

La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein
(The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein)

1983

Sunday, November 6, 1983 2:00 PM
Tuesday, November 8, 1983 8:00 PM
Saturday, November 12, 1983 8:00 PM
Wednesday, November 16, 1983 7:00 PM
Saturday, November 19, 1983 8:00 PM
Friday, November 25, 1983 2:00 PM(Special Holiday Weekend Matinee)
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FALL SEASON 1983

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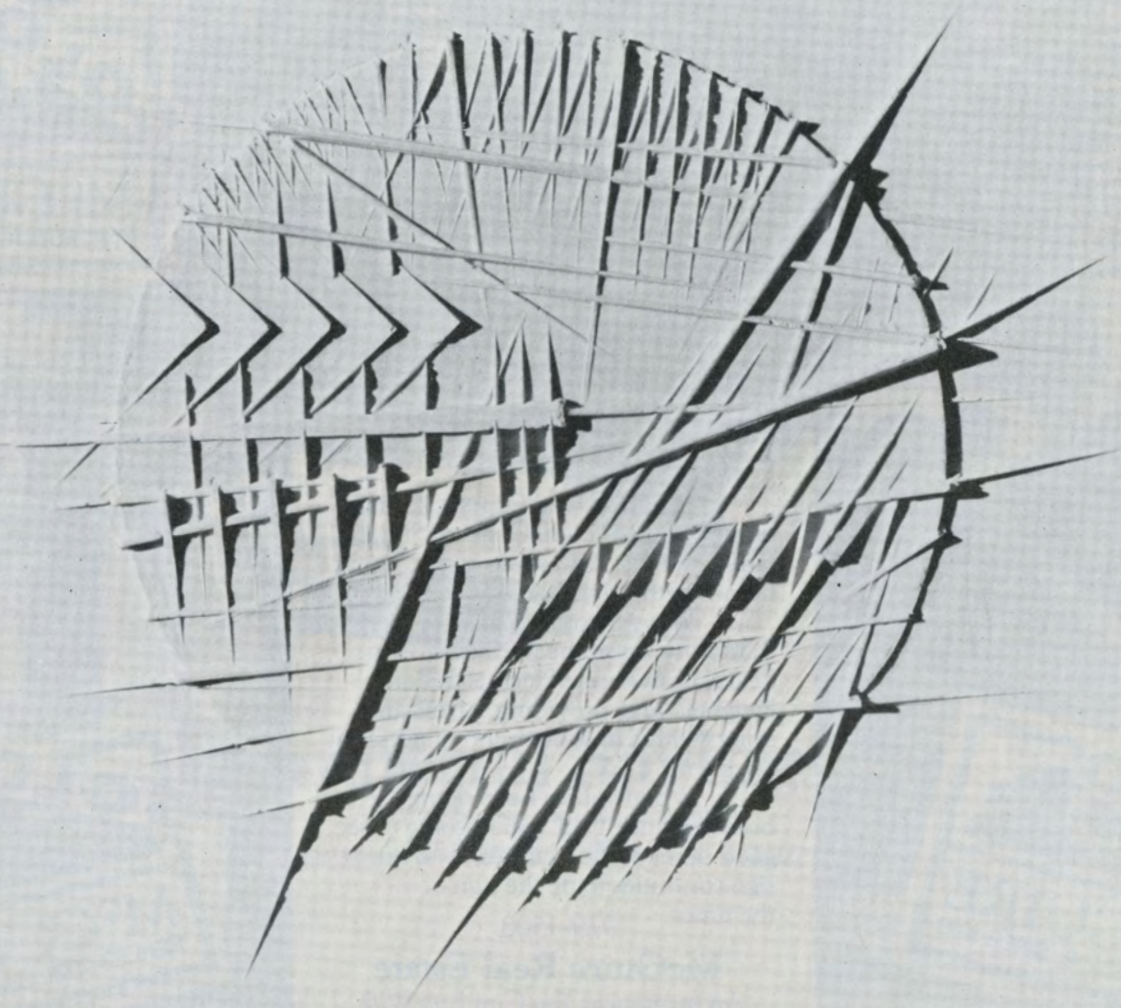
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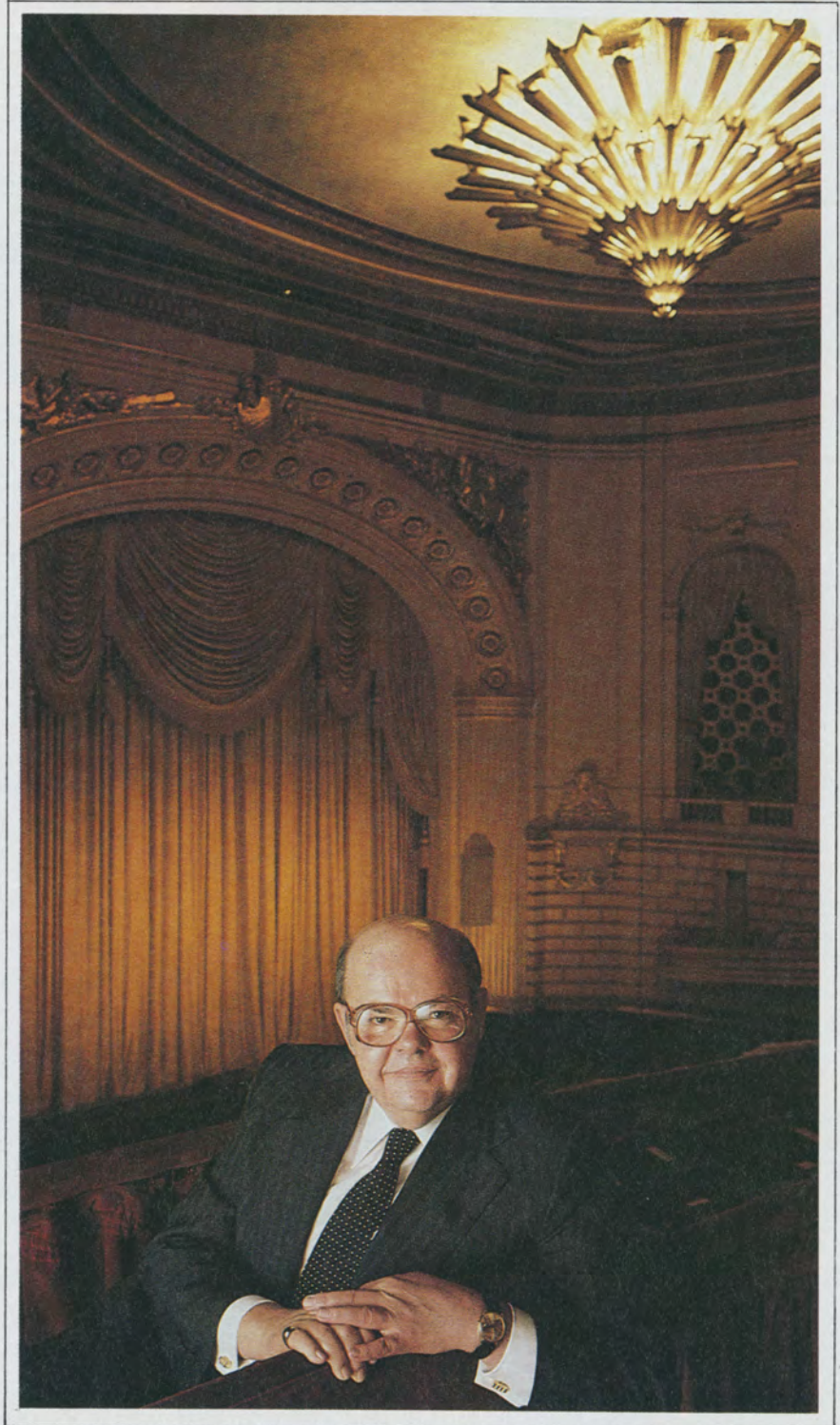
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General Director's Message

Although you see my picture on this page every season and although "the buck stops" at my desk, the San Francisco Opera is very much a team effort. This season, which is particularly heavy for our Technical Department, our Chorus, our Orchestra, and many other departments, makes me particularly aware of this fact and I want to share it with you.

From the technical standpoint, rehearsing and performing as many as five complex productions simultaneously is a heroic task. Matching this undertaking, the musical and artistic staff must contract artists and then plan the long and equally intricate rehearsals months in advance and yet manage to face daily crises with calm, control and even humor. The Orchestra, Chorus, Ballet and Supers are tackling some of their heaviest schedules ever and are handling them with the utmost professionalism. To keep the machinery running, the Development Department endeavors to raise more money. The Public Relations, Marketing and Subscription/Box Office Departments try to sell more tickets and inform an ever increasing audience of our myriad activities. The bottom line is that the conjunction of our summer and fall seasons extends our rehearsal/performance period from April through December. With basically the same number of staff we had before the inauguration of our first Summer Festival in 1981, we are handling a greatly expanded operation. I am glad to report that it is being done with remarkable flexibility, endurance and camaraderie. The 12- to 15-hour days (often seven days a week) necessitate this sustained, maximum effort from all sectors of the Company, and I am very proud of all of my colleagues and employees at the San Francisco Opera who have borne this extra stress.

On a separate page of this book, our President, Walter M. Baird, states the hope that you can increase your support of the San Francisco Opera. May I echo that request while assuring you that there is no finer or more qualified organization you *could* support. Opera is the most complex and irrational of art forms. It is also, when done as it should be, uniquely satisfying and uplifting. We pledge to continue to make it so.



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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, General Director

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FEATURES

- 34 "A Skeleton in Pince-nez"** by Christopher Hunt
A thorough and affectionate look at Jacques Offenbach, his wit, talent, physical presence, and his music.
- 45 La Schneider** by Hervé Le Mansec
Profile of Hortense Schneider, our cover subject, who created, owned and *lived* the role of the Grand Duchess.
- 72 Medallion Award Launched at Luncheon**
San Francisco Opera's recently founded Medallion Society is fêted in the Opera House lobby.

DEPARTMENTS

- 26 1983 Fall Season Repertoire**
- 31 Opera Previews**
- 47 Artist Profiles**
- 58 Synopsis**
- 79 Box Holders**
- 81 Supporting the San Francisco Opera**
- 106 Services**

Proceeds from the sale of this magazine benefit the San Francisco Opera.

Editor: Koraljka Lockhart


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COVER: Hortense Schneider as the Grand Duchess of Gérolstein in the famous photograph by Disdéri. The colored version of the photograph was on the cover of the French magazine *Le Théâtre* for December of 1905, loaned to San Francisco Opera Magazine through the courtesy of Lim M. Lai.

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From the President...



Ron Schert

ANOTHER Fall Season is upon us, that magical time when the performing and visual arts converge to create the most opulent of art forms, opera. We hope that this season is as exciting and special to you as it is to us; the enthusiastic response we have had at the box office would seem to indicate that it is.

Our general director has made it clear since his arrival that one of our highest priorities must be production funding. The world-famous singers who grace our stage and the technical crews that back them up bring us their own unique talents, but it is up to San Francisco Opera to provide the beautiful physical productions that show these artists off to best advantage. We have been fortunate

in the generosity shown by our patrons in funding a number of our fall productions, both new and revivals.

Heading the list must be that very special event, the American premiere of Sir Michael Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage*, which has been made possible through the generosity of the Paul L. and Phyllis Wattis Foundation. Mrs. Wattis has given us a real jewel, and our gratitude cannot be adequately expressed here.

Three of the five productions owned by San Francisco Opera and revived for this season were the result of donor generosity in the seasons of their premieres. Our *Traviata* was made possible in part through a donation from the Charles E. Merrill Trust in 1969; our *Gioconda* was born in 1979 through the generosity of an anonymous friend of the San Francisco Opera and a gift from the San Francisco Opera Guild; and *Samson et Dalila*, first seen here in 1980, was jointly produced for San Francisco Opera and the Lyric Opera of Chicago with a gift from the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa.

Revivals, of course, also require funding, and this year's revival of *Otello* was made possible by a gift from Bernard and Barbro Osher.

Financial assistance is also crucial for productions borrowed from other companies. This year's *Manon Lescaut*, owned by the Greater Miami Opera Association and the Dallas Opera, is being seen for the first time by San Francisco Opera audiences thanks to funding provided by The Koret Foundation.

All of these contributions are a blessing to us: they reflect confidence in the artistic stature of our Company, while augmenting our reputation by making possible productions new to our audiences as well as revivals of some of our past successes. Patronage is truly the backbone of any major arts organization, and we enthusiastically welcome any individuals or groups who wish to join the elite company of the donors listed above.

Despite all of the special grants and production fundings, we must depend on thousands of our supporters for their contributions. Grand opera of the quality produced by our Company is the most expensive performing art form in existence, and in recent years we have incurred significant deficits. Ticket sales cover only between 50 to 55 percent of our operating costs; the remainder must come from other sources, and the biggest single source is our annual fund drive. If you are not an annual contributor, won't you please join the many thousands who help us with a contribution? If you are a current contributor, please accept our thanks with the hope that you will consider an increase this year.

In addition, we would like to extend our gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the Hotel Tax Fund, Mayor Dianne Feinstein, Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas, the City and County of San Francisco, the San Francisco Opera Guild, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees. Our friends are many; the value of their assistance, inestimable. —WALTER M. BAIRD

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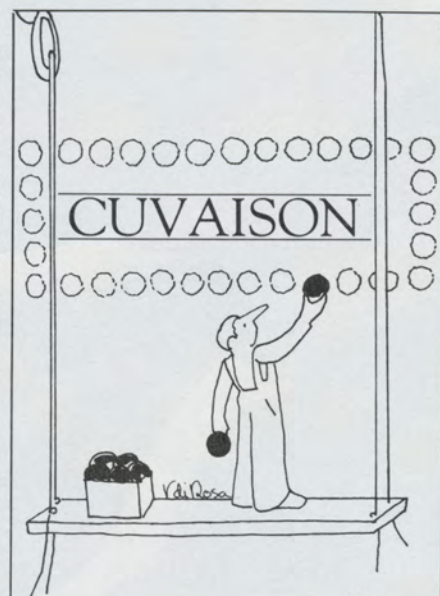
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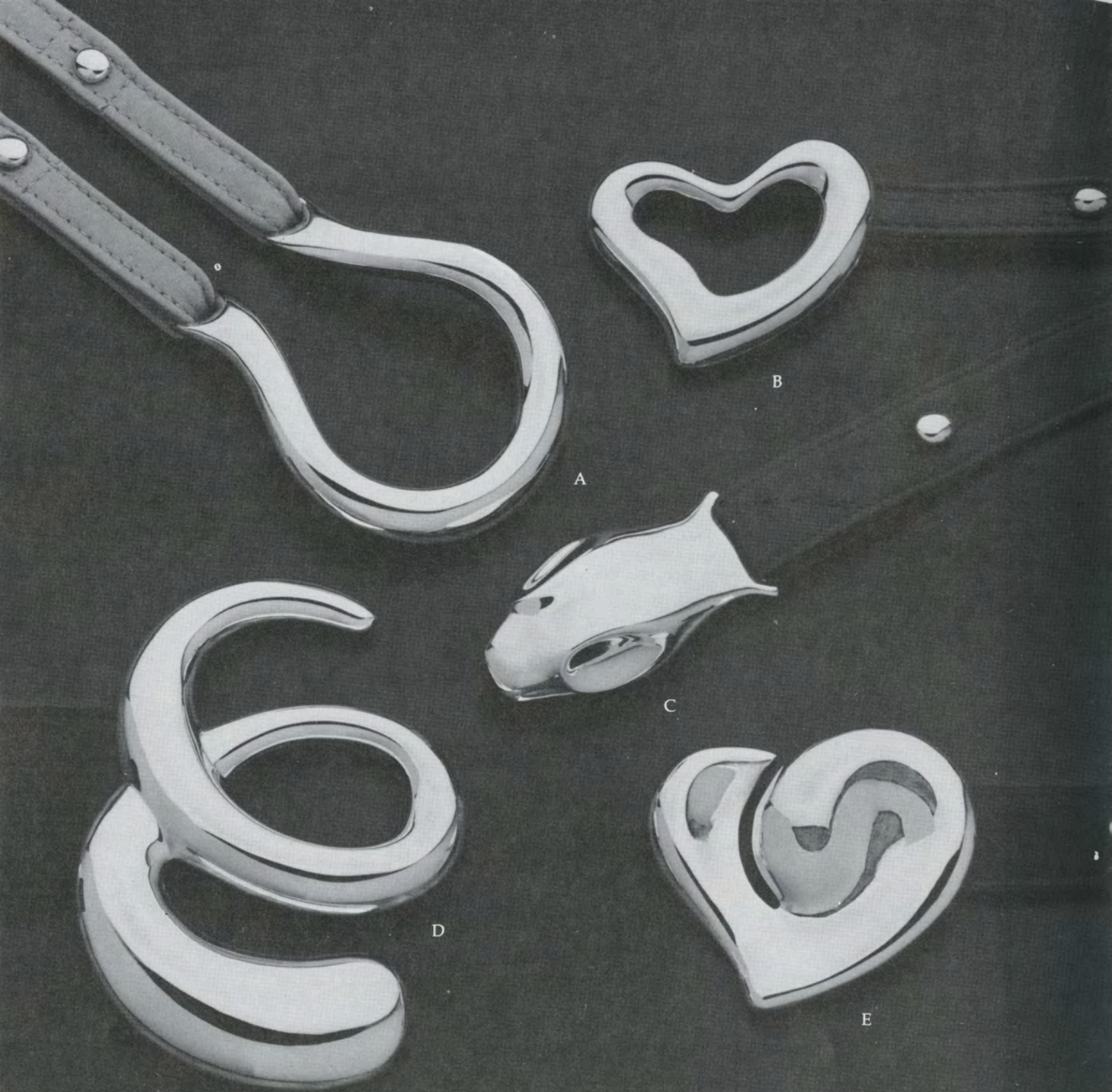
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| Roberta Irene Bowman | Theodotia Hartman | Irene Moreci | Linda Smeage |
| Lael Carlson | Mary Laymon | Sharon Navratil | Ramona Spiropoulos |
| Dotty Dean | Susan McClelland | Rose Parker | Delia Voitoff |
| Brenda Fairaday | Leslie Anne McCorkle | Kathleen Roland | Garifalia Zeissig |
| Roger Andrews | Edward Corley | Kenneth MacLaren | Karl O. Saarni |
| Daniel Becker-Nealeigh | Frank Daniels | Kenneth Malucelli | Sigmund Seigel |
| Bruce Bell | Robert Delany | Frederick Matthews | John Walters |
| David Cherveney | Paul Gudas | Valery Portnov | John Weiss |
| Angelo Colbasso | Gerald Johnson | Kenneth Rafanan | Andrew Yarosh |
| Mark Coles | Eugene Lawrence | Tom Reed | |

DANCERS

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Johanna Baer | Anne Elizabeth Egan | Loren Marcinkowski | Susan Stewart |
| Lisa Brodsky | Devra Gregory | Sarah Gale Oppenheimer | Elaine Wadsworth |
| Peggy Davis | Carolyn Houser | Page Perry | Katherine Warner |
| Liz Douglass | Amy Laszlo | Kathryn Roszak | |
| Peter Childers | Tom Hillyard | Dennis McDonald | Edward Staver |
| William Dunn | Gregory Lara | John Norris | John Sullivan |
| Gregory Gonzales | Karstyn McCoy | John Schoenberger | Edward Dubell |

