became the defining instrument. During her brief peak, from 1948 to 1954, hers was the one "real" voice doing new repertory. All I wrote then was for her, and by extension all I write now comes from what I learned with her. I think mezzo Nell and her friend Martha Lipton were learning Carmen simultaneously. Martha focused on—and today still speaks of—the gypsy's "broad scope of honesty, playfulness and courage." Nell preferred the role's violence and bitchery but never sang it publicly.

Hyères 1951. Robert Veyron-Lacroix permits me to play primo in Bizet's four-hand Jeux d'Enfants, while there by the window, his pate turning the shade of a Café des Artistes soufflé in the Provençal sunset, Boris Kochno loudly recalls staging these goodies for Diaghilev. Boris claims to have heard Mary Garden as Carmen and found her wonderful.

Felix Borowski at Northwestern had taught us that Garden, after felling not only Mélisande but Judith and Salomé and Thaïs and Louise, met her own downfall by tackling Carmen, defeater of all her sisters. Virgil Thomson saw her too, and found her "red-haired, small, psychiatric, intelligent, basing her action on Mérimée."

Sopranos who turn mezzo, like Callas or Price, fare better at Carmen than mez-

zos who turn soprano, like Verrett or Bumbry.

Hyères 1954. A road company, replete with Bizet's bizarre orchestra and featuring the sadly deaf Valentine Tessier in the short, rich role of La Renaude, unfolds L'Arlesienne upon the town square. We all are dazzled, conditioned by knowing that Freud once decorticated this meridional drama to the annovance of its author, Alphonse Daudet. Also in the cast: a donkey, rented from the Toulon slaughterhouse. After the show, Marie Laure asks the manager what will happen to the animal: "Il rentre à l'abbatoir." So she buys the beast, which lives in her stable for the next six years, fitted with a collar of silver bells that awaken us daily as he trots forth to graze on the front lawn. He is christened Alphonse.

Besides owning a donkey named Alphonse, how does Marie Laure de Noailles—my best friend in France, but scarcely a Carmen—tie into these notes? Her maternal grandmother Comtesse Adhéaume de Chevigné, was one of two models upon whom Proust fashioned his Duchesse de Guermantes. The other was Madame Emile Straus, widow of Bizet.

They say a rapport at no more than three steps' remove can be construed between any two persons on earth. Our friend Nadia Boulanger—alive and well and living in Paris—is the daughter of composer Ernest Boulanger, who was already twenty-three when Bizet was born in 1838.

The heirs of some who die comparatively poor and obscure grow rich and chic by wearing their names.

Other Carmens who have shaped my end? Regina Sarfaty, Elaine Bonazzi, Betty Allen, Beverly Wolff.

And now enough of shapeless reverie.



Critic's choice.



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How is *Carmen* shaped by the eight opera components: chords, line, beat, tune, color, vocality (both solo and ensemble), formality (both sectional and overall) and theatrical panache?

II

Wagner loved *Carmen*. Contrary to general thought, composers are more leery of than indulgent toward music that resembles their own. That Bizet was once deemed a Wagnerite seems now merely funny: *Carmen* is as wholeheartedly diatonic as *Tristan* is not. The Habanera? It is chromatic only melodically. Harmonically, with those 120 measures of seesawing over a pedal D, it is more doggedly tonal than a Clementi sonata.

Nor was the leading motif a Bizetian need; his airs once sung stay sung. True, strands dangling from certain early statements — Micaëla's, mainly—are sometimes tucked back into the formal fabric. But only the death tune, announced in the prelude, recurs and recurs and recurs, with that Cui-like augmented second which Frenchmen up to and through Ravel identify with sex, sex being always blamed on other countries, and this interval deriving from Russia, which used it to denote the wayward East.

Harmonically Bizet was not, as we say today, inventive: his chords are triadic, especially in set numbers, while diminished sevenths he employs forebodingly, according to the cliché of his day, to advance the plot. Chordal sequences, when at all tonally evasive, are so nearly always anchored to a drone that the device becomes a signature. Exceptional are the Seguidilla's precipitous modulations to the Neapolitan Sixth, cribbed sixty years later by Prokofiev. And if the rare presence of secondary sevenths seems as pungent as, for example, the very cassia bloom José describes, the opening chords of the flower song could be by Fauré thirty years later, while the closing chords (as well as tune) were filched intact only fifteen years later for Tchaikovsky's Pathétique. So Bizet did shape the future somewhat, but through his harmonic quality, not originality.

His counterpoint was negligible, like that of all French composers. God knows their schooling italicizes polyphony as much as solfège, and Bizet's fugal improvisations in the parlor were as glittering as Liszt's. But the only considerable canonic forays found in written French music are chez Franck, who was Belgian. Oh, in Carmen there is a pseudo-fugato to close Act I; there are many little stretti-at-the-octave descents to close smaller scenes (hear the

ends of the street boys' first chorus, of Carmen's first exit, of the first entr'acte, of Escamillo's first exit); there is so-called part-writing, like the heavenly choir of cigarette girls (seemingly voices in imitation, actually just voices in harmony). But there is no Germanic concern for independent inner lines, or Italianate concern for two or more viewpoints expressed at once. Bizet flirts with neither undifferentiated nor differentiated counterpoint (to steal Thomson's terms), the one being the same material echoing itself, as in a fugue, the other being unrelated materials simultaneously executed, as in the *Lucia* sextet.

(A sly pedant might propose that the opening chorus, "Sur la place," was built on an inversion of the Habanera—the inversion of Stravinsky's Jocasta.)

Like a vat of sangria being brought to boil, the gypsy dance of Act II is as physical as the rumble from West Side Story. Rhythm alone explains the mounting wallop. Not rhythmic interest, however, but rhythmic lack of interest: hypnosis rather than psychedelia, monotony in place of variety. Bizet does step up the tempo thrice, building from a metronome 100 to 138; but the chief tactic, as with Boléro, lies in piling on dynamics and weight rather than, as with Le Sacre du Printemps, increasing the metric intricacy. In song as in dance, Carmen is straightforward; meters are never more eccentric than a square three or four, nor within the bar do there occur rhythmic enigmas, Chopinesque juxtapositions.

A steady beat makes the gypsy dance tick, but what makes it "good" is the strong line traced over the tambourines, though this line too is unchangingly reiterated. Indeed melody, which makes all good opera good, is what makes Carmen Carmen. Bizet's score seethes with tune, apposite and first-rate, some of it stolen. If Prokofiev's Neapolitan mannerism stems from the Seguidilla, the Seguidilla itself stems from the orchestra of Mozart's Commendatore, while the Habanera grew from a nightclub song. (Bizet may well have made thirteen revisions for Galli-Marié, but the final version remains so close to the original that Sebastián Yradier must live in history as its only begetter.) And as in the orchestra of Mozart's Commendatore, certain of Carmen's most ravishing curves unfurl without the distraction of a human voice-for instance the thirty-eight measures of the second entr'acte wherein solo winds weave a nearly three-octave gamut like a silver snake through gold harp

To object that his tunes aren't his is to CONTINUED ON PAGE 56







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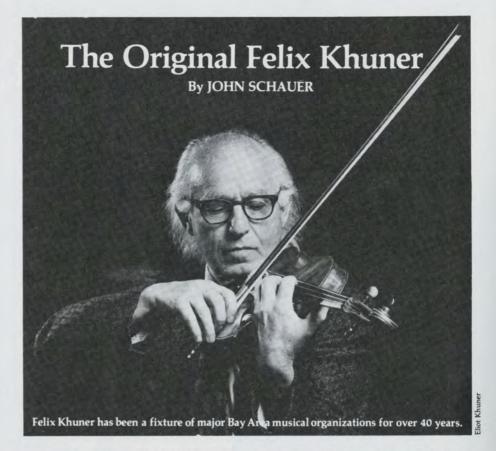
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In a certain opera house of Northern Europe, it is the custom among the members of the orchestra, several of whom are cultivated men, to spend their time reading books—or even discussing matters literary and musical—whenever they perform any second-rate operas. This is to say that they read and talk a good deal.*

With these words Hector Berlioz began his famous satire, *Evenings with the Orchestra*, in which he recounts the fictitious conversations of a mythical opera orchestra as a forum for his own outspoken criticisms of the musical establishment of his day.

It is difficult not to recall Berlioz's opinions while listening to Felix Khuner speak about his long musical career. Born in 1906, he went to school in Vienna (he was, for a while, a schoolmate of Kurt Herbert Adler's) and first worked as a professional musician when he earned pocket money as a substitute violinist at the Vienna Opera in the '20s. At age 19 he became a member of the celebrated Kolisch quartet, with which he played for 15 years, until he decided to settle in the Bay Area. He joined the San Francisco Symphony in 1942 and started playing in the San Francisco Opera

orchestra in 1948. Since 1973 he has played primarily with the Opera and, after the 1983 Summer Festival, will retire as an orchestral musician.

Felix Khuner and his wife live in the East Bay. They have four children. One of them, Eliot Khuner, is a photographer who took the portraits reproduced in this article. Another son, Jonathan, is a conductor of his own orchestral ensemble and is on the musical staff of the San Francisco Opera.

To say Khuner is outspoken is putting it mildly; yet his frequently startling pronouncements are not delivered with any bitterness or sense of frustration. He speaks freely as one who, having toiled for many years in the vineyards of music, feels entitled to call the shots as he has seen them.

The prima donna has shrieked so fearful a high D that we thought she was in the middle of her confinement. The public stamps with joy; two huge bouquets alight on the stage...

Like Berlioz, Khuner has little regard for the musical taste of the general public. His disdain—and many of his musical judg-

*This and other passages from Berlioz's Les Soirées de l'Orchestre are taken from the translation by Jacques Barzun published by the University of Chicago Press.



