

Otello

1983

Friday, September 9, 1983 10:30 PM
(performance scheduled to start at 7:00 PM, actual
start time was 10:30 PM)

Monday, September 12, 1983 8:00 PM

Thursday, September 15, 1983 7:30 PM

Sunday, September 18, 1983 2:00 PM

Friday, September 23, 1983 8:00 PM

Tuesday, September 27, 1983 8:00 PM

Saturday, October 1, 1983 8:00 PM

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FALL SEASON 1983

Otello

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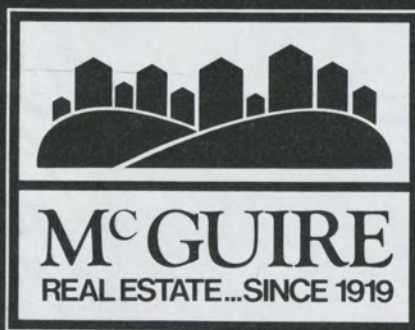


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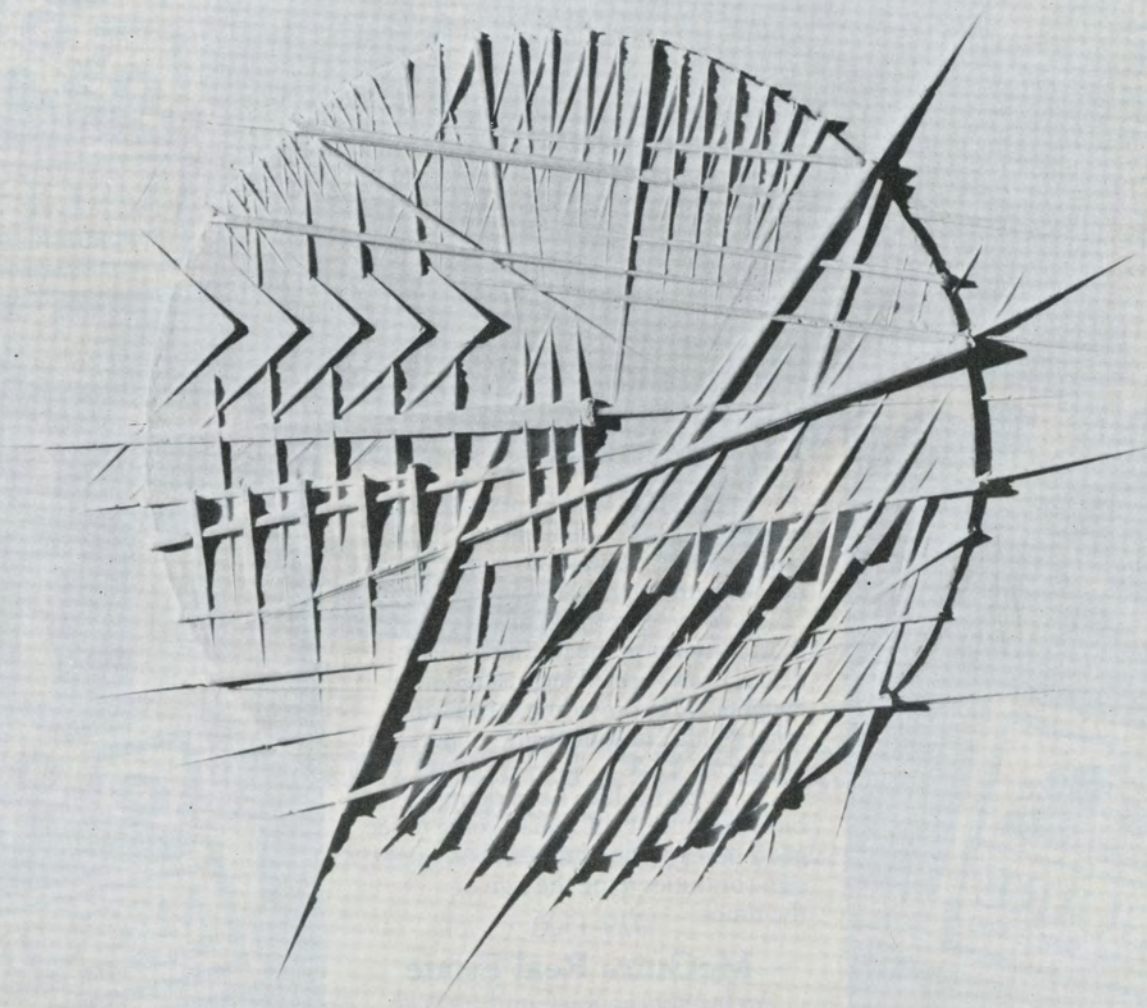
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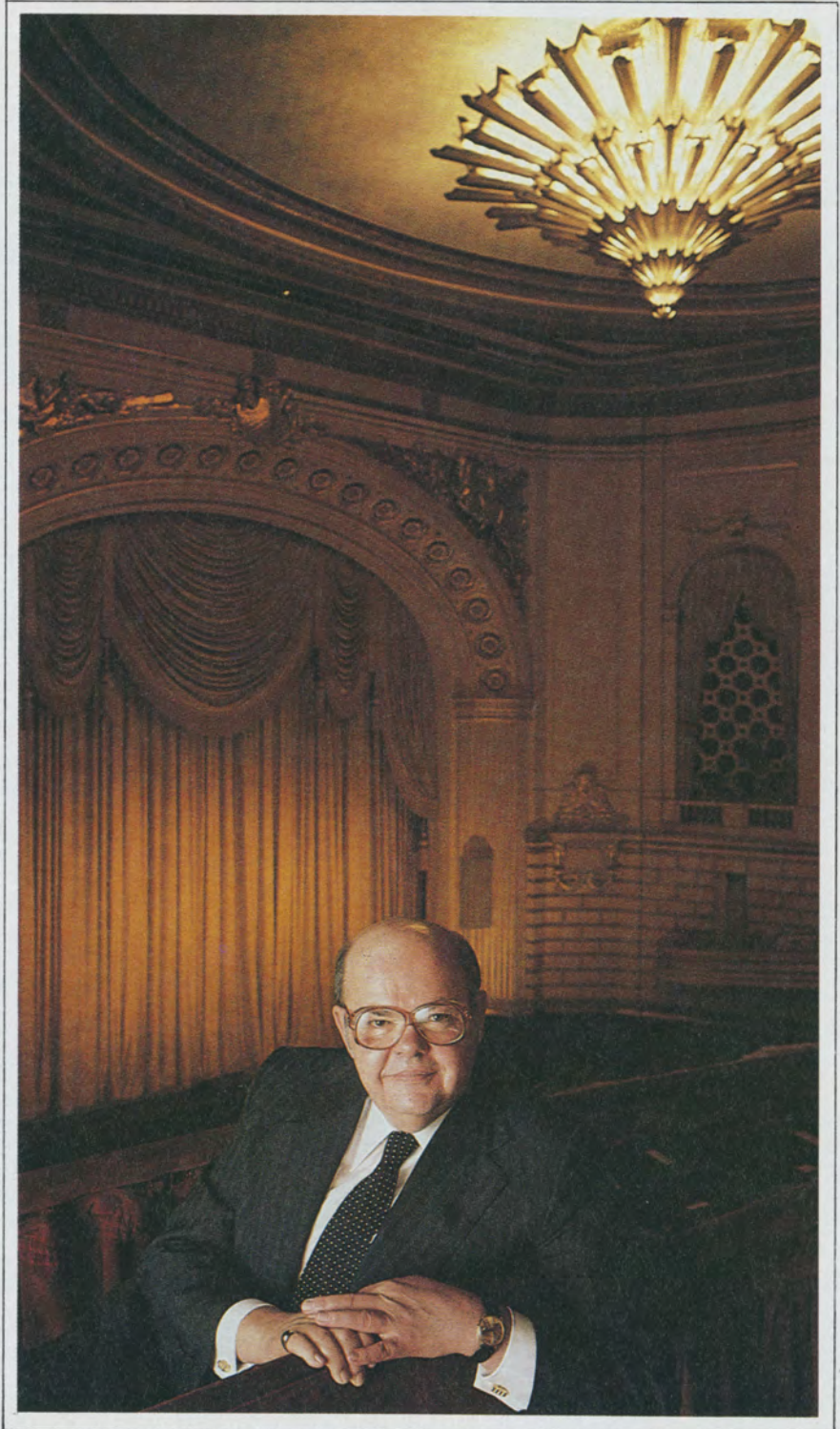
Bill Blass

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.



Ron Scherf



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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

OTELLO FALL SEASON 1983

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Illuminating insights into the creation of *Otello*, the masterpiece that came into being during Giuseppe Verdi's golden years.
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- 68 An Auspicious Debut for the Medallion Society**
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COVER: The opening scene of San Francisco Opera's production *Otello*, taken during one of the strokes of 'lightning.' Carolyn Mason Jones photo.

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

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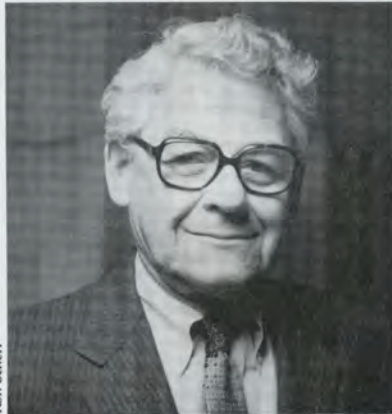
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From the President...



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



For Jacqueline de Ribes, elegance is a matter of grace, ease, naturalness. And in her Fall '83 collection, this quiet beauty has never been more fully, more irresistibly presented. In the luxury of fabrics, the jeweled intensity of colors, the perfection of detail and, always, the creativity of a line that flatters, her designs excel. Truly, these are clothes that are timeless...to be worn by women who understand their elegance, and who will view them as collector's pieces to be treasured forever. Here, her white silk crepe tunic deeply plunged and delightfully tasselled; worn with its jet black cotton velvet skirt lined in silk charmeuse. In American Designer Collections.

