

Don Pasquale

1983

Friday, May 25, 1984 8:00 PM
Sunday, May 27, 1984 2:00 PM
Friday, June 1, 1984 8:00 PM
Thursday, June 7, 1984 7:30 PM
Saturday, June 9, 1984 8:00 PM
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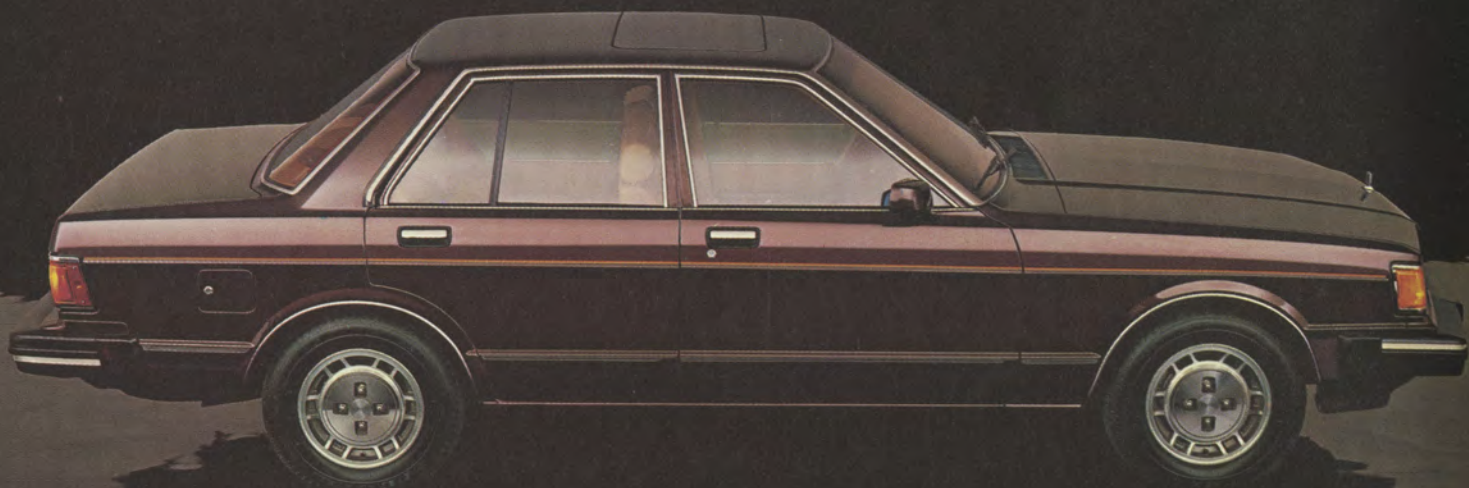
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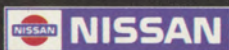
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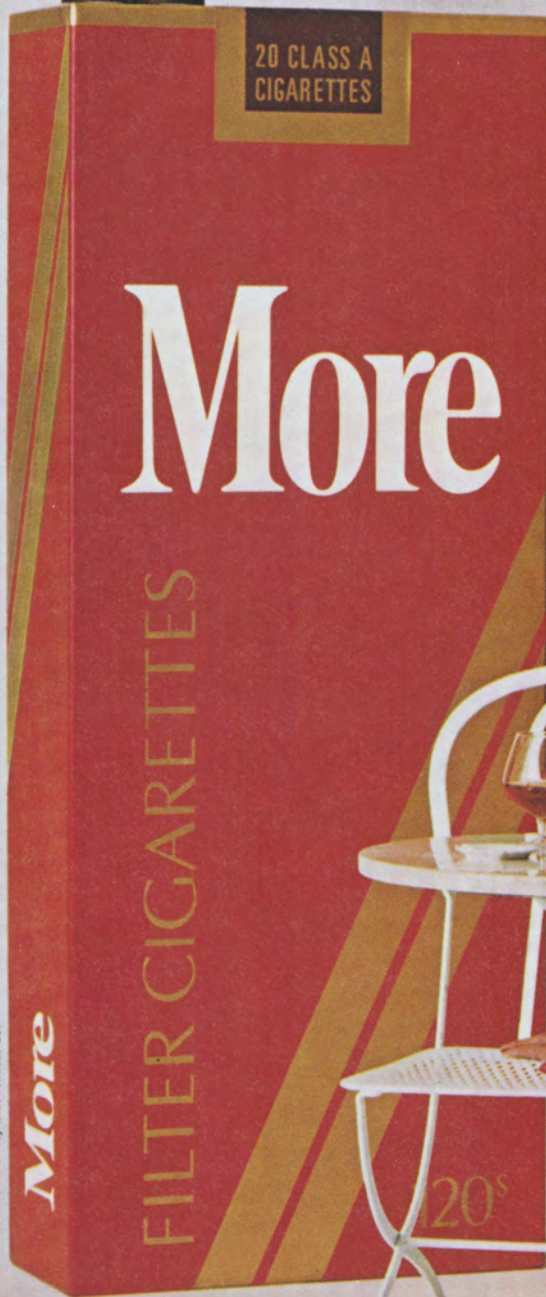
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DON PASQUALE

SUMMER SEASON 1984

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COVER: Portrait of Gaetano Donizetti by G.B. Carnevali, painted in 1835. Museo Teatrale alla Scala, Milano.

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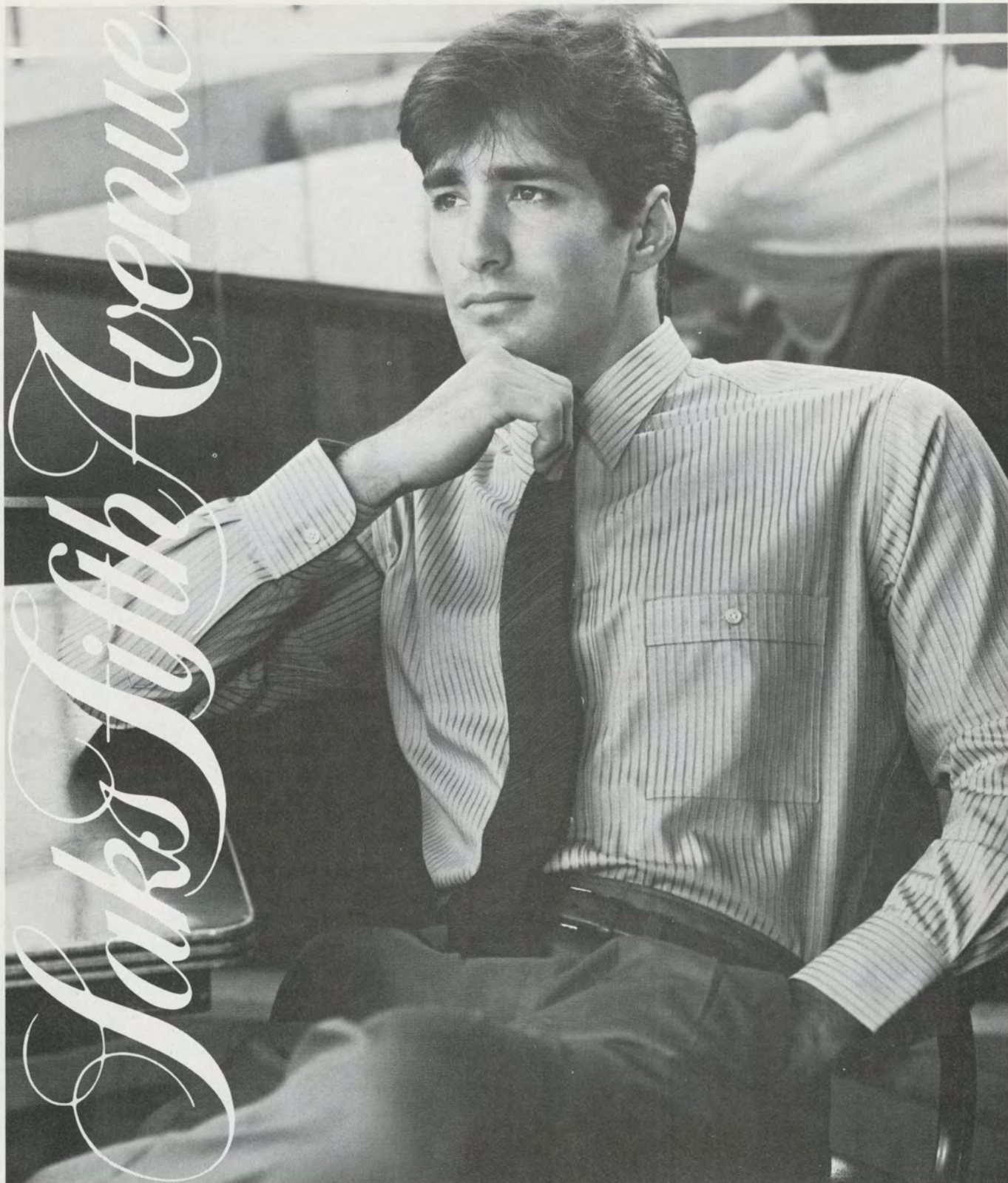
We are exceedingly gratified to observe that our Summer Season, currently in its fourth year, has become a firmly established and significant element in the spectrum of offerings from San Francisco's major performing arts organizations. Attendance at last year's summer opera performances was on a level with that enjoyed by our Fall Season, and we anticipate that this year's response will be as great. To have accomplished this within just a few years is a ringing affirmation of our belief that San Francisco wants, deserves and is willing to support the best opera that can be produced today.

Our marketing studies show us that our Summer Season audience is not the same as our Fall Season audience, a fact from which we may draw two encouraging conclusions: one, that we are not merely giving more performances, but are reaching many more people; and two, that our new audience gives us an extended base of support.

We are especially heartened by the spirit of generosity reflected in the production funding behind some of this summer's offerings. Our *Aida* production, for instance, was made possible by a gift from an anonymous friend of San Francisco Opera in 1981. The Koret Foundation has kindly underwritten the cost of reviving our production of *Don Pasquale* this summer. And very special thanks indeed are due the anonymous friend of San Francisco Opera who has elected to cover the costs of the third installment of our beautiful new Ring cycle, *Siegfried*. This magnificent gesture has given us more than a new opera production; it has enabled our Company to maintain its position among that elite group of opera companies that have been entrusted with perpetuating the highest international standards.

It is an awesome responsibility, and the presentation of our Summer Seasons has taken its toll financially. Grand opera is by far the most expensive of the performing arts; ticket sales cover only 50 to 55 per cent of our expenses. For many years prior to 1981, when we had only the Fall Season to produce, we essentially broke even thanks to the generosity of our patrons and other revenue sources. The fiscal impact of increasing the number of operas produced annually by 50 per cent—about a one-third increase in the number of performances—is obvious. During each of the last three years we have suffered significant losses, a situation we can no longer afford. We are confident that we run a tight ship, so the answer is not simply to reduce expenses; to maintain the quality for which we are known world-wide means we must increase contributions from our patrons, particularly our newer ones. If you are now a contributor, we thank you and hope you will do your best to increase your gifts. If you are not a contributor, won't you please join the thousands of our present contributors with a meaningful donation? We must have your help if we are to bring you the opera you want.

The assistance of a large number of groups and individuals has become a vital factor in our ongoing success, and we would like to thank them: the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the Hotel Tax Fund, Mayor Dianne Feinstein, Chief Administrator Roger Boas, the City and County of San Francisco, the San Francisco Opera Guild, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees. Our gratitude for their indispensable assistance is most deeply felt. —WALTER M. BAIRD



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General Director's Message

Welcome to San Francisco Opera's 1984 Summer Season. This year's summer offerings are marked by two developments adding special significance to what should be a fascinating season. One of these is the unveiling of the third opera in our new production of Wagner's monumental *Ring of the Nibelung*. Mounting a production of *Siegfried* alone would be an enormous undertaking; presented as part of a complete new *Ring* cycle, it is a herculean and yet most welcome task. Being involved with an artistic endeavor of this magnitude is a thrill we all shared last summer when we began our *Ring* with *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*. The depth and breadth of coverage we received from national and international media confirm the scope of our enterprise. The well-deserved success earned by the countless individuals involved on all levels of our Company—our team—is something in which we take great pride.

When the curtain goes up on our new *Siegfried* production, there will be at least

two heroes to applaud: one of them is the on-stage son of the Wälsung twins whose name identifies the opera; the second is the off-stage anonymous friend of the San Francisco Opera who has enabled us to continue bringing Wagner's timeless epic to life on our stage. Such generosity deserves recognition we can never adequately bestow on one whose modesty has requested anonymity.

Another major new development for our international seasons is the use of supertitles in our regular, subscription performances. The striking effectiveness of this technique for enriching one's enjoyment of opera as total theater cannot be appreciated until you have attended a supertitled performance yourself. It is my experience that even seasoned opera-philosophes attending standard repertory works are surprised by the degree to which their comprehension is enhanced by this deceptively simple device. It is certain to be a boon to the understanding of many members of the San Francisco

Opera audience, novices as well as connoisseurs. We owe a round of thanks to Francesca Zambello and Jerry Sherk for implementing and developing a system whose unobtrusive efficiency belies the sophistication and skill required for its realization. We are also indebted to the San Francisco Opera Guild, whose generous support has made the production of supertitles possible.

Finally let me welcome the long list of stellar artists who are performing here this summer, exciting newcomers as well as beloved veterans. Some of them will be appearing in roles new to them, others in roles with which they have become closely identified. Each one of them offers his or her unique gifts as part of this promising new season. It is a privilege to be able to share such excitement with you.