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ments—are based to a great extent on his almost mystical regard for music as an art, particularly as propounded by the composer Arnold Schönberg and the Viennese musical theorist Heinrich Schenker (1868-1935), whom Khuner credits as being a great influence upon him. Schenker taught that the true basis of a musical composition is the Ursatz, a fundamental contrapuntal structure that is implied by the actual sounds we hear, which he considered merely the ornamental foreground of a multi-leveled edifice. Schenkerians, like Khuner, tend to admire the German-Austrian repertoire to the general exclusion of the French, Italian and Russian.

"The audience is totally ignorant about any musical matter," Khuner maintains. "Music is such an esoteric business, and I for the life of me cannot understand why people go to concerts, which are purely musical. [People going to] opera I understand, because lots of things are going on—lighting, costumes, historical background and what-not. But it is impossible for anybody who isn't thoroughly trained in musical analysis to get anything out of a piece of music exept the superficial sound.

"If you manufacture cars or refrigerators or electronic equipment, you can say whether it works or not. Who knows whether it works or not in music? They look at the wrong thing—they look at the chromium trim, like all the other consumers, and the styling-'Look, isn't it a beautiful car?' Only the engineer knows whether it's properly constructed or not, and if it's not properly constructed, then the car is worth nothing. But the consumer doesn't know that until he has to pay for repairs, and nobody pays for repairs in an opera performance. Anything can go wrong; nobody cares, nobody notices. Except if the curtain doesn't come down because something is snagged, that they know. That is the talk of the intermission: 'The curtain didn't come down.'

"When I came here in 1939, I was invited to a talk by some music teacher who went to New York, and she said, 'Oh, it was wonderful! I saw *The Valkyrie*; it was the greatest I've ever seen—they had real horses!' Did you read about the *Traviata* film? Finally we have an opera about furniture. The trim, the lights, the fixtures, the draperies—who cares about anything else? The furniture counts.

"Another thing: Something is considered good only if it was declared good somewhere else. And that is the opposite of what I grew up with in Vienna. A singer was good if he stayed in Vienna and sang

CONTINUED ON PAGE 52



"Never have I seen you at a loss for words, Captain..."

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He glanced towards the woman preparing to step from her car. "I don't think," he said with a smile, "you will need one."



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CARMEN

(in French)

Conductor

Pierre Dervaux*

Production

Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

Stage Director

Vera Lúcia Calábria*

Set Designer

Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

Costume Designer

Werner Juerke

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Sound Designer

Roger Gans

Chorus Director Richard Bradshaw

Musical Preparation

James Johnson

Kathryn Cathcart

Philip Eisenberg

Prompter

Philip Eisenberg

Assistant Stage Director

Sharon Woodriff

Stage Manager

Jerry Sherk

San Francisco Boys Chorus William Ballard, *Director*

San Francisco Girls Chorus Elizabeth Appling, Director

Scenery constructed in

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Principals' costumes executed by

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Paris, March 3, 1875

First San Francisco Opera performance:

October 1, 1927

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(in order of appearance)

Moralès Timothy Noble

Micaëla Barbara Daniels

A gypsy girl Isadora Paisley Knudsen

Don José William Johns

Zuniga Kevin Langan

Carmen Victoria Vergara

Manuelita Claudia Siefer

Frasquita Evelyn de la Rosa

Mercédès Susan Quittmeyer

Le Dancaïre William Stone*

Le Remendado Jeffrey Thomas

Lillas Pastia Michael O'Rourke*

Escamillo Michael Devlin

Guide Bahman Nouri* (June 17, 22)

Teddy Levinson* (June 26, 29; July 2)

Soldiers, townspeople, children, cigarette girls, gypsies

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 19th century; Seville, Spain

ACT I A street in Seville

INTERMISSION

ACT II Lillas Pastia's tavern

INTERMISSION

ACT III In the mountains

INTERMISSION

ACT IV Outside the arena

Latecomers will not be seated during the performance after the lights have dimmed.

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

The performance will last approximately four hours.

CARMEN

Synopsis

ACT I

1. INTRODUCTION

Corporal Moralès and his men are resting outside the guard-house as Micaëla comes looking for Don José.

2. MARCH AND CHORUS OF STREET URCHINS

The change of guard arrives, among them Corporal José and Lieutenant Zuniga. Zuniga questions José about the nearby cigarette factory and the girls who work there.

3. CHORUS OF CIGARETTE GIRLS

The cigarette girls leave the factory for a brief break. The men await a glimpse of Carmen.

4. HABANERA

When Carmen appears, she flirts with them and gives a flower to José.

5. SCENE

The girls return to work and José is left alone.

6. DUET

Micaëla returns and gives José a letter from his mother. She leaves when he begins to read the letter, which advises him to marry and settle down.

7. CHORUS

Screams are heard from the cigarette factory. Zuniga sends José to find out the cause of the disturbance. José returns with Carmen and another girl, Manuelita, who has a knife wound on her face inflicted by Carmen.

8. SONG AND MELODRAMA

When Carmen refuses to speak, Zuniga orders José to tie her hands and take her to prison. Zuniga leaves to make out the warrant for Carmen's arrest.

9. SEGUIDILLA AND DUET

Carmen hints to José about a rendezvous at her friend Lillas Pastia's tavern, and José agrees to let her escape.

10. FINALE

When Zuniga returns with the warrant, Carmen breaks free as she is being led off to prison. José is arrested.

ACT II

11. GYPSY SONG

Carmen and her gypsy friends Frasquita and Mercédès sing and dance at Lillas Pastia's tavern. At closing time the innkeeper begs the soldiers to leave. Zuniga tells Carmen that José has been released from prison.

12. CHORUS AND ENSEMBLE

A torchlight procession announces the arrival of the torero, Escamillo.

13. TOREADOR SONG

Escamillo acknowledges the soldiers' toast and describes the excitement of the bullfight. He is attracted to Carmen, who entices him. As the soldiers leave, Zuniga promises to return to see Carmen.

14. QUINTET

Dancaïre and Remendado come to ask the three gypsy girls to join them in a smuggling expedition.

15. CANZONETTA

José arrives and gives Carmen the gold piece she sent him along with a file while he was in prison. He explains that his soldier's honor prevented him from trying to escape.

16. DUET

Carmen dances for José, but when retreat sounds, he starts to leave for the barracks. She taunts him and challenges him to follow her to the mountains.

17. FINALE

Zuniga returns. The two soldiers fight and are disarmed by the smugglers. José has no choice but to join the band of smugglers.

ACT III

18. INTRODUCTION

The smugglers are at work in the mountains. Carmen has become fed up with José's jealousy.

19. TRIO

Frasquita and Mercédès read their own good fortune in the cards. When Carmen takes her turn, she finds only death. Dancaïre asks the girls to distract the customs men on duty.

20. ENSEMBLE

The girls agree and depart, leaving José alone on guard.

21. AIR

Micaëla appears with a mountain guide looking for the gypsies. She runs off as Escamillo arrives.

22. DUET

José challenges Escamillo to a duel. Carmen intervenes as the smugglers re-enter and break up the fight.

23. FINALE

Escamillo invites the band of smugglers to his next bullfight. Micaëla is discovered hiding. She tells José that his mother is dying. He leaves with her, but warns Carmen that they will meet again.

ACT IV

24. CHORUS

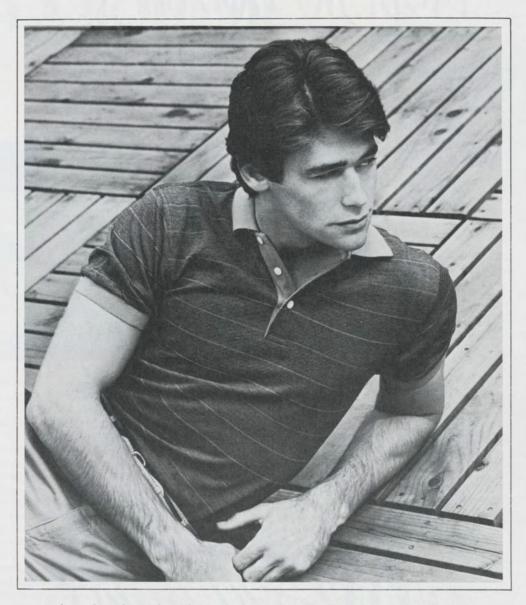
The crowd gathers outside the arena for the bullfight.

25. CHORUS AND SCENE

When Carmen and Escamillo appear, Frasquita and Mercédès warn her that José is in the crowd. Carmen waits alone outside the arena.

26. DUET AND FINAL CHORUS

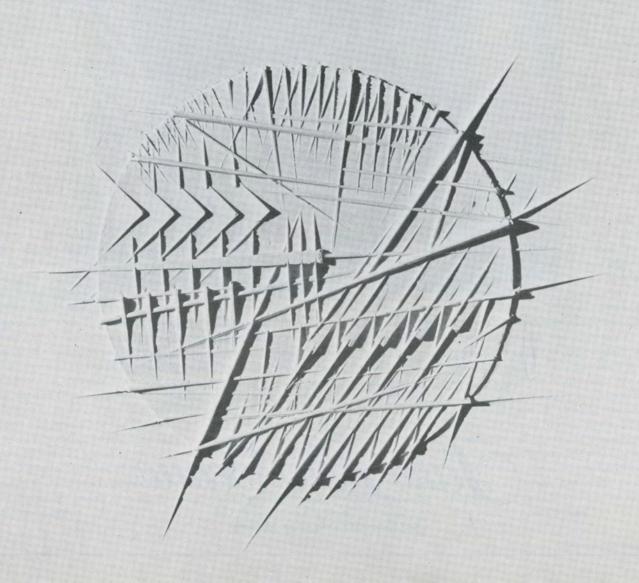
José confronts Carmen and begs her to return to him. She refuses and returns his ring. Realizing that Escamillo is her new lover, he kills her.