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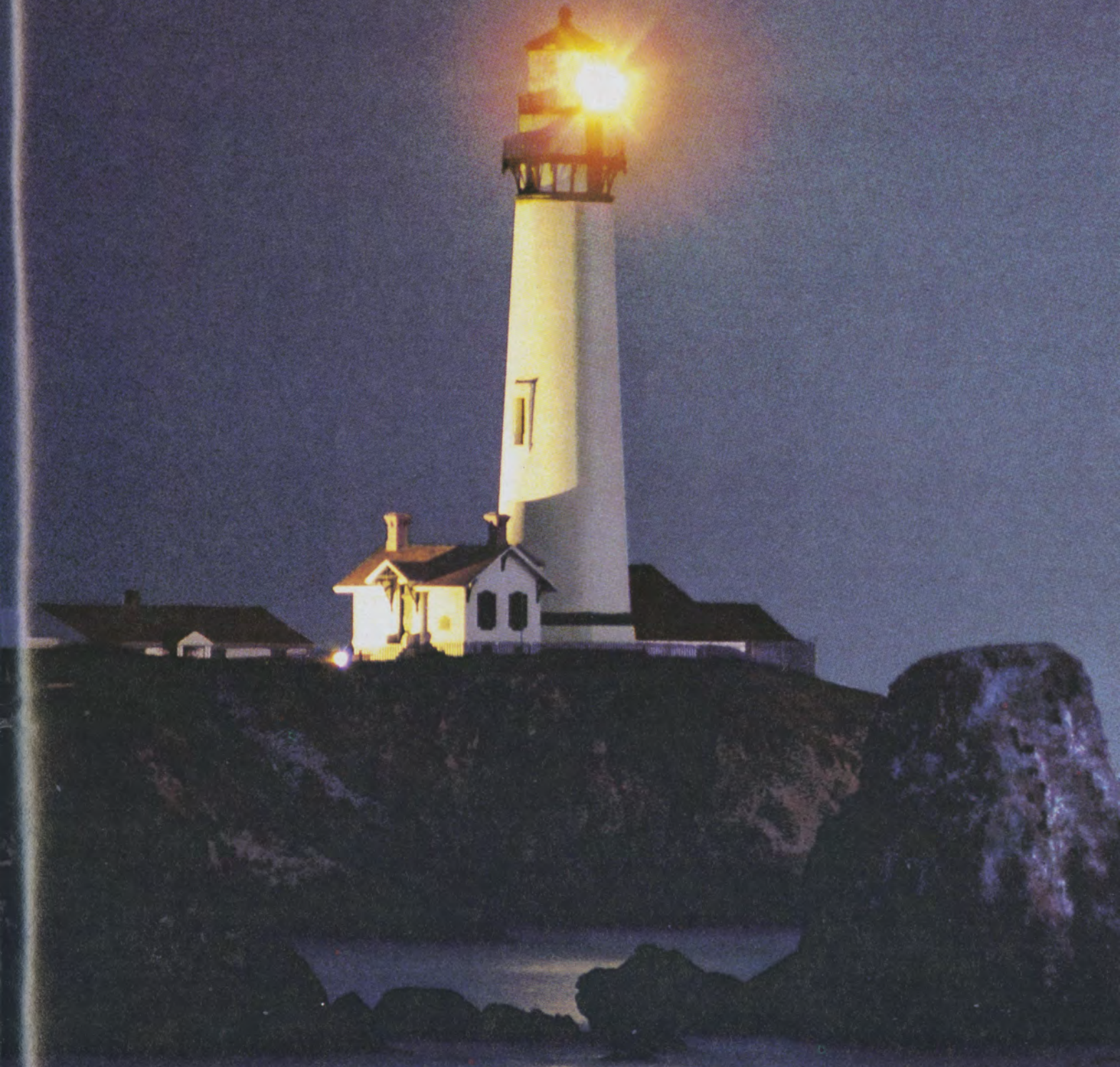
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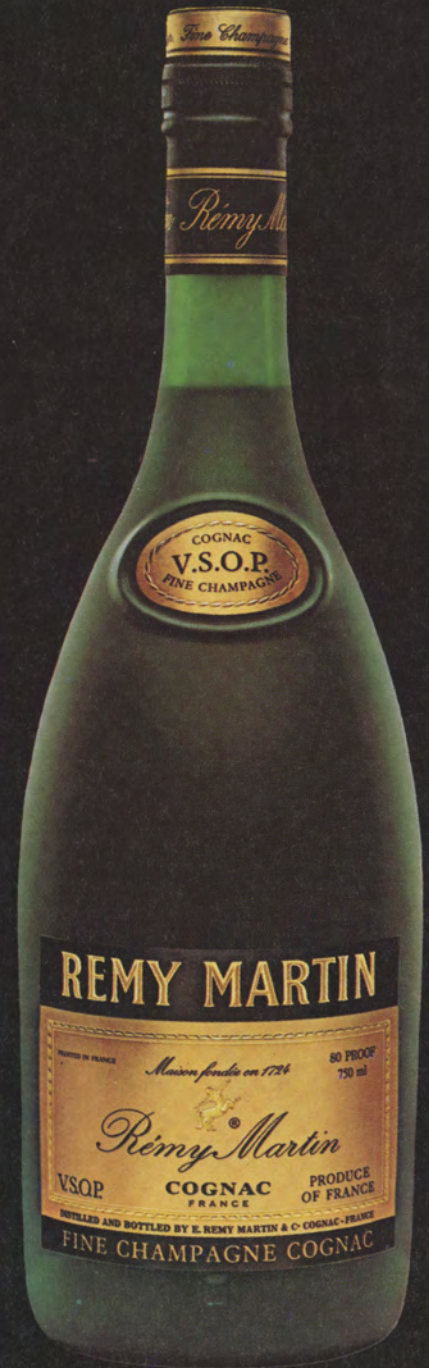
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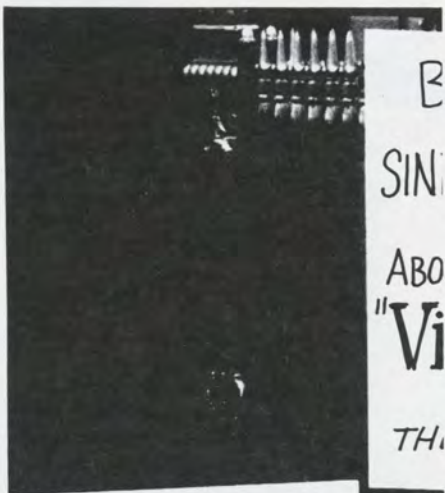
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(Continued on page 20)

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| Angelo Colbasso | Gerald Johnson | Kenneth Rafanan | Andrew Yarosh |
| Mark Coles | Eugene Lawrence | Tom Reed | |

BOYS CHORUS

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Mark Bemederfer | Sebastian Frey | David Koenig | Nicholas Safrit |
| Max Berest | Matthew Hurwitz | Lucas Maciel | Bernard Savant |
| Mark Colety | Jacques Hymans | Kenneth Ohashi | John Paul Savant |
| Justin Dudley | Anthony Impang-Lozada | Jonathan Olmsted | Alastair Wilson |
| Richard Espinoza | Justin Jed | David Owen | Samuel Yan |
| | Jordan King | Jeffrey Paul | |

GIRLS CHORUS


- | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Lisa Bielawa | Sharon D'Cunha | Shauna Finny | Cialin Mills |
| Belynda Biller | Megan Dey | Elke Glendenning | Sarah Norris |
| Kenya Briggs | Sarah Emdy | Katherine Iosif | Elizabeth Richards |
| Christine Campbell | Erica Fitschen | Jessica Israels | Katy Schumacher |
| Rebecca Coolidge | Leah Fitschen | Rachel Lopez | Jennifer Vlahos |

EXTRA CHORUS

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

SUPERNUMERARIES


- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Renee DeJarnatt | Susan Holzkamp | Candace Kahn | Donna Shanklin |
| | Nina Izotoff | Holly Morrison | |
| Andrew Alder | Rick Emmons | Ward Greunke | Simon Pyne |
| Mark Backer | Jay Esser | Joe Hay | Paul Ricks |
| Sky Bamford | Peter Felleman | Mark Huelsmann | Tom Simrock |
| Steve Bauman | Mickey Frettoloso | Steve Jacobs | Rick Skarolid |
| Roy Castellini | Matt Garadis | John R. Janonis | Jonathan Spieler |
| David Clover | Peter Garadis | Julius Karoblis | Robert Wendell |
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 Adolf Bruk *Assistant Concertmaster*
 Ferdinand Claudio
 William E. Pynchon *Assistant Principal*
 William Rusconi
 Agnes Vadas
 Mafalda Guaraldi
 Barbara Riccardi
 Jeremy Constant
 Robert Galbraith
 Celia Rosenberger
 Leonid Igudesman

2nd VIOLIN

Roy Malan *Principal*
 Virginia Price-Kvistad
 Lev Rankov
 Eva Karasik
 Lani King
 Gerard Svazlian
 Linda Deutsch
 Tanya Rankov
 Janice McIntosh

VIOLA

Rolf Persinger *Principal*
 Alison Avery
 Lucien Mitchell
 Asbjorn Finess
 Jonna Hervig
 Natalia Igudesman
 Meredith Snow

CELLO

David Kadarauch *Principal*
 Thalia Moore
 Samuel Cristler
 Jacqueline Mullen
 Helen Stross
 David Budd

BASS

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

FLUTE

Alan Cox *Principal*
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 James Walker

PICCOLO

James Walker

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James Matheson *Principal*
 Deborah Henry
 Raymond Dusté

ENGLISH HORN

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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
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TRUMPET

James Miller *Principal*
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 Timothy Wilson

TROMBONE

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 John Bischof

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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.

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.

Kathleen Battle/Walter Berry	9/14
Evelyn Lear	9/20
Anja Silja/Christoph von Dohnányi	9/27
John Copley/Robin Don	10/12
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 students and seniors). Single tickets are \$3.50 (\$3.00 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 388-6789.

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS Dale Harris	9/8
KATYA KABANOVA Arthur Kaplan	9/15
THE MIDSUMMER MARRIAGE James Keolker	10/13
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.

KATYA KABANOVA Eugene Marker	9/15
THE MIDSUMMER MARRIAGE James Keolker	10/6
LA GRANDE DUCHESSE Jan Popper	10/20
BORIS GODUNOV Blanche Thebom	11/3



Ron Scherl

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.

KATYA KABANOVA Arthur Kaplan	9/13
THE MIDSUMMER MARRIAGE James Keolker	10/11
SAMSON ET DALILA Blanche Thebom	10/18
LA GRANDE DUCHESSE Jan Popper	10/27
MANON LESCAUT Arthur Kaplan	11/8
BORIS GODUNOV Blanche Thebom	11/15

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

Previews will be held at the Saratoga Community Center, 19655 Allendale Avenue, Saratoga. All lectures are on Thursday mornings at 10:30. Series is open to the public at a cost of \$4.00 per lecture, \$3.00 for students and senior citizens (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild

members). For further information, please call (408) 741-1331 or (408) 354-7525.

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS Dale Harris	9/8
KATYA KABANOVA Arthur Kaplan	9/15
OTELLO James Keolker	9/22
THE MIDSUMMER MARRIAGE James Keolker	9/29
SAMSON ET DALILA Blanche Thebom	10/6
MANON LESCAUT Arthur Kaplan	10/13
LA GIOCONDA Blanche Thebom	10/20
BORIS GODUNOV James Keolker	10/27

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.

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS Dale Harris	9/7
KATYA KABANOVA Michael Barclay	9/14
THE MIDSUMMER MARRIAGE James Keolker	10/5
LA GRANDE DUCHESSE Jan Popper	11/2
MANON LESCAUT Arthur Kaplan	11/9
BORIS GODUNOV Blanche Thebom	11/15

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.

OTELLO	9/8
ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	9/15
KATYA KABANOVA	9/22

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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MORAGA Guy's Drug Store

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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, general director

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/Cossutta, 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 Goelet.

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

Monday, September 12, 8:00

Otello Verdi

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

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

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.