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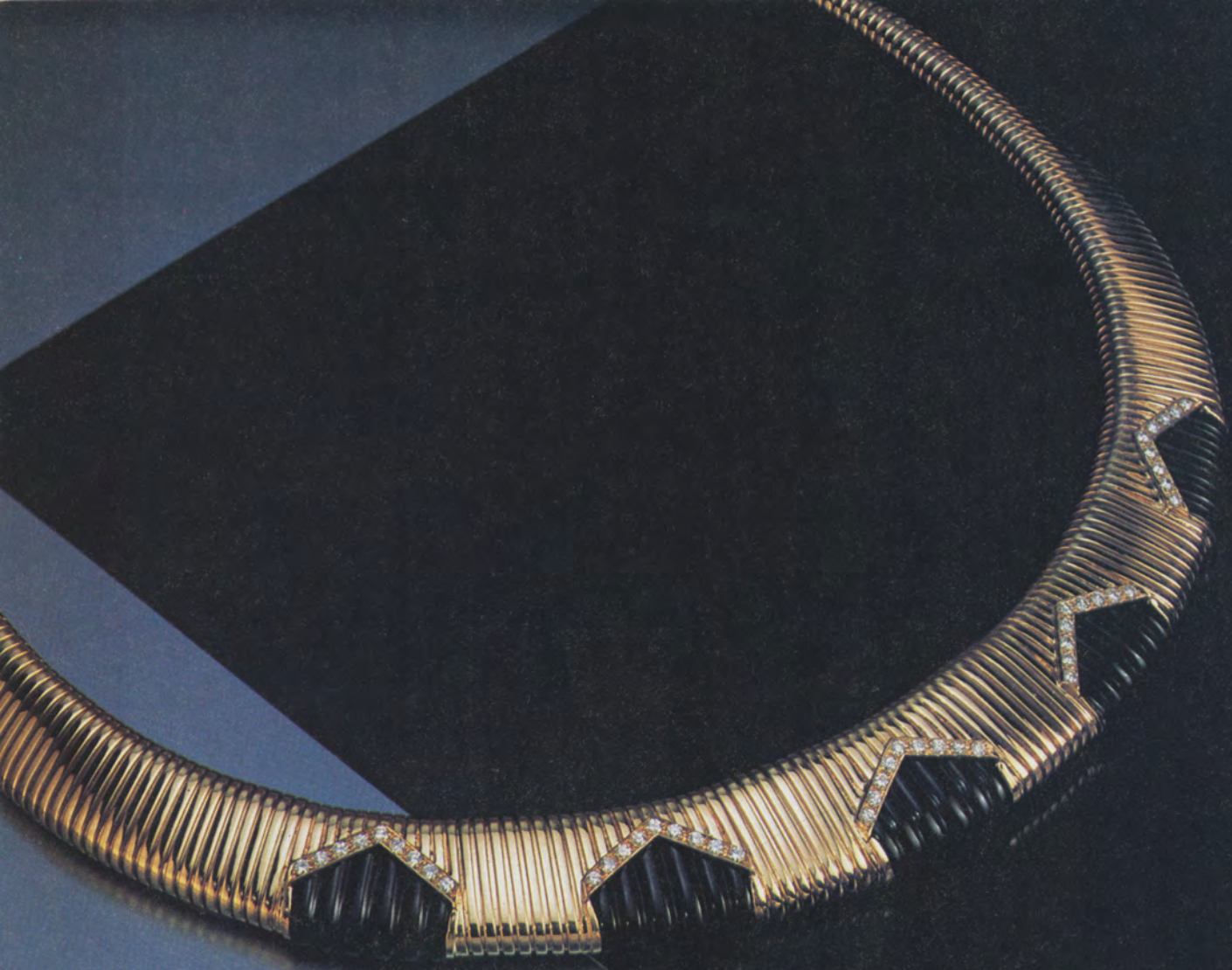
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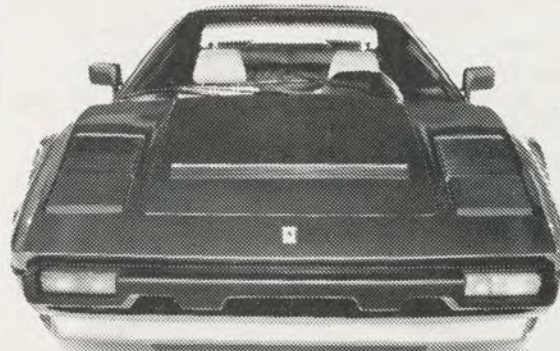
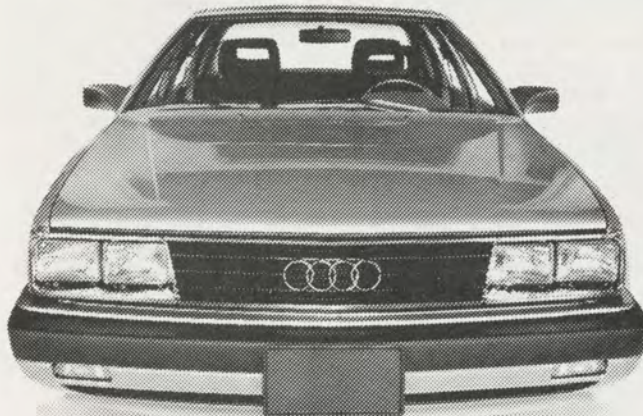
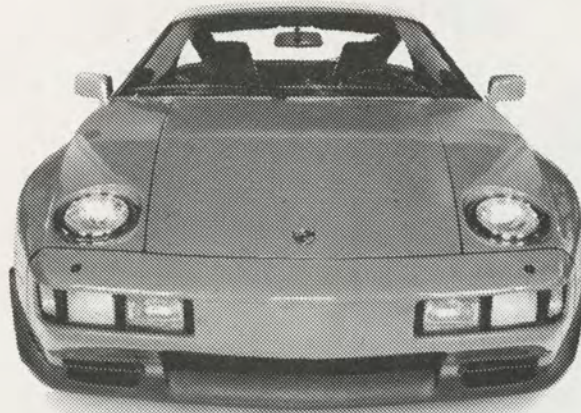
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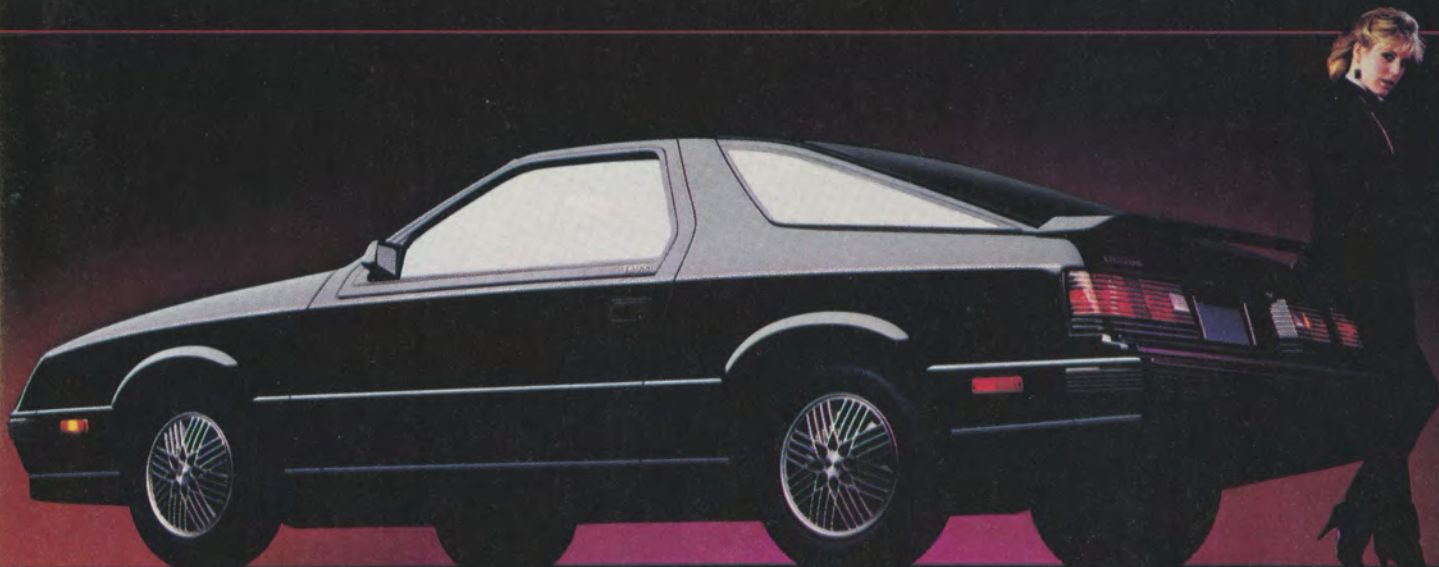
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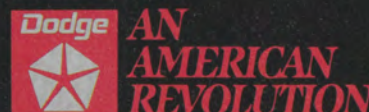


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Opening Night

Friday, May 25, 8:00

Don Pasquale Donizetti

Soviero/Montarsolo, Araiza, Elvira, Malis*
Ajmone-Marsan*/Montarsolo/Conklin/Munn

Saturday, May 26, 7:00 New Production

Siegfried Wagner

The production of *Siegfried* has been made possible by a generous gift from an anonymous friend of the San Francisco Opera. The production of San Francisco Opera's new *Ring* has been partially underwritten by generous three-year grants from the Sells Foundation and BankAmerica Foundation.

Marton, Dernesch, Parrish/Kollo*, Stewart, Pampuch** (May 26, 31; June 3), Egerton (June 8, 12), Patterson, Wexler
de Waart/Lehnhoff/Conklin/Munn

Sunday, May 27, 2:00

Don Pasquale Donizetti

Thursday, May 31, 7:00

Siegfried Wagner

Friday, June 1, 8:00

Don Pasquale Donizetti

Saturday, June 2, 8:00

Aida Verdi

This production was made possible in 1981 through the generous sponsorship of an anonymous friend of the San Francisco Opera.

L. Price (June 2, 6, 10, 15), Evstatieva* (June 20, 23, 27, 30), Baldani, Zajic*/Bonisolli, Pons, Langan (June 2, 6, 10), Tomlinson (June 15, 20, 23, 27, 30), Patterson, Harper*
de Waart/Donnell*/Schmidt/Casey/Munn

Sunday, June 3, 1:00

Siegfried Wagner

Wednesday, June 6, 8:00

Aida Verdi

Thursday, June 7, 7:30

Don Pasquale Donizetti

Friday, June 8, 7:00

Siegfried Wagner

Saturday, June 9, 8:00

Don Pasquale Donizetti

Sunday, June 10, 2:00

Aida Verdi

Monday, June 11, 8:00

Don Pasquale Donizetti

Tuesday, June 12, 7:00

Siegfried Wagner

Friday, June 15, 8:00

Aida Verdi

Saturday, June 16, 8:00

Die Fledermaus J. Strauss

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Tuesday, June 19, 8:00

Die Fledermaus J. Strauss

Wednesday, June 20, 7:30

Aida Verdi

Friday, June 22, 8:00

Die Fledermaus J. Strauss

Saturday, June 23, 8:00

Aida Verdi

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Wednesday, June 27, 8:00

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Pasquale in San Francisco

By ALLAN ULRICH

They say that great art is eternal. They claim that the noblest effusions of the creative spirit resist the encroachments of time, fashion, favor, prejudice, whim and circumstance. They insist that the loftiest aspirations of the imagination transcend simple matters of taste.

Wrong. Wrong. And wrong again. Whoever they may be, they have not spent any spare hours recently perusing the San Francisco press history of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*.

Now, you wouldn't think the work could generate much controversy. The composer was approaching the end of his prolific and tragically curtailed career at the time of the premiere of his opera at the Paris Théâtre-Italien in January, 1843. (Only *Caterina Cornaro*, *Maria di Rohan* and *Dom Sébastien* yet awaited completion and production.) *Don Pasquale* represents the apogee of Donizetti's comic writing at its most exuberant, most subtle, most economical and most unfailingly lyrical. It starts with a folk motif—that of the self-deluded old gent determined to find a young bride—which was already ancient when Geoffrey Chaucer made it the subject of one of his *Canterbury Tales* in the late 14th century. And it develops its own telling variations on the standard *bel canto* format, most noticeable in Donizetti's growing reliance on orchestrally accompanied recitative.

Amidst all this sparkle, *Don Pasquale* reveals a controversial blemish. It's that resounding slap the bride "Sofronia"

Allan Ulrich reviews music and dance for the San Francisco Examiner, contributes frequently to the Los Angeles Times and San Francisco Focus and will contribute to The New Grove Dictionary of Music in the United States.



The cast of San Francisco Opera's first *Don Pasquale*, given in 1929, included Pompilio Malatesta (top left) in the title role, Nina Morgana (top right) as Norina, Tito Schipa (bottom left) as Ernesto, and Giuseppe De Luca (bottom right) as Dr. Malatesta.

plants on Pasquale's cheek which has echoed through the last century, bringing chagrin to Harlequin paperback addicts and all other parties who like their romantic fables unbesmirched by passing clouds of seriousness (Donizetti's music wastes no time in conveying Norina's grief at carrying her cruel charade just a step too far).

Qualms like that didn't disturb the daily

scribes when *Don Pasquale* made its debut at the San Francisco Opera on Sept. 27, 1929, late in the company's sixth season. The opera arrived as a distinct novelty for the Opera's subscribers and reporters, though the *Examiner's* Redfern Mason indicated in his lead paragraph that Tennessee-born soprano, Alice Nielsen, had toured to the Bay city as Norina 20 years earlier, after scoring a sensation in



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But *Don Pasquale* was almost an unknown quantity on the local music scene in that Depression-year season: "a novelty," was how the S.F. Opera's first general director, Gaetano Merola, billed it. Mason commented on that bit of polite puffery: "... inasmuch as most of the younger generation never heard the work, it is certainly a novelty to them, and, as for older folks, it was in the nature of a novelty to hear an old, old work and find it so delightfully new."

And these slightly waspish comments from Marie Hicks Davidson of the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin and Post*: "Good old orthodox Italian opera, with all the time-honored tricks and capriccioso was the offering of the San Francisco Opera Company last night at Dreamland Auditorium, where society and the *réclame* of previous nights was supplanted."

Mme. Davidson's *aperçus* on the intrinsic quality of the work would be laughable, if they were not indicative of the sentiments of the time. Her capsule description of what she termed "the Donizetti idiom": "Saccharine sweetness, grotesque characterization, much monologue and dialogue and lifting of eyebrows constituted a framework almost as creaking as the burlesque, 'After Dark,' at a downtown theater ... But, mind you, the gallery gods liked it."

Both these reviews hint at a profound difference between opera-going then and now. No matter how many contemporary works may dot season schedules in our time, we habitually think of the Opera House as a museum. The preservationist psychology inflames critics and soothes subscribers, but it had to start somewhere. In 1929, opera production seemed to reflect much more on what was actually being composed: it mirrored stylistic currents (or at least some stylistic currents) much more acutely than major houses do today.

Donizetti, in particular, and *bel canto* opera, in general, simply did not constitute a substantial part of San Francisco Opera fare in its first decade. *Lucia di Lam-*

mermoor arrived in her bloodied nightgown in 1926, while *L'Elisir d'Amore* was decanted the same month as *Don Pasquale*. What patrons knew of *bel canto* they had learned from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, which had bowed in 1925 and lingered through the succeeding seasons.

Merola's repertory choices today look like a curious combination of the substantial and the obscure. San Francisco certainly wasn't a "German house": A pair of *Tristans*, two *Marthas* (sung in Italian, *natürlich*) and a lone *Hansel und Gretel* sustained Teutonic pride in the 1920s. Merola served the cause of French opera with more consistency, having mounted such standards as *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Manon* and *Roméo et Juliette*, with *Fra Diavolo* representing the sole concession to comparative Gallic esoterica. As far as the San Francisco Opera was concerned, Mozart was exclusively a composer of symphonies and piano sonatas (Merola finally presented *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Elisabeth Rethberg and Ezio Pinza in 1936). Richard Strauss simply didn't exist (Salome, in the guise of Maria Jeriza, finally doffed her veils in 1930). Slavic opera was strictly alien fare, while native American opera was non-existent. (Louis Gruenberg's *Emperor Jones* attained two performances in 1933, less than a year after its Met premiere.)

So, what exactly were patrons plunking down a \$6 top to see in the late '20s?