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Artist Profiles

Victoria Vergara











Chilean mezzo-soprano VICTORIA VERGARA sings the title role of Carmen, with which she has become closely identified. It was the role of her Zurich Opera debut (in the Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production) in 1981, and that same year she appeared as Bizet's temptress with six American companies: Miami Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Connecticut Opera and Hawaii Opera Theatre. Last season she performed the role in San Juan opposite Placido Domingo, with whom she has filmed an excerpt from Act IV under the direction of Ponnelle. In March of this year she appeared as Carmen in Vancouver, repeating the assignment in April in Philadelphia in a new Frank Corsaro production that will be seen with Miss Vergara at New York City Opera next year. Most recently the role served as the vehicle of her debut at the Berlin Opera, where she will return in 1984 to sing Carmen opposite José Carreras. Miss Vergara is one of the few artists to sing and dance the lead role of Falla's El amor brujo, a task she undertook while at Juilliard. She has also recently recorded the role in Mexico. The mezzo made her debut with Houston Grand Opera in the title role of The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein during the 1978-79 season and also appeared there in the Ponnelle production of La Traviata. That same season brought her to Dayton and Toledo to sing Orlofsky in Die Fledermaus. Her Latin-American credits include Carmen, Zerlina in Don Giovanni and Niklausse in Les Contes d'Hoffmann in her native Santiago, and Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Faust, Luisa Miller and La Gioconda in Caracas. In 1981 she made her San Francisco Opera debut as Maddalena in Rigoletto-a role she has filmed under the direction of Ponnelle-during the Summer Festival and bowed at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in The Merry Widow, returning in 1982 for that company's production of Les Contes d'Hoffmann opposite Alfredo Kraus. In 1982 she returned to Hawaii Opera Theatre and had a great personal success with her first performances of Amneris in Aida, in which role she will open next season at the Vienna Staatsoper opposite Luciano Pavarotti and Maria Chiara under the baton of Lorin Maazel.

Soprano BARBARA DANIELS sings Micaëla in Carmen. The young singer made her San Fran-

cisco Opera debut as Zdenka in Arabella in 1980, and appeared in the title role of La Traviata that same season. She returned to sing Liù in Turandot for the 1982 Summer Festival. The Ohio native made her professional debut in Innsbruck. Austria, and subsequently made appearances in the major European opera houses. Since 1978 she has been a leading soprano with the Cologne Opera under Sir John Pritchard; her Cologne assignments for the 1983-84 season include Turandot, Carmen, Die Fledermaus and Falstaff. Dividing her time between Europe and the United States, she has won acclaim for her portrayals of Manon, Marguerite, Violetta and Liù. She appeared as the Comtesse in Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's Zurich production of Le Comte Ory; and as Musetta at the Teatro del Liceo in Barcelona and at Covent Garden. She made her Royal Opera House 1978 debut as Rosalinda in Die Fledermaus under Zubin Mehta, repeating the role at the Vienna and Paris Operas. This fall the comely soprano will make her Metropolitan Opera debut as Musetta. Future engagements include Zdenka at the Lyric Opera of Chicago; Violetta with Houston Grand Opera; and Donna Elvira in Don Giovanni and Alice in Falstaff at Covent Garden.

Soprano EVELYN DE LA ROSA, who made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1979 as the Celestial Voice in Don Carlo, sings the role of Frasquita in Carmen. Last fall she appeared as Clorinda in La Cenerentola, Chloe in The Queen of Spades and Susanna in the English-language performances of The Marriage of Figaro. During the 1982 Summer Festival, the Nevada native was Berta in The Barber of Seville, the role in which she will make her Houston Grand Opera debut this fall. A participant in the 1979 Merola Opera Program, she created the role of Dorine in the American Opera Project's 1980 world premiere of Mechem's Tartuffe. In 1981 she appeared as Susanna with Spring Opera Theater and sang the role of Aksinya in Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk during the Fall Season. That same year she created the part of Diana in the world premiere of Henry Mollicone's Emperor Norton with Brown Bag Opera. As a participant in the 1982 Western Opera Theater tour, her assignments included Susanna in The Marriage of Figaro and Musetta in La Bohème. She has also sung with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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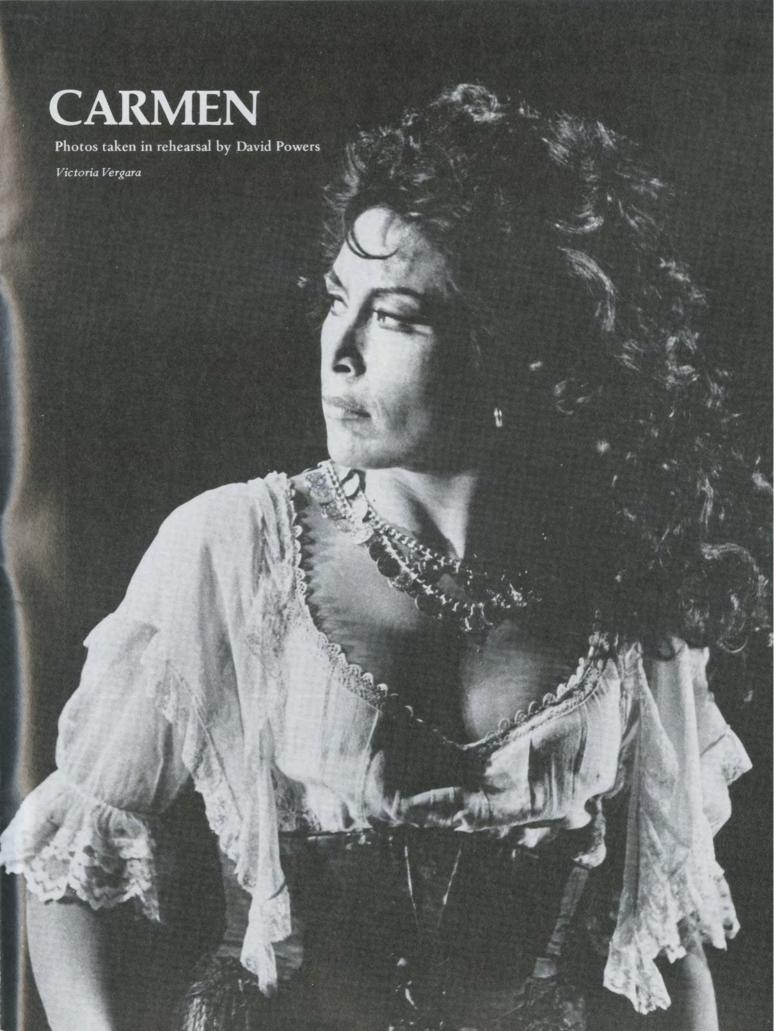


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At left: William Johns, Victoria Vergara
Directly below: Susan Quittmeyer,
Victoria Vergara, Evelyn de la Rosa
Near right: Michael Devlin
Bottom left: Barbara Daniels
Bottom right: Timothy Noble,
Kevin Langan







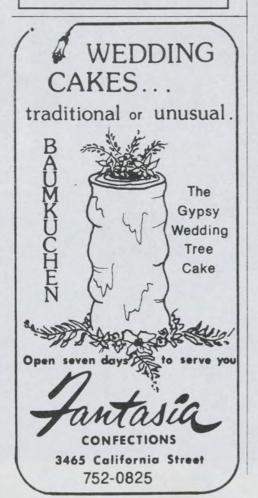






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numerous chamber ensembles and orchestras, most recently appearing at the 1982 Midsummer Mozart Festival.

Mezzo-soprano SUSAN QUITTMEYER returns to the San Francisco Opera as Waltraute in *Die Walküre* and Mercédès in *Carmen*, two roles she sang with the Company during the 1981 Fall Season. She appeared here last Fall Season as the Page in *Salome*, Paulina in *The Queen of Spades*, and Cherubino in the English-language performances of *The Marriage of Figaro*. During the 1982 Summer Festival she sang the role of

Fenena in Nabucco. Miss Quittmeyer began her association with the San Francisco Opera in 1979, when she was invited to participate in the Affiliate Artists program for two years. During that period she appeared as Dorabella in the English-language performances of Così fan tutte; Cherubino with the Spring Opera Theater; and two leading roles in world premieres given by the American Opera Project—John Harbison's Winter's Tale and Kirke Mechem's Tartuffe. A native of New York, she made her professional opera debut with the St. Louis Opera Theatre in Soler's The Tree of Chastity. She bowed with



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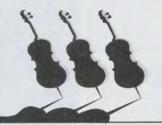
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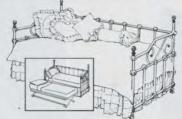
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Baltimore Opera as Siebel in Faust; with the Mobile Opera as Giulietta in The Tales of Hoffmann; and with the Los Angeles Opera Repertory Theatre as Dorabella. With LAORT she also appeared as the Composer in Ariadne auf Naxos, a role she will perform with the San Francisco Opera during the 1983 Fall Season. A busy concert artist, Miss Quittmeyer made her San Francisco Symphony debut in 1981 in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which she also performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Oakland Symphony. The San Francisco Symphony invited her to return to sing pieces for mezzo-soprano by Harbison and Dallapiccola, and last summer she performed Stravinsky's Pulcinella under the baton of Edo de Waart. Miss Quittmeyer appeared in the leading role of the 1982 San Francisco Opera Center Showcase production of Harbison's Full Moon in March. Recent engagements include her San Francisco recital debut; Olga in Eugene Onegin and Cherubino with Hawaii Opera Theatre; and the title role of Carmen with the Mobile Opera Company.