Ricciarelli, 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, Herinx, Langan
Aglér/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

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

Soustrout**/Ducasse**/Monloup**/
Sakellariou/Munn

Sakellariou/Munn

Tuesday, November 8, 8:00

La Grande Duchesse de Gêrolstein Offenbach

Wednesday, November 9, 8:00

Samson et Dalila Saint-Saëns



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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/Bonissoli, Manuguerra, Kavrakos*, MacAllister, Thomas, Patterson, Woodman Meltzer/Mansouri, Thompson/Brown/Sulich/Munn

Saturday, November 12, 8:00

La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein 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 Gérolstein 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, Capecci, MacNeil, MacAllister, Gordon, Will, Thomas Arena*/Asagaroff/Klein/Arhelger*

Saturday, November 19, 8:00

La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein 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 Gérolstein 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 Gérolstein 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 Gérolstein 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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Saturday, October 8, 1:00 Wednesday, October 12, 1:00



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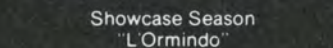
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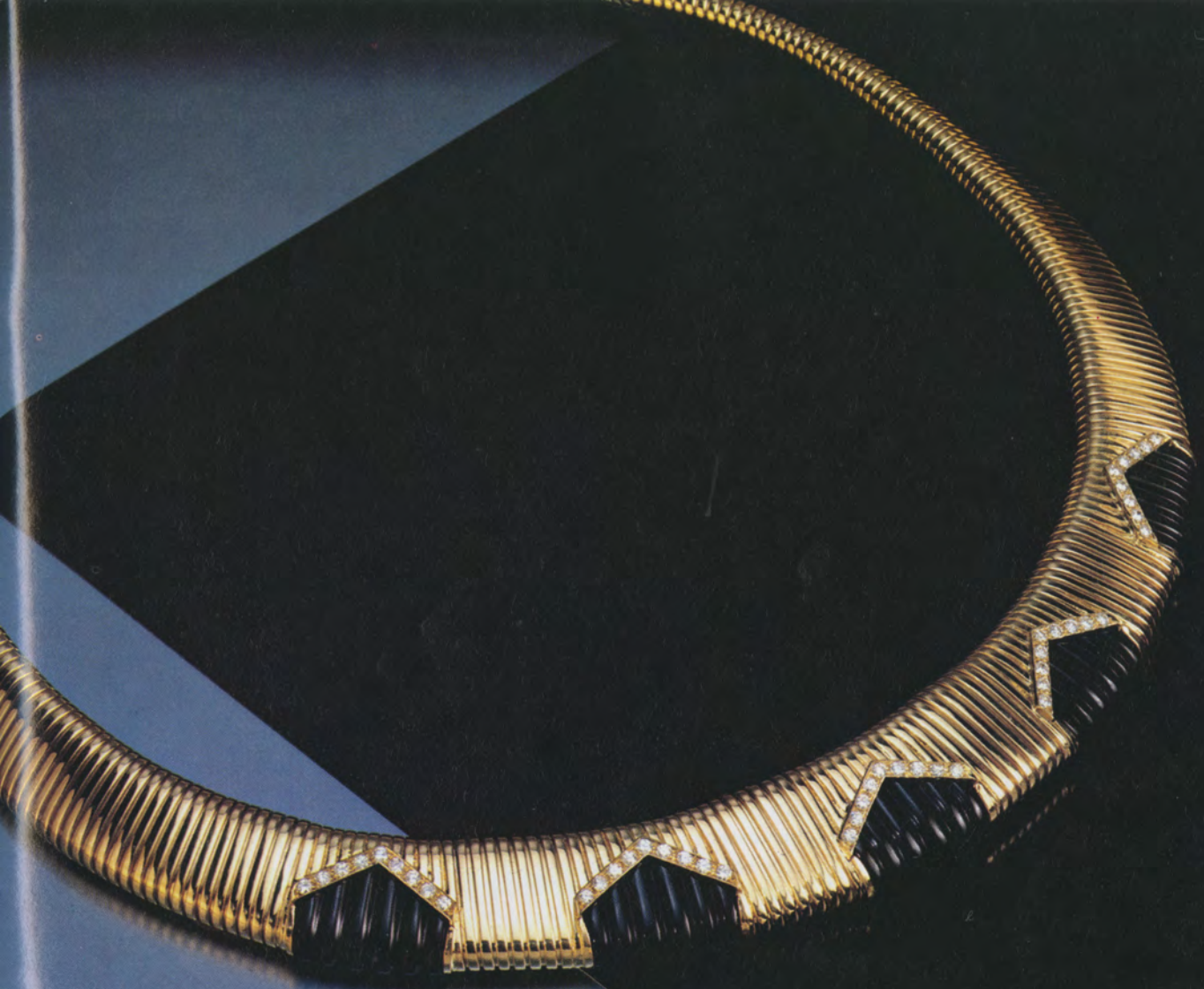
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Otello- Settling the

by John Ardoin

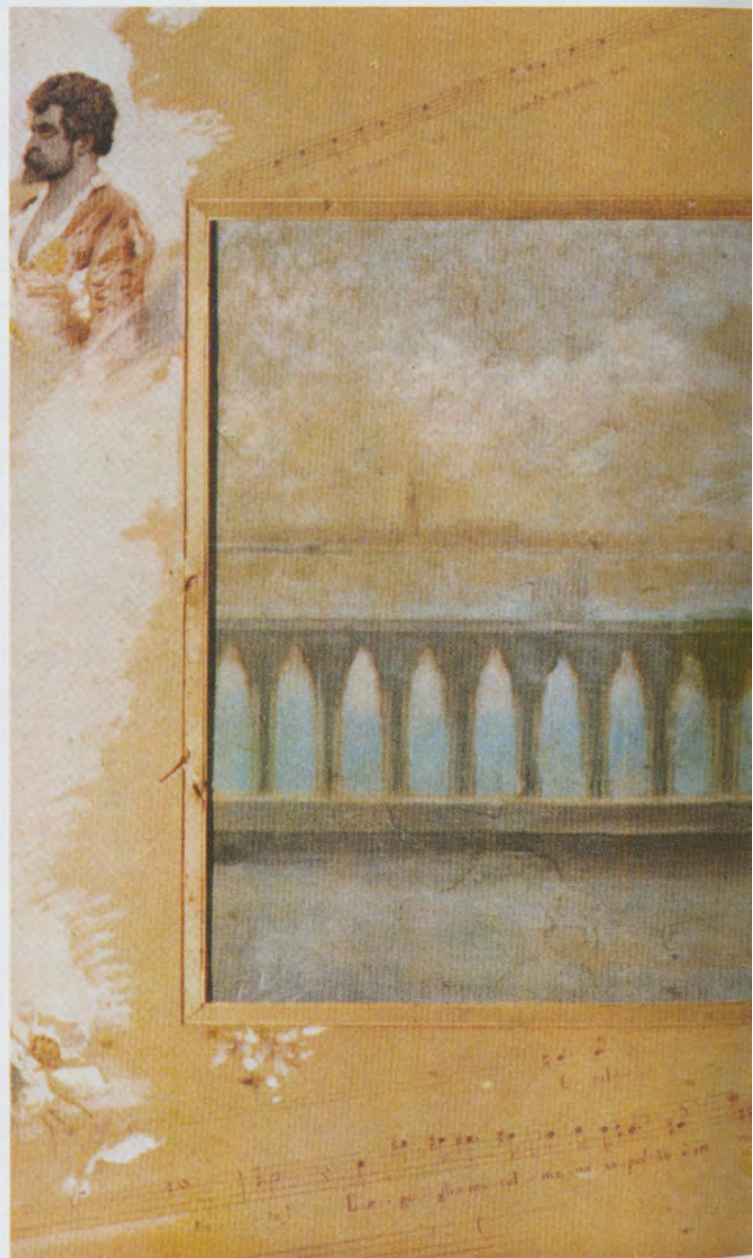
“THE scores are settled,” Verdi told his close friend the Countess Maffei in 1875, when she suggested that he must continue to compose. “I have always conscientiously fulfilled the obligations I have undertaken, and the public has accepted my works with equal conscientiousness, with either splendid hissing or applause. No one, then, has any right to complain.”

Verdi was 72 years old. He viewed *Aida*, which had its premiere four years earlier, as the crowning achievement of his career. He was acknowledged throughout the world as a towering master of music theater and had retreated into semi-seclusion at his beloved farm Sant’Agata. There were many, like the Countess, however, who felt there *was* room to complain. Among these was Verdi’s publisher Giulio Ricordi. Though his reasons might not have been altogether altruistic, they were certainly equally bound up in a fervent belief that this grand man of Italian music was far from finished. In 1879, Ricordi began a diplomatic campaign to bring the aging composer around to his point of view.

During a visit to Milan that year with his wife Giuseppina, Verdi had supper with Ricordi and the brilliant conductor of the day Franco Faccio. After dinner, Ricordi began to steer the conversation to Shakespeare and, in particular, *Othello*. He must have felt if anything was going to spark a response from the recalcitrant composer it would be a subject drawn from the works of his favorite poet.

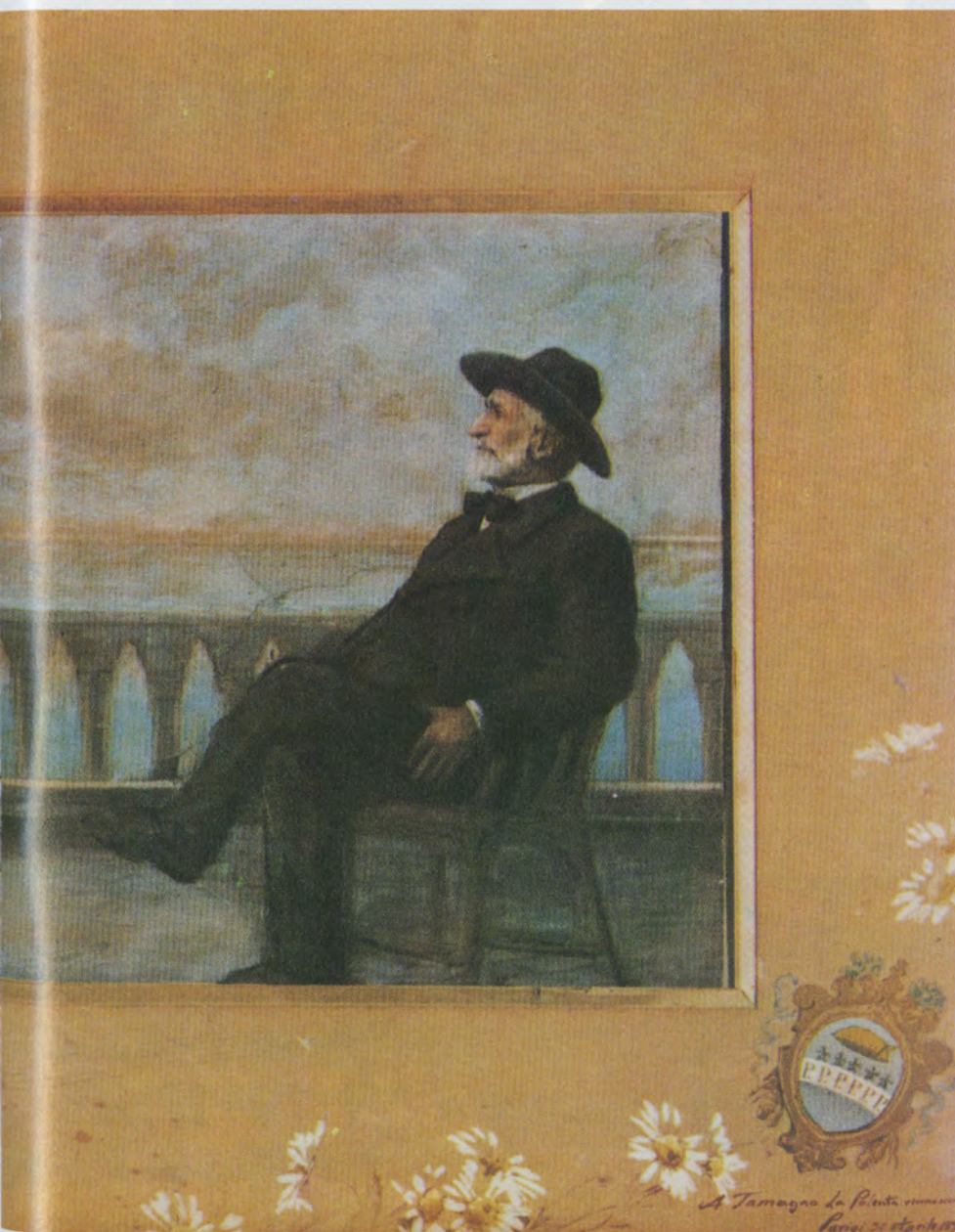
Verdi, Ricordi said later, responded to this gambit with a mixture of suspicion and interest. The latter must have been greater than the former, since before the evening was over, Verdi had agreed that Faccio could bring his friend, the writer-composer Arrigo Boito, to his hotel the next day to talk about *Othello*. This in itself was a minor triumph for Ricordi—not simply due to the fact that he had started Verdi thinking about *Othello*, but because the

John Ardoin is music editor of The Dallas Morning News and author of The Callas Legacy and the soon-to-be published Stages of Menotti. He is currently at work on a book devoted to conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler on the 100th anniversary (1986) of his birth.