Verdi, of course, held pride of place at both the Civic and Dreamland Auditoriums. *Aida*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore* and *Rigoletto* were staples, with one solitary *Falstaff* in 1927 supplying a pinch of exotic spice. But, in truth, the San Francisco Opera found itself in the grip of Puccini and the Italian verists. *Manon Lescaut*, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly* and the entire *Trittico* kept the customers humming right from the inaugural 1923 season. The perpetual double-bill of Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* and Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* made its first appearance in 1927, with the latter's charming, bucolic *L'Amico Fritz* preceding the Sicilian tragedy by three years.

continued on p.53

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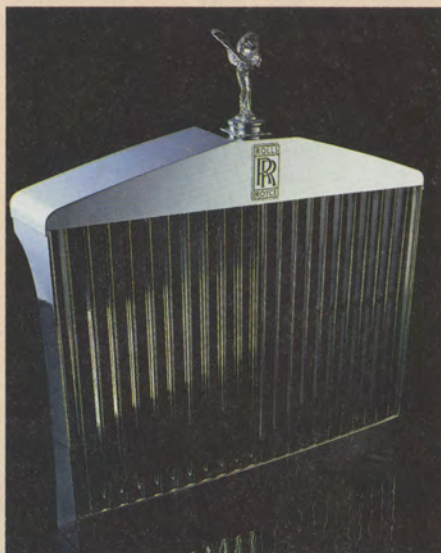
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By JOHN ARDOIN

GAETANO DI PARIGI

The intrigue and melodrama surrounding Donizetti's career in Paris—the years that culminated with the composition of *Don Pasquale*—is the stuff from which opera librettos are made. Had this period in the composer's life been turned into a stage work, it might well have been titled *Gaetano di Parigi*, and have taken its place beside such works as *Emilia di Liverpool*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* or *Maria di Rudenz*. Donizetti, remember, had a penchant for naming his operas after people and places.

Paris had long loomed large in his mind, for by the time he had begun his operatic career, the city was more than the capital of France; it had become the capital of music. Italian opera was the rage of the day, and its leading musical citizen was Rossini. Not only had he written and/or adapted four works expressly for Paris, in addition to supervising productions of earlier scores; he was director of the Théâtre-Italien, the city's most popular opera house. Even the important figure of Meyerbeer had to take a back seat to Rossini and his popularity. (This

popularity, incidentally, was not immediate; there was a faction in town that initially caricatured Rossini as "Monsieur Crescendo," but he soon won over even these detractors.)

It was Rossini's ubiquitous presence in Paris, and not the man himself, that had kept Donizetti from securing a long-desired Parisian commission, the ultimate seal of approval for a composer in the 19th century all the way through Verdi. Even Wagner went hat-in-hand to France, hoping to be accepted there in order to be *persona grata* elsewhere in Europe. It was Donizetti's hope that the great acclaim he received for the premiere of his *Parisina* in 1833 would lead to an offer from a Paris theater. But in June, four months after *Parisina*'s first night, we find him writing to his publisher Giovanni Ricordi: "The success of *Parisina* has not had any influence in facilitating the way to Paris with the impresarios, who say 'Rossini being here, it is unnecessary for us to seek out others in order to put performances on the stage,' almost as if that colossus were jealous of the insects. My misfortune!"

Yet Donizetti had reacted hastily. It had become apparent that Rossini's absence from the stage following the premiere of *William Tell* in 1829 might be an extended one, and that Paris theaters would have to

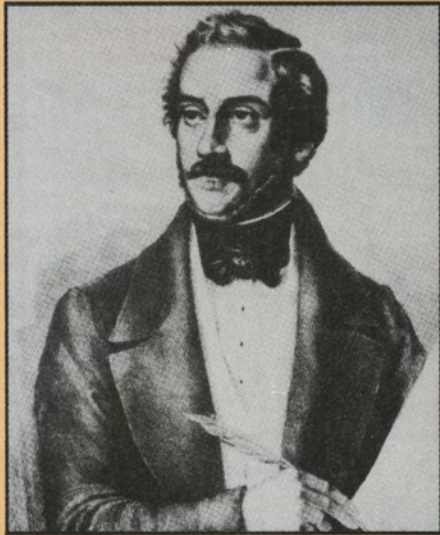
look elsewhere for new works to produce. It was but a short time later that we find Donizetti again writing to Ricordi to tell him that the current directors of the Théâtre-Italien (urged by Rossini himself) had visited him in Rome to arrange for a new Donizetti opera to be heard in Paris the following year. He wrote that the theater was already preparing performances of his *Gianni di Calais* and hoped to do *Gianni di Parigi* as well. (The first of these two *Giannis* had been staged in Naples in 1828, and was indeed given in Paris in 1834; the second, though written in 1831, would not have its premiere until 1839, and then at La Scala.)

Between the time Donizetti received his coveted Paris summons in the summer of 1833, and the premiere of the commissioned work—*Marin Faliero*—in the spring of 1835, Donizetti wrote five other operas: *Torquato Tasso*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Rosamonda d'Inghilterra*, *Maria Stuarda* and *Gemma di Vergy*. All questions of quality aside, one can only wonder how he found time to notate so much music.

(Top right) Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848) in a contemporary engraving, ca. 1835, by L. Roscioni.

(Bottom right) Ernesto's serenade, "Com'è gentil," as seen in San Francisco Opera's 1980 production of *Don Pasquale*.

John Ardoin, music critic of the Dallas Morning News, is the author of *The Stages of Menotti*, a new book covering the entire creative output of Gian Carlo Menotti and published this fall by Doubleday.



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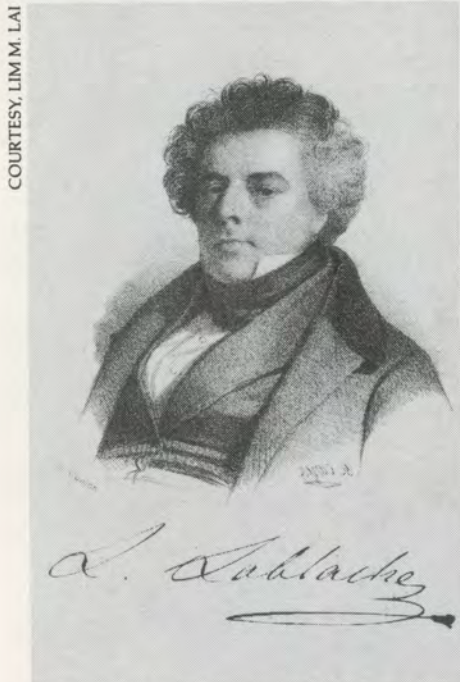
Donizetti arrived in Paris in early February 1835, in time to attend the fifth performance of Bellini's *I Puritani*, which was having its world premiere at the Italian. It was Bellini's first and only Paris commission; before the year was out he would be dead at the age of 34. Writing to Felice Romani, the librettist for such operas as

but as we are different in character, therefore we both have obtained good success without displeasing the public."

But even though Donizetti's first night was well applauded and several numbers had to be encored, the opera was given only five times and has been labeled a failure; in comparison, *Puritani* was played for 18 performances. Ironically, Bellini, who was pathologically jealous of Donizetti, had been equally apprehensive about *Marin* and terrified that it, rather than *Puritani*, would succeed because it was Rossini who had been instrumental in having Donizetti brought to Paris. With unvarnished pleasure he wrote his uncle the news that "The

effect of *Marin* was mediocre," adding that by the third repetition, the performance had become "a real funeral." To Bellini, *Marin* "lacks all novelty, is extremely common and vulgarly orchestrated, without concerted numbers; in a word, worthy of a young student."

Whatever the truth at the time, *Puritani* has survived handsomely, whereas *Marin Faliero* is now no more than a footnote in Donizetti's career. Perhaps his association with Paris would have ended there had it not been for the work that followed, an opera destined to become the cornerstone of Italian Romanticism, *Lucia di Lammermoor*. With Rossini retired, Bellini dead and *Lucia*



Luigi Lablache (1794-1858), the Italian bass who created the role of Don Pasquale in the opera's 1843 world premiere.

L'Elisir d'Amore and *Parisina*, Donizetti comments that "Bellini's success has been very great despite a mediocre libretto ... Today I begin my own rehearsals, and I hope to be able to give the first performance by the end of the month. I don't at all deserve the success of *I Puritani*, but I don't at all desire to displease."

Donizetti was very worried about comparisons to Bellini and the phenomenal success of *Puritani*, with its starry cast of principals consisting of Giulia Grisi, Giovanni Battista Rubini, Antonio Tamburini and Luigi Lablache (all of whom—with the exception of Rubini—would create *Don Pasquale* eight years later). "The success of Bellini," Donizetti wrote an Italian friend four days after *Marin's* premiere on March 12, "has made me tremble more than a little,



Giulia Grisi (1811-1869) created the role of Norina at the world premiere of *Don Pasquale* in Paris in 1843.

COURTESY, LIM M. LAI

triumphant throughout the West, Donizetti's pre-eminence in Italian opera was at last well established. Three years later he returned, planning to settle permanently in Paris, in the hope of earning enough money to retire from the pressures and intrigues of the opera world, just as Rossini had done. Within two years of his arrival in the city in October 1838, he had produced four operas. For the Théâtre-Italien, he reworked *Roberto Devereux*; he made a French version of *Lucia* for the Théâtre de la Renaissance; for the Opéra-Comique he wrote *La Fille du Régiment*; and for the Opéra he converted his *opera seria* *Poliuto* (which had been banned in Naples by royal censorship) into *Les Martyrs*.

This was all too much for the French composers of the day, especially Berlioz, whose opera *Benvenuto Cellini* had failed two years before at the Opéra and who was still licking his wounds. He led the attack against Donizetti, writing that the Italian "appears to treat us as a conquered country; this is a veritable invasion. One can no longer speak of the Paris opera houses, but only of Monsieur Donizetti's opera houses." He went on to criticize *La Fille* as being nothing but a warmed-over version of an earlier opera, *Betty*.

Donizetti replied with a letter of his own to the newspaper that had printed Berlioz's attack. In it, he states that "If M. Berlioz, who rightly places conscience among the first rank of the artist's duties, had taken the trouble to open the score of my *Betty* ... he would have been assured that the two operas that he mentions have no numbers in common between them ... The numbers that make up *La Fille du Régiment* all were composed expressly for the theater of the Opéra-Comique." As usual, the audience was the final arbitrator, and *La Fille* quickly established itself firmly in the Parisians' affections. Berlioz and company soon had further reason to grieve, for the Opéra wanted yet another Donizetti score. He complied with *La Favorite*, a reworking of an unfinished opera that had been begun as *L'Ange de Nisida*. The stage was now set for his next-to-last and greatest Paris creation, *Don Pasquale*.

The commission came from the Théâtre-Italien, and its request was for a new *opera buffa* tailored expressly for the talents of



Norina (Anne Caroline de Lagrange) and Don Pasquale (Luigi Lablache) in the final scene of *Don Pasquale* at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, 1852.

Grisi, Mario, Tamburini and Lablache, then the reigning quartet of singers. For the libretto, Giovanni Ruffini (an Italian exile who lived in Paris) adapted a libretto by Angelo Anelli entitled *Ser Marc' Antonio*, which had been previously set to music by Stefano Pavesi. Midway in his collaboration with Donizetti, Ruffini wrote to his mother that Donizetti "would like me to bring him pieces to set not every day, as I do, but every hour. His facility and fecundity are prodigious. He'll toss you off a long duet in an

hour; what's more, it will be beautiful. For the rest, I ... am on a great footing of intimacy with the Maestro, with whom I hold consultations every day. He's a good and able fellow, without pretense and simple in manner."

As they got deeper into the fashioning of *Pasquale*, however, Ruffini became more and more unhappy with the relationship, for Donizetti was continually cutting the poet's verses, insisting on new ones and even adding words of his own. In the end,

Ruffini asked that his name not be included as librettist. In another letter home, he explains: "It having been written in such haste and my freedom of action having, in a certain sense, been paralyzed by the Maestro, I don't, so to speak, recognize it as my own." It is hard for us today to understand Ruffini's dislike of the finished text, for one of the joys of *Don Pasquale* is the lilt of its words and the natural flow of its plot. Today, the text is credited to both Donizetti and Ruffini.

Rehearsals for *Pasquale* began in December 1842. During this period, Donizetti was made a member of *Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts*, a coveted honor that must have further set Berlioz's teeth on edge. It seems incredible, but while *Pasquale* was being readied for its premiere in January 1843, no one but Donizetti appeared to have much faith in it or sense anything unusual about the music. A writer of the time, Charles de Boigne, observed that during the final rehearsal "the orchestral musicians gave no sign of approval: the silence of death. The work had been condemned, judged. Donizetti took his publisher to his apartment and pulled out of one of his cartons a piece that he asked his publisher to deliver to Mario so that he could work on it immediately. Donizetti intended to rehearse him in it that same evening. This piece, which *Don Pasquale* had been lacking, was the delicious serenade that Mario sang so tenderly in the third act."

Pasquale's premiere (which took place the day after the first performance of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* in Dresden) was, as its composer had steadfastly predicted, a thundering success. To his pupil and friend Matteo Salvi, Donizetti wrote: "Yesterday evening I gave *Don Pasquale*. The result was of the happiest. Repeated the *adagio* of the second-act finale. Repeated the *stretta* of the duet between Lablache and Grisi. I was called out at the ends of the second and third acts. Not a piece, from the *sinfonia* on, was unapplauded . . . I am content." Even Ruffini was now pleased. To his mother, he corroborated Donizetti's account of the premiere: "My dear, we . . . have had a *succès fou*. Beginning with the overture, each and every one of the pieces applauded, some of them fanatically; one finally and two duets



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repeated; Donizetti brought out at least twice in the face of the opposition, the members of which, flattened by the general applause, didn't dare give a sign of disapproval, but contented themselves with chafing in silence." It was soon clear that *Pasquale* would run through the two months remaining in the Italian's season.

A critic of the time also helped to heal the old wound of *Marin Faliero* with these words: "From Bellini's *Puritani* on, no opera composed expressly for the Théâtre-Italien has had a more clamorous success . . . one of those ovations that are given prodigiously by the dozen in Italy to even the most mediocre little composers, but which in Paris are reserved for the truly great." Pace Bellini.

Don Pasquale was Donizetti's first comic work in a decade, and when he returned to this genre, he was not the same composer he had been when he wrote *L'Elisir d'Amore*. He was no longer interested merely in comic stereotypes. In *Pasquale* he combines quicksilver musical invention with an almost Mozartean understanding of and sympathy for human nature. As *bel canto* authority Philip Gossett has pointed out, "Don Pasquale is a richer, more realistic character than his *commedia dell'arte* model. We feel for his foolishness as we applaud Norina's wiles, and even Norina seems truly sorry for subjecting the old man to the lesson he must nevertheless be forced to learn."