EXTRA CHORUS

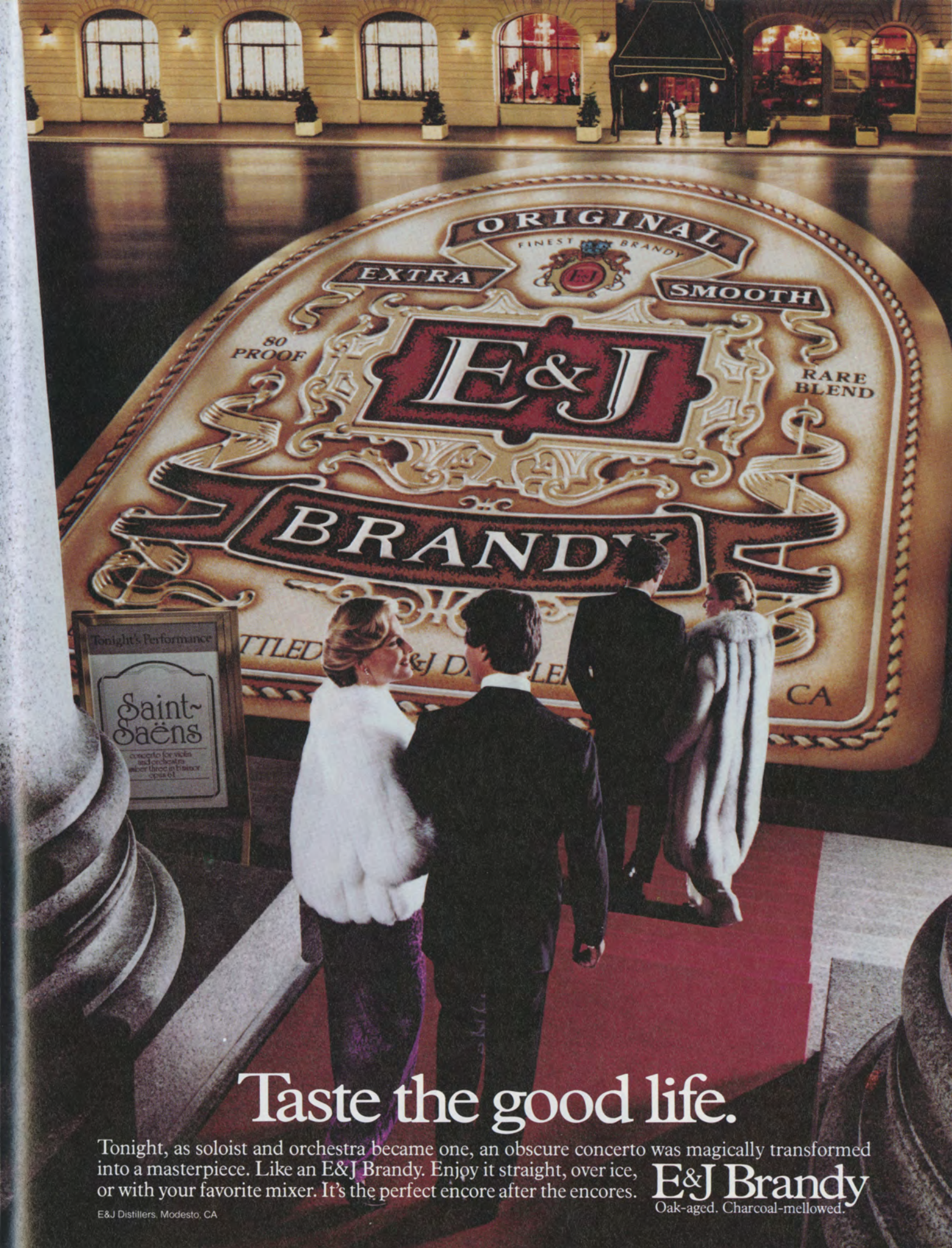
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|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Kathy Anderson | Linda Draggett | Anna Huffington | Anna Marie Riesgo |
| Elizabeth Jo Anker | Beverly Finn | Marena Lane | Daria Schult |
| Candida Arias-Duazo | Lisa Louise Glenister | Lola Lazzari-Simi | Bonnie Shapiro |
| Sophia Badasov | Amy Haines | Cecilia MacLaren | Susan Sheldrake |
| Nora Chickhale | Rita Haronian | Roberta Maxwell | Lorice Stevens |
| Angela Mun-Wai Choi | Liya Hoefling | May Murakami | Sally Winnington |
| Teresa Colyer | Gloria Holmby | Alexandra Nehra | Susan Witt |
| Marilyn Shonka Curtis | | | |
| Stephen Beal | Tim Enders | Eugene Naham | Kevin Skiles |
| John Beauchamp | Peter Giradôt | Steven Oakey | Marc Smith |
| Manfred Behrens | John L. Glenister | Stephen Ostrow | Bill Tredway |
| Ric Cascio | Maxwell Jarman | Autris Page | Daryl Wagner |
| Joseph F. Correllus | Robert Klose | William Pickersgill | James Wagner |
| Patrick Daugherty | Conrad Knipfel | Robert Price | Clifton Word |
| Dale Emde | Gregory Marks | Keith Purdy | Mark Ziemann |
| | Henry Metlenko | Robert Romanovsky | |

GIRLS CHORUS

- | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Deirdre Atkinson | Samantha Graff | Alissa Kingsbury | Cynthia Shank |
| Rebecca Fink | Karla Haeberle | Radha Kramer | Tanna Thompson |
| | Martha Hicks | Phoenix Reed | |

BOYS CHORUS


- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Holger Besch | John David Lanigan | John Pennebaker | John Taber |
| Duncan Campbell | John Lucero | Hiram Piskitel | Ying-Huang Thai Low |
| Devan Cross | Nathaniel Lunt | Jeffrey Pulley | Owen Thomas |
| Michael Curphey | Andrew Mak | Daniel Saffer | Lyndon Ubana |
| Jacob Donham | Eric Marty | Geary Sellers | Robert West |
| Francis Freenor | Mark McDonald | Thomas Shephard | Stanford White |
| Daniel Handler | Michael Molina | Kelsey Siegel | Jeffery Williams |
| Federico Hewson | David Parvin | George Somers | Samuel Yen |
| Daniel Jackowitz | | | |



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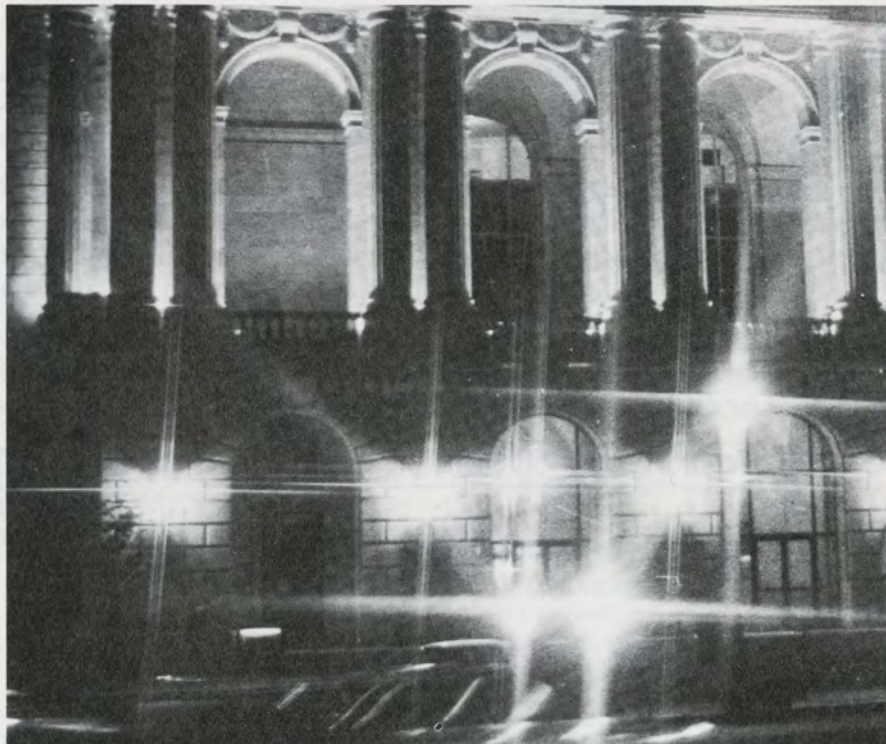
Valentina Simi
Robin Stewart
Stella Tatro
Beverly Terry
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Lisa Waters
Carolyn Waugh
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Jain Weidner
Susan Weiss
Lillian Williams

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Hilbert Duperoir
Rick Emmons

Robert Esformes
Jay Esser
Robert Falterman
Peter Felleman
George Freiday
Mickey Frettoloso
Philip Gibson
Rex Golightly
Albert Goodwyn
Dennis Goza
John Grimes
Paul Grosvenor
Philippe Henry
Willard Holden
Mark Huelsmann
Richard Hughes
Don Jack
Steve Jacobs
John R. Janonis
Richard Jones
Julius Karoblis
Joe Kelley

John Kovacs
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Roger Marquardt
Gerry Marquis
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Raymond Dusté

CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*
Joanne Burke Eisler
Gregory Dufford

BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

BASSOON

Rufus Olivier *Principal*
Jerry Dagg
Robin Elliott

CONTRA BASSOON

Robin Elliott

HORN

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

TRUMPET

James Miller *Principal*
Edward Haug
Timothy Wilson

TROMBONE

McDowell Kenley *Principal*
Donald Kennelly
John Bischof

TUBA

Robert Z.A. Spellman

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Elayne Jones

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Richard Kvistad *Principal/Associate Timpani*
Peggy Lucchesi

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San Francisco Opera

1983 Fall Season

Opening Night

Friday, September 9, 7:00

Otello Verdi

The revival of this production has been made possible by a much-appreciated grant from Bernard and Barbro Osher.

M. Price, Richards/Domingo, Carroli, Davies, Halfvarson, MacNeil, Will, MacAllister Janowski*/Ponnelle/Asagaroff/Ponnelle/Munn

Saturday, September 10, 8:00

Production New To San Francisco

Ariadne auf Naxos Strauss

Production owned by the Metropolitan Opera Association, Inc. and made possible by a generous and deeply appreciated gift from Mr. Francis Golet.

Plowright* (September 10, 13, 17, 21), DeVol (September 25), Reppel** (September 28; October 2), Battle, Quittmeyer, Parrish*, Swenson, Rice/Bailey (September 10, 13 17), Johns (September 21, 25, 28; October 2), Berry, Titus, Langan, Gordon, Tate, Matthews*, Patterson, Reinhardt Von Dohnányi/Neugebauer*/Messel*/Greenwood/Munn

Monday, September 12, 8:00

Otello Verdi

M. Price, Richards/Cassilly, Carroli, Davies, Halfvarson, MacNeil, Will, MacAllister Janowski/Ponnelle/Asagaroff/Ponnelle/Munn

Tuesday, September 13, 8:00

Ariadne auf Naxos Strauss

Thursday, September 15, 7:30

Otello Verdi

Saturday, September 17, 8:00

Ariadne auf Naxos Strauss

Sunday, September 18, 2:00

Otello Verdi

M. Price, Richards/Cossutta, Carroli, Davies, Halfvarson, MacNeil, Will, MacAllister Janowski/Ponnelle/Asagaroff/Ponnelle/Munn

Wednesday, September 21, 8:00

Ariadne auf Naxos Strauss

Friday, September 23, 8:00

Otello Verdi

Saturday, September 24, 8:00

Katya Kabanova Janáček

Silja, Lear, Rice, C. Cook*, Bruno/Jobin, Belcourt, Devlin, Kunde*, Matthews, MacAllister, Von Dohnányi/Freedman/Schneider-Siemssen/Walek/Munn



Sunday, September 25, 2:00

Ariadne auf Naxos Strauss

Tuesday, September 27, 8:00

Otello Verdi

Wednesday, September 28, 7:30

Ariadne auf Naxos Strauss

Friday, September 30, 8:00

Katya Kabanova Janáček

Saturday, October 1, 8:00

Otello Verdi

Sunday, October 2, 2:00

Ariadne auf Naxos Strauss

Tuesday, October 4, 8:00

Katya Kabanova Janáček

Haywood*, Lear, Rice, C. Cook, Bruno/Jobin, Belcourt, Devlin, Kunde, Matthews, MacAllister Von Dohnányi/Freedman/Schneider-Siemssen/Walek/Munn

Wednesday, October 5, 7:30

La Traviata Verdi

This production made possible in part through a donation from the Charles E. Merrill Trust in 1969.

Miricioiu** (October 5), Faix Brown* (October 8, 11, 14), Ricciarelli (October 18, 21, 27, 30), Gustafson, Bruno/Cupido*, Nucci*, Tate, Matthews, MacAllister, Patterson, Thomas, Will, Bradshaw/Farruggio/Businger/Gladstein*/Munn

Friday, October 7, 8:00

Katya Kabanova Janáček

Saturday, October 8, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Sunday, October 9, 2:00

Katya Kabanova Janáček

Tuesday, October 11, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Wednesday, October 12, 7:30

Katya Kabanova Janáček

Friday, October 14, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Saturday, October 15, 8:00

American Premiere

The Midsummer Marriage Tippett

This new production made possible through the generosity of the Paul L. and Phyllis Watis Foundation.

Johnson, Greenawald, Nadler, Richards/Bailey, Davies, Herincx, Langan

Agler/Copley/Don**/Gilbert**/Munn

Tuesday, October 18, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Wednesday, October 19, 8:00

The Midsummer Marriage Tippett

Thursday, October 20, 8:00

Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns

This production made possible by and produced through the cooperation of the Gramma Fisher Foundation of Marshalltown, Iowa, The Lyric Opera of Chicago and the San Francisco Opera.

Horne/Chauvet, Quilico, Del Carlo, Langan, Thomas, Will, Tate

Fournet/Joël/Schmidt/Robbins/Gladstein/Munn

Friday, October 21, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Saturday, October 22, 2:00

Family Matinee

La Traviata Verdi

Vanelli*, C. Cook, Bruno/MacNeil, Woodman, Thomas, Will, MacAllister, Patterson Cathcart*/Zambello*/Businger/Gladstein/Munn

Sunday, October 23, 2:00

The Midsummer Marriage Tippett

Tuesday, October 25, 8:00

Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns

Wednesday, October 26, 7:30

The Midsummer Marriage Tippett

Thursday, October 27, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Friday, October 28, 8:00

Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns

Saturday, October 29, 8:00

The Midsummer Marriage Tippett

Sunday, October 30, 2:00

La Traviata Verdi

Tuesday, November 1, 8:00

The Midsummer Marriage Tippett



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Wednesday, November 2, 7:30
Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns

Saturday, November 5, 8:00
Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns

Sunday, November 6, 2:00
San Francisco Opera Premiere
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Crespin, Erickson, Parrish, Swenson, Bruno,
C. Cook/Raffalli**, Trempont**, Corazza,
Matthews, Tate
Soustrot**/Ducasse**/Monloup**/
Sakellariou/Munn

Tuesday, November 8, 8:00
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Wednesday, November 9, 8:00
Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns

Friday, November 11, 7:30
La Gioconda Ponchielli
This production made possible through the generosity of a friend of the San Francisco Opera and a gift from the San Francisco Opera Guild.

Caballé (November 11, 15, 20, 24), Slatinaru**
(November 27, 30; December 3), Paunova*,
Nadler/Bonisolli, Manuguerra, Kavrakos*,
MacAllister, Thomas, Patterson, Woodman
Meltzer/Mansouri, Thompson/Brown/
Sulich/Munn

Saturday, November 12, 8:00
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Sunday, November 13, 2:00
Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns

Tuesday, November 15, 7:30
La Gioconda Ponchielli

Wednesday, November 16, 7:30
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Thursday, November 17, 8:00
Production New To San Francisco
Manon Lescaut Puccini

Production owned by Greater Miami Opera
Association and Dallas Opera.
The revival of this production has been made
possible by a much-appreciated grant from
The Koret Foundation.

Freni, Bruno/Mauro, Sardinero, Capecchi,
MacNeil, MacAllister, Gordon, Will, Thomas
Arena*/Asagaroff/Klein/Arhelger*

Saturday, November 19, 8:00
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Sunday, November 20, 1:30
La Gioconda Ponchielli

Tuesday, November 22, 8:00
Manon Lescaut Puccini

Wednesday, November 23, 7:30
Production New To San Francisco
Boris Godunov Mussorgsky

Production owned by the Metropolitan Opera
Association, Inc. This production made
possible by a generous and deeply appreciated
gift from Mrs. DeWitt Wallace.

Troyanos, Swenson, Petersen,
Richards/Ghiaurov, Ochman, Belcourt,
Tomlinson*, Del Carlo, Langan, Gordon, Tate,
Woodman, MacAllister, Matthews, Will,
Patterson
Janowski/Everding/Kneuss*/Lee/Hall/
Sulich/Munn

Thursday, November 24, 7:30
La Gioconda Ponchielli

Friday, November 25, 2:00
Special Holiday Weekend Matinee
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Friday, November 25, 8:00
Manon Lescaut Puccini

Saturday, November 26, 7:30
Boris Godunov Mussorgsky

Sunday, November 27, 1:30
La Gioconda Ponchielli

Monday, November 28, 8:00
Manon Lescaut Puccini

Wednesday, November 30, 7:30
La Gioconda Ponchielli

Thursday, December 1, 8:00
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Friday, December 2, 7:30
Boris Godunov Mussorgsky

Saturday, December 3, 7:30
La Gioconda Ponchielli

Sunday, December 4, 2:00
Manon Lescaut Puccini

Monday, December 5, 7:30
Boris Godunov Mussorgsky

Tuesday, December 6, 8:00
La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein
Offenbach

Wednesday, December 7, 7:30
Manon Lescaut Puccini

Thursday, December 8, 7:30
Boris Godunov Mussorgsky

Saturday, December 10, 8:00
Manon Lescaut Puccini

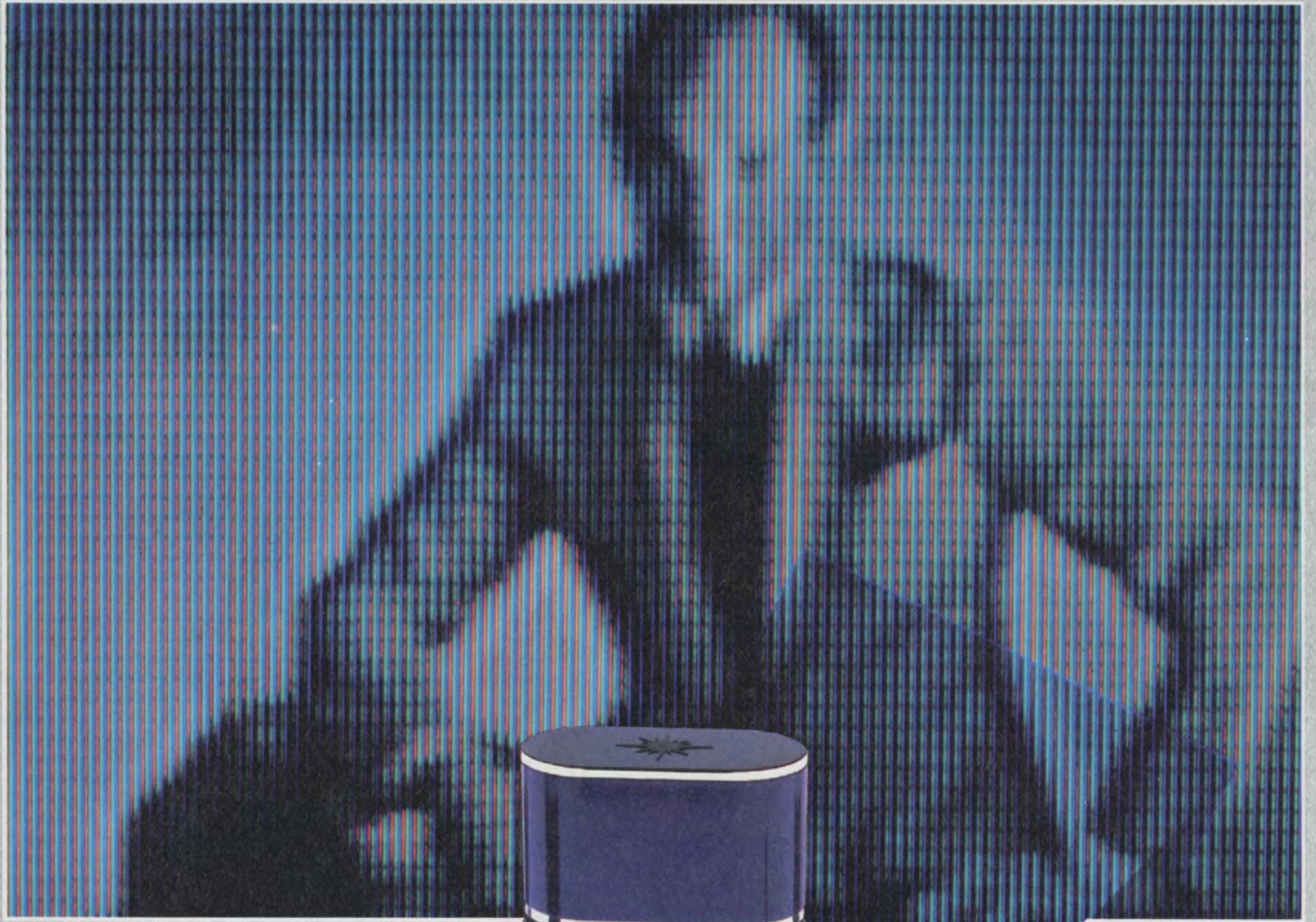
Sunday, December 11, 1:30
Boris Godunov Mussorgsky

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1983 Fall Opera Previews

Information on opera previews and lectures
is carried in San Francisco Opera Magazine in order to enable patrons to make advance plans.
The following is a list of previews and lectures that are open to the public.