Oklahoma-born tenor WILLIAM JOHNS sings the role of Don José in Carmen. He made his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1981 Summer Festival as Walther von Stolzing in Die Meistersinger, a role he has also sung in Rome and Portugal. He began his career in Bremen, Germany, as Rodolfo in La Bohème and soon thereafter was invited to make guest apearances in Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Munich, Stuttgart, Lisbon, Bergen (Norway) and Dubrovnik. In addition to singing standard Italian repertory roles throughout Italy and elsewhere, he performed the title role in Mercadante's Il Bravo in Rome and has sung many performances for RAI, the Italian radio network, including Monteverdi's L'Incoronazione di Poppea and Alfano's Cyrano de Bergerac. In 1975 he made his American debut as Rodolfo with Pittsburgh Opera and has since sung with the companies of New Orleans, Houston and in various Canadian cities. In Vancouver, his first Otello brought rave reviews and return engagements in that part and as Dick Johnson in La Fanciulla del West. Recent engagements include the title roles of La Damnation de Faust in Verona and Lohengrin in Düsseldorf; and Don José and Radames in Aida with the Metropolitan Opera. During the 1981-82 season he sang Bacchus in Ariadne auf Naxos with Lyric Opera of Chicago, where he has also sung Lohengrin and where he will appear in Die Frau ohne Schatten in 1984; the

tenor leads in Cavalleria Rusticana and I Pagliacci in Hamilton, Ontario; and the title role in Wagner's Rienzi with the Opera Orchestra of New York, for which he won great acclaim. Future engagements include performances of Lohengrin, Die Walküre, Die Meistersinger and Otello in Germany.

MICHAEL DEVLIN appears as Wotan in Das Rheingold for the first time in his career and sings the role of Escamillo in Carmen. He made his Company debut in 1979 as Golaud in Pelleas et Mélisande and sang the title role of Dallapiccola's Il Prigioniero that same season. He also appeared here as Jokanaan in the sensational production of Salome during the 1982 Fall Season. Since his first appearance with the New Orleans Opera in Les Contes d'Hoffmann in 1963, Devlin has sung with nearly every major company and orchestra in this country. The American baritone made his New York City Opera debut in Ginastera's Don Rodrigo in 1966 and has since returned for a variety of assignments, including the title roles of Julius Caesar and Mefistofele, Count Almaviva in Le Nozze di Figaro, Don Alfonso in Così fan tutte, Reverend Blitch in Susannah, Golaud, and Escamillo, the vehicle of his 1978 Metropolitan Opera debut. That same year he made his first appearance with the Canadian Opera Company in the title role of Don Giovanni, a part he has sung to great acclaim in Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, London (Covent Garden), Santa Fe and, most recently, with the Fort Worth Opera Association. Devlin made his European debut in 1974 portraying Count Almaviva at Glyndebourne, and was first heard at Covent Garden the following year as Hector in Tippett's King Priam. He returned to the Met for the title role of Eugene Onegin, and appeared there during the 1981-82 season as the four villains in the Met's highly acclaimed new production of The Tales of Hoffmann. During the 1980-81 season he took part in the Paris Opera productions of Carmen and in Rameau's Dardanus. Recent performances include Count Almaviva with the Santa Fe Opera and Falstaff with the Washington Opera. Devlin returns to San Francisco for the 1983 Fall Season production of Katya Kabanova, in which he portrays Dikoy.

JEFFREY THOMAS sings the role of Remendado in Carmen. The young tenor made his debut with the Company during the 1981 Summer Festival as Vogelgesang in Die Meistersinger and returned as the Officer in the 1982

William Stone



Kevin Langan



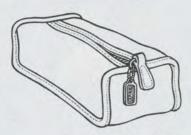
Summer Festival production of The Barber of Seville. During the 1982 Fall Season he appeared in five productions, including the English-language performances of The Marriage of Figaro, in which he sang Don Basilio. At the 1981 Spoleto Festival USA, Thomas appeared in Menotti's The Last Savage. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he portraved Flaminio in the Center's 1982 Showcase production of Scarlatti's The Triumph of Honor. During the 1983 Showcase he stepped in on short notice to replace an ailing colleague in the title role of Cavalli's L'Ormindo, and also appeared as the Male Chorus in Britten's The Rape of Lucretia. Thomas has performed in Mexico's Teatro Degollado as Rameau's Pygmalion with Concert Royal and the New York Baroque Dance Company; in Boston with Musica Viva; and at the Kennedy Center in Robin Hood with New York's Ensemble for Early Music. A familiar concert artist in the Bay Area, he has sung with the San Francisco Symphony, the Oakland Symphony and the Berkeley Symphony, with which he recently performed Britten's Spring Symphony. Other recent engagements include The St. Matthew Passion with Robert Shaw in this year's Festival of Masses. In August he will make his European debut in Cesti's Il Tito in Innsbruck.

Baritone WILLIAM STONE makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Dancaïre in Carmen. The American singer performs extensively in the major opera houses of Italy. Twice he inaugurated the May Festival in Florence singing the title role of Wozzeck and has also appeared there as Orestes in Gluck's Iphigènie en Tauride under Riccardo Muti. He sang the title role of Eugene Onegin at the Rome Opera and has given a command performance for Pope John Paul II at the Vatican. Other Roman credits include a concert version of Mussorgsky's Salammbô given by the Santa Cecilia Orchestra, and he participated in the same work's world stage premiere last spring at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. He sang leading roles for two summers at the Spoleto Festival in Italy and has also appeared at La Scala in Milan and the Teatro G. Verdi in Trieste. He attracted international attention when he created the role of Adam in the 1978 world premiere of Penderecki's Paradise Lost at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, repeating the assignment when that company took the production to La Scala for its European premiere in 1979. Stone, who made his New York City Opera debut as Germont in La Traviata, returned there last season to perform in that opera and Madama Butterfly. Other operas he has appeared in with that company include Lucia di Lammermoor, Le Nozze di Figaro, Hamlet, Les Pêcheurs de Perles and L'Amore dei tre re. He has also sung with numerous American opera companies, including those of Santa Fe, Philadelphia, Baltimore, St. Petersburg and Chautauqua, where he appears this summer as Count Almaviva in The Marriage of Figaro.

Bass KEVIN LANGAN returns to the San Francisco Opera as Colline in La Bohème and Zuniga in Carmen. Since his 1980 Company debut, Langan has appeared in 16 different productions, beginning with Samson et Dalila and followed by Simon Boccanegra, Die Frau ohne Schatten, La Traviata, Arabella, Madama Butterfly, Don Giovanni, Wozzeck, Carmen, Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, Turandot, The Rake's Progress and Aida, the last-mentioned being telecast live to Europe. His most recent San Francisco Opera performances were as Samuele in Un Ballo in Maschera and Bartolo in Le Nozze di Figaro last fall. A 1980 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions winner and member of the Merola Opera Program that same year, Langan made his recital debut the previous year in London under the sponsorship of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and the late Walter Legge. In recent seasons he has appeared as Bartolo, Ashby in La Fanciulla del West and Sarastro in Die, Zauberflöte in Philadelphia; Sarastro in St. Louis and Omaha; and in La Traviata in New Jersey. Langan made his European operatic debut last November as Osmin in Die Entführung aus dem Serail, with additional performances of the role in Chambery and Grenoble. Earlier this season, he sang Sarastro in Palm Beach, the Duke in Saint-Saëns' Henry VIII in San Diego and Seneca in L'Incoronazione di Poppea in his Canadian Opera Company debut. An active concert artist, Langan has sung bass solos in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Oakland Symphony, Handel's Messiah with the Houston Symphony and Indianapolis Symphony, and Rossini's Stabat Mater with the Buffalo Philharmonic. Langan returns to the San Francisco Opera for the 1983 Fall Season in Ariadne auf Naxos, Samson et Dalila, Boris Godunov, and the American premiere of Tippett's Midsummer Marriage.

TIMOTHY NOBLE returns to San Francisco Opera as Schaunard in La Bohème and Moralès





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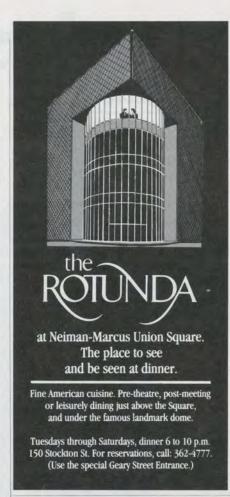
in Carmen. Born in Peru, Indiana, the young baritone made his first appearance with the San Francisco Opera as Albany in the American premiere of Reimann's Lear during the 1981 Summer Festival. Earlier that year, Noble made his Spring Opera Theater debut as Agamemnon in Eaton's The Cry of Clytaemnestra, a role he created at the work's world premiere at Indiana University and repeated in its New York premiere with the Brooklyn Philharmonic. He has appeared as Germont in La Traviata and in the title role of Rigoletto at the Colorado Springs Opera Festival, and as Tonio in I Pagliacci at the Lake George Opera Festival. In 1982, he bowed with the Boston Opera Company in Die Soldaten and portrayed Ping in Turandot for his debut with Houston Grand Opera, where he has also appeared in Wozzeck and the Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of Arlecchino. He sang the role of Miller in Luisa Miller at the Grand Theatre de Nancy in France for his European debut in the spring of 1982, and returned to Europe early this year for appearances with the Frankfurt Opera, the Vienna Festival and the Opéra Comique in Paris. As a concert artist he has sung with such orchestras as the Indianapolis Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the St. Louis Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival. He returns to Houston Grand Opera to sing Figaro in The Barber of Seville this fall. Other future engagements include Tonio in I Pagliacci and Alfio in Cavalleria Rusticana with Opera Columbus, and Sharpless in Madama Butterfly with the Fort Worth Opera and Houston Grand Opera.