In *Pasquale*, Donizetti makes not only important dramatic strides in terms of comic opera, but takes giant steps musically as well. This is particularly startling when one considers that the piano-vocal score was written in only 11 days. There is very little use of old formal designs for the arias; only two, in fact, could be termed "traditional": Norina's "Quel guardo il cavaliere" and Ernesto's "Cercherò lontana terra." No harpsichord is used for recitatives, and the lucid plot is advanced primarily through duets and ensembles. To quote Gossett, once again, "Characters that rise above their *commedia dell'arte* ancestors, a *buffo* style laced with sentiment and tender feelings, a constant freshness of invention within the standard frameworks of Italian opera: *Don Pasquale* is a comedy of age and experience."

There was only one act left to be written of *Gaetano di Parigi*. Eleven months after the premiere of *Pasquale*, Donizetti was back in Paris to supervise the production of his final opera, *Dom Sébastien*, a grand work on a Meyerbeerian scale. During the rehearsal period, Donizetti's behavior became erratic and greatly troubled his friends. His precarious state of mind was not helped by the subsequent failure of *Dom Sébastien*. During the next year, his mental deterioration continued, and when he finally agreed to consult a doctor in January 1846, it was



Giuseppe De Luca as Dr. Malatesta at Milan's La Scala in 1904.

found he was suffering from cerebro-spinal degeneration, a result of syphilis. He was placed in a sanatorium near Paris for 17 months, where he became hopelessly paralyzed. Finally, his nephew removed him from the sanatorium in order to take him back to Italy. He died the same year in Bergamo, his birthplace, on April 8, 1848.

Even in death, however, Donizetti was not done with Paris. In 1860, the world premiere of his one-act comedy *Rita*, written in 1841 but never produced, took place at the Comique. It, in effect, brought the curtain down at last on a tempest-tossed chapter of a life as theatrical as any Donizetti had set to music. □

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DIANA SOVIERO

Lyric soprano **Diana Soviero** returns to San Francisco Opera as Norina in *Don Pasquale*. After studying at Juilliard, she sang her first Violetta in *La Traviata* with New York City Opera. She has since become particularly identified with that role, having sung it with Montreal Opera, the Florentine Opera of Milwaukee, and in her triumphant debut with the Hamburg State Opera during the 1981-82 season. That same season she was Violetta in a new production at New York City Opera and the next season repeated the role in Hamburg and Philadelphia. She made her San Francisco Opera debut as Anne Trulove in the 1982 Summer Season production of *The Rake's Progress*, and bowed with Zurich Opera as Mimì in *La Bohème*. The 1982-83 season saw her Houston Grand Opera debut as Nedda in *I Pagliacci*,

her Toulouse debut as Marguerite in *Faust*, and her first performances of *Madama Butterfly* in Tulsa and *La Rondine* with the Opera Company of Philadelphia. This season she will sing Liù to Eva Marton's *Turandot* with Opera Colorado in Denver, Massenet's *Manon* in Montreal and *Madama Butterfly* in Fort Worth. She has also appeared with the opera companies of Chicago, Dallas, San Diego and Ottawa. The first woman ever to be awarded the Richard Tucker Foundation Award, Miss Soviero performed in the Richard Tucker Memorial Concert in 1980. Miss Soviero recently scored a great personal triumph in her Italian debut as Massenet's *Manon* at the Rome Opera, where she will return next year for a new production of *Adriana Lecouvreur*. Her television credits include WNET's *Gala of Stars*, taped at the Metropolitan Opera and telecast nationally over the PBS network, as well as a production of *Faust* with the opera company of Toulouse, to which she will return for additional performances of that work. Other future engagements include *La Traviata* in New Orleans, *I Pagliacci* in Miami, a return to Fort Worth for her first performances of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, and *La Traviata* in South Africa. In Europe she will be seen as Violetta in Paris, Marguerite in Nice and Thais in Avignon, and she will open this summer's Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago with a new production of *Madama Butterfly*. Later this year, Miss Soviero will make her Vienna State Opera debut as Liù in *Turandot*.



PAOLO MONTARSOLO

Renowned buffo specialist **Paolo Montarsolo** returns to San Francisco Opera to direct and perform the title role of *Don Pasquale*, a role he has performed at La Scala and the Teatro Comunale in Florence, as well as in Turin and Madrid. He directed the work at the Teatro dell'Opera in Rome, and the title role served as the vehicle for his 1974 Metropolitan Opera debut. Born in Naples, the bass-baritone made his American debut with Dallas Opera as Mustafà in *L'Italiana in Algeri* with Giulietta Simionato and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* opposite Teresa Berganza. He bowed with San Francisco Opera in 1969 as Don Magnifico in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, repeating that assignment here during the 1974 and '82 Fall Seasons. Montarsolo has become the world's pre-eminent interpreter of the role of Don

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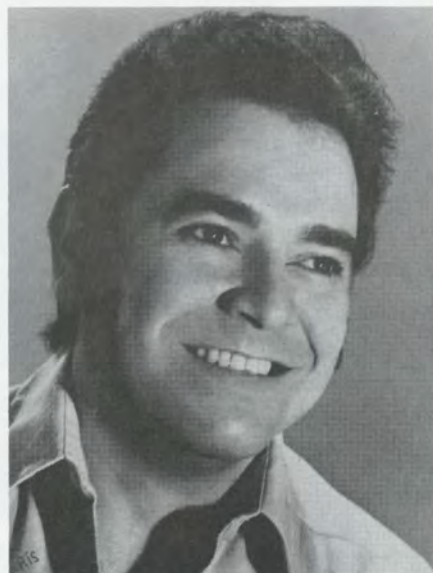
Magnifico, having performed it in Chicago, Houston, Munich and Barcelona, as well as in Washington, D.C., as part of La Scala's visit during the American Bicentennial. His other signature roles include Don Pasquale and Mustafà, and he has won acclaim in these parts in all of the world's major opera houses. His repertoire also includes the buffo bass-baritone roles in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Il Turco in Italia*, *Così fan tutte* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. He is well known at the world's major music festivals, including those at Salzburg, Glyndebourne and Edinburgh. He made his directing debut with *Così fan tutte* several years ago at the Teatro Regio in Turin and has established a reputation as the leading exponent of the true buffo tradition. His recording credits include complete versions of *The Barber of Seville* and *L'Italiana in Algeri*, as well as two complete recordings of *La Cenerentola*. Earlier this year he was seen as Don Magnifico in a national PBS telecast of *La Cenerentola* under the direction of Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. During the 1981-82 season he appeared in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with Lyric Opera of Chicago and a new production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the Met, an assignment he repeated the following two seasons. The 1982-83 season saw him in the title role of *Gianni Schicchi* with the Dallas Opera and as Don Magnifico in Ottawa and Houston. Recent appearances include Mustafà at La Scala and Don Magnifico in Barcelona and Munich. The President of the Italian Republic has conferred upon Montarsolo the honorary title of Grande Ufficiale della Repubblica for artistic excellence.



FRANCISCO ARAIZA

Mexican tenor **Francisco Araiza** returns to the site of his sensational 1982 American debut, San Francisco Opera, to sing Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*. Originally a student of business administration at the University of Mexico City, he went on to study voice with Irma Gonzalez at the Conservatory there and made his professional debut in 1970 in Beethoven's *Fidelio*. His international career began in 1974 in Munich, where he was a winner of the International Singing Competition. Since then he has made important debuts each year, beginning with his 1975 European debut as Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* in Karlsruhe. In 1976 he bowed as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* in Cologne; as Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Prague; and as Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Zurich. Araiza first

appeared at the Aix-en-Provence Festival as Ferrando in 1977, and 1978 saw his first performances in Munich (as Belmonte), the Bayreuth Festival (as the Steersman in *Der Fliegende Holländer*) and in Vienna (as Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*). In 1980 he bowed in Salzburg at both the Easter Festival (in the Mozart Requiem under Karajan) and Summer Festival (as Fenton in *Falstaff*). He performed with Milan's La Scala in Tokyo in 1981, the year of his Paris Opera debut. 1982 brought Araiza's debuts in West Berlin, Chicago (with the Chicago Symphony under Abbado) and in Milan as Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*, the vehicle of his San Francisco Opera debut. Last year marked his debut in London (Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*) as well as Houston (Almaviva), and in March of this year he bowed at the Metropolitan Opera as Belmonte. This summer will see his first performances at the Pesaro Rossini Festival (in *Viaggio a Reims*) and the Edinburgh Festival (in Rossini's *Stabat Mater* with Muti conducting), as well as a return to Salzburg as Ferrando. He makes his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut this fall in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and 1985 will see his first performances as the Count in *Rigoletto* (in Zurich) and in the title role of *Faust* (in Vienna). His extensive discography and television credits include both record and video productions of *La Cenerentola*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Falstaff*, *Così fan tutte* and all three extant Monteverdi operas. Other television credits include *Semiramide* (from the Aix-en-Provence Festival), *Der Rosenkavalier* (from Munich) and a Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of Massenet's *Manon* from Vienna. Araiza is the 1984 Golden Orpheus Award winner,

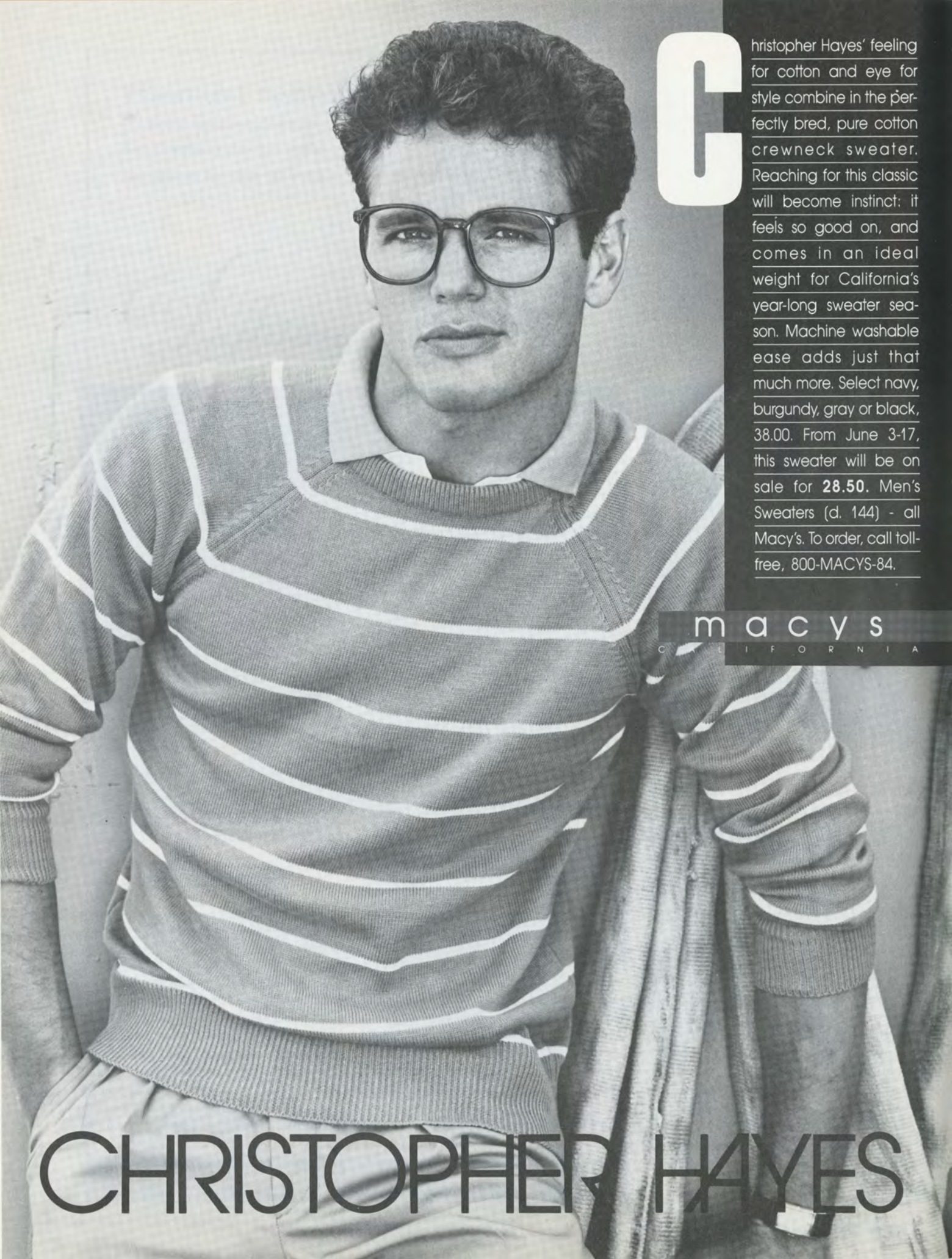


PABLO ELVIRA

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Baritone **Pablo Elvira** sings Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* for the 1984 Summer Season. Born in Puerto Rico, Elvira achieved his first musical success as a trumpet player before taking up singing at the Conservatory of Music. There he so impressed Pablo Casals that the famed cellist-conductor invited him to make his first major appearance at Chicago's Ravinia Festival. Elvira went on to appear as guest artist with the opera companies of Frankfurt, Hamburg, Israel, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Mexico and Paris, where he won unanimous praise as Tonio in *I Pagli-*

continued on p.46



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Don Pasquale

Opera in three acts by GAETANO DONIZETTI
Text by GIOVANNI RUFFINI and the composer

Don Pasquale

(in Italian)

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Paolo Montarsolo*
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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Don Pasquale, an old bachelor Paolo Montarsolo
Dr. Malatesta, his friend Pablo Elvira
Ernesto, nephew of Pasquale Francisco Araiza
Norina, a young widow Diana Soviero
A notary David Malis*
Tradespeople, Servants

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 1830, Rome

ACT I Scene 1 The study in Don Pasquale's house

Scene 2 Norina's bedroom

INTERMISSION

ACT II Pasquale's study

INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1 Pasquale's redecorated house

Scene 2 Pasquale's garden

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 two hours and fifty minutes.

Don Pasquale/Synopsis

(A young student, Ernesto, who lives with his old bachelor uncle, Don Pasquale, has refused to wed the woman of his uncle's choice because he is in love with a charming young widow, Norina. Pasquale has decided to punish Ernesto by getting married and providing himself with an heir, thereby cutting off his rebellious nephew without a penny. Dr. Malatesta, a friend of Pasquale as well as Ernesto and Norina, has devised a plan to save Pasquale from his folly and, at the same time, to help the young couple.)

ACT I

SCENE 1—Pasquale is impatiently awaiting the arrival of Malatesta, who is to suggest a prospective bride for the 70-year-old bachelor. Malatesta describes his beautiful younger sister, whose convent upbringing has taught her the virtues of modesty and frugality and whom he proposes to bring for Pasquale's inspection that very evening. Overjoyed at the prospect, Pasquale offers Ernesto one last chance to marry the woman he has chosen for him. When Ernesto adamantly refuses, Pasquale announces his own plans to marry and orders his astonished nephew out of the house.