Ron Scherl

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

Opera "Insights" held in the Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, Van Ness and McAllister, in San Francisco. All panel discussions begin at 6 p.m.; doors open at 5:30 p.m. Series subscription for Guild members is \$12; Non-Guild member \$18; Individual tickets are \$4. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432. Programs subject to rehearsal schedules.

Mirella Freni/Nicolai Ghiaurov 12/1

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

MARIN

Previews held at Park School Auditorium, 360 East Blithedale, Mill Valley; refreshments served at 7:30 p.m., previews at 8:00 p.m. Series registration is \$17.50 for 6 previews (\$15.00 for stu-

dents and seniors). Single tickets are \$3.50 (\$3.00 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 388-6789.

LA GRANDE DUCHESSE
Jan Popper 11/3

MANON LESCAUT
Arthur Kaplan 11/10

BORIS GODUNOV
Blanche Thebom 11/17

NORTH PENINSULA

Previews held at The Central Park Book Store, 32 East 4th Ave., San Mateo. Lectures begin at 7:30 p.m. Series registration is \$20.00; single tickets are \$5.00. For further information, please call (415) 593-2935.

BORIS GODUNOV
Blanche Thebom 11/3

SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant Street, at 8:00 p.m. (with the exception of 10/27, which will be held at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road). Series registration is \$18.00; single tickets are \$4.00. For further information, please call (415) 941-3890.

MANON LESCAUT
Arthur Kaplan 11/8

BORIS GODUNOV
Blanche Thebom 11/15

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

All Junior League opera previews will be held in Herbst Theatre in the Veterans Building, Van Ness at McAllister. Lectures begin at 11 a.m. There is no admission charge. For information, please call Joni Settlemier at (415) 922-7100.

LA GRANDE DUCHESSE
Jan Popper 11/2

MANON LESCAUT
Arthur Kaplan 11/9

BORIS GODUNOV
Blanche Thebom 11/15

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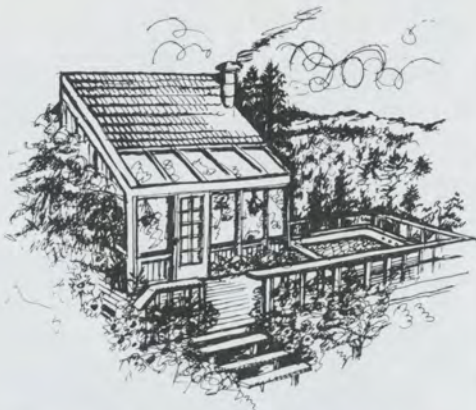
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shampoos, soaps and of course our own herbal balms to pamper every pore. **Up the staircase** to a spacious sleeping loft (26') with queen size bed, luxuriant down spread and pillows, everything. **Your own TV dish** with unlimited channels. **And everywhere there will be flowers.** Potpourris, Herbs. To caress your senses, to soothe away all cares. Let us know if we have forgotten anything.



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NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES

For the 11th year there will be a 10-week course called "Adventures in Opera" in Napa. The course, which accompanies the Saturday and Sunday series at the San Francisco Opera, will be held at 7:30 in St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1917 Third Street, in Napa. Ernest Fly will again teach the course. Cost for the entire series will be \$20.00. Individual lectures will be \$3.00. For further information, please call Mr. Fly at (707) 224-6162.

MANON LESCAUT	11/3
BORIS GODUNOV	11/10

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of all the operas of the 1983 Fall Season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International. Lectures are given in the auditorium of the Dr. William Cobb School, 2725 California Street, between Scott and Divisadero, at 7:30 p.m. Individual admission at the door is \$5.50. For further information, please call (415) 526-5244.

LA GIOCONDA	11/7
MANON LESCAUT	11/14
BORIS GODUNOV	11/21

UC BERKELEY EXTENSION LECTURE SERIES

Eight illustrated previews will be given by noted conductor and lecturer Jan Popper. All previews are at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of the UC Extension Center, 55 Laguna St. (at Market), San Francisco. Series \$70; pre-registration advisable; single lectures \$10 at the door if space is available. For further information, please call (415) 642-8840.

MANON LESCAUT	11/7
BORIS GODUNOV	11/14

ROBERT GOODHUE'S FALL OPERA COURSE

10 one-and-one-half hour classes on all the fall operas (one class per opera). There is a choice of six sections: Section A (Mondays at 5:45 p.m., August 22 to November 14); Section B (Mondays at 7:30 p.m., August 22 to November 14); Section C (Tuesdays at 6:15 p.m., September 6 to November 22); Section D (Thursdays at 6:00 p.m., September 1 to December 1); Section E (Thursdays at 7:45 p.m., September 21 to December 1); Section F (Saturdays at 10:00 a.m., September 23 to December 10). Cost for the course is \$60.00; individual classes are \$7.00 if space permits. Classes are held at 13 Columbus Ave., San Francisco. For further information, please call (415) 956-1271.

San Francisco Opera on Radio

BAY AREA radio audiences will have three opportunities to hear each of nine broadcasts selected from the 1982 Summer Festival and Fall Seasons. These repeat broadcasts, produced by San Francisco Opera in cooperation with KQED-FM, will also be heard nationwide on member stations of National Public Radio and other selected stations throughout the country. Recipient of the 1980 George Foster Peabody Award, the 1982 broadcasts were originally made possible in part by grants from Standard Oil of California and the Chevron companies, R.J. Reynolds Industries, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Local broadcasts will be on the traditional Friday evenings at 8 p.m. and Saturday mornings at 11 a.m., with the exception noted below. The broadcasts may also be heard Saturdays at 1:30 p.m. on KCSM, 91.1 FM, beginning October 8 (all times listed are Pacific Time).

9/30	Julius Caesar
10/7	Norma
10/14	The Barber of Seville
10/21	Turandot
10/28	The Marriage of Figaro
11/4	La Cenerentola
11/11	Cendrillon
11/18	Lohengrin (Saturday at 10 a.m. on KQED-FM)
11/25	The Queen of Spades

For broadcast times outside the Bay Area, contact your local NPR station or consult local listings. Executive producer for the San Francisco Opera broadcasts is Robert Walker; producer, Marilyn Mercur. Gene Parrish is host, and Fred Krock the audio engineer. □



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A Skeleton in Pince-nez

by Christopher Hunt

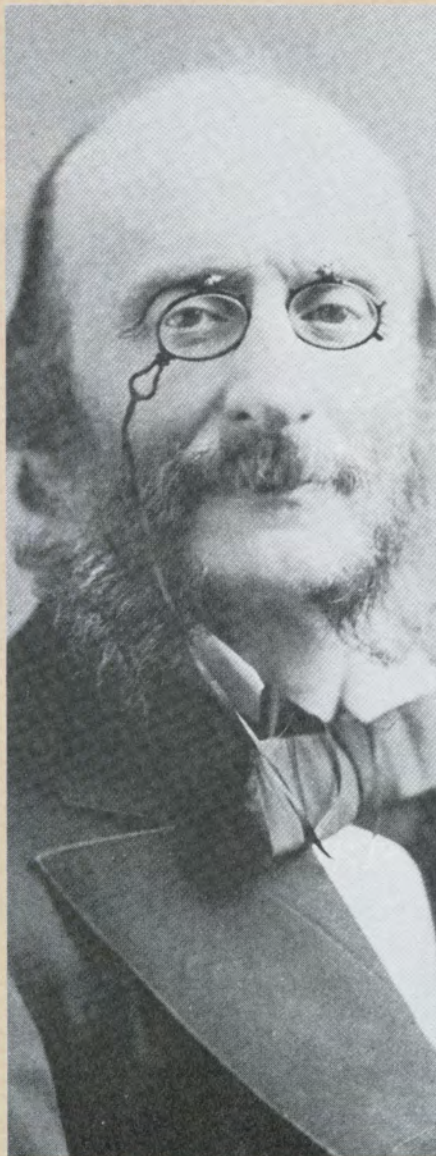
ALTHOUGH Offenbach's opera *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* has kept its place in the international operatic repertoire, it is as a composer of operetta that his true importance rests. It was supposedly he who urged Johann Strauss, Jr. to write operettas; it was his success that encouraged Gilbert and Sullivan to emulate his example in England; it was his international recognition that established operetta as a worldwide genre; and it was from the elements of his style that the American musical developed.

His own operettas combine an exhilarating rhythmic elan with unending melodic invention and a splendid instinct for theatrical effect. As a person he was short, emaciated, and ceaselessly energetic; in professional life an irreverent cynic and tireless perfectionist, he was in private a conventional, sentimental and devoted husband and father.

Offenbach was born in Cologne, on June 20, 1819. His father, born Isaac Eberst, had adopted the name of his birthplace, Offenbach-am-Main, when he left home to make a precarious living in Cologne as bookbinder, teacher, musician and cantor. Jacob (he began calling himself Jacques only when he moved to Paris) was Isaac's second son, and the seventh of ten children.

The young Jacob showed early musical talent. At six he started playing the violin and his first compositions came a year later. It was, however, not as a violinist but as a cellist that he began his musical career, originally against his father's wishes, as he recalled many years later:

"At seven I didn't play too badly, but already my mind was on composing, rather



LEFT: Jacques Offenbach in 1876. OPPOSITE PAGE: Pastel of Jacques Offenbach by Alexandre Laemlein (18-13-1871).

than on scales and exercises. Three years later my father came in one night, followed by a cello he had just bought. As soon as I saw the instrument, I said I wanted to learn that instead of the violin; my parents refused, on the pretext of my health—they were rather worried about my frail appearance. I pretended to give in, but from then on I would watch for them to leave the house; as soon as the street door closed I would get hold of the cello and practice it eagerly in my locked room.

"A few months later they took me to a house where some friends used to play quartets every week. Everyone had been there for some time except the cellist, who hadn't turned up yet. They were getting impatient, and disappointed at having to put off playing Haydn for another week, when I went up to my father and asked him in a whisper if he would let me take the place of the latecomer. I knew I could do it.

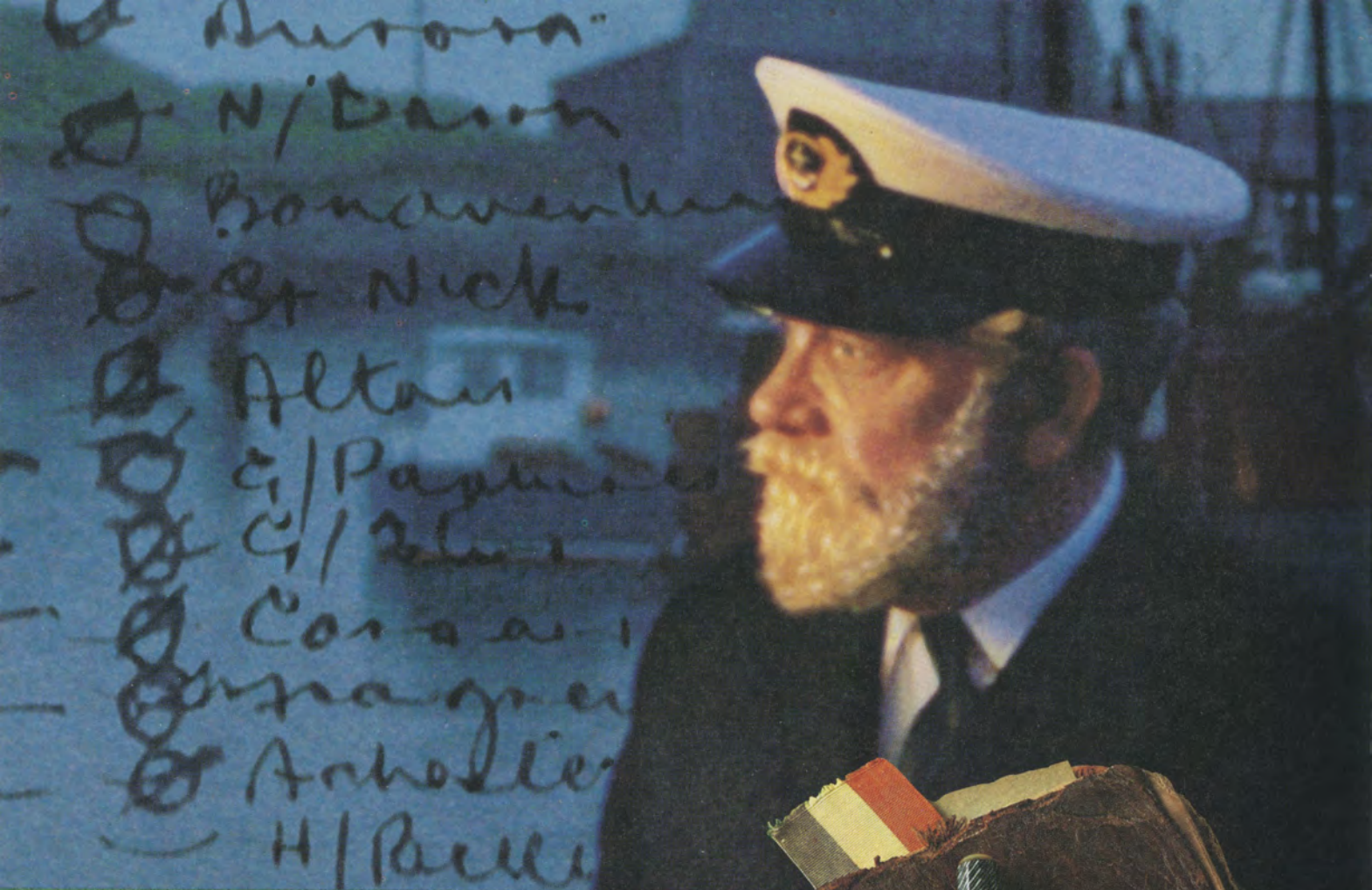
"My father burst out laughing, and the master of the house asked what caused the sudden fit of merriment.

"Why not let him try it?"

"But he's never touched a cello.

"Blushing, I confessed my disobedience. Without wasting time on scolding me he put the longed-for instrument in my hands, and I played my part to the applause of the whole company."

By the time Offenbach was fourteen he showed such gifts that his father, at some sacrifice, took him and his elder brother Julius to Paris, where he enrolled the two



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boys in the Conservatoire. Within a year Jacob—by now calling himself Jacques—had had enough of academic study. Leaving the Conservatoire of his own volition, he enrolled as cellist in the orchestra of the Opéra-Comique. He managed to persuade Fromental Halévy, one of the most important composers of the time, to give him lessons in composition, having with typical impudence introduced himself to Halévy in order to get free admission to Halévy's latest opera *La Juive*. Another of Halévy's operas, *L'Éclair*, had just opened at the Opéra-Comique, with Offenbach in the cello section. "I was naturally very cur-



Ludovic Halévy in 1865

ious," Offenbach later wrote, "to go and hear this *Juive* about which so much was said for and against. Towards six in the evening I had stationed myself unobtrusively in the forecourt of the Opéra, and was waiting impatiently for the composer of these works. A little before seven M. Halévy actually arrived; with the nerve of the brat of thirteen (15) I then was, I went up to him, and though my voice was anything but assured, asked him if he could get me in to hear *La Juive*.

'It's very simple,' he replied, 'and I'm all the more delighted that you've asked me,

since, if I remember right, it was you who played the bass part at my first rehearsal of *L'Éclair*.' Which was true, for I had just joined the orchestra of the Opéra-Comique.

'Do you want to see well?' said M. Halévy.

'I want above all to hear well, Maestro.'

'Then come with me.'

'We climbed to the third circle. He was admitted to a box, and there, all ears, we didn't miss a note of that magnificent score. How far away that performance now seems! Twenty years have passed, and the work, almost fought over when it first appeared, now has a place among the established masterpieces.'

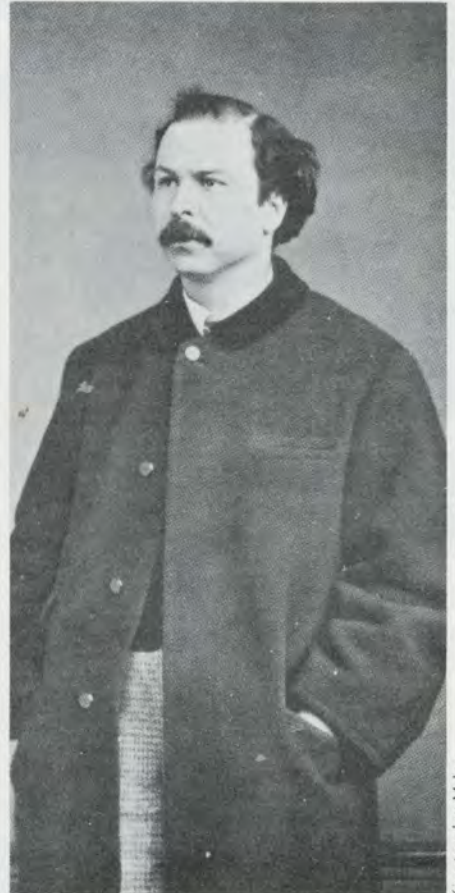
Offenbach enjoyed life in the cello section little more than he had in the Conservatoire. He and an equally bored fellow-cellist were constantly in trouble from the management for playing games to pass the time, ranging from musical tricks such as playing alternate notes each, to less artistic foolery with strings attached to the music stands of other players. Offenbach's salary, which was modest at best, was regularly depleted by fines for his behavior in the pit. He was at this period sharing a garret in Paris with a group of friends; their impoverished but sprightly life may have inspired Mürger in his description of Bohemian existence that later found musical immortality in Puccini's *La Bohème*. At any rate, Offenbach, whose pride in appearances never left him, was certainly the original of one scene in Mürger's novel: he used to bring food home in his violin case, hidden from neighbors' eyes.