Score

Left: Pastel of Giuseppe Verdi done in the 1890s by T. Bianco, with the composer seated on a Venetian terrace. The portrait, framed and matted, was inscribed with several phrases from *Otello* and presented to Francesco Tamagno, the first interpreter of the Moor, by the Parisian "Polenta Circle." The image of Tamagno as *Otello* is seen in the upper left hand corner. COURTESY, SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY.



Above: Verdi greeting friends at Villa Sant'Agata. Watercolor by Leopoldo Metlicovitz, made around 1892. ARCHIVIO STORICO RICORDI, MILAN. COURTESY, SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY.



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Interpreters of the three leading roles at the Scala premiere of *Otello*, seen in contemporary engravings (left to right): Francesco Tamagno (*Otello*), Romilda Pantaleoni (*Desdemona*) and Victor Maurel (*Iago*). Verdi nelle immagini, 1941. COURTESY, LIM M. LAI.

possibility existed that he could reconcile Boito and Verdi after a long period of coolness and distrust following an anti-Verdi article Boito had written when he was 20.

By 1879, however, Boito—now in his late 30s—had recanted, and his scorn for what he had seen as his non-progressive elders had given way to profound appreciation of Verdi and Verdi's achievements. Evidently, the meeting between the two was an unqualified success, for just a few days later, Boito presented Verdi with a scenario for recasting *Othello* as *Otello*. Without committing himself, Verdi urged Boito to proceed to a finished libretto. Soon, Ricordi was suggesting a visit to Sant' Agata by himself and Boito. But wary of complications that might develop, Verdi pulled back, writing to Ricordi: "If you come here now with Boito, I shall have to read the finished libretto he will bring with him. If I find it completely satisfactory, then I am somewhat committed to it. If I like it, but suggest modifications which he accepts, then I'm even more committed. If, however good it is, I don't like it, it would be difficult to say so to his face. No, no, you have gone too far, and must stop before there is any gossip or unpleasantness."

Ricordi, however, was not so easily put off. Rather than pushing the *Otello* dream, he suggested to Verdi that the composer revise his earlier opera *Simon Boccanegra*, which had been given in Venice in 1857, and whose original form Verdi had never been satisfied with. Verdi took the bait, and Ricordi recommended Boito as a collaborator for *Boccanegra*. Within six months, the two men had produced a new version of the opera, adding the mighty Council Chamber Scene, which greatly strengthened the drama and provided it with a much-needed focal point. It was only natural, as Ricordi surely realized, that during the time spent recasting *Boccanegra* the "chocolate idea," as Verdi whimsically described *Otello*, would come up. Little-

by-little, the excitement of *Otello's* drama and the challenge it presented fired Verdi's imagination.

Before long, he was fully committed to *Otello*, and even though he did not begin composing the score until March of 1884 (a revision of *Don Carlo* for La Scala followed the new edition of *Boccanegra*), Verdi wrote a fascinating letter to Boito concerning his ideas for the third act finale of *Otello*. It is worth quoting a sizable amount of this letter because it shows Verdi applying the lessons learned through the years in creating a form of music theater that was void of convention as he had inherited it, and which moved swiftly and unerringly to a decisive summit of action.

"It's so true that a silent *Otello* is grander and more terrible that my opinion would be not to have him speak at all during the whole ensemble. It seems to me that *Iago* alone can say, and more briefly, everything that must be said for the spectator's understanding, without *Otello* replying. After the ensemble, and after the words 'Tutti fuggite *Otello*,' it seems to me that *Otello* does not speak or cry out enough. He is silent for four lines, and it seems to me that after 'Che d'ogni senso il priva,' *Otello* ought to bellow one or two lines, (such as) 'Away, I detest you, myself, the whole world . . .'

"And it seems to me that a few lines could be spared when *Otello* and *Iago* are left alone together. . . . A strangled cry on the word 'fazzoletto' seems to me more terrible than a commonplace exclamation like 'O Satana.' The words 'svenuto,' 'immobil' and 'muto' somewhat hold up the action. One stops to think (when one should be) hurrying on to the end. . . . The chorus has little or nothing to do. Could one not find a way of moving it about a bit? For example, after the words 'In Cyprus my successor is to be . . . Cassio!' Chorus, with four lines—not of revolt but of protest: 'No, no, we want *Otello*!'

"I know perfectly well that you will reply at once: 'Dear Signor Maestro, don't you know that nobody dared to breathe after a decree of the *Serenissima*, and that some-

times the mere presence of the *Messer Grande* sufficed to disperse the crowd and subdue the tumult? I would dare to rejoin that the action takes place in Cyprus, the *Serenissima* were far away, and perhaps for that reason the Cypriots were bolder than the Venetians."

Boito complied with Verdi's requests regarding Otello's outbursts and the subsequent short scene with Iago before the Moor collapsed, but wisely saved the chorus until the sweeping and noble ensemble that is launched by Desdemona's poignant "A terra. . . sì. . . nel livido fango." One stands in awe of the finished libretto and the honorable and amazing skill with which Boito pared Shakespeare's five act drama into four acts, combining Shakespeare's first two acts into one. So finely wrought is his achievement, one is tempted to state that *Otello* makes more sense and is ultimately more telling theater than *Othello*.

There is a strong melodramatic element to the play that never rings quite true, with even the greatest actor as Othello. Yet these same melodramatic elements make excellent sense within the confines of operatic convention. Shakespeare's Moor too often leaves us wondering how (in the words of Ernest Newman) "any man of ordinary intelligence could be so blindly credulous of what he was told about his wife. . ."

It is hard to refute Thomas Rymer's portrait of Shakespeare's Othello as a "tedious, drawling, tame goose, gaping after any paltry insinuation, laboring to be jealous and

catching at every blown surmise." Even with its great flights of poetry, the role of Othello does not ring consistently true when measured, for example, against Lear, the Shakespearean figure to which Verdi so badly wanted to give lyric life, and which eluded him and caused the composer great anguish. Yet within an expressive medium that thrives on the improbable, and given the range of Verdi's imagination and the music that resulted from it, the dramatic shortcomings of Othello not only melt away when he is transformed into Otello, but the character actually gains strength from its new surroundings.

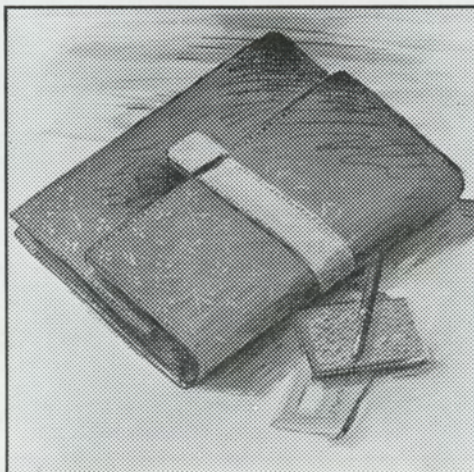
The opera, as well, allows the character of Iago to be painted in blacker tones to form a fiercer foil for Otello. Could any play, even by Shakespeare, support so blatantly theatrical a moment as Iago's "Credo," which Boito created to open the second act of the opera? The taut sinew of this scene is a vivid reminder that Verdi toyed with the idea of calling the opera after its villain rather than its misguided hero. In the "Credo," Newman felt that Verdi and Boito had "boldly out-Shakespeared Shakespeare" in establishing beyond any doubt the person who drums on the emotions of all about him.

Iago was created as a character of total evil by Verdi and his librettist: unscrupulous and coolly controlled, one whose mask is removed only to the audience. He stands as Verdi's greatest achievement in character development after Lady Macbeth. Beyond individual characters, the music for *Otello* is well-nigh flawless in the dramatic pur-

Verdi on his way to a rehearsal of *Otello* at Milan's La Scala. Drawing from 1887 by G. Quaranta. Verdi nelle immagini, 1941. COURTESY, LIM M. LAI.



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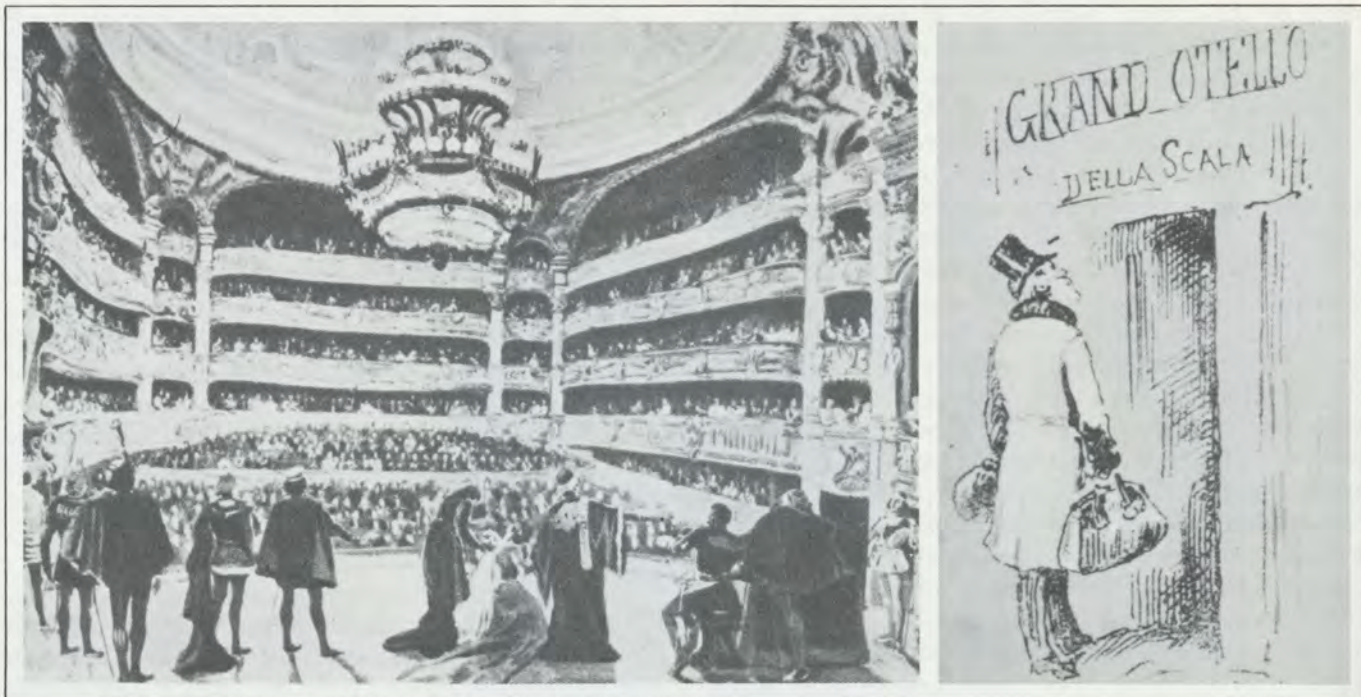
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Left: An artist's rendering of a scene from the third act of the Paris premiere of *Otello*, 1894. Right: Contemporary caricature of Verdi arriving at La Scala to begin *Otello* rehearsals. Verdi nelle immagini, 1941. COURTESY, LIM M. LAI

pose to which it is applied, whether it be the conjuring of a mood, or the movement and manipulation of the drama.