SCENE 2—Norina receives a farewell note from Ernesto informing her that Pasquale has refused permission for them to marry. Malatesta enters and lets her in on his scheme: she is to impersonate his convent-bred sister Sofronia—and he instructs her on how to play the part. Persuaded that the subterfuge will lead to her marriage with Ernesto, she consents.

ACT II

Ernesto, ignorant of Malatesta's plot, expresses his sorrow at the turn of events as he packs his bags and leaves his uncle's house.

Pasquale has donned his best attire for the meeting with his bride-to-be. Malatesta introduces Norina/Sofronia and, after a short interview, the enchanted Pasquale suggests that a notary be summoned immediately

to draw up the marriage contract. Malatesta quickly brings in his cousin, whom he has enlisted to pose as a notary, to officiate at the mock marriage. A second witness is needed to legitimize the contract and when Ernesto bursts in he is recruited and secretly let in on the hoax. No sooner has the fake ceremony taken place and Pasquale's property been signed over to his new bride, than Norina/Sofronia is promptly transformed from a demure convent girl to an ill-tempered spitfire. She flies into a rage, telling Pasquale that he is too old for a young woman of society and demands that Ernesto be her escort. Declaring herself mistress of the house, she announces her intention to hire additional servants and purchase an alarming array of costly items for her new home. Pasquale, confused and angry, moans that he is ruined.

ACT III

SCENE 1—Don Pasquale's house is being lavishly redecorated by an army of new servants. Norina/Sofronia enters dressed for the theater. Pasquale admonishes her for her extravagances and attempts to detain her, but ends up getting his face slapped. She saunters out, intentionally dropping a note which mentions an evening rendezvous with a secret lover in the garden. Pasquale reads it in disbelief and goes in search of Malatesta. After instructing Ernesto to be in the garden that evening, Malatesta pretends to sympathize with Pasquale and proposes that they lie in ambush for the guilty pair.

SCENE 2—After singing a serenade, Ernesto is joined by Norina in the garden. They renew their vows of love in full view of Pasquale and Malatesta. The enraged Pasquale rushes out of hiding to denounce the young couple. As Malatesta reveals the hoax, the old man, glad to be freed of his own false marriage, sanctions the marriage of Ernesto and Norina, and joins in observing that an old man who contemplates marriage is a fool.

Don Pasquale

Photos taken in rehearsal by David Powers

Paolo Montarsolo



This production of *Don Pasquale* was made possible, in part, by a generous 1980 grant by the San Francisco Foundation.



David Malis, Paolo Montarsolo



Pablo Elvira, Paolo Montarsolo



Diana Soviero



Francisco Araiza

The revival of this production was made possible by a much appreciated grant from the Koret Foundation.



Pablo Elvira, Paolo Montarsolo



Francisco Araiza



Pablo Elvira, Paolo Montarsolo



Pablo Elvira, Paolo Montarsolo



Paolo Montarsolo



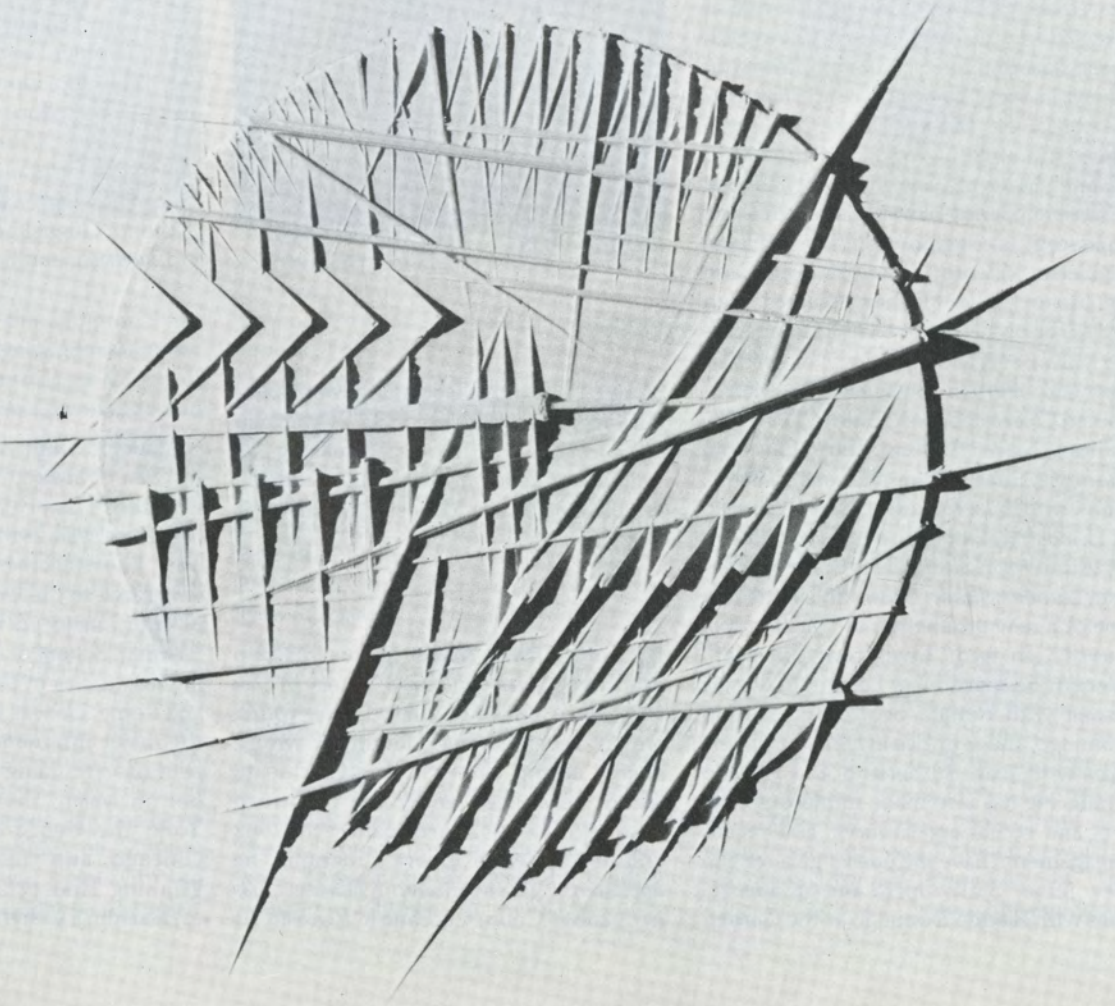
Diana Soviero, Paolo Montarsolo



Paolo Montarsolo, Diana Soviero

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MODESTO LANZONE'S



continued from p.37

acci during the 1982-83 season. In the United States he was seen as Valentin in *Faust* with the Fort Worth Opera Company, and he opened the 1982-83 season in New Orleans singing Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, the role of his 1982 San Francisco Opera debut. His debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, where he appeared on short notice in the title role of *Rigoletto* opposite Luciano Pavarotti, earned him standing ovations, and he won acclaim in New York for a concert performance of *La Favorita* with the Opera Orchestra of New York. Elvira became a leading singer at New York City Opera, where he opened numerous seasons and appeared as Germont in *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, Valentin, Rossini's Figaro and Renato in *Ballo*. He has received high praise for his bel canto technique, appearing with Beverly Sills in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *I Puritani*. Since his 1979 Metropolitan Opera debut as Tonio in *I Pagliacci*, he has appeared there as Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Don Carlo in *La Forza del Destino*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Don Carlo in *Ernani*, Montforte in *I Vespri Siciliani*, the Stage Manager in *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* and in the title role of a new production of *The Barber of Seville*. In two "Live from the Met" telecasts he appeared as Lescaut in *Manon Lescaut* with Renata Scottò and Plácido Domingo, and as Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Joan Sutherland and Alfredo Kraus. He has also made numerous concert and recital appearances, and recent engagements have included a gala for the New Jersey State Opera and an appearance with Plácido Domingo at the Garden



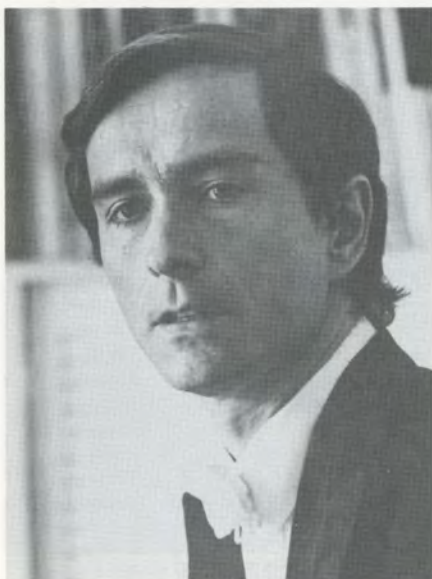
DAVID MALIS

State Arts Center. Upcoming Metropolitan Opera assignments include Marcello in *La Bohème* with Domingo making his conducting debut in that house, and the *Ernani* Don Carlo opposite Montserrat Caballé.

Baritone David Malis makes his San Francisco Opera debut as a Notary in *Don Pasquale*. A native of Georgia, the young singer received his Master of Music degree at the University of Cincinnati, where he studied under the renowned bass Italo Tajo. As a participant in the 1982 and 1983 Merola Opera Programs, he appeared at Villa Montalvo in *Madama Butterfly* and as Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*. At

Sigmund Stern Grove he was seen in Merola productions of *The Magic Flute*, in which he portrayed Papageno, and *The Tales of Hoffmann*, singing *Dapertutto*. In 1982 he received the Norman Treigle Graduate Scholarship from the University of Cincinnati, and that same year was a winner of the 1982 Metropolitan Opera National Council Regional Auditions. During Western Opera Theater's 1983 tour of *Madame Butterfly*, Malis appeared as Sharpless and Yamadori. He is currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, and his assignments for San Francisco Opera's 1984 Fall Season include Yamadori, Count Ceprano and Dancaire in *Carmen*. Other roles in his repertoire include the title roles of *Billy Budd*, *The Barber of Seville* and Walton's *The Bear*; Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*; Silvio in *I Pagliacci*; and Ford in *Falstaff*.

Conductor Guido Ajmone-Marsan makes his San Francisco Opera debut leading Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, the vehicle of his highly praised 1983 Covent Garden debut. The Italian-born conductor, who emigrated to the United States at the age of four, majored in conducting at the Eastman School of Music before continuing his studies in Salzburg, Venice, Siena and Rome. He was soon winning prizes in the major international conducting competitions, including the Cantelli Competition in Milan, the Mitropoulos in New York, the Georg Solti Competition in Chicago, and the Rupert in London. Winning first prize in the last-named earned him a year's appointment as assist-

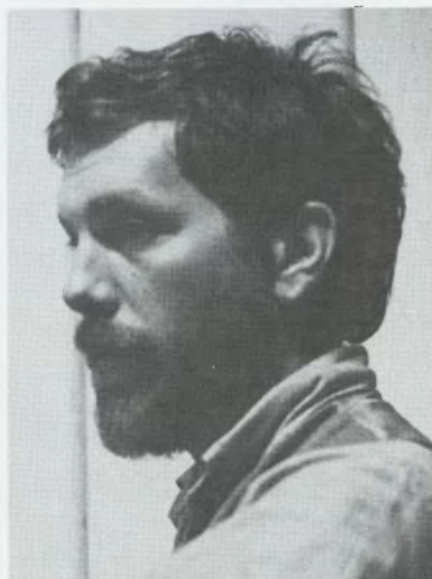


GUIDO AJMONE-MARSAN

ant conductor with the London Symphony. He has since been guest conductor of such major orchestras as those of Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, San Francisco, Dallas, Rochester, Indianapolis, Cincinnati and Detroit, as well as the National Symphony in Washington, D.C. His foreign credits include guest engagements with the major orchestras of England, France and the Netherlands, as well as many of the top-ranking radio orchestras on the continent. Ajmone-Marsan made his opera debut with *The Queen of Spades* at the 1976 Spoleto Festival, repeating the assignment the following year for the debut season of Spoleto USA in Charleston. He returned to Charleston in 1979 for *La Sonnambula*. He has since conducted new productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *La Traviata* and *Tosca* with the Welsh National Opera, and last October

he earned critical plaudits leading the Melbourne and Sydney symphony orchestras in programs with Dame Janet Baker. In 1982 he was named music adviser of the newly formed Orchestra of Illinois, and he also holds the title of chief conductor and artistic adviser of the Het Gelders Orkest in Arnhem, the Netherlands.

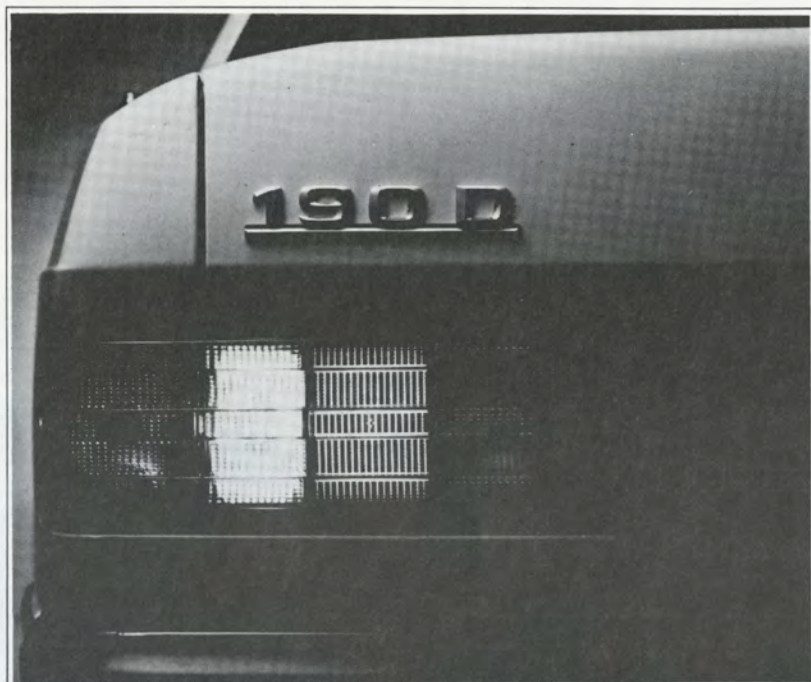
John Conklin, creator of the designs for San Francisco Opera's new production of Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*, returns here for the third opera of the cycle, *Siegfried*, and *Don Pasquale*, first seen here in 1980. The first two segments of the *Ring* cycle, *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, were unveiled during the 1983 Summer Season. Conklin's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, with which he made his 1977 San Francisco Opera debut, was also seen during the Company's 1982 Fall Season. His Spring Opera Theater credits include *Orfeo* (1972), *Death in Venice* (1975 and '79) and *Julius Caesar* (1978). Long associated with Santa Fe Opera, Conklin has designed numerous productions for that company, including *Così fan tutte*, *Salome*, *Fedora*, *Eugene Onegin*, the first American production of the three-act version of *Lulu* in 1979 and *The Marriage of Figaro*. For the New York City Opera, Conklin has designed Rossini's *Il Turco in Italia*, the world premiere of *Miss Havisham's Fire* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Other design credits include projects for St. Louis Opera, the Washington Opera Society and Scottish Opera. In addition, he has created designs for a number of legitimate theater companies, including the New York Shakespeare Festival, the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, the Arena Theat-



JOHN CONKLIN

er in Washington, D.C., the Long Wharf Theater in New Haven and the Hartford Stage Company. This summer, his production of *Così fan tutte* will be seen at the Holland Festival. Additional upcoming productions include the American professional premiere of Verdi's *The Battle of Legnano* and the American premiere of Henze's *We Come to the River* for this year's Santa Fe season.