In 1838, when Offenbach was nineteen and still playing in the orchestra of the Opéra-Comique, he was introduced to the Paris salon life by another composer-patron, Flotow, the composer of *Martha* and like Jacques an expatriate German. Offenbach's ready wit and musical dexterity made him a favorite of the salons, and he began the assiduous cultivation of the aristocratic and powerful that was to help and hinder him throughout his career, according to the fluctuations of the political climate. His career as a cello virtuoso flourished, though his aspirations as a composer remained unrecognized. As a cellist he already showed the irreverence that was to characterize his operettas years later. When a critic dubbed him the "Liszt of the cello" it was as much for the unusual sounds he drew from his instrument as for his musical skill.

By 1839, his solo career had sufficiently advanced that he could leave the Opéra-Comique orchestra. In the next five years

he traveled widely as a virtuoso, drawing praise that was not unmixed with criticism of his showmanship and his penchant for making the cello sound like anything except a cello. He gave recitals with the leading pianists of the day including Liszt and Anton Rubinstein. When he played in England in 1844, his triumphs led to a performance for Queen Victoria, and comparisons not only with Liszt but also with Paganini. But his expansion of the cello repertoire with transcriptions of his own devising brought the disapproval of staid critics on his head:

"M. Offenbach follows the pernicious



Henri Meilhac in 1865

fashion in playing, on the violoncello, that which was not meant for the violoncello; 'transcribed' is a new musical term we find hard to recognize, even when a Liszt represents, on the piano, Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony, or an Ernst, on the violin, Schubert's wondrous *Erlkönig*... the offender is both too highly gifted and too young to be permitted to wander from true artistic taste without protest."

Despite such occasional bouts with pedantry, Offenbach continued to flourish as a cellist. In an age when musical performance and social elegance were insepar-



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able, his penchant for dandyism helped. He was, according to the London *Athenaeum*, precursor of the *New Statesman*, "certainly an artist of first-rate ability, and, we might add, *agility*, on his instrument, and moreover, a man deserving the respect of every musician for his acquirements, and of every gentleman for his deportment." Offenbach was plainly amused as well as pleased by his social successes; to his friend Chevalet in Paris, he wrote:

"Last Thursday I played at Windsor in front of the Queen, Prince Albert, the Emperor of Russia, the King of Bavaria,

for a good five minutes, and shouting 'Encore' at the tops of their voices that I had to play the same piece again.

"You will see from all this that I have had just as much success here as in Paris. And I am beginning to be just a little proud. When I get back to Paris I won't be able to see you any more, accustomed as I now am to mix only with lords, dukes, queens, kings, emperors! Emperors, my friend!!! I can't stoop any more to talk to a simple bourgeois, but since I can write to him, I am, you see, taking the opportunity. Adieu, my dear Chevalet. My very best regards to the charming Mme. Chevalet; and you, my friend, I will allow you—make a note of this—I will allow you to kiss my hand."

On his return from his English tour, Offenbach married the 18-year old daughter of an Englishman living in Paris, Michael George Mitchell, who was probably (the sources are unclear) the brother of Offenbach's English impresario John Mitchell. Herminie, Mitchell's daughter, was to remain Offenbach's devotedly supportive wife for the rest of his life.

Meanwhile, once back in Paris, Offenbach turned his attention again to composition. The cello took an increasingly insignificant part in his life, as he tried for the next three years to get access to a Paris theater for his new operettas—at this stage always one-act pieces, as was the custom of the time, and using not more than three performers, as was the legal obligation of the smaller theaters. His own first attempt to produce his work met with only moderate success. And just when it seemed as if greater recognition was approaching, his career, like everyone else's in Paris, was cut short by the advent of the 1848 Revolution. In despair and poverty, Offenbach took his family back to Cologne. His mother failed to recognize the son she had not seen since he was fourteen.

A year later, however, he was back in Paris. Still his operettas found no impresario willing to stage them. From 1850 to 1855 he worked as music director of the Théâtre-Français, whose miserable musical standards he tirelessly tried to improve. Though he made no headway with his own works, the experience of this time in the theater gave him the practical stage experience that he was to use with triumphant success soon.

"I stayed" he later said, "at the Théâtre-Français for five years, from 1850 to 1855. It was during this time that, faced with the continuing impossibility of having my works performed, I had the idea of starting a musical theater myself. It seemed to me



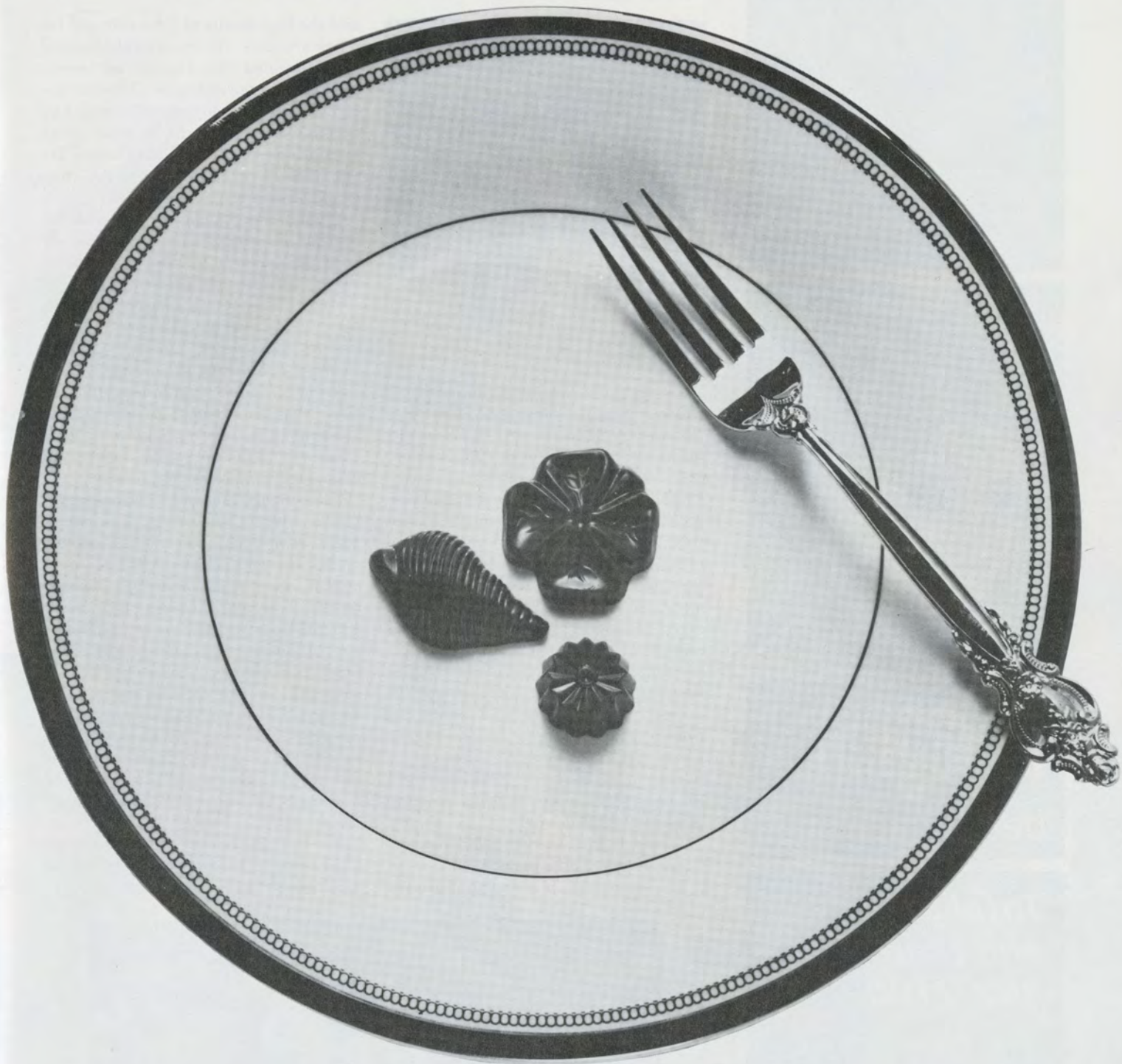
José Dupuis as Fritz in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*, 1867.

etc. The elite of the Court, in fact. I was a great success. But in spite of all the honors I am receiving I much prefer my beautiful Paris and would rather be among my real friends, enjoying your pleasant little soirées...

"Last week I was invited to dinner at the Society of Melodists, whose president is the Duke of Cambridge. Well, my dear fellow, as you can imagine, there was some music after dinner. I played my *Musette*; they made such a row, banging on the table

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that comic opera no longer existed at the Opéra-Comique; that truly light, gay and witty music, music with life in it, in fact, was gradually being forgotten. The composers working for the Opéra-Comique, were creating little grand operas. I saw that here was a job to be done by the young musicians who, like myself, were fretting in vain at the doors of the opera houses."

The turning point came in 1855. To coincide with the Great Exhibition in Paris, Offenbach rented a little, tumbled-down wooden theater on the Champs-Élysées, empty since the bankruptcy of its previous tenant, a magician. His one-act operetta, *Les deux aveugles*, given as the finale to a variety program he staged for the Exhibition, became the rage of Paris.

In the same year he met the nephew of his former mentor Fromental Halévy. Ludovic Halévy, then in his early 20s, was to write, together with his friend Henri Meilhac, the libretti for most of Offenbach's most celebrated operettas. It was in 1855, too, that Offenbach made the first of the discoveries of unknown star-talent that contributed so much to his later triumphs: she was a young singing actress from Toulouse studying in Paris (alongside a busy schedule as mistress to a rich protector)—Hortense Schneider. In addition to her many extra-dramatic achievements, she was to be the first Belle Hélène and the first Grande Duchesse.

In the next seven years, until 1862, Offenbach wrote and produced some fifty short operettas, and—in 1858—his first full-length stage work, *Orphée aux enfers* (Orpheus in the Underworld). It had 228 consecutive performances, an unheard-of popularity. Offenbach was now enjoying,

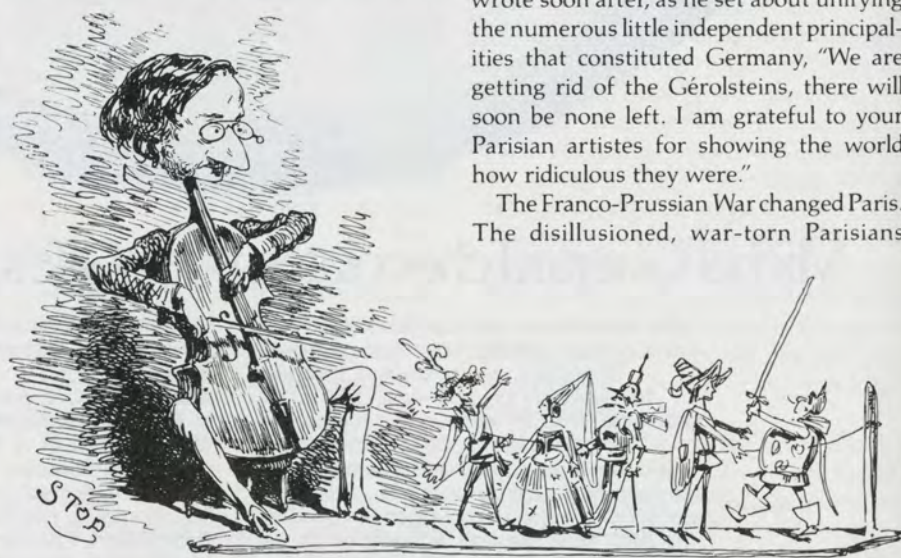
despite reckless overspending which brought him several times to the verge of bankruptcy, the success he had so long wanted. He became a French citizen, and was made a Chevalier of the *Légion d'honneur* on the personal instructions of Napoleon III, whose love of Offenbach's music linked the composer irrevocably—and for his later career, disastrously—to the current regime.

In 1867, Paris staged a second Great Exhibition. Offenbach repeated his earlier success, indeed outdid it: the Grand Duchess became the hit not just of Paris, but of all Europe. The satire inherent in Offenbach's works had coincided perfectly with the frantic gaiety of a generation that sensed the end of an era. Ludovic Halévy was only too correct in his comments, confided to his diary at the time:

"Four operettas in two and a half years, all of them successful... *La Belle Hélène* performed nearly 300 times... *La Vie parisienne* nearly 200, and now *La Grande Duchesse*, which will be, if not the most fruitful, at least the longest and most resounding of our successes. For this is where luck comes in, and politics come to our aid; M. de Bismarck is working to double our takings. This time we are laughing at war, and war is at our gates; the Luxembourg crisis comes just in time to give topicality to our play."

Bismarck was certainly the right name to mention. Three years later, his war with France brought an end to Offenbach's popularity. In 1867, however, Bismarck was merely one of the innumerable celebrities who enjoyed the Grand Duchess's wit. He reportedly remarked after seeing it, "C'est ça! C'est tout-à-fait ça!" and he certainly wrote soon after, as he set about unifying the numerous little independent principalities that constituted Germany, "We are getting rid of the Gérolsteins, there will soon be none left. I am grateful to your Parisian artistes for showing the world how ridiculous they were."

The Franco-Prussian War changed Paris. The disillusioned, war-torn Parisians



Contemporary caricature of Jacques Offenbach, 1857.

Courtesy, Lum M. Lar



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turned against their former idols. Offenbach was attacked for his German origin, and a planned revival of *Grande Duchesse* had to be cancelled. Yet by 1873 Offenbach had recovered enough to attempt new seasons as a theatrical producer. But his perennial extravagance and the absence of a major new hit, brought him three years later to such penury that even his indomitable optimism and energy seemed dimmed. He was by now suffering very severely from the gout that was eventually to kill him, but with customary adventure he set off on a tour of America to recoup his fortunes. It was an immense success, though not without some press criticism that recalled the staid London critics of his cello-playing years. His operettas—*Belle Hélène* was the principal culprit—were labeled immoral:

"M. Offenbach long ago found that to use his gift of melody in the service of immorality was a sure path to fortune. . . The opera-bouffe is simply the sexual instinct expressed in melody. . . Priapism is put on a level with music, and composers who have devoted their lives to the composition of works which no man can hear understandingly without being lifted out of the grossness of his earthly nature, are virtually asked to take notice that they have made a grave mistake in not wedding their music to indecency."

America was not alone in mistrusting the popular satire in Offenbach's music. In England, George Bernard Shaw recognized its infectious nature, if only with tongue-in-cheek: "I warn . . . solemnly, that Offenbach's music is wicked. It is abandoned stuff; every accent is a snap of the fingers in the face of moral responsibility." But in Paris, his works were being superseded by newer operettas by Lecocq and by Offenbach's own protégé Johann Strauss, Jr.

Offenbach was by now nearing sixty. He had only a few years to live, and was physically little more than a walking skeleton. But he still found means to recover his old knack of popular success: in 1878 and 1879, he presented seasons in Paris with several new works, among them *Madame Favart* and *La Fille du tambour-major*; briefly, his popular renown returned. He knew, however, that he was dying, and in his last year he spent every possible moment working at the fulfillment of his own great unachieved ambition—to write a musical drama that would put his name among the major composers of opera. *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* was unfinished when gout finally gripped his heart, killing him on October 5, 1880. Some two months

earlier, his doctor had remarked: "It's shocking—there's nothing left of his body; it's destroyed and exhausted." In the same week, Offenbach had written to Ludovic Halévy "I have just a month to write the third act of *Belle Lurette*, orchestrate the three acts, and compose the finale and the whole fifth act of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (I'm not even talking of the orchestration, which will come later), and I have to write a one-acter for the Variétés. Will I make it? Let's hope so." He was overheard telling his beloved dog, "I would give everything I have to be at the premiere." His wit did not desert him, though: handing a friend a notebook of melodic ideas he had jotted down over the years, he instructed him to give it to Saint-Saëns when he died—Saint-Saëns who, for all the technical skill that Offenbach recognized and loved, had a limited melodic capacity. And he wrote a note to his hairdresser, who had visited him in Paris every day for so many years:

"Coquillard, my good fellow, everyone in Paris thinks my hair curls and waves naturally. I am in your debt for this false reputation. Today I shall prove that I am not ungrateful. So here are my last wishes—God knows I have a horror of broaching the subject: on the day of my funeral you will lead the procession immediately behind the hearse, carrying a velvet cushion on which you will have laid out a comb, a hairbrush, my badger, razor and curling tongs, in short, the insignia of your noble and useful profession. You must swear to do this, or never touch a hair of my head again. You have until tomorrow to decide."

Offenbach was a small man, little over five feet, and never weighing more than 90 lbs. His beaky nose, flowing hair, pince-nez, and his liking for extravagant dress made him a gift to caricaturists. In his early years the Goncourt brothers described him in their *Journal* as "a skeleton with pince-nez who looks as if he's raping a cello," and Offenbach himself joked about his diminutive size with the same sort of wit that characterizes his best operettas: in summoning an Annual General Meeting of the Society Against Boredom, of which he was founder-shareholder, he reminded guests of his home address at 11 Rue Lafitte with a note at the bottom of the printed announcement: "Shareholders whose memories are treacherous have only to think of their host's legs to recall the number." He enjoyed the busiest possible social life: indeed he had "a terrible fear of solitude and quiet." Halévy recalled how Offenbach would write amid domestic chaos and social din: (Continued on page 76)

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La Schneider

by Hervé Le Mansec

IT WAS 1855, and Jacques Offenbach was the 36 year-old principal conductor of the Comédie Française. Tired of playing other people's music, he was impatient to give the French the brilliant, witty melodies he had been writing for several years, and had just rented a modest theater which he renamed Les Bouffes Parisiens. It was during this time of preparations for his premiere season that Offenbach received a routine visit in his apartment on the Rue Saulnier by Berthelier, one of the foremost French actors of the time. Accompanying Berthelier was his *maîtresse du jour*, a young fresh-faced girl, newly arrived from the provinces. She was just 22, the daughter of an unpretentious Bordeaux tailor. Extremely pretty, she had large mocking eyes, hair of a flamboyant blond that "put the sun to shame" (according to her mother), a dazzling complexion, and a plump figure in the style of the time. She was a singer, and she was ambitious. She maneuvered Offenbach into requesting a song from her. He chose the famous bolero from *Le Domino Noir* by Auber. She began to sing, but after three bars Offenbach interrupted to ask if she would be taking any more vocal lessons. Hoping to please, she answered in the affirmative. Jacques exploded, "Miserable child, if you dare start lessons again, I'll kick you in the ... and tear up your contract, because you're hired! you understand? I am hiring you at 200 francs a month." The young singer's name was Hortense Schneider and this meeting was a turning point for both of them.

From then on, Hortense Schneider was to be the *inspiratrice*, a muse for Jacques Offenbach. She would become what Colbran and Malibran had been for Rossini and Bellini. Was it love at first sight? Was it one of those *coups de foudre* that would change the course of music? Perhaps. But if so, the "love affair" was short-lived.

Hervé Le Mansec is a professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, a music critic for the French weekly *France-Amérique*, and West Coast correspondent for the Paris monthly *Opéra International*.



However, it rapidly grew into a solid and respectful friendship that was to last until Offenbach's death in 1880. Hortense was never romantically in love with Jacques. She admired and respected him greatly and he was the only person she ever permitted to call her "Cath," after her middle name.