French conductor PIERRE DERVAUX makes his San Francisco Opera debut with Carmen. Currently resident conductor at the Paris Opera. Maestro Dervaux first held that position from 1947 to 1970 and was invited to return in the same capacity in 1978. Previous positions include the vice presidency of the Pasdeloup Concerts from 1949 to 1955; general directorship of the Orchestre des Pays de la Loire from 1971 to 1979; a similar position with the Nice Philharmonic; and, since 1964, general directorship of the Quebec Symphony. Making frequent guest appearances, Maestro Dervaux has led all of the leading French orchestras and has conducted widely throughout the world. He has been a professor at the Ecole Normale de Musique since 1964, served as professor at the Montreal

Conservatory from 1965 to 1972 and currently holds the same position at the Academie Internationale d'Été in Nice. He teaches at the National Conservatory of Paris and is also president of the jury for the International Music Competition in Besançon. Next year he will celebrate his 25th anniversary as president of L'Orchestre de Colonne in Paris. The many distinctions conferred upon the French conductor both at home and abroad include the title of Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, Officer of the National Order of Merit and Officer of Arts and Letters. His lengthy discography includes Bizet's The Pearl Fishers, Massenet's Thaïs, Verdi's La Traviata and the world premiere recording of Poulenc's Dialogues of the Carmelites.

VERA LÚCIA CALÁBRIA makes her San Francisco Opera directorial debut with Carmen. The Brazilian-born director began her association with the Company in 1979 as assistant to Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, with whom she worked on his production of Carmen when it first appeared here during the 1981 Fall Season. She has also assisted the renowned director-designer on Carmen in Zurich; a Paris Mozart cycle that began with Don Giovanni in 1982; the Metropolitan Opera production of Idomeneo that was telecast this year over PBS; Madama Butterfly in Strasbourg; I Pagliacci and Arlecchino at the Houston Grand Opera; and Parsifal in Cologne. She returned to San Francisco Opera to assist Ponnelle for the American premiere of Aribert Reimann's Lear at the 1981 Summer Festival, and during the Fall Season assisted Sam Wanamaker on the spectacular production of Aida that was telecast to Europe via satellite. From 1977-79 she was under contract at the National Theater in Munich as assistant stage director, and then signed a contract with the Frankfurt Opera, where she assisted Ruth Berghaus on The Magic Flute. Since 1981 Miss Calábria has been working as a freelance director. She has worked on new productions of Strauss' Daphne, Eugene Onegin, Otello, Così fan tutte, Werther, Fidelio and the Munich world premiere of Lear, assisting such directors as Filippo Sanjust, Gian Carlo Menotti and Götz Friedrich. She has also worked with director Brian Large on the production of Puccini's Il Trittico that was televised from La Scala in Milan.

One of the world's most noted and discussed directors and designers, JEAN-PIERRE PON-NELLE, conceived the productions of *Carmen* (1981) and *Cost fan tutte* (1970), designing the sets



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for both and the costumes for the latter. Ponnelle's productions have been seen in all of the world's major opera houses, and many of them have originated in San Francisco. He made his American design debut with the Company in premieres of Orff's Carmina Burana and The

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Wise Maiden in 1958, and returned the following season to design the American premiere production of Strauss' Die Frau ohne Schatten. In 1968 he began to assume dual responsibility as director/designer with productions of 11 Barbiere di Siviglia and Così fan tutte at the Salzburg Festival, where this summer he will be responsible for Die Zauberflöte and Idomeneo. The first American project both designed and directed by Ponnelle was San Francisco Opera's La Cenerentola, seen here for the first time in 1969 and revived for the 1974 and 1982 Fall Seasons. Other Ponnelle productions mounted by San Francisco Opera include Otello (1970, '74 and '78), Tosca (1972, '76, '78 and '82), Rigoletto (1973 and '81 Summer Festival), Der Fliegende Holländer and Gianni Schicchi (1975 and '79), Cavalleria Rusticana and I Pagliacci (1976 and '80), Turandot and Idomeneo (1977), Il Prigioniero (1979) and the American premiere of Aribert Reimann's Lear (1981 Summer Festival). Ponnelle has created productions of Falstaff for Glyndebourne; Moses und Aron for Geneva; Le Nozze di Figaro, Don Giovanni, Die Zauberflöte and Les Contes d'Hoffmann at the Salzburg Festival; Tristan und Isolde at Bayreuth; and Wagner's complete Ring cycle in Stuttgart. For the Cologne Opera he has created a series of Mozart opera productions, and in Zurich he produced the three extant Monteverdi operas, all of which were filmed and televised in this country over PBS. Recent assignments have included a new production of Busoni's Arlecchino in Houston, and later this season his productions of La Cenerentola and Der Fliegende Holländer will be seen at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. His film credits include Le Nozze di Figaro and Madama Butterfly, also seen on American television.

German set and costume designer WERNER IUERKE made his debut as costume designer at the War Memorial with Carmen in the 1981 Fall Season. His collaboration with Jean-Pierre Ponnelle on this opera originated with the 1973 production of Bizet's masterpiece at the Stockholm Opera and the Frankfurt Opera. In the late 1950s he assisted Ponnelle on the designs for Orff's The Wise Maiden and Strauss' Die Frau ohne Schatten at San Francisco Opera and for productions at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Munich Staatsoper, the Opéra-Comique in Paris and theaters throughout Germany. Juerke did his first solo designs for the Berlin Ballet Company in 1957. In the early 1960s he worked as designer for theaters in Berlin and Düsseldorf on such works as the musical Bells Are Ringing,

Anouilh's General Quichotte and Pinter's The Caretaker, and collaborated with choreographer Tatiana Gsovsky on numerous ballets. In 1964 he designed the production of Gounod's Le Médecin malgré lui seen at Munich's Cuvilliés Theater and was responsible in 1970 for a production of The Merry Widow at the Gärtnerplatztheater in Munich. For the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf he created designs for the ballet Sleeping Beauty, for Puccini's Turandot and La Bohème and, most recently, for Strauss' Ariadne auf Naxos. Juerke has done extensive work in television, for which his credits include over 200 productions.

In his eighth year with San Francisco Opera, THOMAS J. MUNN is responsible for the lighting designs of Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Carmen and Così fan tutte. During the 1982 Fall Season he designed the lighting for such productions as Un Ballo in Maschera, The Queen of Spades and Lohengrin; was the lighting director of Tosca; and the scenic supervisor and lighting designer for Salome. Earlier that year, for the 1982 Summer Festival, his lighting was seen in the productions of Julius Caesar, Turandot and Nabucco, for which he also designed the sets. For the first Summer Festival in 1981, he created the lighting for Don Giovanni, Lear and Die Meistersinger. In 1980 he originated the lighting designs for the new productions of Samson et Dalila and Don Pasquale, and the previous year won an Emmy Award for the new production of La Gioconda that was telecast internationally. That year he also designed the scenery for Roberto Devereux and Pelleas et Melisande. 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 in 1976. Munn has created the scenery and lighting projection for the Hartford Ballet's acclaimed multi-media production of The Nutcracker; created the scenery and lighting designs for Don Quichotte with the Netherlands Opera; and, last year, designed the lighting for the Washington Opera Society's productions of Tristan und Isolde and Lucia di Lammermoor. Other recent design credits include La Bolieme and Rigoletto with the Houston Grand Opera. Munn's television projects include Luciano Pavarotti's live concerts from Houston and San Francisco earlier this year.

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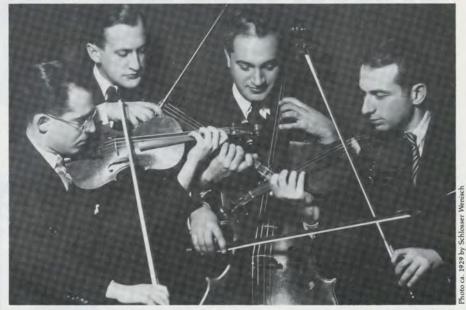


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The Kolisch Quartet was renowned for championing the atonal compositions of such composers as Schönberg, Berg and Webern, and for astonishing their audiences by playing from memory. From left: Felix Khuner, 2nd violin; Eugen Lehner, viola; Benar Heifetz, cello; Rudolf Kolisch, 1st violin.

12, 15, 20 roles a year to the satisfaction of the local audience. But if you look today, you read that he sang this in Milan and this in Vienna and this in Lyons, and next year he'll sing that in Amsterdam or in Melbourne—who cares? Is that good? I remember years ago they had a German concertmaster [in an American orchestra], and in the first program they had a whole list of the orchestras he has played with. I said, 'Those are not orchestras where he played; they're orchestras that kicked him out!'"

I am seated next to one of the violas, who manages to hold his own during the first hour. But a few minutes later his bow begins to sweep the strings listlessly; then it drops from his hand, and I feel an unusual weight on my left shoulder. It is the martyr's head resting there all unconscious...

"I was teaching chamber music at U.C. Berkeley for several years, and I had music majors, majors in other disciplines, and auditors. The music majors couldn't have been less interested in what was going on. The geologists or physicists, they were much more interested in music, and the auditors were the ones who were really interested.

"The music majors are the ones who have a certain skill playing an instrument— as if the instrument had anything to do with music. Playing the instrument is just like digging a ditch, or any other physical activity—sewing, embroidering; you have

to have good fingers, coordination; you have to adjust what you do to what you hear—especially violinists. Violin is a very difficult instrument. You have to start it very early if you want the fingers flexible.

"If a kid has very good ears, sensitive ears, or a sense of rhythm, it has nothing to do with music; it's a purely sensuous thing. The pitch and rhythm are very important elements of music, but you can be sensitive to them without having any affinity to music itself, to what's going on with the pitch and rhythm. But if you have nagging parents who have the means of sending you to a teacher, and you are practicing and are obedient and ambitiouswell, they become violinists. By the time they are 14 or 15, they are fabulous violinists, but by the time they are 18, it turns out they shouldn't have anything to do with music.

"Thave to tell my students that the sound they make on the violin is of paramount importance. The sound is not part of a performance, but is an absolute necessity. The television and radio receiver are not part of the program, but if they're not good, you won't hear the program. You have to have a good receiver to hear the program. But the hi-fi enthusiasts are only interested in the receiver, and they couldn't care less about the program."

A very dull modern French opera is being given. The musicians take their seats with obvious disgust and ill-temper. They do not condescend to tune up, a detail to which the conductor seems not to pay any attention.