In his ninth year with San Francisco Opera, **Thomas J. Munn** is responsible for lighting all of the 1984 Summer Season productions. Since 1976, he has designed the lighting and special effects for over 70 San Francisco Opera productions. His assignments last year included new lighting designs for *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the American



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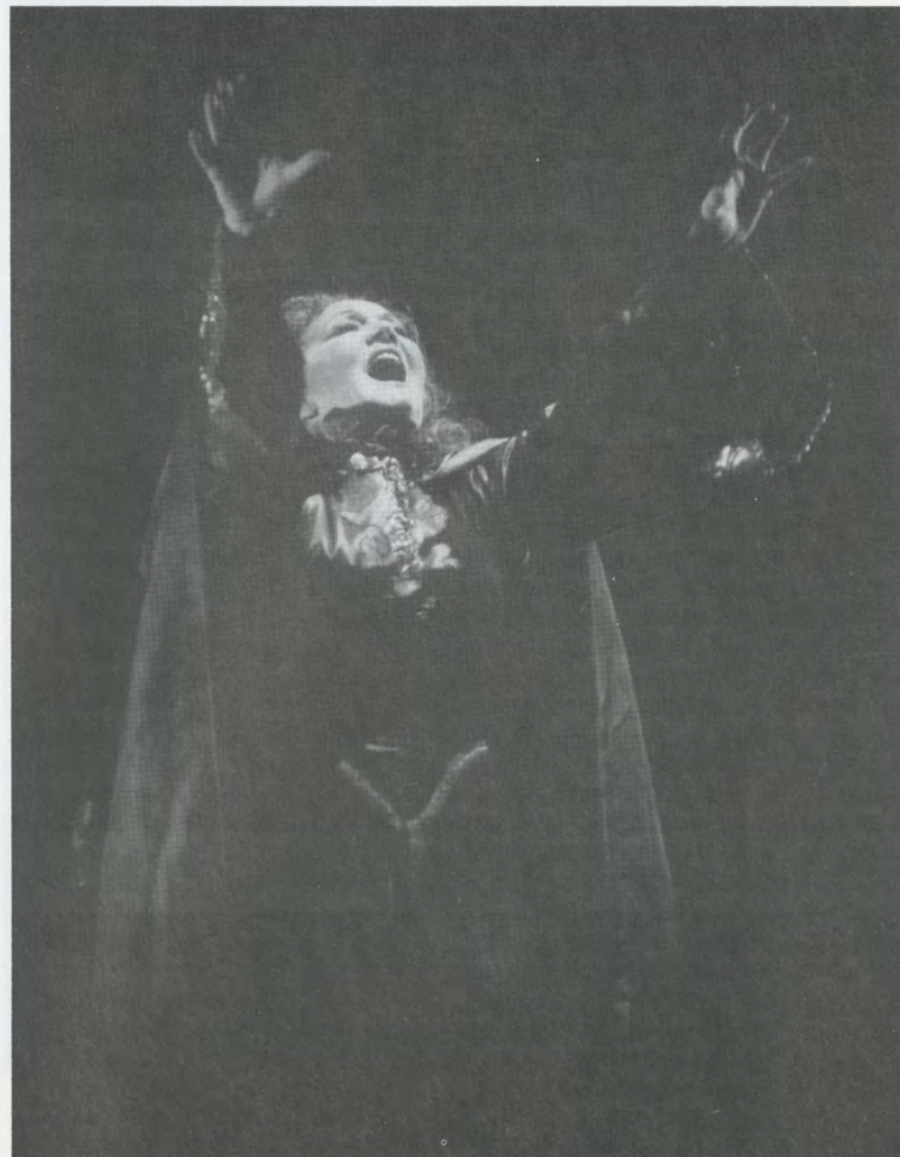
THOMAS J. MUNN

premiere of *The Midsummer Marriage*, *La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein* and *Boris Godunov*. He has also designed the scenery as well as the lighting for *Nabucco* and *Salome* in 1982, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in 1981, *Roberto Devereux* and *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1979 and *Billy Budd* in 1978. In addition to his numerous design credits for the War Memorial stage, Munn has designed for Broadway, Off-Broadway and regional theater companies throughout the United States and Europe. His most recent projects have been for the Hartford Ballet, the Washington Opera, Houston Grand Opera and the Netherlands Opera. His television credits include San Francisco Opera productions of *La Gioconda* (for which he received a 1979 Emmy Award), *Samson et Dalila* in 1980, *Aida* in 1981 and the Pavarotti Concert in 1983. He is currently a consultant on new theater projects for the Netherlands Opera and Lake George Opera Festival.

Rysanek Returns

San Francisco Opera patrons will have the opportunity to experience a truly special event during the 1984 Summer Season when one of the opera world's most beloved artists makes a rare concert appearance on June 29 in the War Memorial Opera House. A favorite of local audiences since her eagerly anticipated American debut here in 1956, she is immediately recognizable to knowledgeable opera-goers merely by mentioning a few of the many roles for which she has become famous: Senta, Sieglinde, Lady Macbeth, the Empress—it could only be Leonie Rysanek, one of those rare singers who can elicit superlatives from the critics as readily as she evokes thunderous ovations. "Who else," asks Peter G. Davis in *New York* magazine, "generates so much theatrical intensity, gives of herself so generously, takes such dangerous risks, and still makes such a glorious sound with so exciting a voice?"

For nearly 28 years, San Franciscans have known the answer. Since bowing at the War Memorial Opera House as Senta in 1956, Miss Rysanek has shared with us her wealth of musical and dramatic insight into 15 different roles, including those with which she has become most closely identified: Lady Macbeth (1957), Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* (1958 and '73), Tosca (1976),



RON SCHERL

Leonie Rysanek as Ortrud in her first assayal of the role at the San Francisco Opera in 1982.

Chrysothemis in *Elektra* (1973 and '79) and what are perhaps the brightest jewels in her operatic crown, Sieglinde (1956, '76, '81 and '83) and the Empress from *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (1960, '76 and '80). In 1982, Miss Rysanek selected San Francisco Opera as the site of the first Ortrud of her distinguished career.

San Franciscans, of course, are not the only ones to appreciate this magnificent artist, and the accolades that have been bestowed upon her indicate the unique position she holds in the hearts of opera-lovers all over the world. Holder of the prestigious title of *Kammersängerin* with both the Vienna Staatsoper and Munich

RON SCHERL



CAROLYN MASON JONES

Leonie Rysanek as Salome in 1974.

DAVID POWERS



Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, 1976.



RON SCHERL

Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, 1973.



IRA NOWINSKI

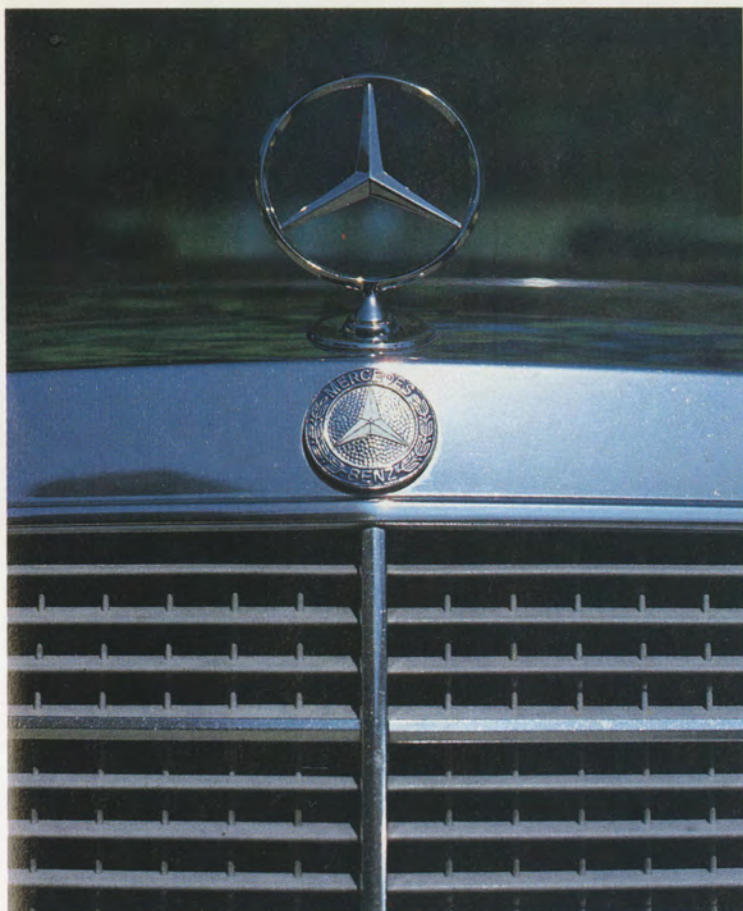
Chrysothemis in *Elektra*, 1979.

Opera, she also received the unique Lotte Lehmann ring from the members of the Vienna Staatsoper, and the San Francisco Opera Medal was awarded to her in 1976. Most recently, New York journalists nearly ran out of adjectives when they described the incredible ovation she received last February after the celebration of her 25th anniversary at the Met. Where Leonie Rysanek goes, excitement and love follow.

Miss Rysanek's concert of June 29 will be given at 8 p.m. in the War Memorial Opera

House, accompanied by the San Francisco Opera Orchestra under the baton of Edo de Waart. The soprano is expected to sing arias and scenes from her German and Italian repertoire.

Tickets for this memorable occasion are available at the Opera House Box Office or can be charged by phone at (415) 864-3330. Ticket prices are: Rear Balcony, \$8; Front Balcony, \$12; Balcony Circle, \$15; Dress Circle, \$18.50; Grand Tier and Orchestra, \$25; Single Box Seat, \$35.



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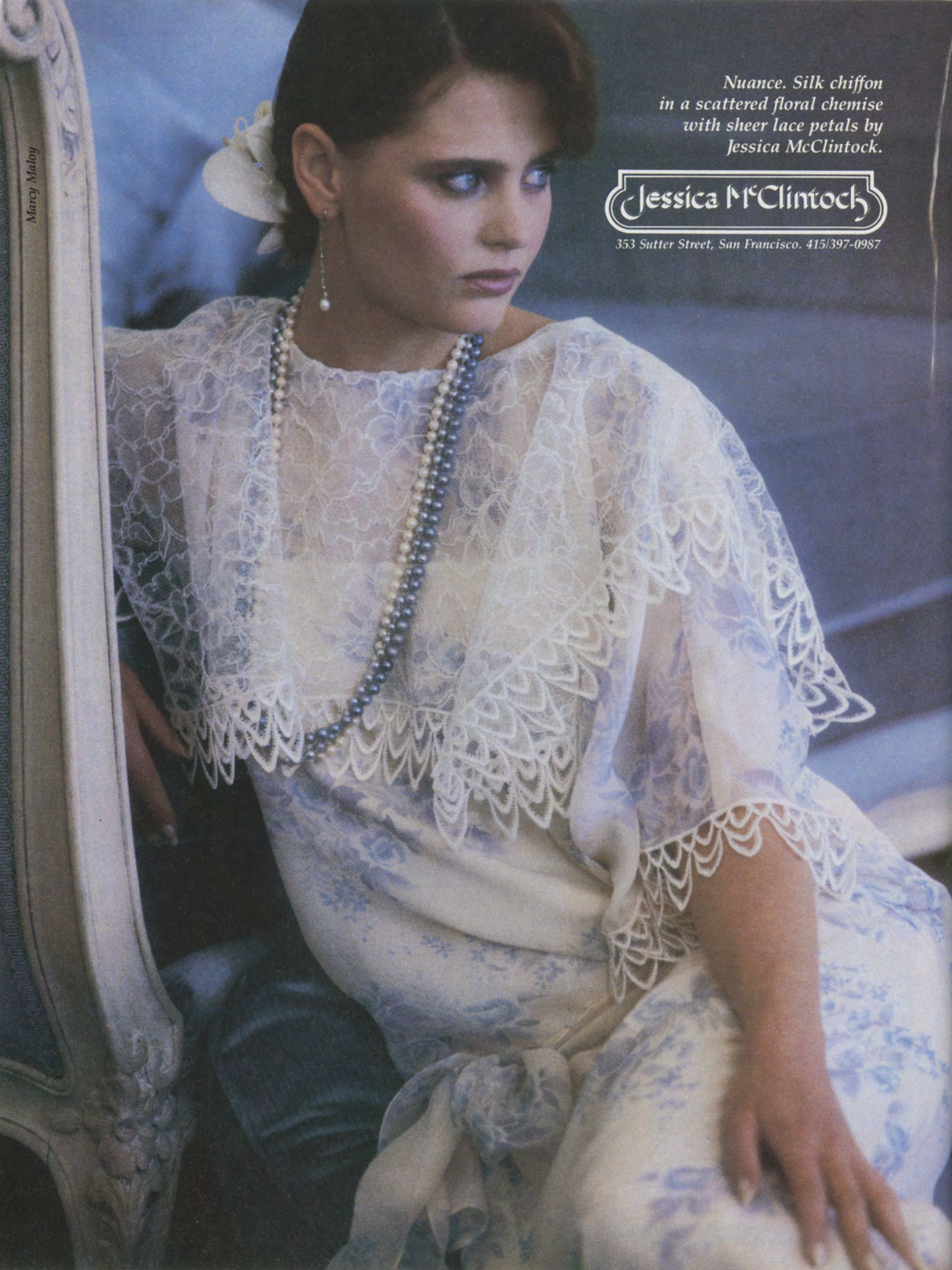
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Pasquale continued from p.24

The 1928 season provided crystalline evidence of how Merola was shaping the tastes of San Francisco opera addicts. The general director might as well have posed on the steps of City Hall flashing a V for Verismo sign. Leaving aside performances of *Carmen*, *Faust* and *Aida*, the season seemed curiously imbalanced in its range. There were revivals of the *Cav-Pag* pairing, Montemezzi's *L'Amore dei Tre Re*, Puccini's *Tosca* and *Butterfly* and a company premiere of *Turandot*, with its third act left incomplete at the composer's death in 1926. And, there were—not one, not two—but three operas by Umberto Giordano, *Andrea Chénier*, *Fedora* and *La Cena delle Beffe*, this final entry only four years old. If the company were to stage three Philip Glass operas (or, more to the point, a trio of Menotti pieces) today, the effect might be similar.