A few days after this first encouraging meeting, on August 31, 1855, Hortense started at the Bouffes in two short operettas, *Une Pleine Eau* by Jules Costé and *Le Violoneux*, a Breton legend set to music by Offenbach himself. In the role of Reinette, a brazen down-to-earth peasant girl, Hortense instantly conquered her public and the press: "As for Mlle. Schneider, sent to us by the provinces and adopted right away by us Parisians, no one could have more charm, grace, finesse and *esprit*" wrote E. Jouvin, one of the most influential critics in Paris. And for the first time since he had seen her, Offenbach himself seemed to notice that she had a truly beautiful voice: light, enhanced by a soft, girlish

Hortense Schneider's dressing room at Théâtre des Variétés, during intermission of La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein. Watercolor by d'Edmond Morin.

quality, and a slightly metallic yet very provocative tone. Hortense had one of those special voices that impresses the listener as much by its unique qualities as by its limpid timbre. She also possessed other talents that would soon propel her into the limelight. Very quickly, the Paris *monde* and *demi-monde* adopted La Schneider. She became an instant celebrity. From the Duc de Morny, half-brother of the Emperor, to Dumas, Queen Amélie, Louis-Philippe's widow; from Thackeray to Meyerbeer to Tolstoy, everybody who was anybody would now hurry to the Bouffes to applaud Hortense. The theater soon proved too small to accommodate the crowds and Offenbach moved his company to a bigger, more imposing theater, Place Choiseul, near the newly-built Opéra. There, on April 3, 1856, Hortense created the role of Gigolette in Offenbach's *Tromb-al-ca-zar* or *Les Criminels Dramatiques*. On June 12 of the

(Continued on page 64)

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Artist Profiles



Régine Crespin

In her eighth season with San Francisco Opera, renowned French singer **RÉGINE CRESPIN** performs the title role of *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*, having appeared in this production in Toulouse and Paris and recorded the role for CBS. Her most recent appearance at San Francisco Opera was last fall as Mme. de Croissy in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. Born in Marseilles, she studied at the Paris Conservatoire and made her professional debut in Mulhouse as Elsa in *Lohengrin*, the vehicle of her 1951 Paris Opera debut. During the next few years she appeared with numerous French opera companies as Leonora in *Il Trovatore* and *Fidelio*, Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello*, Sieg-

linde in *Die Walküre*, Salomé in *Hérodiade*, and her first Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*. She sang the role of Mme. Lidoine in the 1957 world premiere of the French version of *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and made her Bayreuth debut in 1958 as Kundry in *Parsifal*. By the next year she was singing at virtually all of the major European houses. In 1959 she made her triumphant Italian debut at La Scala in Pizzetti's *Fedra* and bowed at the Vienna Staatsoper as Sieglinde. The next few years saw her as the Marschallin at Glyndebourne, the Berlin State Opera and Covent Garden. By 1961 she was widely regarded as the foremost French opera singer of her generation, and her embodiment of authentic French singing style has set the standard for our time. In 1962 she made her American opera debut as Tosca at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and bowed at the Metropolitan Opera as the Marschallin. Other Met assignments that year included Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer* and Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. She made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1966 as Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, and San Francisco audiences have since been privileged to hear her in four of her most famous roles: the Marschallin (1967); Didon and Cassandre in *Les Troyens* (1966 and '68) and Sieglinde (1968 and in Los Angeles in '69). She has also appeared here as Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Her discography includes complete recordings of Offenbach's *La Périchole* and *La Vie Parisienne*, as well as a critically acclaimed *Rosenkavalier* with Sir Georg Solti, with whom she has also



Kaaren Erickson

recorded Sieglinde; Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* under Karajan, with whom she performed the role at Salzburg; *Dialogues of the Carmelites*; *Carmen*; Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été* and Ravel's *Sheherazade*, as well as *Thirty Years on the Stage*, a compilation of arias delineating her illustrious career. In June of 1982 she was given the highest award conferred upon an artist by the French government, the Legion of Honor Medal, second grade "Officier."

Soprano **KAAREN ERICKSON** returns to San Francisco Opera as Wanda in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*. She made her Company debut during the 1982 Fall Season as Noémie in Massenet's *Cendrillon*.

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Cheryl Parrish



Ruth Ann Swenson

lon. A protégée of internationally renowned baritone Martial Singher, Miss Erickson scored a major triumph when she won first place in the prestigious Munich International Competition in September 1982. Previously a finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions and San Francisco Opera Auditions, the Seattle native made her debut with Seattle Opera in January 1982 as Gilda in *Rigoletto* and Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes*. Her success was such that she was immediately engaged to return for the 1983-84 season as Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*. She reaped further acclaim early last year as soloist in the Oakland Symphony performances of Britten's *Les Illuminations* and in the title role of Verdi's *Luisa Miller* with Pocket Opera, the company with which she recently participated in the first American performance of Donizetti's *Maria Padilla*. Earlier this summer she was a soloist in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* conducted by Robert Shaw for the Festival of Masses. She was featured in two productions of the 1982 San Francisco Opera Showcase, portraying Doralice in Scarlatti's *The Triumph of Honor* and Virginia Woolf in Vivian Fine's *The Women in the Garden*. Recent concert appearances include performances with the Fresno Philharmonic and Sacramento Symphony. Among her future engagements are Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Hamburg, a concert with the Victoria Symphony in San Francisco, and the role of Aennchen in *Der Freischütz* in Nantes, France, and a series of recitals next March in Pasadena, Palm

Springs and Fresno. She makes her debut with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in February, and next spring makes two important Vienna debuts: at the Musikvereinsaal, performing in Mahler's Eighth Symphony; and in her Vienna recital debut.

Texas native **CHERYL PARRISH** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Naiade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and sings Iza in *La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein*. As a participant in San Francisco Opera Center's Merola Opera Program, the young soprano has been featured in numerous roles, including Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*, Sally in *Die Fledermaus*, Alice Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and, most recently, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, a role she performed on Western Opera Theater's 1982 national tour. A former artist-in-residence with St. Louis Opera, Miss Parrish was a winner of the 1982 Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions and was named grand finalist in the 1981 San Francisco Opera Auditions, as well as first-place winner of the San Francisco Opera Regional Auditions in 1981 and 1982. She was recently named a national finalist in the WGN Auditions of the Air and has been the recipient of a Merola Study Grant. Her concert performances include Handel's *Messiah*, Brahms's *Requiem*, Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate* and Haydn's *The Seasons*.

Soprano **RUTH ANN SWENSON** appears as Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Olga in *La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein* and as Xenia



Donna Bruno

in *Boris Godunov*. The young New Yorker made her debut with the Company during the 1983 Summer Festival as Despina in *Così fan tutte*. A participant in the San Francisco Opera Center's Merola Opera Program for two years, Miss Swenson appeared in productions of *Die Fledermaus*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Magic Flute* and *Rigoletto*. She was a winner of the San Francisco Opera Auditions in 1981 and 1982, and during the Center's first Showcase series in 1982 sang the role of the First Attendant in the production of Harbison's *Full Moon in March* presented under the auspices of the American Opera Project. She continued to advance within the Center's training programs and toured with Western Opera Theater's production of *Rigoletto* last fall, singing the role of Gilda. During the 1983 Showcase Series she appeared as Erisbe in *L'Ormindo* and Lucia in *The Rape of Lucretia*. She is currently an Adler Fellow, the highest level of the San Francisco Opera Center, and in March sang in a special program of music at a banquet given by President Reagan for Queen Elizabeth II of England during the royal visit to California. Competitions she has won include the Philadelphia Orchestra Young Artists Competition in 1981, the same year she was a national finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions. Most recently she won the Loren L. Zachary Competition in Los Angeles, and last fall she made her East Coast concert debut with the Buffalo Philharmonic under the baton of Julius Rudel.



Carla Cook

Mezzo-soprano **DONNA BRUNO** sings four roles during the 1983 Fall Season: Feklusha in *Katya Kabanova*; Annina in *La Traviata*; Amélie in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*; and a Musician in *Manon Lescaut*. She made her San Francisco Opera debut during the 1983 Summer Festival as Siegrune in *Die Walküre*. A participant in the 1982 and 1983 Merola Opera Programs, she appeared in Merola productions of *The Magic Flute*, *Rigoletto* and *The Tales of Hoffmann*. The Chicago native has sung several seasons with the Lake George Opera Festival and the DuPage Opera Repertory Theater, where she portrayed Meg Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. She has been a winner in the 1982 and 1983 San Francisco Opera Audition Grand Finals, the 1979 National Association of Teachers Singing Competition and the 1982 American Opera Auditions in New York.

CARLA COOK makes her first appearances with San Francisco Opera singing the role of Glasha in *Katya Kabanova*, as Flora in the Family matinee performances of *La Traviata* and as Charlotte in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*. The young mezzo-soprano recently appeared in the 1983 San Francisco Opera Center Showcase productions of Cavalli's *L'Ormindo* and Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*. Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, Miss Cook was invited to join the 1982 Merola Opera Program, during which she appeared in *The Magic Flute* and *Rigoletto*. She received the

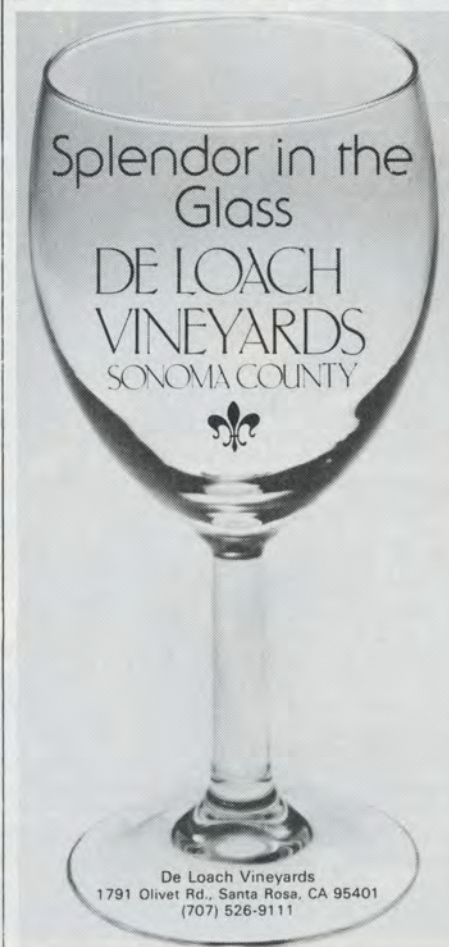
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Tibère Raffalli



Jean Donnell Memorial Award in the 1982 San Francisco Opera Auditions and, last fall, won third prize in the prestigious Munich International Competition. Also a winner of the 1982 Metropolitan Opera Auditions, Miss Cook has completed her Master of Music Degree at Boston University and is currently in the post-graduate program at the Manhattan School of Music. Her repertoire includes the following roles: Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*; Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*; the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Charlotte in *Werther*; Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Siebel in *Faust*; and Dame Quickly in *Falstaff*. She has performed with the Mississippi Opera Company, the Washington Civic Opera, the Utah Opera Company, the Lake George Opera and the Des Moines Metro Opera. She will make her Seattle Opera debut as Waltraute in the 1984 Pacific Northwest Festival production of Wagner's *Die Walküre*, and will return as Venus in Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. Among her future engagements is her Metropolitan Opera debut this January in *Mahagonny*.

Making his American opera debut with the San Francisco Opera, tenor **TIBÈRE RAFFALLI** appears as Fritz in *La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein*. Born in Corsica, he began his studies at the Conservatoire in Marseilles, going on to study at the Paris Conservatory. In 1977 he won the Conservatory's singing competition and obtained a scholarship, which he used to study at the Juilliard School of Music and the American Opera Center in New York. Upon his return to France in 1979, Raffalli was immediately engaged for performances at the Paris Opera, the Strasbourg Opera and at the opera houses of Lisbon,

Michel Trepont



Siena, Liège and Nancy. In August of last year, he sang the title role of Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires and, in September of that same year, repeated the role with great success at the Berlioz Festival in Lyons. Raffalli recently made his debut at La Scala as Prince Ali in Gluck's comic opera *La Rencontre imprévue*. Engagements for 1983 have included the role of Damon in Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes* at the Théâtre Musical de Paris-Châtelet, a role he repeated at the Teatro Fenice in Venice. Next April he will be soloist in the Verdi Requiem in Marseilles, and the following June will appear as Ismaele in *Nabucco* in Lyons. He will open the 1984-85 season at the Opera du Rhin in Strasbourg as Des Grieux in Massenet's *Manon*.

MICHEL TREMPONT makes his American opera debut with San Francisco Opera as General Boum in Offenbach's *La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein*. The Belgian lyric baritone and baritono-buffo began his musical studies in his native country and made his operatic debut in 1952 as Valentin in *Faust* at the Liège Opera. Since then, he has appeared at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels and at the principal French opera houses in Marseilles, Strasbourg, Lyons and Bordeaux. In Paris he has sung the Figaros of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Germont in *La Traviata* and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*. He has also appeared at the Teatro São Carlos in Lisbon, La Fenice in Venice, in Montreal and Mexico, at Covent Garden and at La Scala, where he was heard in *Benvenuto Cellini*. Recent engagements have included Massenet's *Don Quichotte* in Venice, Avignon and Basel, and *The Love for*

Rémy Corazza



Three Oranges at the Paris Opera. During the 1983-84 Paris Opera season, Trempont appears in *Vive Offenbach*, a triple-bill comprising Offenbach's *Pomme d'Api*, *Monsieur Choufleuri* and *Mesdames de la Halle*. He has sung frequently at the festival of Aix-en-Provence, where he was seen in *L'Italiana in Algeri* and *Così fan tutte*, among others. In 1984 he will perform at the Paris Opera in Cimarosa's *Matrimonio Segreto* and Massenet's *Don Quichotte*. His many recordings include *Manon* with Beverly Sills; *Carmen* with Grace Bumbry; *La Vie Parisienne* with Régine Crespin; *La Périochole* with Teresa Berganza; and *Orphée aux Enfers* with Mady Mesplé. For future release is Auber's *Fra Diavolo* under the baton of Marc Soustrot.

French tenor **RÉMY CORAZZA** returns to San Francisco Opera as Prince Paul in Offenbach's *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*. Born in the Ardennes, in the north of France, Corazza began his studies in Toulouse. After winning the Toulouse Conservatory First Prize of Honor for his excellence in various areas of music, he went on to study at the National Conservatory in Paris, where he began to move into the realm of vocal arts. He was awarded further prizes from the Opéra-Comique and the Paris Opera and won an additional first prize in the International Singing Competition in Toulouse. He began his career as first tenor with the Théâtre de l'Opéra de Paris and is presently a member of the Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg. Corazza has a repertoire of over 30 French, Italian and German roles. He has appeared with most major opera companies, including the houses of Brussels, Liège, Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles, Nancy, Nice,

(Continued on page 59)

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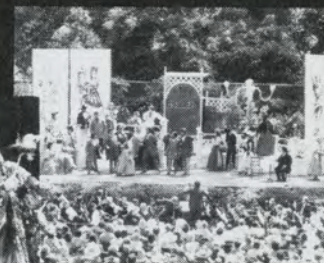
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La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein

At left: Régine Crespin

*Below, left-to-right: Ruth Ann Swenson,
Cheryl Parrish, Donna Bruno,
Carla Cook*



PHOTOS TAKEN IN REHEARSAL BY MARTY SOHL



*Above, left-to-right: Michel Trempont,
John Matthews, Rémy Corazza*

Opposite page: Tibère Raffalli

Bottom, left-to-right: Régine Crespin

*Far right: Régine Crespin,
Tibère Raffalli*







Above: Michel Trempont,
Top: Régine Crespin, Emile Belcourt
At right: Kaaren Erickson,
Tibère Raffalli



La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein

(In French)

The generosity of the Columbia Foundation has helped to make possible this production, originally created for Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse.

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Marika Sakellariou

Musical Preparation

James Johnson

Mark Haffner

Svetlana Gorzhyevskaya

Philip Eisenberg

Prompter

Philip Eisenberg

Assistant Stage Director

Francesca Zambello

Stage Manager

Jerry Sherk

First performance:

Paris, April 12, 1867

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6 AT 2:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8 AT 8:00

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25 AT 2:00

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6 AT 8:00

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 forty minutes.

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Fritz Tibère Raffalli**

Standard-bearer Michael O'Rourke

Wanda Kaaren Erickson

Général Boum Michel Trempont**

Baron Puck John Matthews

Nepomuc Robert Tate

Ladies-in-waiting:

Iza Cheryl Parrish

Olga Ruth Ann Swenson

Amélie Donna Bruno

Charlotte Carla Cook

La Grande Duchesse Régine Crespin

Prince Paul Rémy Corazza

Baron Grog Emile Belcourt
(special guest appearance)

Soldiers and attendants

Corps de ballet

**American opera debut

TIME AND PLACE:

19th century; the fictitious duchy of Gérolstein

ACT I A military encampment on the border of Gérolstein

INTERMISSION

ACT II The palace

INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1: The Bedchamber
Scene 2: The Wine Cellar

La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein

Synopsis

Gérolstein is ruled by the Grand Duchess, who inherited her position at an early age. She was raised by Baron Puck, a diplomat, and General Boum, the commander-in-chief of her army. Puck and Boum have arranged for a war to divert the Duchess from her frivolous romantic ventures. They are also trying to convince her to marry the weak and ineffectual Prince Paul, so that they may, in fact, rule Gérolstein.

ACT I—A military encampment on the border of Gérolstein

A grand review of the army is about to be held. In the ranks is the young recruit Fritz. He has already made General Boum jealous by winning the affection of the peasant girl Wanda. The Grand Duchess arrives to review her troops, for romantic as well as battle potential, and Fritz catches her eye. She calls him out of the ranks and, in a matter of moments, Fritz is promoted to corporal, then sergeant, lieutenant and finally captain, much to the chagrin of General Boum. The Grand Duchess withdraws to her headquarters to study the battle plans. She receives Prince Paul, heir to a neighboring duchy, who has been waiting six months to propose to her. The Grand Duchess has no interest in marrying Paul but allows him to sit in on the war council. General Boum submits the plans. Captain Fritz denounces them as nonsense. Boum and Puck counter by claiming that Fritz cannot speak since he is neither a commanding officer nor a noble. The Grand Duchess settles the issue by promoting Fritz to the rank of general. Fritz proposes a plan, and the Grand Duchess finds him so charming that she makes him supreme commander-in-chief. She presents him with her late father's saber, a potent symbol. This sends Boum, Puck and Prince Paul into a fury. They join together to plot Fritz's demise as the troops march off to war.

ACT II—The Palace

The war is over and the ladies-in-waiting eagerly anticipate the return of the soldiers and their interrupted love-life. General Fritz returns in triumph to the court with a tale of victory. The Grand Duchess dismisses the court in order to

welcome Fritz privately. Claiming to speak for one of her ladies, the Duchess confesses her passion for him. His thoughts are with Wanda and he is unable to think romantically of any other woman. Fritz misses the point and the Duchess, unaccustomed to being rejected, immediately desires revenge. She overhears Boum, Paul and Puck conspiring against Fritz and surprises them by joining their plot. She allows Fritz and Wanda to be married and she arranges for them to spend their wedding night in the Bedchamber of the Right Wing of the palace. Two centuries previously, Max, the Count Sedlitz of Calembourg, was murdered in that same bedchamber. The conspirators decide to recreate the deed.

ACT III, scene 1—The Bedchamber

As General Boum and the Duchess await the arrival of the married couple, they are joined by the conspirators and Baron Grog, an envoy of Prince Paul's. The Duchess is rather taken with Grog, whom she had previously denied an audience. Grog convinces her to marry Paul and, in order to avoid bloodshed on her wedding day, she countermands the assassination of Fritz. However, she does permit the conspirators to vent their frustrations by playing some practical jokes on the young couple, including a mock summons to battle for Fritz.