Only for a single instance does Verdi loosen his grip and slip into the commonplace: when he allows the chorus to hold up the momentum of the action with its thin "Fuoco di gioia" (mercifully, most productions ignore the pointless third act ballet Verdi dished up for the opera's Paris premiere). But this lapse, while bothersome, is hardly major, and certainly not when measured against the miracle-after-miracle that unfolds within this titanic musical canvas.

The first of these comes with the opening, slashing, wind-swept chorus in the orchestra. The audience is thrown immediately into the maelstrom of the story in a propulsive, thrilling manner. Next, there is Iago's remarkable drinking song in the first act. Again, the seeds for this scene were planted 40 years earlier in Verdi's first Shakespearean opera *Macbeth*, in the Lady's banquet toast. Convention normally dictated that such a festive moment be of more or less asymmetrical design, such as can be found in Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* or Verdi's own *La Traviata*. But Orsini or Violetta and Alfredo are little more than cardboard next to the flesh-and-blood figures of Lady Macbeth and Iago. Here there is no convention, no symmetry. How could there be when the drama dictated more? Both the drinking songs of Lady Macbeth and Iago are motivated by other than surface reasons.

Lady Macbeth is attempting to divert attention from her husband's hallucinations, while Iago wants to get Cassio drunk while on duty and discredit him. As the lieutenant responds to Iago's invitation to drink, the music gradu-

ally disintegrates as Cassio reels under the influence of the wine. The orchestra becomes as disjointed and feverish as Cassio's mind. Then, at the end of Act I, comes one of Verdi's most original strokes—a sustained love duet in which the voices of Desdemona and Otello join for only a moment in the final page. This rapturous stretch is a marvel of contrasts—the flowing, feminine lines of Desdemona juxtaposed with the more martial, masculine ones of Otello.

Boito had originally wanted Iago onstage watching the love scene and commenting on it, but Verdi was wiser. He insisted on establishing the depth and bliss of Desdemona and Otello's love before allowing Iago to corrode it with distrust and doubt. The second act begins with the powerful "Credo" already described, and climaxes with a stirring farewell to glory and honor by Otello, Iago's masterpiece of insinuation "Era la notte" and a duet between the two of a passion unmatched even in the powerful tenor-baritone duets of *La Forza del Destino*. This entire scene from "Ora e per sempre addio" through "Sì, pel ciel" is crafted as a single, unbroken strand of drama, as concentrated as it is overwhelming.

The first scene of Act III brings an almost unending stream of operatic invention from Verdi. First there is the brilliant characterization of the opposing states of mind of Otello and Desdemona in the duet "Dio ti giocondi," and then Otello's brooding monologue "Dio! mi potevi," as great an aria that has ever been written, yet like no other. In it Otello becomes a great beast licking his wounds in agony and self-pity. Finally there is the trio of conflicting emotions and purposes between Otello, Iago and Cassio in which Desdemona's fate is sealed.

The second half of the act is rooted more in pageantry and convention, but it possesses extraordinary touches



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Left: Lauritz Melchior was San Francisco Opera's first Otello (1934). It was the only time the tenor sang the role in the United States. Below: In 1936, San Francisco Opera presented Otello with Giovanni Martinelli as the Moor and Lawrence Tibbett (shown above) as Iago. Both Martinelli and Tibbett were singing their roles for the first time anywhere.

the stentorian Italian tenor Francesco Tamagno created the title role and the acclaimed French singing actor Victor Maurel was Iago. The ovations started in the first act after "Fuoco di gioia" and the Drinking Song, and when Verdi took a curtain call following Act I, there was "an immense shout" that made the theater rock. So it continued throughout the evening and long into the night. After the theater closed on this impressive event, Verdi's carriage was pulled by the crowd to his hotel, where he was cheered and serenaded until nearly daybreak of the next day.

In his rooms with only his wife and a few close friends, Verdi, however, seemed melancholy instead of jubilant. He said he felt as if he had "fired my last cartridge." He then added, "I so loved my solitude in the company of Otello and Desdemona. Now the crowd, always greedy for something new, has taken them away from me . . . My friends, if I were 30 years younger, I should like to begin a new opera tomorrow, provided Boito wrote the libretto."

But he had not fired his last cartridge, nor was the score yet settled. Two years later, Boito sent Verdi the synopsis for *Falstaff*. With it—the comic mask to complement the tragic one of *Otello*—the last shot was fired. The score was finally tabulated, and the debt Verdi long professed owing Shakespeare was at last paid. □



Morton Photo

generated by Verdi's keen theatrical sensibilities, such as the cutting asides from Otello to Desdemona as he reads the proclamation brought by Lodovico recalling him and appointing Cassio in his place as governor of Cyprus. This leads to the panoramic finale that caps the act and a final, supreme gesture of disdain and malevolence from Iago. As Otello collapses on the floor, unconscious in a spasm of delirium, amid fanfares and the cheering of the populace outside ("Glory to Otello, the Lion of Venice"), Iago plants his foot on the Moor's prostrated form sneering "Here is your lion!" In the orchestra there is a parallel nasty trill in the lower strings and winds.

The last act opens with two of the most atmospheric arias ever fashioned for soprano, the "Willow Song" and Desdemona's prayer, "Ave Maria." Their simplicity barely masks an underlying sense of terror and foreboding as Desdemona prepares for bed with profound sadness and quiet, penetrating fear. The mood of the music then stiffens with the entry of Otello against a mounting, eerie solo for the double basses.

It was Verdi who urged the condensation of the action at the end, so that the opera could move with urgency and directness following the murder of Desdemona. And with Otello's majestic farewell, "Niun mi tema," the opera concludes not with a bang or a whimper but on a kiss, another kiss and yet another kiss, as Otello takes his life and bids Desdemona a last farewell.

The world premiere at La Scala on February 5, 1887, was one of the sensations of the decade. Franco Faccio conducted (with the 19-year-old Toscanini in the cello section),



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Leonie Rysanek Meets Elektra

by Allan Ulrich

Elektra will have its American premiere showing in the Opera House, September 25, 1983 at 8 p.m.

THE SETTING of this little epic is an enormous stone building on the outskirts of Vienna, once a flourishing locomotive factory. In the era before people learned to hop jets the way they cross the street, the Austrian capital was renowned throughout Europe for the quality of its locomotives. But Vienna boasts another tradition, this one scarcely extinct: preserving the operatic reputation of Richard Strauss.

For two months in the summer of 1981, those two traditions met head-on in that abandoned factory: UNITEL Films of Munich committed Strauss' one-act tragedy, *Elektra*, to celluloid. This most intense, most concentrated of the composer's lyric tragedies demands from all an heroic effort, even in the most congenial and unhurried circumstances.

Such was not the case here. The participants included one of the opera world's most controversial directors, a designer noted for his flights of fancy, an 87-year-old conductor who knew only too well, as did his colleagues, that this assignment would be his last; and a soprano, who, on reaching that stage of a career when most singers cut back, had decided to tackle the most demanding part of her lifetime.

On September 25, San Francisco Opera audiences will be the first in America to discover how it all turned out. Götz Friedrich's version of *Elektra*, starring Leonie Rysanek in the title role of the revenge-crazed Mycenaean princess, with the late Karl Böhm conducting the Vienna Philharmonic, can be safely included among that infinitesimal number of opera films, that both remain true to the score and cohere on a purely cinematic level. UNITEL had intended the film primarily for television exhibition abroad, but special theatrical showings in both Berlin and Vienna convinced everybody involved that *Elektra* was simply too special to be consigned to the small screen. The Cannes Film Festival didn't bother with such trifles when it awarded the movie a special prize last year.

Confluences of talent like this *Elektra* don't simply happen. The project became a remote possibility almost six years ago.

"We have to be very honest. It was the subject of a lot of gossip for quite a while," recalled Rysanek one morning

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



Leonie Rysanek as Elektra.

last June, the day after her final Sieglinde at the Summer Festival.

Böhm and Friedrich had already collaborated successfully on a film of another Strauss opera, *Salome*, with Teresa Stratas. The conductor approached UNITEL about an *Elektra* to succeed it, an *Elektra* that would feature "his" cast—Birgit Nilsson in the title role, Rysanek as Chrysothemis and Astrid Varnay as Klytämnestra. The answer

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Artist Profiles

Margaret Price



Internationally acclaimed Welsh soprano **MARGARET PRICE** brings her celebrated portrayal of Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello* to the San Francisco Opera. She has triumphed in her previous appearances as the Verdi heroine, including the famed Covent Garden 1981 production with Carlos Kleiber conducting, and the recording, made with Carlo Cossutta under the baton of Sir Georg Solti. Miss Price made her American debut with the San Francisco Opera as Pamina in *The Magic Flute* in 1969 and performed Nannetta in *Falstaff* and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* with the Company in 1970. She returned here in 1980 as Amelia in Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* and the following season sang the title role of *Aida* here for the first time in this country. Her ascent to international stardom began in 1962 when, on 18 hours' notice, she appeared as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Covent Garden, the role of her Welsh National Opera debut that same year. She was then invited to sing Pamina and Mar-

zelle in *Fidelio* at Covent Garden and to appear in *La Vida Breve* and *Eugene Onegin* with BBC Television. She also made numerous appearances at the Aldeburgh and Glyndebourne Festivals. Since then, she has scored successes at La Scala, the Paris Opera, the Vienna Staatsoper, the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the opera houses of Munich and Hamburg. During the 1976 visit of the Paris Opera to New York and Washington, Miss Price was hailed for her performances as Desdemona and the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. She made her Zurich Opera debut in the title role of *Norma* during the 1978-79 season and, during the following season, was heard in Chicago in *Simon Boccanegra* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony under Sir Georg Solti. Some of her recent engagements include *Don Carlos* and *Otello* at the Munich Staatsoper, *Otello* at the Vienna Staatsoper, *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Paris Opera and *Lohengrin* with Peter Hofmann at La Scala. In great demand as a soloist and recording artist, Miss Price has recorded *Tristan und Isolde* with Carlos Kleiber, Mahler's Fourth Symphony with Edo de Waart and the San Francisco Symphony, and, most recently, *Un Ballo in Maschera* conducted by Georg Solti. A renowned Mozart interpreter, her recordings also include a Solti *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte* with Otto Klemperer, *Abduction from the Seraglio* with John Pritchard and two albums of Mozart arias with the English Chamber Orchestra. Projected engagements include the title role of *Maria Stuarda* in Zurich and *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Munich early next year.