"A conductor, number one, has to know the piece very well; he has to have a decent concept of how it should go. Most of them don't. And what the conductors really don't have is the elementary stick technique. If we would handle our bows the way the conductors generally handle their baton, we couldn't get a job.

"Those people who can't accompany don't want to become opera conductors. An exception is Toscanini, who couldn't accompany, but he had the power to say, I'm not going to accompany; you sing the way I conduct.' He was a very good conductor, but a very mediocre musician, an uneducated musician. A friend of mine played cello in the NBC orchestra and he was carrying a recording of Bach's Art of the Fugue. Toscanini said, 'What do you have there?' So my friend showed him and Toscanini said, 'Art of the Fugue-what is that?' My friend said, 'Would you like to listen to it? Take it home and I'll pick it up day after tomorrow.' He said to me, 'Isn't it wonderful that Toscanini is interested in Art of the Fugue?' And I said, 'Isn't it absolutely outrageous that a man of Toscanini's stature has never heard of the Art of the Fugue?'

"It is very unpleasant to be harassed by a conductor. They have to have a kind of leadership. Some are nice and friendly, like Bruno Walter, who did it like syrup. 'My friends, we will...' or, 'My friends, let us...' I was furious—I hadn't given him permission to call me his friend. I didn't even know him. How dare he call me his friend! Although he was a knowledgeable musician. As a matter of fact, he was quite good. I can think of more failures of conductors than high points." Khuner proceded to offer a number of colorful anecdotes, none of which could be printed in a publication of this nature.

Who was the greatest conductor Khuner played under? "You can't answer that; it's like department stores. Like violin playing, a conductor is a department store. One is good in children's shoes and in power tools, and god-knows-what; any department can have deficiencies.

"We played sometimes better with a poor conductor than with a good conductor because we were left to our own devices; we had to listen to each other and think, because the conductor was no help."

...there is not a single score, however flat and empty, null and void, that does not gather a few votes of approval or that fails to number sincere admirers, as if to justify the proverb that says there is no pot without a lid.

"I played the first performance of *The Rise* and Fall of the City of Mahagonny with Weill,

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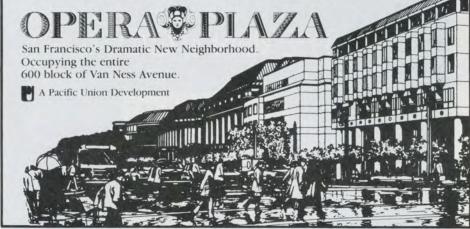
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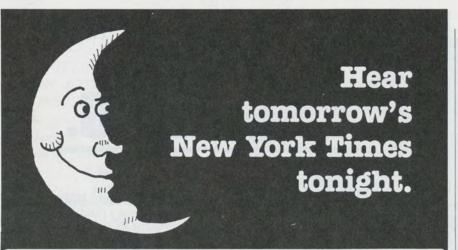
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when it was a chamber opera before he enlarged it into a big, grand opera. It was 1927, Baden-Baden in Germany. Didn't do anything for me, I must say. Weill has a certain flavor that is appealing, but if he hadn't been collaborating with Brecht, who has a bigger reputation as a dramatist of the revolutionary persuasion, Weill would be forgotten.

"When people look down their noses at Puccini and say, 'Oh, he's just an entertainer,' to them I say no, he was a good composer. But to people who say there is nothing else *but* Puccini, I tell them it's worthless. He is both—he is an enormous craftsman, but actually as music it's worthless.

"I don't like Verdi. I admire some things in Verdi; he does very striking, very convincing things with very simple means, but that is not great music. It's purely entertainment.

"Wagner was one of the greatest minds we ever had. Compared to Wagner, the rest are pygmies. Of course, Brahms was a more skillful craftsman in music, but Wagner had a much bigger imagination than Brahms. Wagner would have been a magnificent symphony composer if he had wanted to, which you can see in the Siegfried Idyll, which is a very good symphonic piece. If I play a Wagner opera, with a bad conductor, excruciatingly lousy singing and very sloppy orchestra playing, still it's a tonic for me. I'm looking forward to playing Rheingold again. It's a wonderful piece."

...the cause of great art, of pure and true art, is compromised by the theater; but it will triumph in the theater itself if we artists defend it and fight for it with unremitting strength and constancy.

"I advise an intelligent young man going into music, 'Don't. Do something else.' Unless it's for your own pleasure, if you don't have to make a living with it. You are not playing music for your own glory—that's why a violinist wants to play first violin instead of second violin, because he thinks it's more glorious to play first violin. Or he has to sit at the second stand and not the fifth. Maybe there's some financial advantages, but I don't play for the glory of Mr. Felix Khuner. I play to feed my family."

Zaven Melikian, concertmaster of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, says of Mr. Khuner, "For a number of years, Felix and I were stand-partners in the San Francisco Symphony. Thanks to him, those were rather pleasant years for me, void of musical boredom that can sometimes set in as a result of routine playing of the music put in front of you. ["The only difficulty is

to stay awake," is the way Khuner puts it.] His thorough knowledge of every score we played would keep me on my toes—particularly when he would suddenly start playing notes different than the ones I was looking at. It would always take me a minute to realize that he was filling in for some wind instrument that had failed to make an entrance!"

Robert Commanday, music critic of the San Francisco Chronicle, maintains, "Felix Khuner is one of the few originals in the Bay Area's musical scene. The keen mind, lively curiosity and wit of this skilled musician have kept all of us, his colleagues, on our toes, for anyway three decades. The Khunerisms may not reach the public directly-more's the pity-but his effect musically has gotten around. Whether in a new music/chamber music scene, where he was a leading force in the '50s and '60s. or in the San Francisco Symphony and Opera Orchestras or other ensembles, musicians always look to Felix. His point of view counts."

"Music is generally something that is very close to me," Khuner says, "because I think that I know a lot about it. When I look at a Haydn quartet or a Schumann symphony or a Wagner score, it tells me a lot that it seems not to tell other people. So I feel I have a personal relationship.

"When I recently looked, for instance, at the beginning of *Rheingold*, I came to think, 'Now, what is this E-flat triad? Why is it there?' And I came to see Wagner had the idea that the major triad is the seed of music; the water is the first environment of life; and what the Rhinemaidens sing is the beginning of language—inarticulated language. Now I don't know whether Wagner thought about that, but somehow I feel he told me that."

San Francisco Opera general director emeritus Kurt Herbert Adler has kind words for his colleague and countryman: "Felix Khuner is one of the most experienced and knowledgeable orchestra musicians I have known. In addition to having a sharp sense of humor, he has a great talent for discussing musical matters and has indeed been a most distinguished and likeable colleague throughout all the years. He is a real connoisseur of opera and knows not only the part of the orchestra, but also a lot about the singers and what was happening on stage. He has great musical integrity and suffered, for instance, when we sometimes made cuts he didn't like." Khuner, needless to say, did not suffer in silence. San Francisco Opera musical supervisor David Agler recalls a rehearsal for Die Meistersinger, with Adler on the podium, in which Khuner so strenuously objected to a cut that he offered to contribute \$200 to help cover the Company's deficit if Adler would restore the cut passage.

"The joy of my music is that I tell myself I communicate with the composers—and have a lot of contempt for all the other people," Khuner laughs heartily. "But still I'm friendly. The best human beings are totally unmusical, so I don't consider musical education or musical affinity a required part of a good human being."

Tom Heimberg, manager of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, played for years in the San Francisco Symphony with Khuner. Heimberg recalls a conversation in their car pool in which Khuner was discoursing on the essence of music. "If you are really interested in music," Khuner asserted, "in its true value, then you will search and search for importance and quality, and will not be afraid to have opinions about it, to make new opinions or to change your mind when more experience and thought and wisdom show you that you were wrong." A third member of the car pool was somewhat mystified by Khuner's remarks. "What value?" he questioned. "What importance? There are rehearsals and performances—what else is there?" Heimberg gives a masterful imitation of Felix's shrug and knowing smile as he delivers Khuner's reassuring response: "If you don't know or care, don't worry about it. You can have a fine life without thinking about such things."

Khuner's memory is legendary; he is known to have performed the most difficult pieces, both orchestral and chamber, without music. Heimberg tells of a time someone asked Khuner how he managed to memorize the second violin part of a Beethoven quartet. Khuner replied that he didn't memorize the second violin part; he memorized the entire quartet and played "what was missing." But surely, the inquirer persevered, if he waited to hear what the others were playing, wouldn't he be late? "No," Khuner explained, "—very fast reflexes."

"My contribution to the Opera," Khuner summarizes, "is mainly that I was never late to a rehearsal or a performance, except once when I forgot that the student performances in the afternoon start at one instead of two. I'm very skillfull as a violinist, an excellent ensemble player. I have a very good ear, better than most, equal to anybody; I'm really very versatile and very agile, and I see what's going on. I'm a very useful orchestra player; I've made a very good living with it."



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Coe Glade, Ned Rorem's first Carmen, did not sing the role with the San Francisco Opera. In 1935, her only season with the Company, she bowed as Nancy in Flotow's Martha (shown above), then appeared as Charlotte in Werther.

object to Shakespeare's or Beethoven's sources. It's an ungracious quip, the one about sexual prowess, "It's not what you've got but what you do with it"; yet we are now distanced enough from Bizet to hear him, not as his contemporaries heard him, for the plagiarist that he was, but for how personally he used his robbed goods.

His arias are true arias, not ditties with instruments. The difference? No aria can work on a song program (tell that to your stars), because by definition an aria leads from past to future, advancing the soloist in time and space, while a song is selfcontained, sans plot, leaving the soloist where he began. Of Bizet's forty actual songs only one, "L'Adieu de l'hôtesse arabe," has much profile, and many of the others seem to be extracted from unfinished stage works and garnished with fresh words after the composer's death. If Bizet did not possess the gift of song (contrary to, say, Fauré, who lacked a sense of drama), his arias are nonetheless songlike in that they will repeat themselves literally and with identical accompaniment.