ACT III, scene 2—The Wine Cellar

Celebrations of the marriage between the Grand Duchess and Prince Paul are at their height when Fritz arrives in a state of disarray. Not only was he torn from his marital bed in a state of frustration, but he was also waylaid enroute by a jealous husband Boum had misinformed. The Grand Duchess demotes Fritz for permitting the emblems of the supreme commander—the saber and the panache—to be so dishonored. She orders Boum to be reinstated as general by giving him back the panache, and Puck is awarded the saber. The Duchess resigns herself to life with Prince Paul—until another soldier catches her eye . . . □

John Matthews



Paris, Rouen, Strasbourg, Toulouse, Lisbon and Geneva, as well as the Salzburg Festival. He made his first American appearance with San Francisco Opera in 1977 as Pang in Puccini's *Turandot*. Earlier this year, he took part in a concert performance of Wagner's *Das Rheingold* at the Paris Opera. Other recent engagements include *Falstaff* and *The Love for Three Oranges* at the Paris Opera, *Don Quichotte* in Avignon and *The Queen of Spades* in Geneva.

Baritone **JOHN MATTHEWS** essays five roles during his debut season with San Francisco Opera: the Wigmaker in *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Kuligin in *Katya Kabanova*; Baron Douphol in the international cast of *La Traviata*; Baron Puck in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*; and a Boyar in *Boris Godunov*. Earlier this year, the Los Angeles native appeared in the 1983 San Francisco Opera Center Showcase series as Osmano in *L'Ormindo* and Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia*. During the fall of 1982, Matthews took his portayal of Rigoletto on a nationwide tour with Western Opera Theater. On Western Opera's 1981 tour, he sang the roles of Marcello in *La Bohème*, Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Figaro in the English language production of *The Barber of Seville*. Matthews was the recipient of the Classical Vocalist of the Year Award from the United States Air Force while on tour of duty in the Orient, and has been a finalist in the Metropolitan Opera and San Francisco Opera auditions.

Tenor **ROBERT TATE** sings five roles during the 1983 Fall Season: Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Gastone in *La Traviata*, the Messenger of the Philistines in *Samson*

Robert Tate



et *Dalila*, Nepomuc in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* and Missail in *Boris Godunov*. He sang the role of Parpignol earlier this year in the 1983 Summer Festival production of *La Bohème*. The young tenor made his Spring Opera debut in 1979 in the ensemble of Britten's *Death in Venice* and subsequently portrayed Antigonus in the 1979 world premiere of Harbison's *Winter's Tale* that inaugurated the American Opera Project. The following year he appeared in the world premiere of Mechem's *Tartuffe*, again under the auspices of the AOP. Tate made his San Francisco Opera debut in 1980, when he was heard in *Samson et Dalila*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *La Traviata* and *I Pagliacci*. Last fall he appeared in five operas during the course of the season: *Salome*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Cendrillon*, *Lohengrin* and both the English-language and Italian performances of *The Marriage of Figaro*. During the 1982 San Francisco Opera Center Showcase series, Tate won plaudits in the travesty role of Cornelia in Scarlatti's *The Triumph of Honor*. He was recently heard as Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* and as Lindoro in *The Italian Girl in Algiers* with Pocket Opera. Last summer he sang Stravinsky's *Les Noces* with the Oakland Ballet and made his Wolf Trap debut as Ferrando.

Tenor **EMILE BELCOURT** returns to San Francisco Opera as Tikhon in *Katya Kabanova* and Prince Shuisky in *Boris Godunov*, and makes a special guest appearance as Baron Grog in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1982 Fall Season as Herod in the much-discussed production of Strauss' *Salome*. Born in Lafèche, Saskatchewan, Belcourt originally studied to

Emile Belcourt



be a pharmacist. He sang in the Glyndebourne Chorus and subsequently went to Vienna, where he studied at the Academy as a baritone. Between 1956 and 1959 he was a member of the opera companies of Ulm and Bonn, where his roles included Guglielmo, Sharpless, Falke, Escamillo, Don Giovanni and Julius Caesar. In 1959 he changed to the tenor repertoire and went to study in Paris. Following a broadcast performance of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, he was engaged by Scottish Opera to repeat the role. While in England, he auditioned for Sir Georg Solti and was invited to sing Gonzalve in *L'Heure Espagnole* at Covent Garden. Belcourt began his long association with the English National Opera in 1962. He is best known for his performances as Loge in *Das Rheingold* (which he recently presented at Seattle's Pacific Northwest Wagner Festival), Herod in *Salome* and many operetta parts, notably Danilo in *The Merry Widow* and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, which he recently sang at Covent Garden. Other companies with which he has performed are the Welsh National Opera and the Canadian Opera Company. Recent engagements include *Lulu* at Covent Garden, *The Merry Widow*

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Marc Soustrot



with the Théâtre Châtelet in Paris and, earlier this year, *Boris Godunov* with the English National Opera.

French conductor **MARC SOUSTROT** makes his American opera debut with San Francisco Opera, leading Offenbach's *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*. Born in Lyons, Soustrot began studying piano at the age of four, eventually going on to study in Lyons and later at the Paris Conservatory. In 1974 he won first prize in the International Competition of Young Conductors in London and became assistant conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. The following year he won first prize in the Besançon International Competition, and during this period worked with such noted conductors as Karl Böhm, Claudio Abbado, Herbert von Karajan and Leonard Bernstein, among others, while making guest appearances with L'Orchestre de Lyon, L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, L'Orchestre National de France, the Padeloup Orchestra, the Cape-town Symphony Orchestra, R.A.I. Milan, and the Houston Symphony. In 1976 Soustrot was named joint conductor with Pierre Dervaux of L'Orchestre Philharmonique des Pays Loire, becoming musical director in 1978. He has since conducted that ensemble at numerous music festivals—including the Festival of Athens—and in a 1982 tour of the United States, while serving as its director, administrator and conductor. In 1980 he received the Grand Prix du Disque for his recording of *Le Chant du dépossédé* by Serge Nigg, with L'Orchestre National de France. In addition to leading annual concerts with the Manchester Orchestra, he is very active in the field of opera. He recently conducted

Maurice Ducasse



29 performances of *Carmen* at the Palais des Sports with the Paris Opera and additional performances of the same work (with Régine Crespin) in Nîmes. Additional operatic credits include Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* at the Paris Opera, Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* and Philidor's *Le Sorcier* at the Maison de la Culture in Rennes, and Berg's *Wozzeck* in Nantes. Future engagements include Bartók's *Bluebeard* in Geneva and Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict* in Lyons in 1984, as well as a major tour of Germany, Austria and Switzerland with L'Orchestre Philharmonique des Pays Loire.

MAURICE DUCASSE makes his American directorial debut with *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*, a production on which he collaborated when it was mounted in Toulouse with Régine Crespin and subsequently revived in over a dozen French cities, including Paris at Le Châtelet. Born in Hendaye, France, Ducasse began his career as a director of classic and modern comedies by such playwrights as Molière, Calderón and Goldoni. He was an assistant director to Pierre Mondy and Luchino Visconti, as well as Jacques Charon of the Comédie Française, where he worked for several years. During that time, he became the assistant and then associate of Robert Dhéry and his company of "Branquignols." With Dhéry, Ducasse staged numerous operatic productions, including Rossini's *Le Comte Ory* at the Paris Opéra-Comique, and *Vive Offenbach*, which was mounted at the Opéra-Comique, is to be repeated in Toulouse and Nancy, and is being revived for the opening of the Opéra-Comique season this year. Other recent projects include *En Sourdisine les Sardines*, one of the



highlights of the 1982-83 season at the Théâtre des Bouffes Parisiens. Future engagements include a staging of Hervé's *Mlle. Nitouche* in Tours next year.

HUBERT MONLOUP makes his American opera debut with the designs for Offenbach's *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*. Born in Lyons, this versatile French designer began his studies in his native city, going on to study art in Paris. His work has been shown in several exhibits in Paris, Lyons, and Brussels, among other cities. He has worked extensively in legitimate theater and from 1959 to 1961 held the post of scenic and costume designer at the Théâtre des Célestins in Lyons. Holder of the prestigious title "Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres," Monloup has created sets for most of the principal dramatic theaters in France, including the Comédie Française, the Odéon in Paris and the Théâtre National Populaire. His operatic projects include Monteverdi's *Orfeo* in Munich, *La Forza del Destino* and *La Gioconda* in Geneva, *La Bohème* at the English National Opera and a highly acclaimed *Rigoletto* in Basel. His most recent creations include set designs for *Falstaff* at the Paris Opera, Puccini's *Il Trittico* in Basel, *La Bohème* in Nancy and *Rigoletto* for the Théâtre des Champs Elysées in Paris. Future engagements include *Carmen* in Munich, *Così fan tutte* in Bonn, *Salome* in Bremen and *Manon* in Basel.

MARIKA SAKELLARIOU returns to San Francisco Opera to create the dances for *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*, a work she choreographed for Spring Opera Theater in 1981. During the same season she also choreographed *The Marriage of Figaro* and

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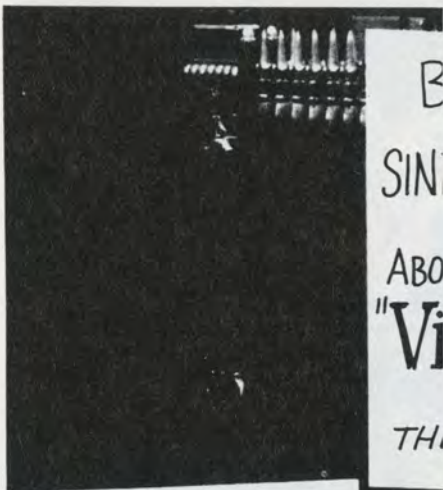
Thomas J. Munn



Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, and danced in the SPOT production of *Il Ballo delle Ingrate*. Later that year, she made her San Francisco Opera debut with her choreography for *Don Giovanni*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *Rigoletto* during the 1981 Summer Festival. For the 1982 San Francisco Opera Center Showcase, she was responsible for the dances in *The Triumph of Honor*, *The Women in the Garden* and *Full Moon in March*. That fall she scored a major success with her choreography for the Lehnhoff production of *Salome*. She last appeared on the War Memorial stage as a solo dancer in the 1982 Fall Season production of *The Queen of Spades*, and for the 1983 Summer Festival choreographed the Rhinemaidens in *Das Rheingold*. Miss Sakellariou studied at Connecticut College and the Juilliard School of Music and continued her training with Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham, among others. She has also performed with the José Limon Dance Company of New York, the Xoregos Performing Company of San Francisco and the San Francisco Opera Ballet. The 1983 Fol-de-Rol will mark the third time she has choreographed the popular San Francisco Opera Guild event. Miss Sakellariou has been San Francisco Opera's ballet mistress since the 1981 Fall Season.

In his eighth year with the San Francisco Opera, **THOMAS J. MUNN** is responsible for the lighting designs of *Otello*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Katya Kabanova*, *La Traviata*, *The Midsummer Marriage*, *Samson et Dalila*, *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*, *La Gioconda* and *Boris Godunov* during the 1983 Fall Season. For the 1983 Summer Festival, Munn designed the lighting for *Das Rhein-*

gold, *Die Walküre*, *Carmen* and *Così fan tutte*. The 1982 Fall Season saw his designs for *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *The Queen of Spades* and *Lohengrin*; found him as the lighting supervisor of *Tosca*; and the scenic supervisor and lighting designer for *Salome*. During the 1982 Summer Festival his lighting was seen in productions of *Julius Caesar*, *Turandot* and *Nabucco*, for which he also designed the sets. For the first Summer Festival in 1981, he created the lighting for *Don Giovanni*, *Lear* and *Die Meistersinger*. In 1980 he originated the lighting designs for the productions of *Samson et Dalila* and *Don Pasquale*, and the previous year won an Emmy Award for the production of *La Gioconda* that was telecast internationally. That year he also designed the scenery for *Roberto Devereux* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*. In past seasons he has created special effects for the Company's productions and served as supervising set designer for *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Faust* and *Billy Budd*. Since 1976 he has designed the lighting for nearly all of the new productions of the San Francisco Opera, including the world premiere of Imbrie's *The Angle of Repose* in 1976. Munn has created the scenery and lighting projection for the Hartford Ballet's acclaimed multi-media productions of *The Nutcracker*; created the scenery and lighting designs for *Don Quichotte* with the Netherlands Opera; and, last year, designed the lighting for the Washington Opera Society's productions of *Tristan und Isolde* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Other recent design credits include *La Bohème* and *Rigoletto* with the Houston Grand Opera. Munn's recent television projects include Luciano Pavarotti's live concerts from Houston and San Francisco earlier this year. □



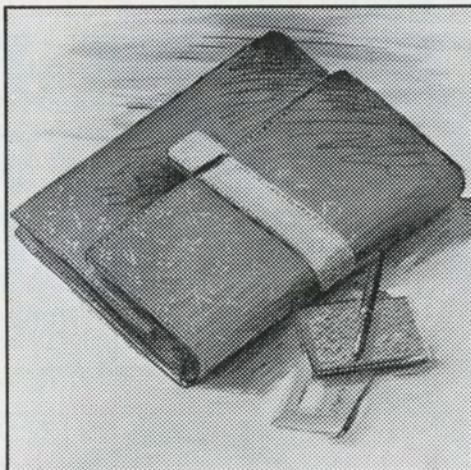
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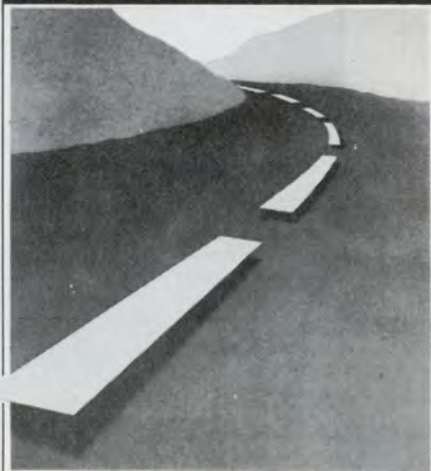
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SCHNEIDER (Continued from page 45)

same year, she portrayed, in the premiere of *La Rose de Saint-Flour*, a happy and pert peasant girl (yet another), torn between two royal pretenders. Offenbach was killing himself, with four new works within one year, and Hortense performed magnificently in all of them. Eager to live out her stage roles in private life, Hortense now could not decide between Comte Eugène de Talleyrand-Périgord and the young Duc de Grammont-Caderousse (Berthelier had already been gently set aside). The former helped her move out of her apartment, gave her her first *coupé* and her first diamonds. The latter would, a few years later, give her her first (and only) child.

Grammont was the unofficial leader of the *Cocodès*, wealthy young aristocrats who spent their days gambling, racing, dueling and fornicating. Their female counterparts, known as *Les Ogresses* or *Les Lionnes* (they would later be termed *Grandes Horizon-*

by Herminie and Jacques Offenbach, for years one of the most *recherché* salons in the capital. She was after all an actress, and suffered the prejudices of a society that still refused to members of her profession even religious burial.

Now celebrated and admired, and very nearly notorious, Hortense decided to stand on her own two feet and left Offenbach to accept a more lucrative contract with the Théâtre des Variétés where she bowed in September of 1856. She stayed at the Variétés for two years; two seasons which, in the end, brought her nothing in the way of artistic achievement. She performed an incredible amount of operettas and plays, all second- and third-rate, obtained an immense personal success, but did not create any significant role and never obtained any real satisfaction.

In January 1858, Hortense suddenly abandoned Paris and the theater to return



Hortense Schneider in two different costumes from *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*.

tales, a much more accurate term) were some 100 or so women of obscure origins who lived in dazzling states of luxury provided by the aforementioned *Cocodès*. *Les Lionnes* led the merriest lives in the most extravagant way and formed this *demi-monde* of which Hortense was now becoming a central figure. Among those courtesans, a select few held the limelight: Anna Deslions (an appropriate name for a *Lionne*), Giulia Barrucci, Marguerite Bellanger, who became Napoleon III's mistress in 1863, Juliette Beau, La Paiva and a certain Cora Pearl, née Emma Crouch or Emma Church, depending on the source (it really doesn't matter; neither Crouch nor Church being appropriate to her station in life). Though a reigning figure in social Paris, it should be noted that Hortense was never once invited to the highly regarded Tuesday Salons held

to her native Bordeaux. On April 10, she gave birth to Georges-André, a mentally retarded child who was to live until 1919. For more than sixty years, Hortense took care of him as if he were a small child. Early in August, Hortense was lured back to Paris by incredible sums of money. She signed a contract with Plunkett, Director of the Palais-Royal Theater. For six more years she continued to perform in any conceivable comedy, *opérette* and *opéra-comique*. One of the few Offenbach works she appeared in during this period, *Mimi Bamboche*, was the only one that was to give her some kind of artistic gratification.

Headstrong, acting on impulse as she often did, she decided to abandon her theatrical career. Her contract at the Palais-Royal had not brought her the artistic fulfillment she was still yearning for and she was beginning to get tired of the futile life of a *demi-mondaine*. Her father had just

Courtesy, Lum M. Lai

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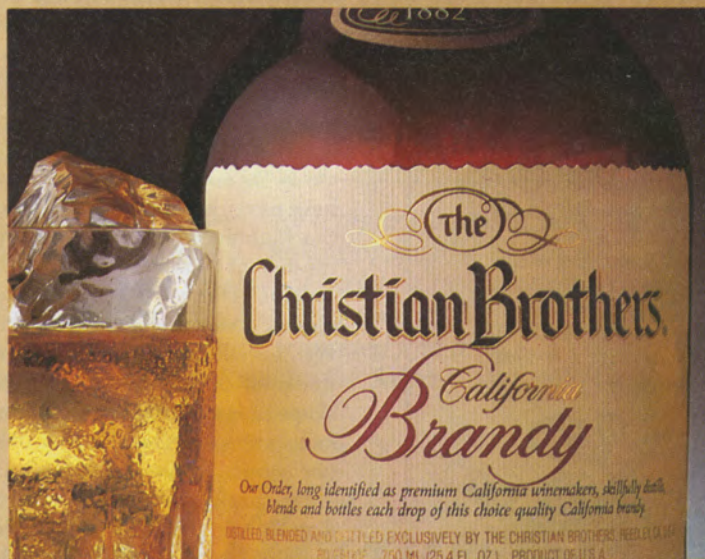
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the Variétés as if in pilgrimage to acclaim the *Duchesse* and pay their respects. Napoléon III was the first of a long line of crowned heads to attend. Not at all offended at the fun poked at royalty, he allowed himself to laugh and smile. Alexander II, Tsar of all Russias, arriving to the Exposition with his two sons, wired ahead to his Ambassador in Paris to reserve a box right away. He had heard that the Court of Gérolstein was a parody of the Court of Russia and wished to see it for himself. The day after he attended the performance, he disappeared and was found by his secretary at Hortense's residence on the Avenue de l'Impératrice (where else?), discussing Gérolstein and the duties of government. Otto von Bismarck attended *La Grande Duchesse* with the King of Prussia a few days after the Tsar. He found it hilarious and went to Hortense's loge afterwards to congratulate her for making such sublime fun of small European courts (the same courts he must already have been planning to gobble up). Thiers, Moltke, and the Kings of Bavaria, Portugal, Sweden, Belgium and Greece were all attracted to the Variétés by the political allusions and the witty music of Offenbach. And Hortense's dressing-room, later made immortal by Morin's watercolor, was packed every night by the great and near-great. It became one of the most sought-after gathering places of Paris. Hortense was soon named by a malicious rival *demi-mondaine* as the "Passage des Princes," an easy pun referring to the name of the street on to which her dressing-room opened. Among her most fervent admirers was the Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII of England, who devoted many of his leisure hours to Hortense during the course of several incognito visits to Paris.