Mezzo-soprano **LESLIE RICHARDS** sings Emilia in Verdi's *Otello*, the role of the Priestess in the American premiere of Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage* and the Nurse in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. She

Leslie Richards



appeared as Rossweisse in *Die Walküre* during the 1983 Summer Festival, a role she first sang with the Company in 1981. Last Fall Season, she sang the role of Clotilde in *Norma*, Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* and Mother Jeanne in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. She made her Company debut in the fall of 1980 in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *Jenufa*. During the 1982 San Francisco Opera Center Showcase series, Miss Richards sang Leonora in Scarlatti's *The Triumph of Honor*. She created the roles of Mme. Pernelle in the American Opera Project's world premiere of Kirke Mechem's *Tartuffe* in 1980 and Marla in the world premiere of Mollicone's *Emperor Norton* with Brown Bag Opera in 1981. As a member of the 1980 Merola Opera Program, she appeared as Nancy in *Albert Herring* and Berta in excerpts from *The Barber of Seville*. A native of Los Angeles, she participated in the San Diego Opera Center Program and made her debut with that company as Sofia in Verdi's *I Lombardi*



Carlo Cossutta

in 1979. In addition to her operatic assignments, Miss Richards has recently appeared with the San Francisco Concert Orchestra in Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* and a concert version of *Carmen* with the Ventura Symphony. Other recent engagements include Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Maddalena in *Rigoletto* with Hawaii Opera Theater, and the *St. Matthew Passion* with the Hawaii Symphony.

Tenor **CARLO COSSUTTA** returns to the San Francisco Opera in one of his most celebrated portrayals, the title role of Verdi's *Otello*. The Trieste-born tenor has interpreted the Moor in London, New York, Washington, Hamburg, Paris, Milan, Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich, Buenos Aires, Trieste, Florence, Geneva, Vienna, Naples, Bonn, Nice and Barcelona, among other cities. In 1977 he recorded the role with Margaret Price as Desdemona and Sir Georg Solti conducting the Vienna Philharmonic. After a long association with the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, where he was the leading tenor, Cossutta returned to Europe and made his Covent Garden debut in 1964 as the Duke in *Rigoletto*. He returned the following season to repeat his portrayal of the Duke and also appeared to great acclaim in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Other roles he has sung there include Don Carlos, Cavaradossi and, in 1974, his renowned *Otello*, which he repeated during the 1978 season. Cossutta made his 1972 San Francisco Opera debut as Radames in *Aida*, and the following season appeared for the first time at the Metropolitan Opera as Pollione in *Norma*. During the 1979 season, Cossutta appeared as *Otello* in Munich and Hamburg and sang Pollione at the Met,



Silvano Carroli

followed by performances of *I Pagliacci*, *Don Carlos*, *Aida* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Munich. In September of that year he sang *Otello* in Hamburg and finished the season with *Simon Boccanegra* in Chicago, and *La Forza del Destino* and *Aida* in Munich. His 1982 season began with *Samson et Dalila* in Trieste, *Otello* in Bonn and *I Pagliacci* in Stuttgart, as well as *Simon Boccanegra*, *Otello* and *Il Tabarro* in Munich. Earlier this year, he portrayed the Moor in Munich and Barcelona, appeared in *Norma* in Sofia and, in December of this year, will return to Barcelona as Radames.

Venetian-born **SILVANO CARROLI** returns to the San Francisco Opera as Iago in Verdi's *Otello*, a role he recently sang to great acclaim in Denver for the inaugural season of Opera Colorado, sharing the spotlight with Pilar Lorengar and James McCracken. He previously appeared on the War Memorial Stage as Renato in the 1982 production of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*. Considered a true Verdi baritone, Carroli began his career by winning first prize in the Palermo National Voice Competition in 1957 and in the Teatro La Fenice Contest in Venice in 1963. He was invited to join the opera school at La Fenice that same year, and made his debut as Marcello in *La Bohème*. In 1973 he won special acclaim for his portrayal of the High Priest in the Verona Opera Festival production of *Samson et Dalila*. During the 1977-78 season he made his American debut as Scarpia in *Tosca* with the Opera Society in Washington. The previous year he toured with La Scala on that company's Bicentennial visit to Washington, D.C. in the title role of *Simon Boccanegra*. A regular



Ryland Davies

performer with many important opera houses throughout the world, Carroli has appeared at La Scala, in Hamburg, Vienna, Marseilles, Chicago, and opera houses in Spain and Yugoslavia. He has also made recent appearances in Berlin in *Nabucco* and as Scarpia, in Hamburg in *I Vespri Siciliani* and *Il Trovatore*, at Covent Garden in *Otello* and *La Fanciulla del West*, in Munich in *Aida* as well as in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci* at the Metropolitan Opera. Earlier this year, Carroli participated in several festivals, including performances of *Aida* at the Orange Festival, at the Pro Musica Festival in Spain in *Tosca* and at the Sofia Music Festival in *Don Carlos*. Upcoming engagements include *Aida* at the Chicago Lyric Opera, *Simon Boccanegra* at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin and Verdi's *Jerusalem* at the Paris Opera.

Welsh tenor **RYLAND DAVIES** returns to the San Francisco Opera singing Jack in the American premiere of Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage* and Cassio in Verdi's *Otello*, a role he sang here in his 1970 American debut with the Company. That same season, he portrayed Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, a role he repeated here in 1973. It was as Ferrando and as Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* that the tenor first won critical acclaim at the Glyndebourne Festivals of 1968 and 1969. Now a stalwart at the renowned festival, Davies has repeated these roles and added Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Prince in *Love for Three Oranges* to his credits. This season, he returned to Glyndebourne as Belmonte and the Prince. Davies sings regularly with all the major opera houses in Great Britain and his



Walter MacNeil

appearances at Covent Garden have included Don Ottavio in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Ferrando, Cassio and Count Almaviva in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*. He returned there earlier this season for performances of *Don Pasquale*. Davies has sung extensively in France, appearing as Pelléas in Lyons, Belmonte at the Paris Opera and, most recently, Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* at Nancy. In 1979 he made his debut in Germany singing Pelléas in Stuttgart and has since returned for *La Traviata* and *Don Giovanni*. A busy concert artist, he has appeared extensively on the concert stages in Great Britain. This season he sang with the English Chamber Orchestra portraying the Evangelist in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* at the Barbican Centre. Davies's extensive discography includes complete operas by Cimarosa, Leoni, Montemezzi, Mozart, Verdi and Handel.

WALTER MACNEIL appears during the 1983 Fall Season as Roderigo in Verdi's *Otello*, Alfredo in the family matinee performance of *La Traviata* and as Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut*. A native of New York City, the young tenor made his operatic debut in 1959 as a choir boy in *Tosca* at the Central City Opera Festival. MacNeil was a winner of the 1982 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and portrayed the Duke in the 1982 Western Opera Theater fall tour of *Rigoletto*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1983 Summer Festival as Froh in *Das Rheingold*. He has performed with the New Jersey Opera and the Bronx Opera, where he has sung leading roles in *The Magic Flute*, *La Traviata*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème*, *The Barber of Seville*, and Vaughan Williams's *Hugh the*



Eric Halfvarson

Drover. Earlier this season he made his Carnegie Hall debut singing with Marilyn Horne in Rossini's *Semiramide*. Most recently, MacNeil was a participant in the 1983 Carmel Bach Festival, where he appeared as Ferrando in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, and was heard as Cassio in Opera Colorado's production of *Otello* with James McCracken.

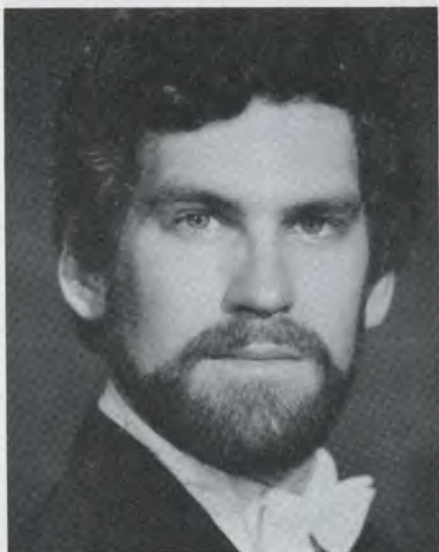
ERIC HALFVARSON returns to the San Francisco Opera as Lodovico in Verdi's *Otello*. During the 1982 Fall Season he appeared as the Marquis in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Surin in *The Queen of Spades* and Angelotti in *Tosca*. The young bass made his professional debut in *The Barber of Seville* at the 1973 Lake George Opera Festival. Subsequent performances there included *The Magic Flute*, *Manon*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Don Giovanni*. Since joining the Houston Opera in 1976, Halfvarson has been heard there in productions including *Arabella*, *Norma*, *Aida*, *Tosca*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Jenufa*, *Werther* and *Madama Butterfly*. He made his 1979 Chicago Lyric Opera debut in Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*. Halfvarson first appeared with San Francisco Opera during the 1981 Summer Festival as Ortel in *Die Meistersinger* and Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*. That fall, he appeared in San Francisco Opera productions of *Semiramide*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and *Le Cid*. During the 1981-82 season he returned to Houston as Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* and as Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*; this last season, as Colline in *La Bohème*. Recent engagements include *Adriana Lecouvreur* with the New Orleans Opera, *L'Africaine* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Venezuela and *Manon Lescaut* with the



Jacob Will

Baltimore Opera. Earlier this year Halfvarson appeared in a concert performance of *Semiramide* at Carnegie Hall with Marilyn Horne and sang Colline in *La Bohème* with Opera Colorado. Other recent engagements include a televised performance of Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust* with the Boston Symphony under Seiji Ozawa.

Bass-baritone **JACOB WILL** undertakes several assignments during the 1983 Fall Season: Montano in *Otello*; the Messenger in *La Traviata*; Baron Douphol in the family matinee performance of *La Traviata*; the 2nd Philistine in *Samson et Dalila*; a Sea Captain in *Manon Lescaut*; and the roles of Lavitsky and Mitiukh in *Boris Godunov*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1983 Summer Festival as the Customhouse Guard in *La Bohème*. Born in South Carolina, Will was a participant in the 1982 Merola Opera Program, during which he appeared at Stern Grove as the Speaker in *The Magic Flute* and at Villa Montalvo as Count Monterone in *Rigoletto*. During the 1983 Merola presentation at Stern Grove, he sang the role of Dr. Miracle in Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann*. A finalist in the 1981 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Will is currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center. Pursuing his Master of Music Degree at the University of Cincinnati under the tutelage of Italo Tajo and Andrew White, his roles at that institution have included Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* and Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*. Will has also appeared in *Madama Butterfly* with the Columbia Lyric Opera and as Anselmo in Rossini's *La Gazzetta*, in which he was



John MacAllister



Marek Janowski



Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

heard at the American Opera Auditions in Cincinnati.