Repertory planning, then, did give more of a consideration to contemporary efforts in 1928, though it should be noted that such stylistically disparate works as Strauss' *Die Ägyptische Helena* and Weill's *Die Dreigroschenoper* both had their premieres elsewhere that year, and that Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* was already three years old.

It's not a surprise then, that the advertising copy for the 1929 season brochure should both enthuse about *Don Pasquale* as if it were a true obscurity and provide the ultimate reason for its introduction here: "... through ninety-six years, [it] has never lost its place as one of the most popular of the comic grand operas. The score is full of pleasing numbers. There are two duets and a quartet of rare beauty, and the most melodious of all Donizetti's airs, the serenade, 'Com'è gentil' (Soft beams the light) furnishes an exquisite finale for the opera. This is one of Schipa's most beautiful arias ... Donizetti, had he lived today, instead of a hundred years ago, might have composed these two operas for Schipa."

The other was a second Donizetti comedy, also produced for the first time, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and in that same busy



MORTON

Mafalda Favero (Norina) and Richard Bonelli (Dr. Malatesta) in the last scene of San Francisco Opera's 1938 *Don Pasquale*.

September, Tito Schipa, then 40, honored San Francisco with the Conte Almaviva in *Il Barbiere*, Lionel in *Martha* and Des Grieux in *Manon*. Then at the height of his distinctive popularity (decades later, John Steane would observe that "his voice is like the sort of face you never forget or a person who, met once, seems to have been a lifelong friend"), Schipa was all the pretext needed for *Don Pasquale*.

The critics waxed enthusiastic about his incomparable lyric tenor. Noted Mason: "Schipa has that intangible quality which

we call distinction; he is an aristocrat in his singing, and because he is true to his breed, his art is loved by folk of every class." On Schipa's Ernesto, Alexander Fried, then of the *Chronicle*, observed "his heart-warming public success." Davidson was her customarily direct self: "Schipa was a Romeo-like lover and sang, as usual, divinely."

Schipa's role in that 1929 affair points up a crucial difference between then and today at the S.F. Opera and other major houses. The season here ran only a few

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PHILLIP ELWOOD. . . *San Francisco Examiner*

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weeks. One, at the most two, performances of each opera were given. There were no jet planes to guarantee easy access and departure from town, so the major artists participated in the entire length and breadth of the music-making. It's the closest we have come to a true repertory company with almost every niche filled by a glittering superstar, and we shall never see its like again.

What staging 12 different operas within a month did to standards of stagecraft can only be surmised. As to the way that *Don Pasquale* actually looked on Sept. 27, only Davidson dared to hint at "a wrinkled sky as Background" to the final act love duet. Opera still meant voice, voice and more voice.

Fifty-three-year-old baritone Giuseppe de Luca fit right in. He assayed the wily Dr. Malatesta, one of his six 1929 assignments, which included recreating his original title-role in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. "He is a past master of the art of song and the art of comedy," said Mason. According to Davidson, "his voice manipulation is always a marvel to students of singing and a delight to the laity. The former know of the things he might do and doesn't. The latter know only that a great voice flows unerringly," Fried termed De Luca "suavely shrewd."

As Norina, lyric soprano Nina Morgana scored high with the critics. Fried: "a creation of character that took its place among the best of a generally well-cast season." Mason lauded her for ease in Donizettian roudades. Davidson found her even better in the part than she had been as Rosina a couple of weeks earlier.

To confuse matters slightly, the title-role in *Don Pasquale* was taken by one Pompilio Malatesta, a character basso, who had made his debut here the previous season in the minor roles of the Sacristan (*Tosca*), Yamadori (*Butterfly*) and Mathieu (*Andrea Chénier*). *Don Pasquale* represented his swan song to the S.F. Opera, though he appeared on and off at the Met through 1939. To enhance his operatic pedigree some more, he was reputed to be a member of the Malatesta clan, the more hot-blooded of which are represented in Riccardo Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini*,

and the basso did, in fact, appear in the small role of the jester in that opera's American premiere at the Met in 1916. Our local critics were cool to his performance, with Davidson finding him exaggerated and quavery.

A further note: the chorus, whose appearance is restricted to the last act, was permitted an encore. Another note and possible explanation: chorus director Antonio Dell'Orefice was in the pit.

The hearty greeting accorded *Don Pasquale* makes it difficult to explain the opera's peek-a-boo existence during the following decades. Historically-minded parties might attribute its fate to Merola's insistence on finding casts that measured up to the Schipa-Morgana-De Luca combination, and to the fact that the original *Pasquale* cast in 1843—Luigi Lablache, Giovanni Mario, Antonio Tamburini and Giulia Grisi—was of genuinely legendary proportions.

The feeling somehow persisted that *Don Pasquale* was simply a bit too flimsy for an entire evening's entertainment. So, when Merola decided to revive it nine years later, he paired it with *Cavalleria*. Fried's headline writer on Oct. 18, 1938 noted this new juxtaposition ("Old Operatic Friends Part in Double Bill"). But he found this new arrangement a felicitous one:

"Salvatore Baccaloni was a gaily comical Don Pasquale. Baritone Richard Bonelli was crafty and mellifluous as Malatesta. The Ernesto of Dino Borgioli benefitted not only by his gallant romantic manner, but also by a graceful lyric tenor style. Mafalda Favero sang her first florid aria with fine tone and brilliant skill."

Don Pasquale was a novelty no more. With the roly-poly Baccaloni, one of the more expert *buffos* of his era, Merola felt the piece strong enough to warrant a revival the following year. But the onset of World War II played havoc with the casting scheme, and the work did not reappear until 1941. This time, *Don Pasquale* received the highest accolade of all: it opened the season.

The *Chronicle's* Alfred Frankenstein was jubilant: "Donizetti's score is *Veuve Clicquot* of a fine and noble year, and this



Bidú Sayão was Norina in San Francisco Opera's 1941 Opening Night performance of *Don Pasquale*. Salvatore Baccaloni portrayed the title role; Anthony Marlowe was the Notary; Franco Perulli, Ernesto.

last of the great comedies in the Mozart-Rossini tradition had a cast completely in keeping with its bubbling, head-turning score."

His appraisal of Baccaloni accords with

posterity's: "He simply WAS Don Pasquale, a foxy, purse-proud old buffoon, who, for all his weight and age, is still capable of shaking a leg. But one must not let one's admiration for Baccaloni's mas-

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Backstage scene after San Francisco Opera's 1946 *Don Pasquale*: (l.to r.) John Brownlee (Dr. Malatesta), Licia Albanese (Norina), John Garris (Ernesto), Karl Kritz (conductor) and Salvatore Baccaloni (signed, Don Pasquale).

terly and effortless portrayal obscure the fact that he is also a bass with a voice as cavernous and deep-sounding as his name."

The enchanting Brazilian artist Bidú Sayão was "the last word as Norina." Australian baritone John Brownlee's Malatesta was "one of the major delights of the occasion." And tenor Franco Perulli, recruited when Schipa could not juggle his travel itinerary to Merola's satisfaction "was very able in style." Frankenstein also noticed the entire look of the affair, an element that seemed to elude his colleagues: "the ensemble counts for everything in an opera like this, and the ensemble was as fast and deft, as a championship tennis match in its expert give and take."

Critics were beginning to consider opera as theater. When *Don Pasquale* returned in 1943, with Baccaloni and another gilt-edged cast (Licia Albanese in a rare comic outing, German-American

tenor John Garris as Ernesto, the superb baritone Ivan Petroff as Malatesta and that treasurable comprimario, Alessio de Paolis as the notary), Fried contributed to a debate that has raged ever since.

The brouhaha revolved around opera in English vs. opera in the original tongue, and, in certain cases, Fried told his readers exactly where his sympathies lay.

"Baccaloni's pantomime was so good that he made the audience able to understand by sight jokes which in all common-sense, it ought to have been hearing in English, not in Italian."

Fried hadn't launched that complaint out of mere wartime chauvinism. The language of the opera's performance really does influence its musical values. About the conducting of the 1941 revival, the *Examiner* critic had this to say: "Genaro Papi's only fault was that in his exquisite refinement of musical wit he sometimes polished details too deliberate-



Photography by Gudrun Lewin

Bill Blass

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ly and slowed the performance down. His tempo might have been faultless for an Italian audience. And it will be right some day for a San Francisco Opera crowd that is given the chance—in all good sense—to hear 'Don Pasquale' in plain English."

Apparently, Merola had never been completely convinced that *Don Pasquale* could conjure box-office magic. For the 1946 revival (with the 1943 cast), there had been plans to preface the opera with a ballet version of *Le Coq d'Or*. But the Civic Ballet was undergoing one of its chronic crises and Merola put the opera on by itself. There were sufficient empty seats to compel a comment from Fried.

Could that sole performance explain why *Don Pasquale* disappeared entirely from the San Francisco Opera for almost 20 years? When Kurt Herbert Adler succeeded Merola in 1953, the Opera's repertory took different turns, turns which most observers considered extraordinarily daring. Perhaps casting was the problem. Perhaps *Don Pasquale's* reputation as a musical trifle persisted in the corridors of power.

The company finally revived the opera in 1963, in the old Spring Opera season at the Opera House. The cast included Lee Venora, Charles Bressler, Richard Fredricks and Herbert Beattie, the conductor was the young Henry Lewis, the language on their lips was English and Fried was ecstatic:

"Despite the pedestrian lines and rhymes, the use of English was basically wise. The audience took it as a matter of course and obviously enjoyed the opera better because it understood it better."

Times had changed since *Don Pasquale* had last occupied the War Memorial. Where critics had once been content to employ an adjective or two to describe the traffic management of Merola's resident director, Armando Agnini, they now demanded more of a theatrical experience from their operatic odysseys. In 1963, Fried approved of Elemer Nagy's staging, but found other aspects of the evening bewildering: "A mysterious aspect ... was the notion of stressing 17th century costumes, whereas the style of Donizetti's own 19th century would surely have been

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more fitting both to the story's behavior and to the informal English text."

The era of the stage director had come to the world of opera. And when *Don Pasquale* made its next appearance, the stage director looked like he was the boss. It happened during the initial season of Spring Opera Theater at the Curran in 1971. The program bore an item undreamed of in the Merola era, an introduction from the director, explaining his strategy. Richard Pearlman recalled that Donizetti had desired a contemporary look for his premiere, but expressed his own distaste at garbing Norina in hot pants.

However, temporal transposition was the production gimmick of the day and Pearlman was no slouch in the imagination department. His solution: set the opera in San Francisco in the post-earthquake year of 1909. Don Pasquale became a retired banker and full-time opera fan. Ernesto became a Yalie whose tennis racket entered a room before he did, while Norina metamorphosed into a domestic employed on Nob Hill. English was the language, but Pearlman reserved his boldest stroke for the overture. Don Pasquale wound up his Victrola, dozed off, and from the horn emerged all the fabled creatures of operatic lore, not excluding Aida and Brünnhilde. They were played by the Cockettes, members of a transvestite comedy troupe of that liberated era, and they camped up a considerable storm.

This year's revival, a restaging of the Lotfi Mansouri-John Conklin production from fall, 1980, dabbles in no such theatrical extravagances. *Don Pasquale* has been cheerily restored to the time and place intended by Donizetti. The language will be Italian (the family matinees in 1980, given in English, attracted a fair amount of admirers). But now, thanks to the advent of supertitles, one can have one's Donizetti and understand him, too. When *Don Pasquale* is stylishly sung, suavely conducted and deftly staged, that's no minor pleasure. □

The author wishes to thank the Archives for the Performing Arts for their assistance in preparing this article.

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Supertitles: Solving a Centuries-Old Problem

By JOHN SCHAUER

Opera, as every music history student knows, was discovered by Europeans the same way North America was—by accident. Just as Columbus thought he was sailing to India, the members of the Florentine group of intellectuals called the "Camerata" thought they were resurrecting the style of vocal declamation that had given the ancient Greek dramas their overwhelming emotional force. But if those dedicated dilettantes failed in their original goal, their "failure" resulted in one of the first and most enduring developments of that period of music known as baroque: opera.

The Camerata's experiments were guided by the pronouncements of Plato and other philosophers who had maintained that the most important element of music was the text, a principle diametrically opposed to the madrigal style that was popular at the end of the 16th century with its elaborate counterpoint and intri-

cate melodic passages all but obscuring the text being sung. It marked the beginning of a debate that has continued unabated up to the present day, namely, which is more important—the words or the music?

Since opera, like most developments of the baroque period, was Italian, it was logical that the greatest exponents of the genre were Italians; and when other countries first became acquainted with this curious new type of musical theater, it was usually through performances by Italian singers of works by Italian composers. This added a whole new kink to the great operatic debate, since no matter how exposed and clearly set the text was, an audience that didn't understand Italian was obviously going to miss out on the original *raison d'être* of this astonishing artform.

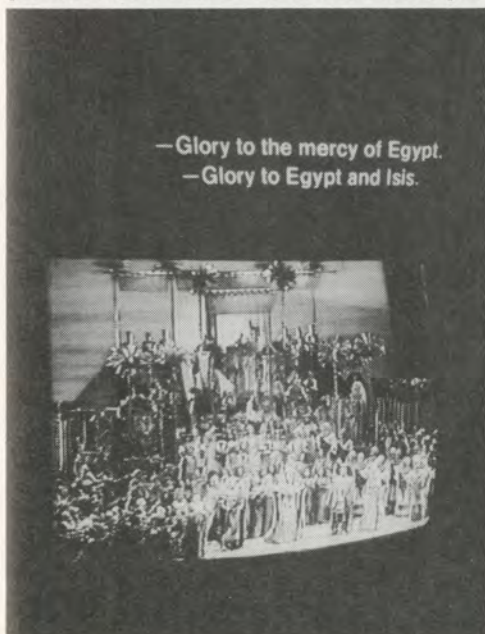
Acceptance was not immediate and universal. When Italian opera was eventually introduced to England around the end of the 17th century, the concept of enter-

tainment in a foreign tongue brought great resistance from the critical establishment. Joseph Addison published many tirades in the *Spectator*, and in a letter once wrote, "... there is no Question but our great Grand-children will be very curious to know the Reason why their Forefathers used to sit together like an Audience of Foreigners in their own Country, and to hear whole Plays acted before them in a tongue which they did not understand . . . It does not want any great Measure of Sense to see the Ridicule of this monstrous Practice . . ."

Even with one of the greatest composers of all time laboring on the side of the Italians—George Frideric Handel—the language barrier proved to be too great to hurdle, and after nearly three decades of composing Italian works for London audiences, the great champion of baroque Italian opera retreated and restricted himself to setting English texts.

During the heyday of Italian opera in England, audiences were at least able to

Through the use of a home slide projector, a television set and an improvised fade-in/fade-out device, the supertitles for this year's performances of *Aida* are tested over a videotaped showing of the 1981 San Francisco Opera production.



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During a typical brainstorming session between supertitles creators Francesca Zambello and Jerry Sherk, the exchange of ideas is intense, animated and, ultimately, productive.

translate what was being sung. House lights were not lowered for performances, and since bilingual libretti were available at the theater, it was no problem for a listener to follow along with the text, if he or she was so inclined.