Another admirer of this period was Ismail Pasha, Khedive of Egypt. Their relationship, too, lasted for a period of several years. One day in 1867, as he arrived in Vichy straight from Egypt, he ordered his secretary to arrange to have "Schneider" come down for a visit. The secretary misunderstood the Khedive's intentions and contacted Eugène Schneider, the armaments manufacturer who supplied weapons for the entire Egyptian army. Ismail Pasha's aide-de-camp met Schneider at the train station, escorted him to a private apartment at the Grand Hotel and led him to a luxurious bath to wait for the Khedive . . . Unfortunately, there is no record whatsoever of Ismail Pasha's expression upon entering the bath!

Hortense was the Queen of Paris. She

was so captivating on and off stage, so generous, so easy of access. Her intelligence was keen and her wit was sharp. Her quips and jokes were quoted in the papers, the cafés and the salons. But, spoiled by popular favor, she became haughty, obstinate, impatient. She would not, as befits a *Duchesse*, accept the slightest word of criticism. She constantly threatened to leave the theater. She totally identified herself with the role she was performing every night at the Variétés. Who could blame her? Many came to believe that she really was the *Duchesse* of that small principality lost somewhere in Mittel Europa. Thinking she was the *Grande Duchesse* of Gérolstein, a village priest asked her to inaugurate a church and become the godmother of its bell. She accepted and acquitted herself with great aplomb. Nobody in the village ever suspected Gérolstein only existed on stage. One afternoon in Paris, she was driven to the Exposition and was at first refused entrance to a particular gate reserved for royal visitors. When asked to identify herself, she replied, outraged: "La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein." The gates were immediately thrown wide open and Hortense swept royally into the Exposition. It is interesting to note, however, that all through her long career, in spite of the highest acclaim and success, and in spite of her strong, imperious personality, Hortense suffered the most debilitating stage-fright. Yet none of her audience ever perceived it.

After the immense success of *La Grande Duchesse*, Hortense was offered mountains of gold to leave the Variétés and perform in *Les Voyages de Gulliver*, a fifth-rate fairytale-cum-grand-spectacle. She accepted. It was a complete disaster. So, she returned to the Variétés for more triumphant performances of *Barbe-Bleue*, *La Belle Hélène* and *La Grande Duchesse*. On October 6, 1868, she created yet another great success in her wonderful collaboration with Offenbach, *La Périchole*, and in 1869 appeared in a new Offenbach *opéra-comique*, *La Diva*, in which she portrayed a character based on her own career, with some good-natured humor made of her own temperamental nature.

After going to London for a series of more performances, Hortense left in 1869 for Egypt to join Ismail Pasha. Obviously he did not deliver what she expected as she was back in Nice a few months later, and accepted a new contract at the Bouffes. But with the Franco-Prussian war and the Sedan disaster, all theaters were abruptly closed and she was unable to honor her

(Continued on page 78)

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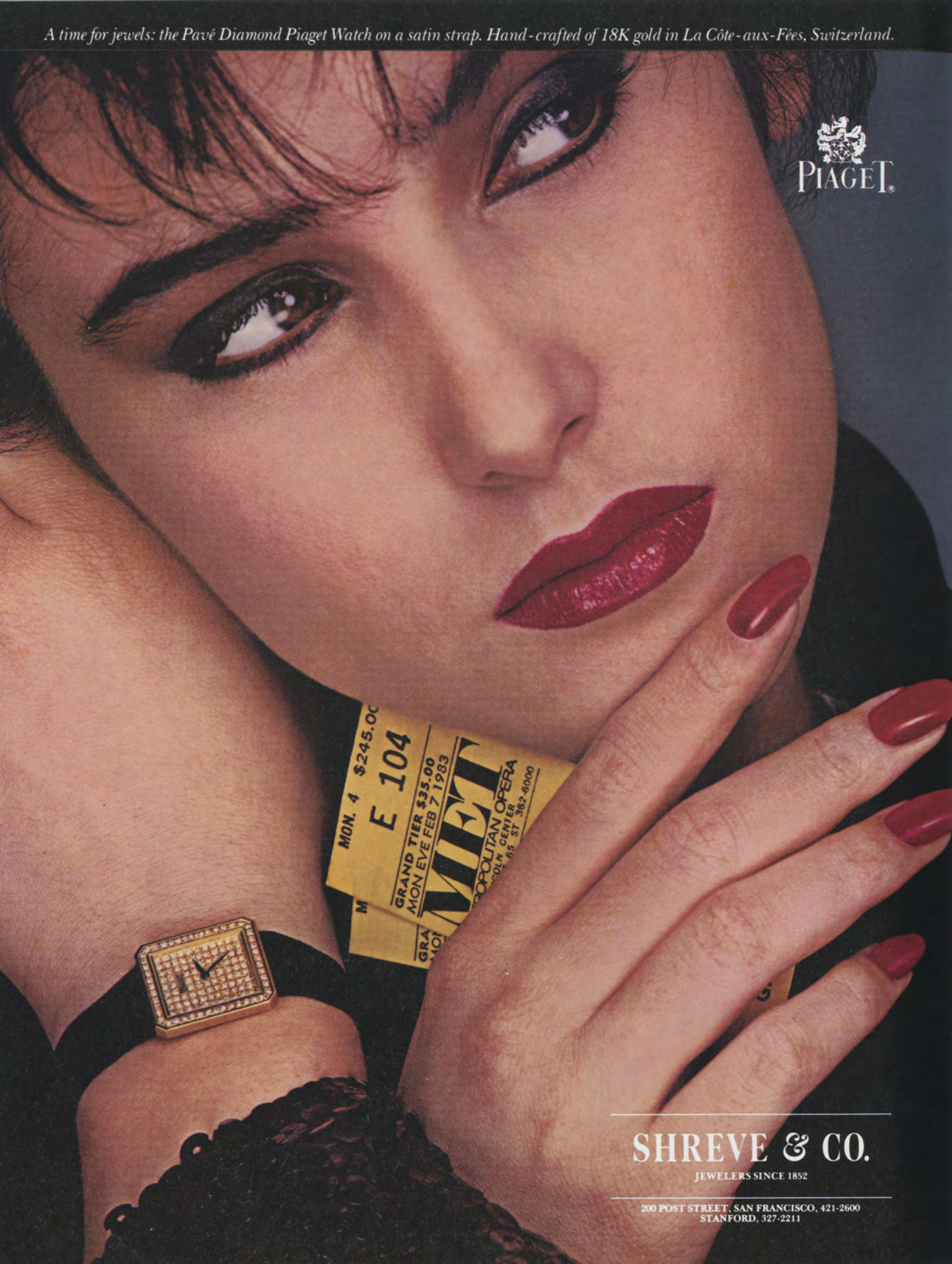
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died, and Grammont, who was himself dying of phthisia, had left for Egypt where he hoped the sun would cure him. Hortense was distraught. She could not cope. She sold her fabulous collection of pearls and her furniture and wired her mother that she was coming back to Bordeaux to take care of six-year old André. But destiny was ready to give her a second chance. As she was ready to leave, sitting on her trunks, waiting for a cab, Offenbach (who else?) and his librettist Halévy showed up at her apartment to offer her the role of Héléne in a new *opérette* that they had just completed. She refused. Offenbach sat at the piano and played for her the major arias of his new composition. Hortense was immediately seduced by the music but, stubborn, refused to accept and left for Bordeaux. Offenbach was panic-stricken. He sent her a telegram: "We need you for the role. We accept your terms." Hoping to discourage him, Hortense replied that she would not consider anything less than 2000 francs a month, a sum undreamed of at that time. In Paris, Offenbach immediately accepted her demand. Thus started a new chapter in her life, the one that was to bring her true artistic success and lasting fame.

A few days later Hortense was back in Paris and the rehearsals of *La Belle Héléne* started. The atmosphere soon turned stormy. Lea Silly, another one of those famous *Lionnes*, had been hired to sing the role of Orestes. She and Hortense simply did not get along. Mademoiselle Silly was known for her jokes (in Salt Lake City she had once sung the most eccentric Tyrolean refrain in front of Brigham Young, attributing it to Monsieur Mozart-de-Saint-Cloud). She began to mimic Hortense in the wings during rehearsals. Hortense did not appreciate Mlle. Silly's sense of humor, and a quarrel of the most polished feline sort ensued. It ended in a voluminous exchange of venomous letters in *Le Figaro*, and Silly was compelled to withdraw from the production. The premiere of *La Belle Héléne* took place on December 17, 1864, and was an instant success. Hortense was declared "the most complete, the most expressive, seductive and feminine incarnation" on stage. She had everything in her favor, "physical charms, voice, intonation, facial expressions such as no other actress possessed, and special gestures which were both elegant and incisive. She bewitched her audience by creating a certain atmosphere of well-bred sensuality and could use her beauty to the very best advantage both on and off stage." She was

crowned *Reine de l'Opérette*, and from then on, started to live like one: she owned carriages, jewels, furs, eight dogs, and led a sumptuous life. The cumbersome Grammont had the audacity to come back from Egypt at the time of this new triumph but was gallant enough to die a few days later. Hortense had finally obtained the recognition for which she had so eagerly yearned. Despite a seemingly frivolous life-style, she was a true professional who knew that only work and more work would sustain her reputation. Her success was no mere fluke. Immediately following the run of *La Belle Héléne*, she started to rehearse a new Offenbach production, *Barbe-Bleue*, and once again, in the now familiar role of a buxom and brash peasant girl, she received a triumphant welcome. As the toast of *Le Tout Paris*, she became such a permanent fixture of the city that when, in the summer of 1868, she disappeared for a few days for a vacation in the Bordeaux area,



Hortense Schneider in the title role of Offenbach's operetta *La Belle Héléne*.

the Parisian press, unaccustomed to this sudden silence, and unable to locate her, announced her death.

1867 was the year of the fabulous *Exposition Universelle*. It witnessed the *apogée* of the Second Empire and also the peak of Hortense Schneider's career, with the brilliant opening, on April 12, of the newest Offenbach operetta, *La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein*. The audience included the most prominent, the most elegant figures of the *Régime*: members of the Imperial family, the aristocracy, the diplomatic corps, literary figures, *mondaines* and *demi-mondaines*, celebrities of all kinds. Hortense's performance was acclaimed by all. Never had royalty been portrayed on stage with such stamina, affront, seduction, dynamism and comic verve. For the next few months, all the foreign visitors to the Exposition, the illustrious and the not-so, would hurry to

Courtesy, Lim M. Lai

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- Each actor, actress, playwright, director, producer, set, lighting and costume designer, composer and

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Learn what's on the minds of California's leading critics and reviewers.

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- You will read how the economy has affected not only the Equity-Waiver renaissance but larger subscription theatres as well; analyze the year's output and major milestones.

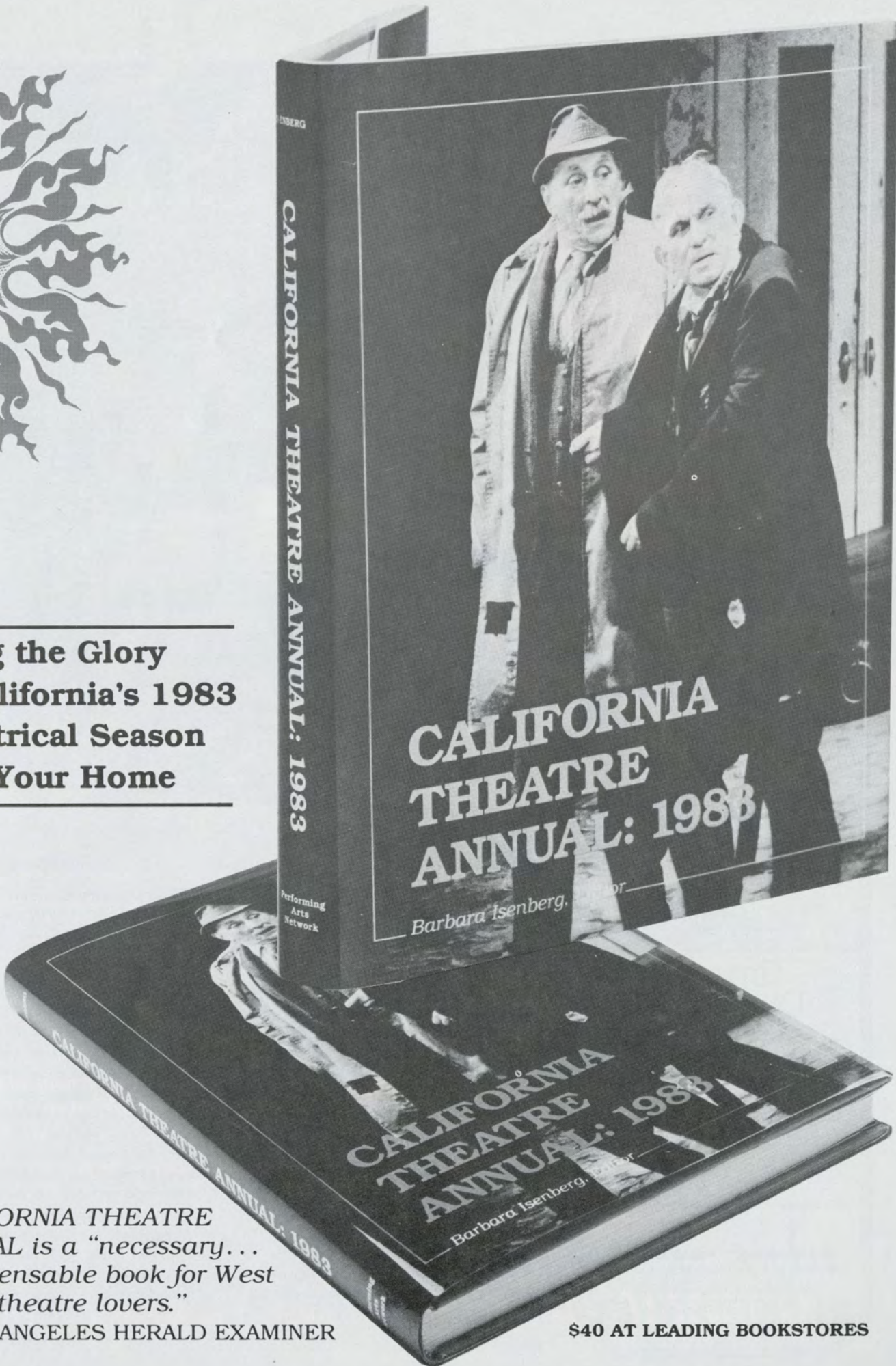
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- Liberally filled with photographs that showcase the variety and adventurousness seen on our stages, CALIFORNIA THEATRE ANNUAL: 1983 brings you in for a closer look at productions like "On the Money" at the Victory Theatre, "Brighton Beach Memoirs" at the Ahmanson, "Artery" at the Antenna Theatre, "Greek" at the Matrix, "Strider" at the Cast and many, many more.
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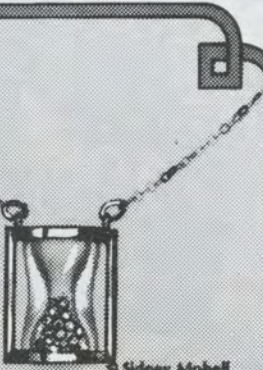
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Medallion Award Launched at Luncheon

Nearly 200 members of The Medallion Society filled the elegant tables set up in the temporarily transformed main lobby of the War Memorial Opera House for the group's first annual awards luncheon.

THE majestic main lobby of the War Memorial Opera House is always a fine place to meet friends, and was never more so than on Monday, September 26, when the recently founded Medallion Society held its first major function there.

The event, hosted by the Opera Association Board of Directors, was the first annual Gala Awards Luncheon to honor Medallion Society members who have underwritten productions or major production elements for the 1983 Summer Festival and Fall Season of the San Francisco Opera.

Making its debut was The Medallion Award, a cast bronze cube bearing the Society's emblem, protected by a fine leather pouch handcrafted by Craig Hampton of the Opera's wardrobe department and embellished with a swatch of red velvet from the former upholstery of the Opera House's orchestra seats.

Chairman of the event was Robert Lee-feldt of the Opera Board, who supervised the transformation of the Opera House lobby into a gracious dining hall enclosed by royal blue curtains. Tables glittered with gold and crystal service on gold, pink and maroon place settings, highlighted by large sprays of red roses reaching several

feet over the tables so as not to disrupt lines of vision.

There was a lot to see under the roses, including officers and members of the Opera Board of Directors, San Francisco Opera general director Terence A. McEwen, San Francisco Symphony music director and conductor Edo de Waart, representatives of some of the state's most prestigious private and corporate foundations, and nearly 200 members of The Medallion Society, in addition to entertainment provided by a bright lineup of talented performers.

Medallion Society members arrived at the Carriage Entrance and were greeted by musical selections performed by a brass quintet from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. As the guests entered the dining area, opera arias recorded on antique music boxes set the mood for an exquisite afternoon. Seating arrangements were indicated by miniature golden replicas of The Medallion Award itself, each gold-foil box containing a chocolate truffle from Cocolat.

Entertainment began with a selection of arias sung by soprano Nikki Li Hartliep, mezzo-soprano Carla Cook and baritone Thomas Woodman of the San Francisco Opera Center. They were followed by the San Francisco Wagner Tuba Quartet, con-

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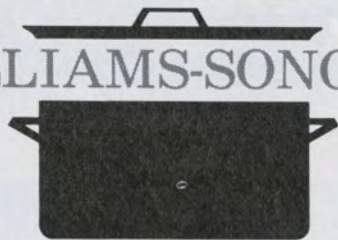
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sisting of Carlberg Jones, Glen Swarts and Eric Achen on Wagner tubas, and guest artist Zachariah Spellman on the Company's recently acquired cimbasso, which was purchased with a grant from Mr. and Mrs. Lennart K. Erickson. The quartet was introduced by Maestro de Waart, conductor of San Francisco Opera's new *Ring of the Nibelung* cycle which began during this year's Summer Festival, who praised the new spirit of cooperation between the city's opera company and symphonic organization. He was followed by San Francisco Opera musical supervisor and resident conductor David Agler, who added an eloquent appeal for sponsorship of the new Wagner tubas, which elicited favorable responses from several interested donors.

The San Francisco Opera Chorus under the leadership of Richard Bradshaw gave Medallion Society members a preview of choral selections from *The Midsummer Marriage* and *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* with bass-baritone John Del Carlo as soloist. The chorus was eventually joined by Adriana Vanelli and Walter MacNeil, the stars of the Family Matinee production of *La Traviata*, in the famous "Libiamo" drinking song. Piano accompaniment was provided by Ernest Knell and Susanna Lemberskaya of the Company's music staff.

The Medallion Awards were presented by Terence McEwen following introductory remarks by Richard K. Miller, chairman of the Opera Association Board of Directors. Medallion Awards were given to the following contributors:

BankAmerica Foundation, for a three-year grant toward production costs of the new *Ring of the Nibelung* cycle; accepted by Foundation Program Director Victoria Wood, on behalf of Edward Truschke, executive director and vice-president of BankAmerica Foundation.

The Callison Foundation, for underwriting the cost of the costumes for *La Traviata*; accepted by Mr. Russell Gowans.

The Columbia Foundation, for a gift to help underwrite the new production of *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*; accepted by Columbia Foundation president Mrs. Madeleine Haas Russell.

The Koret Foundation, for a five-year grant to underwrite one revival production each year.

Barbro and Bernard Osher, for sponsoring this fall's revival of *Otello*; accepted by the Oshers.

The San Francisco Foundation, for a major three-year administrative development grant, in addition to funding seven



A highlight of *The Medallion Society Awards Luncheon* was the special preview of choral sections from Tippet's *The Midsummer Marriage*, performed by the *San Francisco Opera Chorus*.

productions since 1976; accepted by Mr. Mort Raphael, acting director of the Foundation in Martin Paley's absence.