Bass **JOHN MACALLISTER** sings five roles in the 1983 Fall Season: the Herald in *Otello*; Marquis D'Obigny in both casts of *La Traviata*; Zuane in *La Gioconda*; the Innkeeper in *Manon Lescaut*; and Nikitich in *Boris Godunov*. He most recently appeared with the Company in 1982 in *Salome* and *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. After becoming a finalist in the 1971 San Francisco Opera Auditions, MacAllister sang many roles with the San Francisco Opera during the seasons of 1973 and 1978. During the 1979 season, he appeared in *Don Carlo*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *La Fanciulla del West*. That same season he participated in the American Opera Project's world premiere of John Harbison's *Winter's Tale* at Herbst Theatre. With Spring Opera Theater, MacAllister was heard in *L'Ormino* and Bach's *Passion According to St. Matthew*. In recent years he has been featured with the San Jose Symphony in their productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *La Traviata* and *Carmen*, and with the Bear Valley Music Festival in *The Barber of Seville*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *The Marriage of Figaro*. MacAllister's concert credits include Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the San Francisco Symphony; appearances with the Oakland Symphony in Mahler's Eighth Symphony and Handel's *Messiah*; and Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* with the Mozart Festival.

MAREK JANOWSKI makes his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1983 Fall Season conducting Verdi's *Otello* and Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. Born in Poland,

but a resident of Germany from a very early age, Janowski's first major appointment after finishing his studies in Cologne was with the Hamburg Opera from 1969 to 1973. In this latter year, he became music director of the Freiburg Opera and, from 1975 to 1979, held a similar position in Dortmund. In the 1977-78 season he made his Berlin Philharmonic debut and in 1980, his American opera debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago production of Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Since 1979 he has worked extensively with four organizations: the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, the Bavarian State Opera, the Paris Opera and the Dresden Staatskapelle. Since 1980 he has been the principal guest conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic in England and, in September of this year, became senior conductor of that orchestra with the title of Artistic Adviser. During the 1982 season, Janowski conducted a new production of *The Rake's Progress* in Cologne; led *Lohengrin* on Hamburg Opera's tour to Moscow; made his first appearances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival and with the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Lyons Berlioz Festival; was on the podium in Cologne for *Die Meistersinger* and Mahler's Seventh Symphony; and conducted a concert performance of *Parsifal* in Paris with Leonie Rysanek, Siegfried Jerusalem and the Orchestre National de Paris. Currently his major project is the first complete digital recording of Wagner's *Ring* with the Dresden Staatskapelle. The first half, *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, have been released to wide critical acclaim, with the cycle to be completed this year. He has also recorded Weber's *Euryanthe* and Strauss' *Die*

schweigsame Frau for EMI, Korngold's *Violanta* for CBS, and the world premiere recording of Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudon* for Philips. Recent projects have included a Wagner Centenary concert with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and a production of Janáček's *From the House of the Dead* with the Cologne Radio Orchestra. During the 1983-84 season, Janowski will be on the podium of the Metropolitan Opera for Strauss' *Arabella*, in Munich for *Parsifal*, and at the Aix-en-Provence Festival conducting Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*.

One of the world's most noted and discussed directors and designers, **JEAN-PIERRE PONNELLE**, conceived the production of Verdi's *Otello* for the San Francisco Opera first in 1970, with repeat presentations in 1974 and 1978. Ponnelle's productions have been seen in all of the world's major opera houses, and many of them have originated in San Francisco. He made his American design debut with the Company in premieres of Orff's *Carmina Burana* and *The Wise Maiden* in 1958, and returned the following season to design the American premiere production of Strauss' *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. In 1968 he began to assume dual responsibility as director/designer with productions of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Così fan tutte* at the Salzburg Festival, where earlier this year he was responsible for *Die Zauberflöte* and *Idomeneo*. The first American project both designed and directed by Ponnelle was San Francisco Opera's *La Cenerentola*, seen here for the first time in 1969 and revived for the 1974 and 1982 Fall Seasons. Other Ponnelle productions include *Così fan tutte* (1970, '73, '79 and '83 Summer Festival),

A black and white photograph of a man, likely a performer, wearing a white, draped robe with a decorative floral pattern on the shoulder. He has a beard and is looking upwards with his mouth wide open in a dramatic, expressive pose. The background is dark and out of focus.

Otello

PHOTOS
TAKEN IN REHEARSAL
BY WILLIAM ACHESON

This page: Carlo Cossutta



Marry Suhl



Marry Sohl

OTELLO

Far left: Carlo Cossutta, Margaret Price.

Near left: Silvano Carroli.

Below: Margaret Price.

Below left: Silvano Carroli.





OTELLO

Left: Carlo Cossutta.

Below: Ryland Davies.

*Bottom (left-to-right): Leslie Richards,
Carlo Cossutta, Margaret Price,
Eric Halfvarson, Silvano Carroli,
Walter MacNeil.*



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

Opera in four acts by GIUSEPPE VERDI
Libretto by ARRIGO BOITO
Based on the play by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Otello

(in Italian)

Conductor
Marek Janowski*

Production
Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

Stage Director
Grischa Asagaroff

Designer
Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

Lighting Director
Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director
Richard Bradshaw

Musical Preparation
James Johnson
Susanna Lemberskaya

Prompter
Susan Webb

Assistant Stage Director
Robin Thompson

Stage Manager
Jerry Sherk

San Francisco Boys Chorus
William Ballard, *Director*

San Francisco Girls Chorus
Elizabeth Appling, *Director*

First performance:
Milan, February 5, 1887

First San Francisco Opera performance:
December 5, 1934

Baldwin organ provided courtesy
of Baldwin Piano & Organ Center,
Santa Clara, California

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Montano Jacob Will
Cassio Ryland Davies
Iago Silvano Carroli
Roderigo Walter MacNeil
Otello Carlo Cossutta
Desdemona Margaret Price
Emilia Leslie Richards
A herald John MacAllister
Lodovico Eric Halfvarson

Soldiers, Sailors, Cypriots, Venetians

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE:

Late 15th century; a seaport on Cyprus

ACT I: Outside Otello's castle
by the sea

INTERMISSION

ACT II: A hall and terrace of
the castle

INTERMISSION

ACT III: The great hall of
the castle

INTERMISSION

ACT IV: Desdemona's bedchamber

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 AT 7:00
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 AT 8:00
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 AT 7:30
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 AT 2:00
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 AT 8:00
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 AT 8:00
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1 AT 8:00

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after the lights have dimmed.*

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

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

Opening night flowers courtesy of Ah Sam.

Otello

Synopsis

ACT ONE—On the island of Cyprus, Venetian officers and the Cypriot populace are awaiting the arrival of the Moor Otello, the governor from Venice, whose ship is battling a violent storm. The storm subsides and Otello lands, to the joy of the crowd. Only Iago and Roderigo do not share the general happiness. Iago is bitter because Otello has named Cassio his lieutenant, instead of Iago; and Roderigo is unhappy because he is in love with Desdemona, Otello's wife.

Iago is already plotting his revenge, and when Cassio appears, Iago and Roderigo make him drunk, then provoke a duel with Montano. Otello, summoned by the brawling, dismisses Cassio from his service. Desdemona also comes out, and when all have gone, she and Otello again declare their love.

ACT TWO—Iago, now Otello's confidant, continues his plotting. He advises Cassio to ask Desdemona to intercede with Otello for the disgraced officer's pardon. The Moor sees Cassio with his wife, and Iago plants the seed of jealousy, which grows as Desdemona pleads with her husband to forgive their old friend Cassio.

Iago takes a handkerchief of Desdemona's from his wife, Emilia, who is Desdemona's companion. Later he will use it as evidence. When he and Otello are alone, he tells how he heard Cassio talk in his sleep about Desdemona, as if the two of them were lovers. Otello vows vengeance,

and Iago swears to assist him and to furnish him with proof.

ACT THREE—Ambassadors are coming from Venice. Before they arrive, Desdemona again broaches the subject of Cassio, and Otello openly accuses her of adultery. Later he spies on a meeting between Iago and Cassio, who displays a handkerchief he has mysteriously found in his room. It is Desdemona's, placed there by Iago. Otello cannot hear the two men's words, but the sight of the handkerchief convinces him. When he receives the ambassadors, he cannot restrain his jealous fury and, in front of all, insults his wife and hurls her to the floor. Iago feels that his triumph is near.

ACT FOUR—Desdemona is preparing for bed. As Emilia assists her, she sings "Willow, willow," a sad song about unhappy love. Emilia leaves; Desdemona prays, then goes to bed. Otello enters and warns her that he has come to kill her. Again she protests her innocence, but he refuses to believe her and strangles her. Emilia knocks, then bursts in to tell Otello that Roderigo, who—according to Iago's plot—was to kill Cassio, has been killed. Cassio lives.

Desdemona moans. Emilia cries out in horror, and others come in, including Iago, whose villainy is revealed. Iago flees, pursued by the others, and Otello kills himself over Desdemona's lifeless body.

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Grischa Asagaroff

Carmen (1981 and '83 Summer Festival), *Tosca* (1972, '76 '78 and '82), *Rigoletto* (1973 and '81 Summer Festival), *Der Fliegende Holländer* and *Gianni Schicchi* (1975 and '79), *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci* (1976 and '80), *Turandot* and *Idomeneo* (1977), *Il Prigioniero* (1979) and the American premiere of Reimann's *Lear* (1981 Summer Festival). Ponnelle has created productions of *Falstaff* for Glyndebourne; *Moses und Aron* for Geneva; *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Salzburg Festival; *Tristan und Isolde* at Bayreuth; and Wagner's *Ring* cycle in Stuttgart. For the Cologne Opera he has created a series of Mozart opera productions, and in Zurich he produced the three extant Monteverdi operas, all of which were filmed and televised in this country over PBS. Recent assignments have included a new production of Busoni's *Arluccchino* in Houston, and later this season his production of *La Cenerentola* and *Der Fliegende Holländer* will be seen at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. His film credits include *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Madama Butterfly*, also seen on American television.

Returning for his fifth season with the San Francisco Opera, German director **GRISCHA ASAGAROFF** directs Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* and stages the Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of Verdi's *Otello*. While studying theater science, music and art history at the University of Munich, he served as stage manager and second assistant at the Bavarian State Opera, where he worked on 70 different operas from all periods with such directors as Rudolf Hartmann, Günther Rennert, Ponnelle, Otto Schenk and August Everding. From