Notoriously, Carmen's Paris failure killed its composer, though posthumously the piece quickly became a hit from Munich to Moscow. Can one sense the causes in another time and place? "It is lovable," Nietzsche felt, because "it does not sweat.... Through it one almost becomes a masterpiece oneself.... Farewell to the damp north." And farewell to Lohengrin, he might have added, for Nietzsche loathed the Wagner he loved, and betrayed him

with a Parisian. But how exact was Nietzsche's French?

Insofar as a person not born to a language can presume to assess a native's accent, let me state that Bizet is often prosodically illogical. French being the sole European tongue without a tonic stress (no syllable having more value than another), any sung layout of verse can be argued as correct. Yet throughout Carmen one senses that words have been forced onto preexisting tunes, especially the tunes of Don José; not only at the start of the flower song, with "la" strong and "fleur" weak, but in more tactile, talky moments where declamation should be dictated by nature. Why, for example, with the phrase "Laisse-moi te sauver" in the final dispute, does José hit "te" rather than "sau" on the highest note and strongest beat?

Something's amiss with Don José. By current U.S. standards, he's a mama's boy (un fils à papa in French): his need to cast out both fiancée and career while reeling between mistress and mother strikes us as Freudian, while for the nineteenth century the predicament would seem more Roman than Romany (unless it were Jewish, since Halévy and not Mérimée contrived the situation). Were the tenor's lyric inspiration less grand, Americans would hear merely the bathos of this Spaniard behaving like an Italian singing in French for the sole delight of Germans.

Bizet is less expert at le mot juste than at la phrase juste. Winton Dean calls him a "master of the paragraph," meaning that "the rise and fall of the melody produced whole numbers that seem to spring forth complete from the first bar to the last." I get edgy when people start to compare the arts (architecture is frozen music, etc.), for if the muses were interchangeable we'd need just one, not nine. But if Bizet did compose paragraphs, they were stanzaic, for he was no prosifier; and though music can't rhyme, it can certainly echo. Perhaps he was more a master of the sentence, or rather of the verse. Such verse swells not through development but through repe-

Yet through all *Carmen* flows the technical inevitability one finds in a disco palace, a linking, an overlapping of numbers granting them both independence and interdependence, and sending them all finally to flight like some doomed Greek family, heroes and jesters alike, toward a horridly needed apotheosis.

Formally the opera bites off more than it can chew, then chews it. CONTINUED

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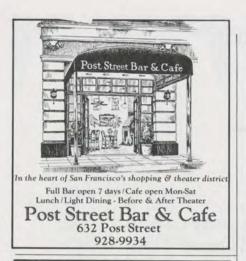
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Carmen's a liberated woman, she makes the rules, and like great actresses she speaks of herself in the third person, especially as she nears the end. She's a merry and obsessive lover, but a sad and gluttonous one too, and death more than lust seems her dish. At the hour of her suicide-what else can you call it?-Carmen seems fed up. Why? Music explicates where psychoanalysis fumbles. But if Mérimée's tale continually instructs us (his limning of Spanish Romany is no less morosely veridical than his Corsican Mafia in the masterpiece Mateo Falcone), who can deny that some pages of the opera sound silly? The males of the chorus, extrovert Latins though they be, are kidding when they ask Carmen when she'll love them (love them collectively?), whereas José in taking her literally, shows himself crazy and provides his own doom. But Bizet was not kidding (surely he, not his librettists, was responsible for the stretchings and ricochetings that veer toward farce) when he invites our sympathy during the Gilbert-and-Sullivan exchange between Micaëla and the garde montante. Operetta conventions of yesterday are today unwilling suspensions of disbelief, and not only poor Micaëla suffers in our eyes as she giddily parrots her would-be lover's remarks ("Sa mère, il la revoit," etc.)-Escamillo and Carmen too, glamorous public figures, go around telling just anyone they're in love.

Nothing indicates that Bizet and his friends, at least in their musical speech, were out for a revolution. If things were different after *Carmen*, the difference lay in a (to us) minor French definition of what constitutes grand opera. So far as the ear is concerned, *Carmen*, while becoming the indisputably best lyric drama of its age in France, remains strictly in the tradition of Opéra Comique, unaltered by Delibes or Hahn, by Poulenc or Sauguet, or by Rosenthal or Damase a century later.

Half the opera is choral. Do the choruses, in their inevitability at scene setting, their directness of melody, their lean virile languor and bull's-eye femininity, provide the most gorgeously inspired minutes?

Before deciding, listen again to "La cloche a sonné" as the unison tenors for only twelve bars intone a series of tetrachordal arches more perfectly symmetrical than those of the Pont du Gard (no, architecture is not frozen music), and which, though they speak but once, satisfy our memory over the context of the next two hours. How almost immoral that so telling a fragment be followed by another more elegant still: unison baritones, against six-

teen measures of fluxing hues among undulating cellos and near-motionless reeds, chant but two notes, over and over, only sinking ecstatically to a third as they give way to the long-awaited girls. Hear these girls now, this time in pairs, curling their vowels around each other like the very smoke they evoke, and growing, growing ever higher in the air. Oh, one could go on. Yes, the choruses do form the must beautiful moments.

Paradoxically, it is possible to conceive a Carmen (as opposed to a Meistersinger or a Dialogues des Carmélites) without chorus.



Jennie Tourel and Ned Rorem in Venice, 1951.

The drama is between the few, not the many, and requires no kibbutzing. *Carmen's* choruses are marvelous clothes on a marvelous body.

Had I never heard the orchestration but only seen it, I'd say it couldn't work. I would be wrong. The chances we are taught to avoid when scoring for voice with instruments seem not to be chances to Bizet. Balances or areas that on the page look top heavy or empty are to the ear always right: the scoring is unstintingly crystalline.

But the scoring is not unusual. Beyond a

predilection for low flutes, for solo bassoon and for crossed strings (as within the sudden soft parentheses between which. after fifteen minutes of rattling fanfare, Escamillo emerges in the final act and, with string quartet, speaks his piece, ominously intimate and self-contained as a black opal centered in a crown of a thousand diamonds), Bizet doesn't really run risks. The major difference between Germans and the French is that in their orchestration the ones use doubling while the others do not. Of course, not to double (i.e. to reinforce, for example, the violas, with one or more oboes at the unison or octave) is probably in itself a risk, like any vulnerable exposure, but it does make for an air-filled luminosity in which the vocalist is not forced to scream for his life, whereas the Germans had to breed a new race of singer to withstand their triple-thick orchestration.

While in Paris in 1947, enjoying some adventures in the line of duty entertainingly recounted in her current Other People's Letters, the Proustophilic historian Mina Curtiss coincidentally and almost by accident gained legal access to a cache of memorabilia that opened as unexpected a window onto cultural France as Watergate did onto political America. The cache was in the hands of one Magda Sibilat, the likable but unstable and not too well-informed widow of the nephew of Emile Straus, himself heir to his second wife, nee Geneviève Halévy, daughter of La Juive's composer and, by her first marriage, widow of Georges Bizet. The memorabilia were an acre of letters—from Bizet to all his family, from Gounod and rival geniuses to Bizet, to Fromental Halévy from Rossini, Verdi and Berlioz, letters never before seen by anyone but the correspondents. Letters, said Madame de Sévigné, are the wings of friendship—a manifestation no longer vital, but still in Bizet's day so frequent as to seem no more historically useful than our telephone. Surely no such thorough documentation has come down to us from any other artist of the epoch. In her pursuit of what she calls the truth about Bizet, Curtiss spent the next decade immersed in an accurate vision of the past, and by 1958 she had published maybe the grandest profile ever composed on a composer, Bizet and His World.

Consider how many volumes appear every month, how much hidden data may still be around on the Second Empire, and how famous are such men as Massenet or Saint-Saëns, Duparc or Chausson, Gou-



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nod or Fauré. Then realize that no books are readily available on these men, nor are there decent biographies of even Debussy or Ravel. And the past fades with each passing day. Bizet's each passing day is meanwhile revived, as through a teadrenched madeleine, and with it a new sense of the man's musical importance, thanks to the Curtiss book. Or is it not Bizet's book? A good 50 percent is "in his own voice," quoting letters judiciously woven into context.

Now, this new sense of Bizet's musical importance—is it a matter of luck, of historic availability? Suppose the author had stumbled upon a store of, say, Meyerbeeriana, with Gounod in a walk-on role (as he has in the present book) and Bizet a mere cameo, would the status of these figures be rearranged in our consciousness? Or is importance irrelevant to worth? (In a sense, because of his defining influence on Wagner, Spohr is more important than Debussy.) Durability in music probably does not rely upon what is written about the music-or its composer-since the musical and the literary publics do not overlap. Mrs. Curtiss herself is a musician only at second hand (Marc Blitzstein's aid in this case was invaluable), though she is a born snoop. Thus her useful book appears built on a devotion less to music than to research. The margins of my copy are sprinkled with reactions.

Bizet made a living out of dying, at least for his closest relatives, all of whom survived to enjoy his fame. Marie Reiter, the family maid, at the end of her life in 1912 informed her grown son Jean that he was the offspring not, as was always supposed, of Bizet père but of Georges himself. She doubtless lied.

In musical accouterments—sight-reading, singing, getting the point—Bizet was wildly talented. He could "do" anything. But so could many a prize Conservatoire graduate. Though his professional reputation was solid, his whole bourgeois life was passed as an overworked teacher and copyist with both social connections (all artists had those) and money problems. The woes and joys were those of today's composers-unrehearsed premieres but premieres all the same, mixed reviews, jealousies. He retained boundless fidelity to those he admired, Gounod especially, and developed what looked like an American equation of failure with death.