Santa Fe Industries Foundation, for leasing the million-dollar property on which the Opera Scene Shop and Production Warehouse stand, for \$1 per year; accepted by Mr. and Mrs. E.G. Hartnett on behalf of John Schmidt.

The Carol Buck Sells Foundation, for a three-year grant toward the *Ring* cycle; accepted by Mr. and Mrs. John E. Sells.

The L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, for a grant toward the costs of *Das Rheingold*; accepted by Philip Jelley, secretary and manager of the Foundation, on behalf of Mrs. L.J. Skaggs.

The Paul L. and Phyllis Wattis Foundation, for underwriting the American premiere production of *The Midsummer Marriage*; accepted by Mrs. Paul Wattis.

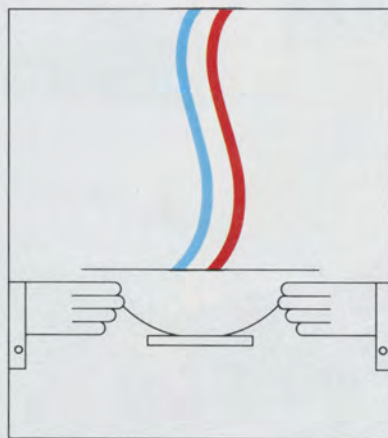
Enhancing the imposing and elegant decor was the warm, familial feeling pervading the afternoon's activities. Numerous Medallion Society members lingered after the awards presentation, reluctant to leave the charmed event, and several were so delighted as to upgrade their contribution status before they left.

Membership in The Medallion Society is open to patrons contributing \$1,500 or more per year to the San Francisco Opera. For further information, contact the Development Department at (415) 861-4008, ext. 167, or phone The Medallion Society at 626-8754. □

The San Francisco Opera has applied for Treasury Fund and Challenge Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. If awarded, your gift may be used to complete required matches associated with these grants.

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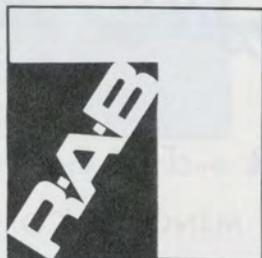
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OFFENBACH (Continued from page 42)

"I remember him working on *Belle Hélène*, orchestrating at the little desk in his study in the rue Laffitte. He wrote, wrote, wrote—with what speed!—then, from time to time, in search of a harmony, he would strike a few chords on the piano with his left hand while his right hand still flew writing across the paper. His children came and went around him, shouting, playing, laughing and singing. Friends and collaborators arrived. . . Entirely at ease, Offenbach chatted, joked, talked. . . and his right hand traveled on and on and on. . ."

If guests and family life did not provide enough bustle around him, he organized parties to amuse himself, sometimes with traits that suggest he hardly distinguished between the absurdity of operetta-life and that of "reality." On one occasion such a domestic gathering saw the premiere of a *Grand Symphony of the Sea*, whose proceeds were to go to charity. Offenbach had made printed announcements which drew attention to the importance of reading the large as well as the small print on such notices:

GRANDE SYMPHONIE
DE LA
MER DE
JACQUES OFFENBACH
POUR
LES MALADES
AVEC LA PERMISSION DE
L'AUTORITÉ

In his relations with his librettists, as in all other aspects of his professional life, his mania for work stretched patience to its limit. "Chers Meil et Hal," though quicker than most of his lesser collaborators, were rarely able to keep up with Offenbach's speed of composition. He would send them little notes urging effort, penned with a self-deprecating wit that barely concealed his feverish discontent.

In his own theater he was a tyrant, insisting on rehearsing until everything was exactly as he wanted it. And he knew precisely what he wanted, whether it was gentle beauty or irresistible verve. He wrote for the tastes of his audiences and would invariably cut his own works ruthlessly during rehearsal and after the first two or three performances. His theaters were tiny—the lanky singing-actor who created John Styx in *Orpheus in the Underworld* could touch the proscenium arch without difficulty. In such intimate environments, special kinds of theatrical talents were needed, and Offenbach had a sure instinct for talent. He had no patience with talent scouts less sure than himself: "Your young and beautiful singer," he wrote to one of them, "is neither young

nor beautiful—so try to find me what I am asking you for, but in the name of heaven put on your spectacles; you know that in my little theater the public is very near the artistes, and as a result the women have to be even prettier than elsewhere. Therefore do not bring me your artiste tomorrow, but try to find me another one, another day.”

Towards the end of his life, when he was crippled by gout and rheumatism, Offenbach had difficulty moving around. But Halévy has left a graphic picture of one of the last occasions on which he attended a rehearsal for one of his operettas:

“Offenbach strode over to the conductor at the piano, and started in conducting himself. He had suddenly regained his strength and was throbbing with vigor



Jacques Offenbach in a contemporary caricature by Carjat.

and energy again. His old ardor and excitement had been rekindled. He started singing and shouting, and startled the singers in the back row from their sleep. Then he returned once more to the forestage and went over to the left of the stage to put life into the supers. . . . A minute before he had been shivering with cold, but now he was bathed in perspiration. He took off his overcoat and flung it down in a chair; he started giving the beat with all the strength that was in him. He struck the piano so hard that his stick broke in two. With an oath he flung the stump to the ground, snatched the violin-bow from the poor conductor, who was frightened out of his life, and went on beating time with incred-

ible force. . . . He was no longer the same man, they were no longer the same players, the same singers. And as for the finale, it suddenly bubbled over with gaiety and cheerfulness and went with a tremendous swing.

“Scarcely had the last note sounded than everyone, from Mlle. Aimée down to the least important super, started enthusiastically applauding Offenbach, who sank back exhausted in his seat.

“I’ve broken my stick, but I’ve saved my finale” he said.”

Offenbach enjoyed enormous success for part of his life, but for much of it he was misunderstood, even hated, for his irreverence. He brought musical satire to new heights; his musical wit helped a lot in discrediting the earnest pomposity of the Grand Opera and Symphony composers of his time, as Debussy was one of the first to observe:

“Because he was a gifted ironist, Offenbach was perhaps the only man to perceive the false, overblown quality of such music. Above all, he was able to expose the hidden element of farce which it embodied, and to exploit this. We know how successful he was. But no one realized what he was about, because it was so much taken for granted that Meyerbeer represented the great art at which one was not allowed to smile.”

Offenbach died, as he had long before predicted, “with a melody at the tip of my pen,” working on *Hoffmann* to the end. His music had transformed operetta into a new international genre. Although he never underestimated his own talent as the author of light music of undying popularity, he had wanted to be remembered for more serious things. He knew that he might have written greater music, and he was not alone in knowing that; even Wagner, at whose expense Offenbach made some of his easiest jests, recognized the genius of the composer whom, at times, he had so deeply scorned. Wagner, who had once written that Offenbach “possesses the warmth that Auber lacks but it’s the warmth of the dunghill; all the pigs of Europe have wallowed there,” wrote shortly before his own death what remains perhaps the best, if the most reluctant, funeral eulogy: “Look at Offenbach. He writes like the divine Mozart. The fact is, . . . the French have the secret of these things. I don’t envy them in many areas; but one has to acknowledge the truth that leaps to my eyes: Offenbach could have been like Mozart.” □



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SCHNEIDER (Continued from page 69)

engagement. Times were changing. The Second Empire had expired. The Third Republic refused to acknowledge this *Reine des Variétés* who now represented a much-hated past. Courageously, Hortense tried to appear at the Palais-Royal in 1872 but it seemed she had already been forgotten by her public and received little notice. Refusing to accept defeat, she left for St. Petersburg where she once again found the intoxicating atmosphere of her greatest triumphs. On opening night, in the presence of the Tsar and the entire Russian aristocracy, she received 15 curtain calls.

When she returned to Paris, she tried again. *La Veuve du Malabar*, with her old friend Berthelier, was a stinging disaster. And she again considered retiring from the theater. But Offenbach, one more time, entered the scene and asked her to appear in a revival of *La Pèrichole*. She could not refuse him. It was, to everybody's surprise, a triumph. So, as a result, she was asked to participate in another of Offenbach's creations, *La Boulangère à des Ecus*, but left before the premiere because the director of the theater refused to bow to some of her capricious suggestions. A few months later, at a performance of Hervé's *La Belle Poule*, portraying the ubiquitous 16 year-old peasant girl, she suddenly found herself feeling ridiculous and decided on the spur of the moment to call it quits. This time she stuck to her decision.

Hortense Schneider never appeared on the stage again, except on November 18, 1880, to honor Jacques Offenbach who had just died. She began to sing, but her grief was too intense. She had to be escorted offstage, in tears.

She sold her luxurious house on the Avenue du Bois and retired to the bourgeois suburban town of Vanves-Malakoff where she devoted herself to her son and to her charities. But it was not all over yet...

On October 4, 1881, she married the young Italian "Count" de Brionne. The two lovebirds left for Florence on a honeymoon but Hortense returned to Paris, alone, a few days later. She had discovered that all Emilio wanted was her money, nothing else. She divorced him in 1883 and moved to Versailles... It was a city that suited a former queen much better. Hortense Schneider died in 1920 at the age of 87, after a long and outspoken old age, spent as a major source of information about the music and career of Jacques Offenbach, and also, in the manner of many reformed *demi-mondaines*, in much religious and charitable work. □

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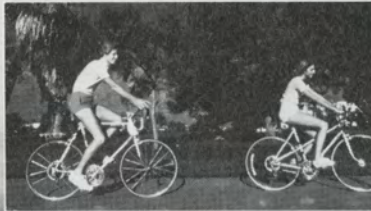
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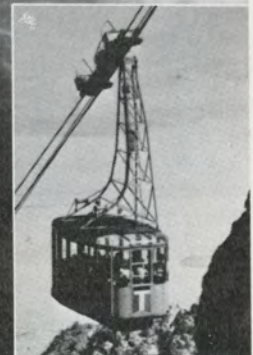
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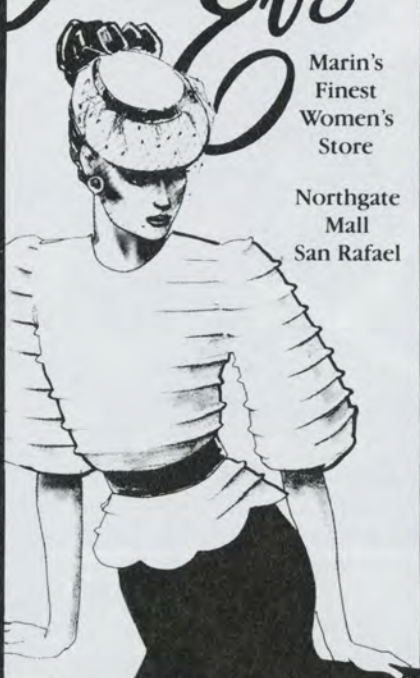
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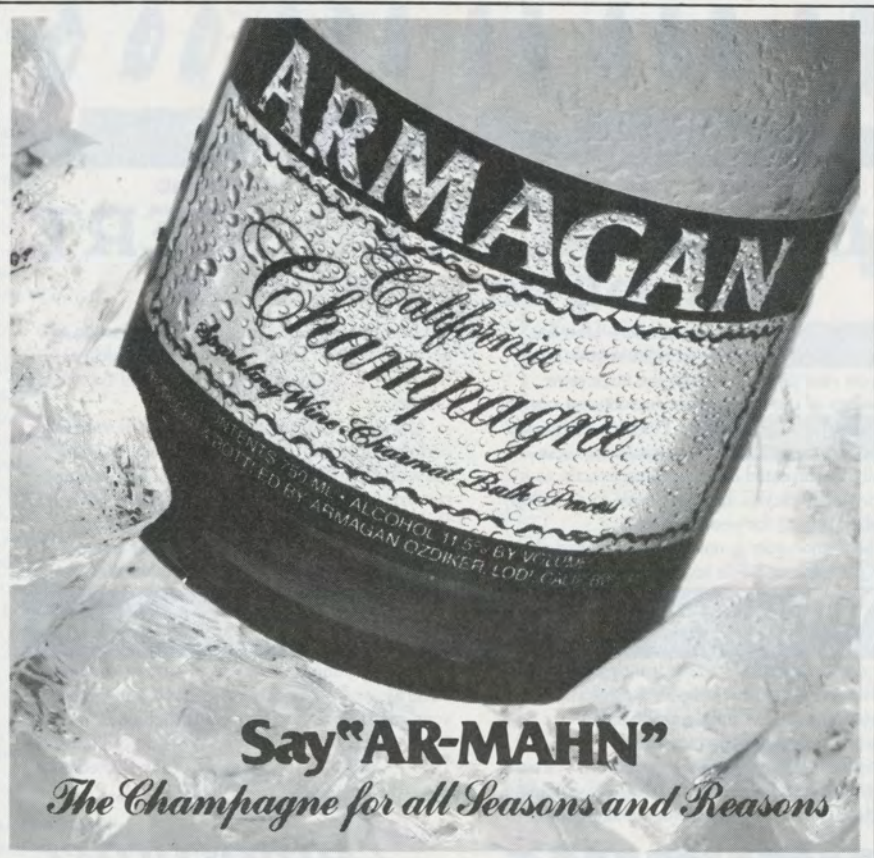


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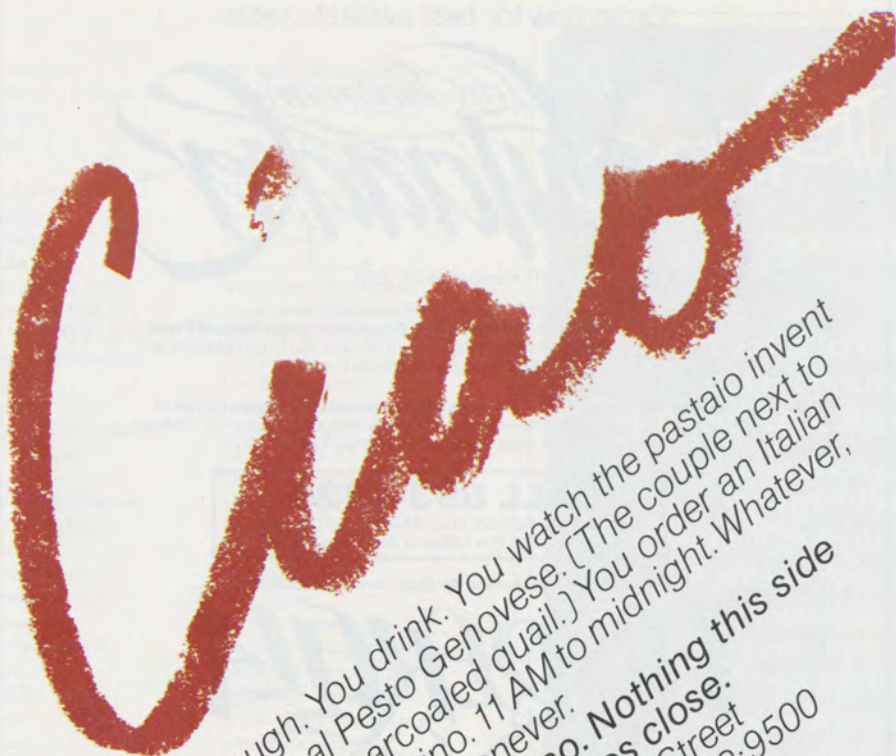
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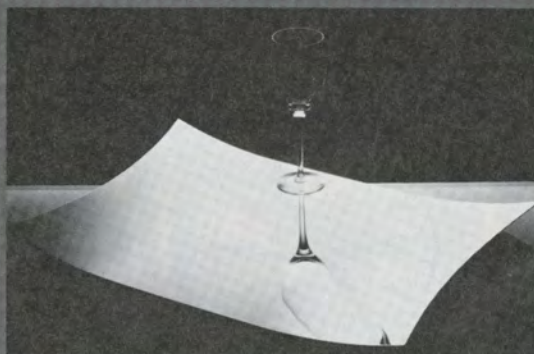
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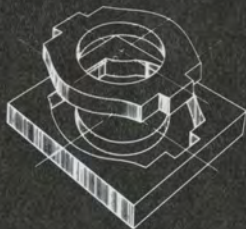
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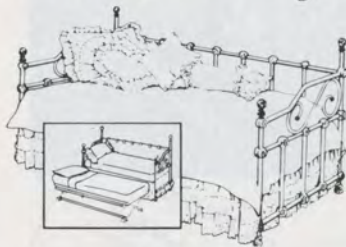
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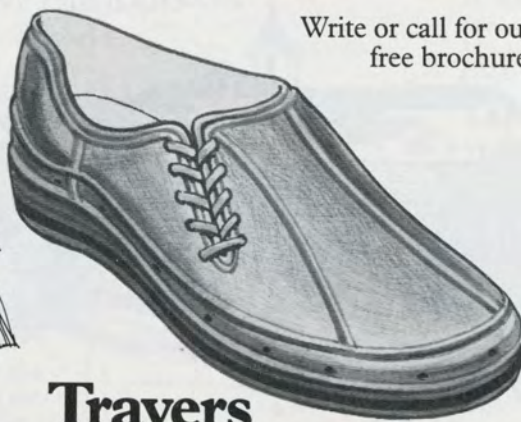
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Wednesday 1:30/2:30—Saturday 12:30/1:30

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

General \$3.00—Seniors/Students \$2.00

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

THE OPERA HOUSE MUSEUM, located on the south mezzanine (box) level behind the Opera Boutique, currently houses an exhibit on the San Francisco Opera Center. Featuring photographs and information on the talented young singers of the Center, the display, assembled by Christine Albany, provides an introduction to the many activities and events that make the San Francisco Opera Center unique among operatic training programs in this country.



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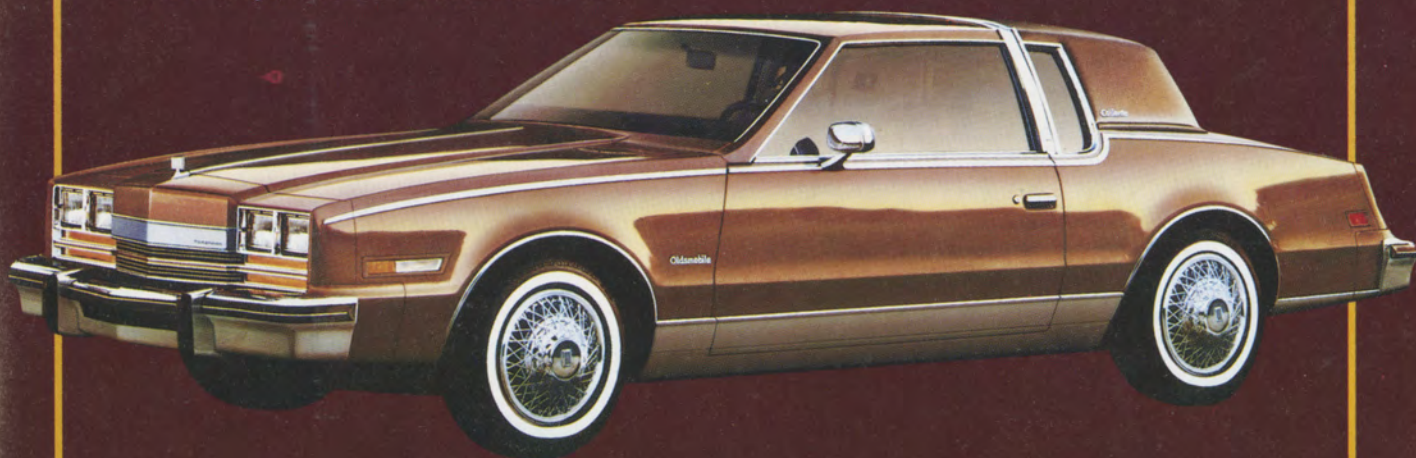


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120's: 6 mg. "tar", 0.6 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Mar. '83.