Nationalistic sentiments eventually led to the development of opera in other languages, with France being one of the quickest to devise their own operatic tradition after the Italians. Other countries followed suit, and the day when an Austrian composer like Mozart could compose operas in Italian for audiences in Munich, Vienna and Prague soon passed. Audiences wanted to hear their own language, and if a piece were written in some other tongue, it could be translated—which opened up a whole new can of operatic worms.

Translating any literature usually exacts a price for the immediacy that is gained for the foreign reader, but the price is even higher when the translator is bound by the rhythms of the music to which the original text was set. It is ironic that the same nationalistic tendencies that created the demand for translating were also responsible for the varied and distinctive styles that composers in different countries developed for the idiomatic setting of their native languages. The problem grew worse as the more or less universal musical style of the 18th century diversified into more and more highly personal and idiosyncratic styles of individual composers in the 19th century.

Bilingual libretti were clearly no longer the answer. Theater historians generally hold Richard Wagner responsible for the innovation of lowering house lights during performances, at the same time that he elevated the importance of the text to a level where he virtually banished ensem-

bles in his operas, so vital did he consider the written word. Non-German devotees making the pilgrimage to Bayreuth soon resigned themselves to studying the libretto beforehand so as to follow the action on stage, which was a definite compromise, particularly with Wagner. His lengthy dialogues and narrations take on a new urgency when one is aware not only of the topic being discussed, but what is being said about it. But the custom of extinguishing the house lights caught on, and more and more audiences around the world were finding themselves in the dark as to what was happening on stage.

Matters were complicated in 20th-century America by the democratic and economic factors that dictated larger and larger opera houses. Certainly America's three most illustrious companies—the Met, San Francisco Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago—each make their home in grandiose music palaces several times larger than the houses for which most of the repertoire was composed. Any language can easily become unintelligible over the great distances encompassed by the enormous new auditoriums. It seemed more people than ever before were attending opera, while the percentage that understood what they were hearing dwindled dramatically.

The magic of opera is potent enough, however, that understanding or not, those who heard opera became addicted. The resultingly increased demand for opera and the development of electronic technology brought about the next breakthrough in comprehension when opera became a staple of television broadcasting. It is amusing to note that the very medium attacked by some critics as the antithesis of intellectual pursuits contributed what may be the most satisfactory solution yet



PHOTOS BY ROBERT MESSICK

to the operatic Tower of Babel: subtitles.

Many had foreseen the important place television could play in bringing great performances to vast audiences who would never otherwise experience them, but few could have predicted the impact made even by the frequently crude and erratic translations that were flashed at the bottom of the television screen after the fashion of foreign films. For the first time, the entire audience was able to follow dialogues and soliloquies closely—not just the gist of what was being said, but from moment to moment, as moods changed and new ideas were introduced. It was a true moment of discovery for many; if only the same technique could be applied in the theater!

It was inevitable that the attempt should be made. The Canadian Opera Company in Toronto was the first to experiment with the idea of projecting a translation on a screen over the stage, and a similar system was inaugurated by New York City Opera during their abbreviated 1982-83 season. The impetus for San Francisco Opera to adopt the practice came from Francesca Zambello, a young, live-wire opera director who was assigned to stage the student/family matinee performances of *La Traviata* for the 1983 Fall Season.

In previous years, some student/family matinee productions were given in English translations to assist the young viewers' comprehension. *La Traviata*, however, was to be performed in Italian, and Zambello's work has always been distinguished by her burning desire to make opera as accessible as possible to the largest number of people. She accordingly approached the head of her department at San Francisco Opera, Company production stage manager Jerry Sherk, with the

idea of using projected translations, and the two of them prepared a presentation that convinced the highest administrative levels to support their project.

Owing to their different backgrounds, Zambello and Sherk form an ideal team to refine the practice of projected translations, which they have christened "supertitles" to emphasize the fact that the translations appear over the stage. Sherk has a professional musician's training, holding a bachelor's degree in French horn and theory, with a minor in piano and graduate work in musicology. Zambello has had training in piano and flute and has lived at various times in Germany, Italy, France and Russia, experience that has given her invaluable linguistic skills. Sherk's work as a stage manager has always entailed setting and calling cues—a vital element in the precision timing of the supertitles—while Zambello's directorial experience has given her a director's sharp eye for adjustment of detail in her work of analyzing and articulating the meaning of various opera libretti.

The combination works. Popular and critical reception of the supertitles for the matinee *Traviatas* was overwhelmingly favorable; the supertitles created by Zambello and Sherk have since been seen in the Canadian cities of Calgary, Winnipeg and Manitoba, with future use scheduled for productions in San Diego, Cleveland, Fort Worth and New Orleans. In addition, other North American companies have expressed interest, and the 1984 Summer Season marks the first time the system will be used in San Francisco Opera's regular, international productions. Supertitled performances are being offered of the three works not being performed in English: *Don Pasquale*, *Aida* and *Siegfried*.

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Both Zambello and Sherk credit the great success of San Francisco Opera's supertitles to the fact that two people are involved in creating them, as opposed to other houses where one person does the whole writing job alone. The added input and creativity unleashed by the lively give-and-take that transpires between the two results in a more finely honed product than one person could produce.

The procedure the team uses may look chaotic to the casual observer, but has become standardized. They begin by

finding a visual aid such as a videotape of a previous performance, if one exists; if not, they assemble a recording, several scores, and all available translations. They next listen to the work and mark their scores for the places where translations are needed, and at which point the slides should change. They place high priority on finding moments in the score that are musically appropriate for the projected words to change. In ensemble passages, they must decide which lines are musically the most prominent, and which senti-

ments are most vital for audience comprehension of the dramatic moment.

Once the proper moments have been indicated, they begin by translating the line in question literally, and then go on to toss it back and forth between them, until they come up with what they consider the best possible form for the supertitle text. They operate according to a number of guidelines:

- It is realized that the text cannot be completely translated, literally. Repetitions are avoided, and while they try to write in complete sentences 99 percent of the time, they also try to include a complete thought in one slide.
- To avoid ambiguity as to who is talking to whom, character names are sometimes worked in even where they don't occur in the libretto.
- Careful attention is paid not only to what is said and when, but also to such subtle considerations as to how quickly the projection appears or fades away, always following the lead provided by the composer in the score.
- The aesthetic experience of the audience is always the highest consideration. Zambello and Sherk are scrupulous to avoid upstaging the onstage action and, whenever possible, prefer for the audience to be able to focus on the stage images and the music rather than on reading the text. Sherk points out that supertitles are different from television and film subtitles in that those media allow one to view the entire picture and translation in one glance without changing focus; that obviously is not possible in the three dimensions of live theater. If a particular idea can be clearly articulated by stage action alone, a projected translation for that moment may be considered superfluous, and omitted.
- Different operas demand different approaches. In *Don Pasquale*, for instance, some lines of text are "broken" or split between two consecutive slides to preserve a joke by saving the punchline for exactly the right moment. In *Siegfried*, the two have found that the various characters require different styles of language in keeping with their personalities. And a work with specific

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When the curtain goes up and the subtle glow of supertitles appears above the proscenium this summer, patrons will have more than Jerry Sherk and Francesca Zambello to thank for their deeper understanding of opera performances. The San Francisco Opera Guild, as the underwriter of this extraordinary project, has also been a major force in making possible greater enjoyment and accessibility of opera for our diverse audiences.

Dedicated to serving San Francisco Opera and the community at large, the Opera Guild takes a leading role in providing a wide variety of educational programs for both new and experienced opera lovers. As the sponsor of special matinee performances during the Fall Season, the Guild makes it possible for students, seniors and disabled citizens to enjoy grand opera performances at discount prices. Taking opera into the classroom, the Guild's innovative "Operatunities" program allows students and teachers to experience the magic of the art form by working with artists and performing a specially developed opera in their own environment. And, throughout each of the San Francisco Opera's major performing seasons, the Opera Guild presents previews, lectures and seminars covering topics related to the current repertoire, giving audiences greater insight into contemporary and classic masterworks.

It comes as no surprise, then, to learn that the Guild views supertitles as an important audience-development and educational tool, or that the Guild has offered its support to ensure that the

visual translations would be available in 1984. "Promoting enjoyment and understanding of opera is inherent in all of the Guild's goals and activities," states Guild executive director Allen Hillebrandt, "and opera education has been of prime importance to the Guild since its inception in 1938. The staff and board have spent a great deal of time over the years developing programs which serve the opera company and the community, programs which have a valuable educational impact. Since the supertitles were so successful during our matinee series last fall, we felt very strongly that they should be available in the summer season as well."

Education, like opera production, is not without its costs, and the Opera Guild has matched its philosophical support of supertitles with financial support as well. The Guild Board's Development Committee, led by dynamic community leader Diane Morris, voted to underwrite the expense of the project by making a special grant to the San Francisco Opera Association. Since the Guild is itself a non-profit organization which must raise funds to cover the costs of its programs, Miss Morris and her dedicated colleagues have launched a campaign to obtain community support for supertitles, as well as a wealth of other educational projects.

The sponsorship provided by the Opera Guild has earned the gratitude of the San Francisco Opera—and of the many patrons whose appreciation of opera is increased through supertitles. We hope you will join us in thanking the Guild for their outstanding support!

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set pieces requires some differentiation between matter-of-fact dialogue and the more poetic or introspective texts of arias.

Zambello and Sherk admit the process is somewhat more difficult for the summer operas than it was for *Traviata*, mainly because Francesca is not directing any of the summer productions. But she is quick to point out that the problem is minimized thanks to general director Terence A. McEwen's guiding principle that San Francisco Opera productions should never violate the original meaning intended by the opera's librettist and composer.

The bottom line for everyone involved in the decision to use supertitles is that they are not imposed on anyone. Performances without supertitles are also available, and even at performances that use them, the projections are discreet enough to allow everyone to make the choice whether to read them or not. Opera may still be the "exotic and irrational entertainment" Samuel Johnson once branded it; but it need no longer be because the audience doesn't know what's going on. □

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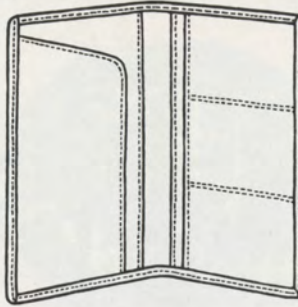
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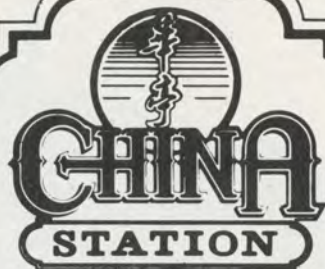
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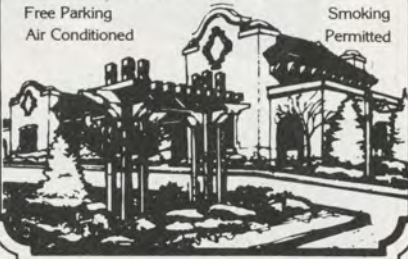
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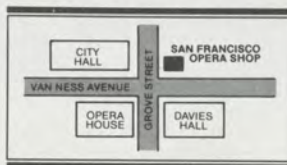
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Services

Bus Service

Many operagoers 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:

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.

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

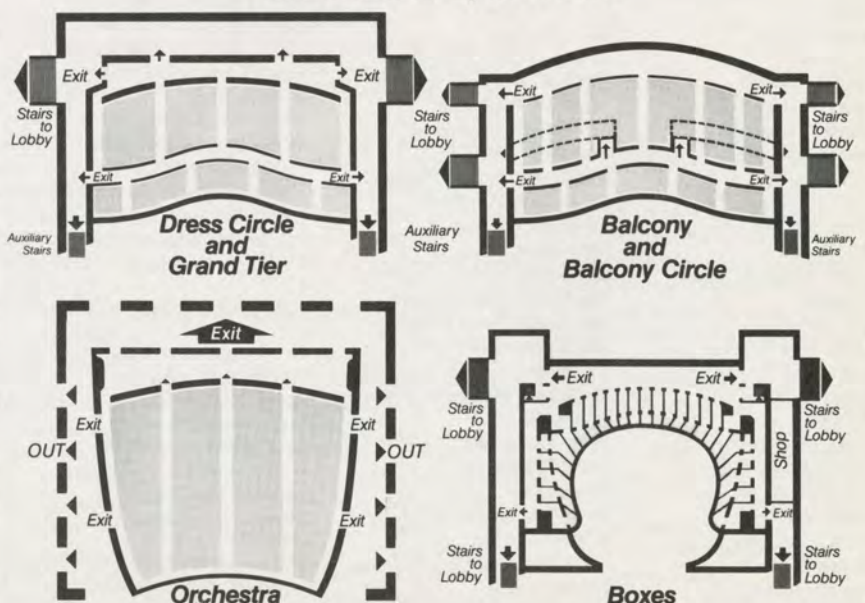
All tours leave from Davies Symphony Hall, Grove Street entrance.

General \$3.00—Seniors/Students \$2.00

For further information, please call (415) 552-8338.

San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center

War Memorial Opera House



Patrons, Attention Please! 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. (Refer to diagrams.)

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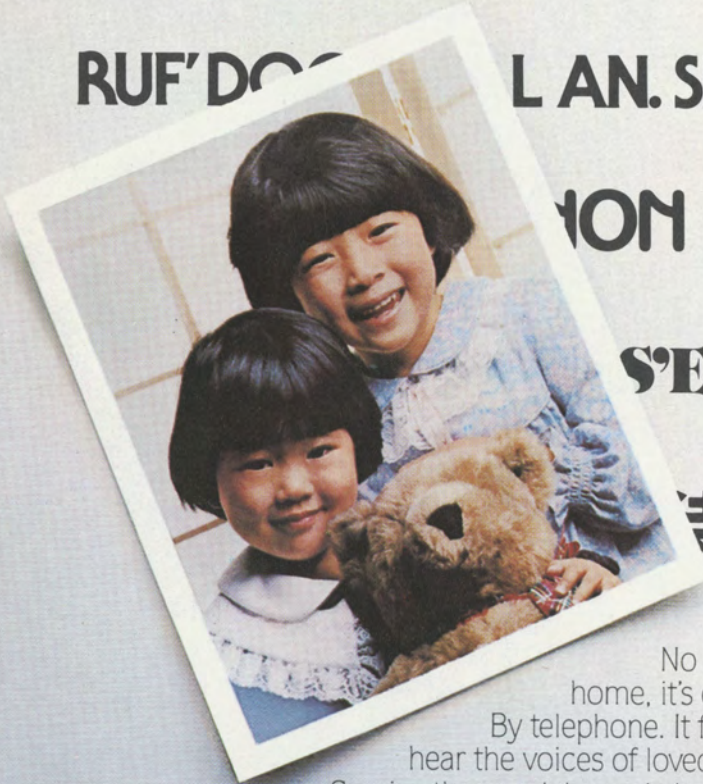
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The original production of *Don Pasquale*
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