If flop after flop is patiently chalked up by Curtiss, as by Winton Dean in his less factually documented but more musically canny biography, she is understandably defensive about her subject. The fact remains that Bizet's output was mostly mediocre. Even his best works—the young Symphony in C, Jeux d'Enfants, parts of Les Pècheurs de Perles—are in the salonistic genre of his period. There were no first-class gods in France then, as he semiconsciously realized; those he invoked were ever foreigners (Shakespeare, Homer, Michelangelo)—except for Meyerbeer, whom he classed with Beethoven.

What do I think about Bizet and his Carmen? There are no flukes in art. Yet Carmen is a fluke. The high value, if not the style, is incongruous in Bizet's catalogue. Carmen deserves her continuing glory: her musical worth is on a par with Mélisande, her narrative worth on a par with Aschenbach, her vocal know-how on a par with Norina. One might argue that Carmen is the most perfect opera ever composed, while being far from great. One might also argue that Carmen is great but Bizet is not.

Why is *Carmen*, rather than *Fidelio* or *Lulu*, the perfect opera? Because all the elements (beginning with the libretto—an improvement, at least in stageworthiness, on Mérimée's tale-*cum*-document) are firstrate: the traditional symmetries are perfect, the literal repeats are perfect, the exquisite banality is perfect. But perfection does not a chef-d'oeuvre make. Many a masterpiece is flawed, for beauty limps, and grandeur, though spectacular, can turn top-heavy.

Then why is *Carmen* a chef-d'oeuvre? Because the perfect elements all catch fire and gleam with life. They are, as we say, inspired, and together they jell: they have hardened into immortality.

Yet *Carmen* does not make my mouth water. (No offense; neither does Schubert.) I like everything about it except *it*. I do not object that in the final analysis the opera is really so corny and predictable, but my taste buds crave a Frenchiness that did not yet exist, a longing for the almost edible sadness that resides in the more sharply spiced recipes of Debussy and Ravel.

Perfection is a realistic goal, greatness is not. Greatness is an endowment—a post partum present, if you wish—never consciously nor even necessarily bestowed by the maker. One can admit to the fact of, and even cheer, certain universal marvels without needing them, while in the private heart one elevates to Paradise lesser works that merely (merely?) satisfy.



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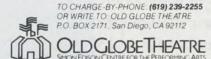
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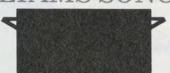
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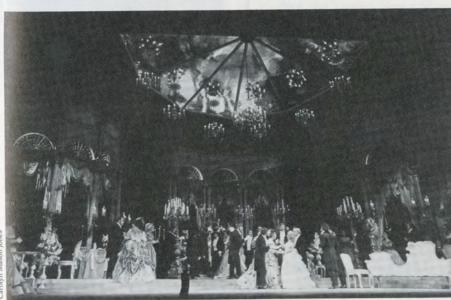
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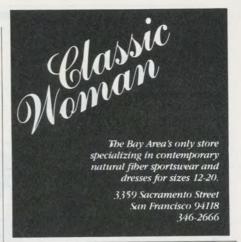
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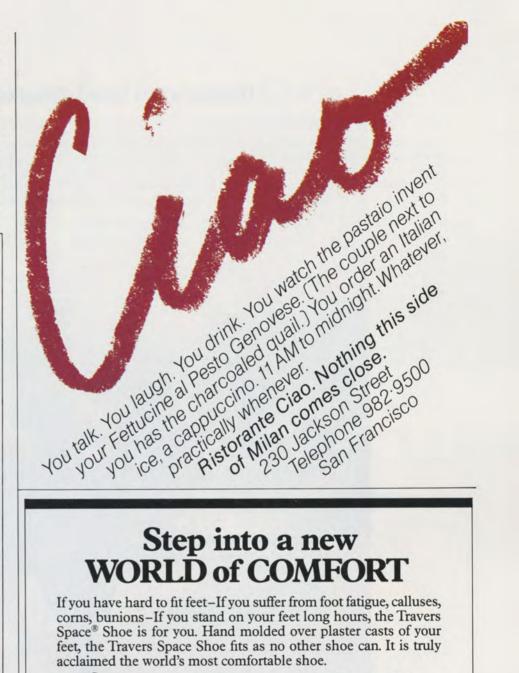
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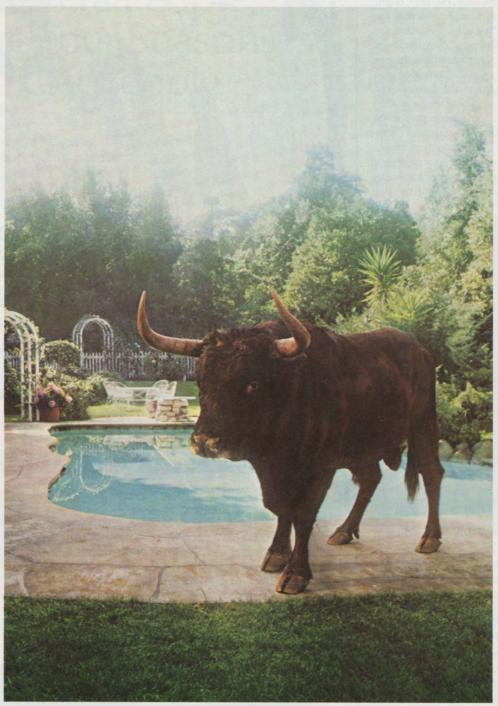
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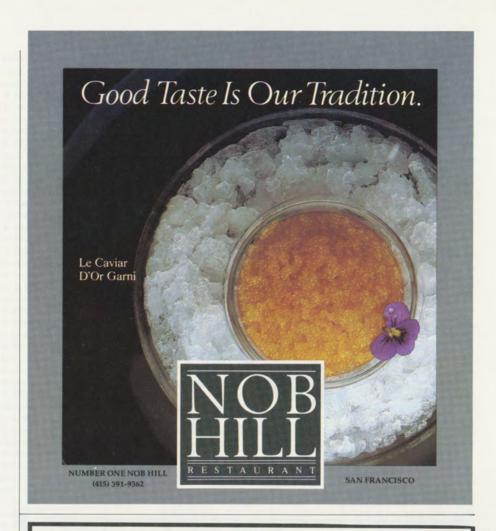
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Services

Bus Service

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

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

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

Its route is as follows:

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

Taxi Service

Patrons needing a cab at the end of the performance should reserve one with the doorman at the Taxi Entrance before the end of the final intermission.

Food Service

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

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

Emergency Telephone

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

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

Watch That Watch

Patrons are reminded to please check that their digital watch alarms are switched OFF before the performance begins.

Ticket Information

San Francisco Opera Box Office. Lobby, War Memorial Opera House: Van Ness at Grove, (415) 864-3330. 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. Monday through Saturday. 10 A.M. through first intermission on all performance days.

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

Unused Tickets

Patrons who are unable to attend a performance may make a worthwhile contribution to the San Francisco Opera Association by returning their tickets to the Box Office or telephoning (415) 431-1210. Donors will receive a receipt for the full value, but the amount is not considered a contribution to the fund drive or fulfillment of a fund drive pledge.

Opera glasses are available for rent in the lobby.

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

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

Management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

For lost and found information, inquire at check room No. 3 or call (415) 621-6600, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Performing Arts Center Tours

Tours of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center, which include the War Memorial Opera House, the Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall and the Herbst Theatre take place as follows:

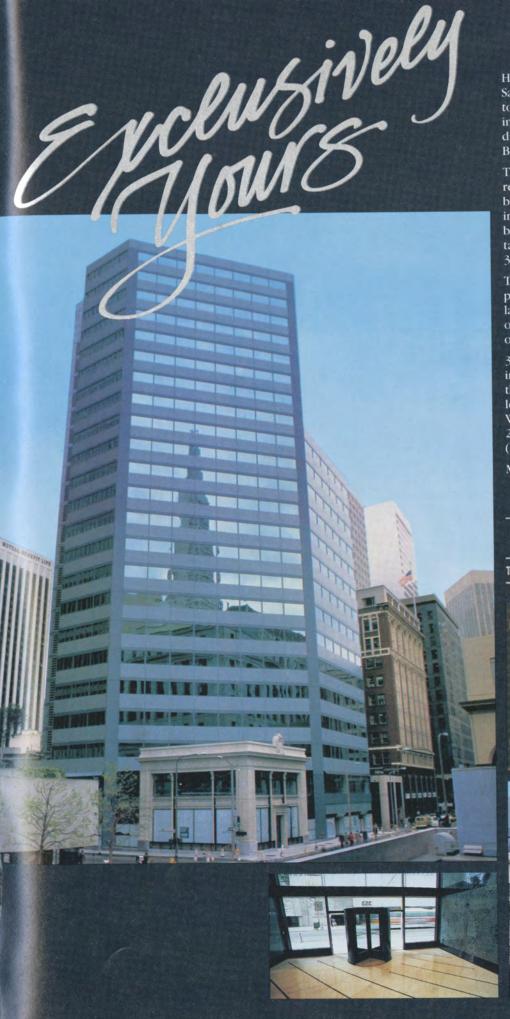
Mondays, 10:00-2:30 on the hour and half hour.

Davies Hall only:

Wednesday 1:30/2:30—Saturday 12:30/1:30 All tours leave from Davies Symphony Hall, Grove Street entrance.

General \$3.00—Seniors/Students \$2.00 For further information, please call (415) 552-8338.

THE OPERA HOUSE MUSEUM (South Mezzanine Box level behind the Opera Boutique) currently houses an exhibit on Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung* as it has been seen in San Francisco in years past. Featured are photographs, props, costumes and memorabilia from the complete *Ring* cycles of 1972 and 1935 (with Kirsten Flagstad and Lauritz Melchior). A brief browse through this fascinating exhibit, assembled by Christine Albany, will provide an intriguing counterpoint to the new *Ring* productions in this year's Summer Festival.



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