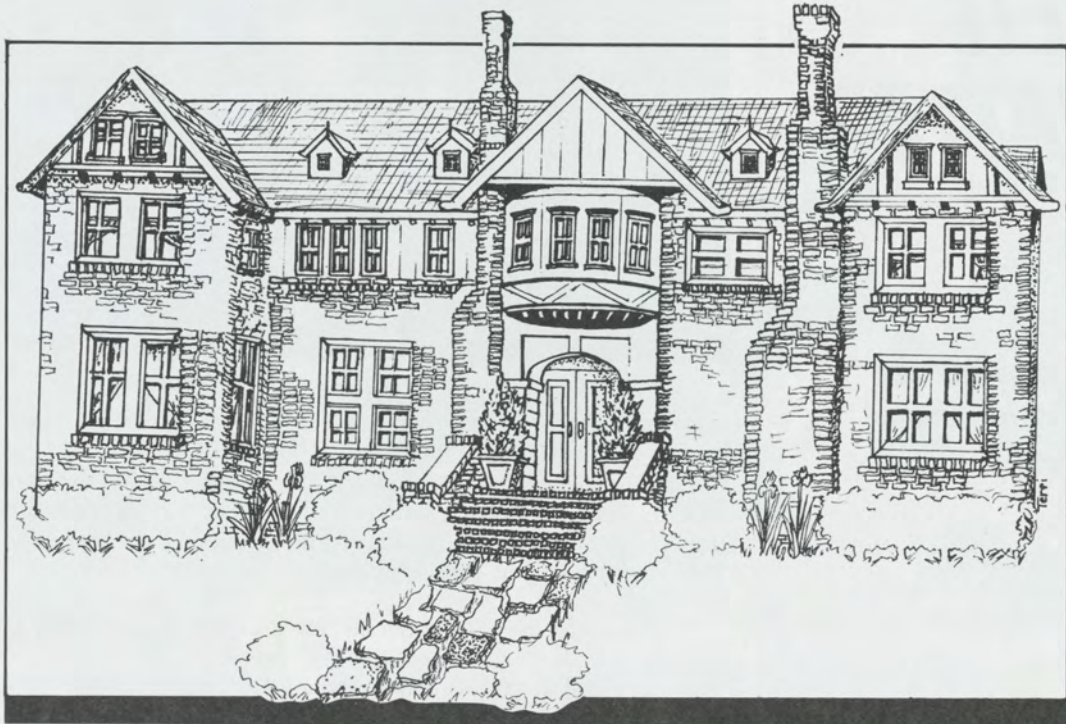
Thomas J. Munn

1969 to 1971 he was first assistant and director for the Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Düsseldorf. His first assignment with the San Francisco Opera was assisting Ponnelle on the 1977 production of Mozart's *Idomeneo*, and he served Nikolaus Lehnhoff in a similar capacity for *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in 1980 and *Salome* during the 1982 Fall Season. During the first Summer Festival in 1981, Asagaroff staged Ponnelle's production of *Rigoletto*. He has been associated with the Zurich Opera since 1979 and is principal stage director for the opera as well as the main teacher of the opera studio. Asagaroff's own productions include *Il Matrimonio segreto* in Dortmund, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in the Netherlands and at Passau, *La Cenerentola* in Athens, *Don Pasquale* and *Lo Frate innamorato* in Zurich and Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* at the Split Festival. Recent stagings in Zurich include *The Barber of Seville*, *L'Ormino* and *Fedora*. Recent assignments have included *Aida* in Zurich, *Rigoletto* in Houston, and revivals of *La Cenerentola* in Chicago and Ottawa. Future engagements include productions of *Maria Stuarda*, *Viva la Mamma*, *Rigoletto* and *Macbeth* in Zurich, *Tosca* and *Simon Boccanegra* in Houston, and the Met revival of *L'Italiana in Algeri*.

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 Gêrolstein*, *La Gioconda* and *Boris Godunov* during the 1983 Fall Season. For the 1983 Summer Festival, Munn designed the lighting for *Das Rheingold*, *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 the 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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ELEKTRA (Continued from page 45)



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came back: the cast is too old to be credible on the screen.

"So," Rysanek continued, "I forgot all about it. Then, when I was on tour with the Wiener Staatsoper in Washington in 1980 (my best Salome, ever) I had dinner with Karl."

The musician whom Rysanek calls "my mentor, my father, my everything," announced that the project was on again. Her response was immediate:

"Oh, Karl, you know I always love doing Chrysothemis with you."

"No, no," came the reply, "Elektra."

Dolly in on one very perplexed and slightly panicky diva.

"But, Karl, you, you of all people. You always told me never to sing the role."

"For once," he answered, "I would like to hear something different in Elektra, maybe not quite so heroic, but sweeter and more feminine, especially in the Recognition Scene. I want a legato Elektra."

So, the diva thought it over. How could she not? For thirty years, she had distinguished herself on virtually all the world's important opera stages as the leading Chrysothemis of the era. Moreover, Böhm had shared many of those triumphs, from New York to the Herod Atticus Amphitheater in Athens, with sundry ovations in between. And she had never forgotten that the essential word in any singer's vocabulary is "No."

But the conditions seemed too good to resist. Although Rysanek had never worked with Friedrich, the former assist-

ant of Walter Felsenstein at the Komische Oper in East Berlin, she had admired his contribution to the Deutsche Oper in West Berlin, where Friedrich was *Generalintendant*, and she had adored his cinematic *Salome*.

The cast was tops, too. Swedish soprano Catarina Ligendza would now assume the role of Chrysothemis, the younger, innocent, uncomprehending sister. The legendary Astrid Varnay, once a formidable Elektra in her own right, would sing Klytämnestra. No less a luminary than baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau would be Orest, and veteran *Heldentenor* Hans Beirer would impersonate Aegisth, Klytämnestra's dissolute paramour. The producers would exercise great care, also, in the minor parts: veteran German bass Josef Greindl, for example, was cast as the tutor of Orest. Sharp-eyed San Francisco Opera patrons will recognize Carmen Reppel, one of this season's Ariadnes, as Klytämnestra's Confidante. (Sharper-eyed patrons will catch Rysanek's soprano sister, Lotte, filling in for her illustrious sibling in a couple of shots.)

And this, Rysanek told herself, was only a movie.

"I started learning the part, and I just wasn't comfortable. I talked to Böhm about my fears. He called them 'labor pains.' I went to my old coach—he's now more than 80. And he pleaded with me not to try and darken the voice. 'Sing it like Chrysothemis,' he advised.

"From that moment on, learning Elektra



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still wasn't easy. It was, shall we say, easier."

One is tempted to ask, "Easier than what?" The heroine is rarely absent during the entire 100 minutes of the opera. Her interpreter must constantly compete with an orchestra of 120 musicians. She must begin her opening monologue, "Allein, ganz allein," at an emotional and dynamic extreme, survive heated exchanges with both Chrysothemis and Klytämnestra, turn tender for the Recognition Scene, and conserve sufficient energy for the hysterical finale.

The fact that UNITEL would record the soundtrack first, and then have the singers lip-synch their parts during the shooting, didn't make Rysanek breathe any easier.

"I remember the first day of the taping at the Sofiensaal. I couldn't sleep at all the night before. Our recording producer, Andrew Raeburn, tried to cheer me up. But, you know, I never really liked to record in the studio. It's just too broken up. I could never stand hearing the playback of my own voice. And, then, temperamentally, I never thought I was as good on record as I was on stage. I still think so.

"We started with the final duet for the two sisters. And, then, as soon as the music began, something hit me. Pow!"

Uppermost in the mind of everybody at the taping was the deteriorating condition of Böhm's health. He was still ailing when

the crew and the Vienna Philharmonic set up in the Sofiensaal in the latter part of March. He suffered a serious stroke on April 5, and when he returned later, there were days when he could muster sufficient strength to record only a few pages at a time. It was agreed that, in order to conserve his energies, no more than two takes of any passage would be recorded.

Yet, Böhm's 50-year experience served *Elektra* and Rysanek well. All the way through the sessions, he prodded her not to overdo, to think carefully about the part. As with everything else he conducted, line was to be the paramount consideration.

"He would say to me, 'The more beautifully she sings, the more horrifying she is. Murder is a fascinating thing.'

"Yet when we came to the moment when Elektra curses Chrysothemis for not joining her plot, when she sings, 'Sei verflucht,' and the part rises to that B-flat, he stopped me. 'Too beautiful. You wouldn't curse anyone that way.'"

With only the Recognition Scene awaiting taping, Böhm suffered a relapse. On June 11, he gathered enough energy to complete the recording. He was helped to the podium and, before delivering the downbeat, he addressed his beloved Vienna Philharmonic.

"It was a heartbreaking occasion. He was saying farewell to the orchestra. He

Astrid Varnay as Klytämnestra.



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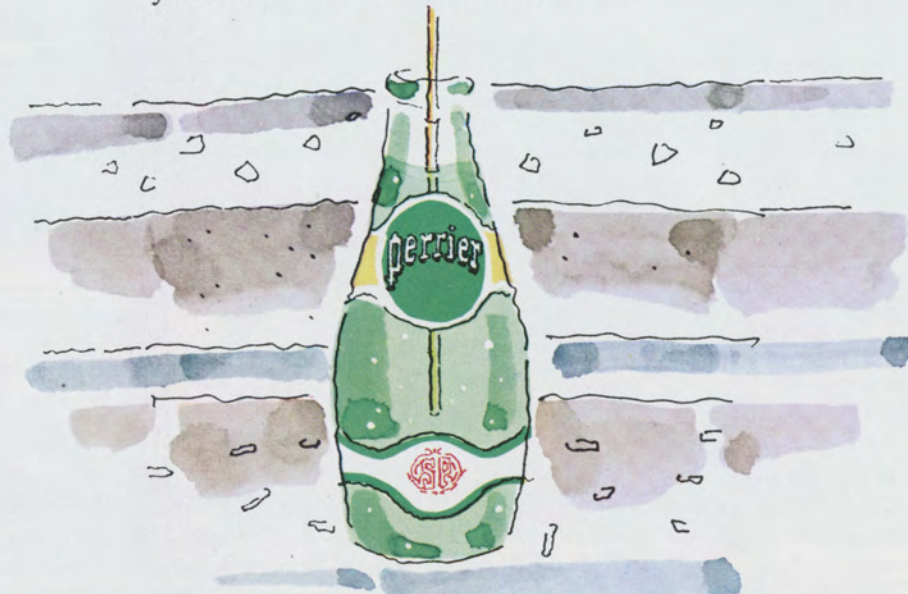
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The maids.

knew he would never conduct them again, and, as a farewell gift, he gave them five of Richard Strauss' diaries. And, you know, June 11 is Strauss' birthday. It was the completion of a circle. I found myself in tears." Böhm was to die the following August, without ever having seen the completed film. But, in his last months, he rejoiced in playing the cassette of the performance to any and all who would listen.

With the soundtrack in the can, the actual shooting proceeded on schedule. Inspired by a trip to Greece, Czech designer Josef Svoboda converted the entire locomotive factory into an enormous representation of the crumbling courtyard of Agamemnon's palace. The truncated pillars and chipped masonry suggest stone, but Svoboda used aluminum. The mists that hover everywhere and the puddles that make the set resemble a physical and moral swamp were, however, all too real.

Overnight, Leonie Rysanek, diva, became Leonie Rysanek, movie star. From her description, it was far from a glamorous existence.

"The calls were for 7 a.m. So I got up every morning at six, and would walk into the studio with the red eyes, white face and stringy hair you see in the movie. I used to tell the make-up people not to bother. I just wasn't the gorgeous creature you think I am."

Friedrich insisted on a concentrated shooting schedule. They began at 9, broke at noon, and frequently continued into the late evening. He proved himself a super-

realist. When you see Rysanek splashing around in a pool of blood and water, you're not seeing her double.

"They used hot water," she mutters. "But it wasn't hot by the time I walked through it."

Candor compels her to reveal that her first meetings with Friedrich were not auspicious. First, he wanted to change her blue eyes. Then, the shooting was out of sequence. And then, there was his insistence that the performers sing full out in accompaniment to their pre-recorded voices, rather than just mouthing the words, or marking.

The dialogue went something like:

"I must mark. I can't sing Elektra eight hours a day."

"No. You can't mark. You're no good if you're marking."

"Sadist!"

Yet the long periods of inactivity bothered her most of all. In the movie world, lights must be changed, cameras moved, make-up adjusted. "One day, we managed to film 28 seconds."

Ultimately, it proved an unforgettable experience. Rysanek remembers it all with a chuckle. She recalls her reaction to first seeing Varnay in her grotesque costume and silent-movie make-up: "I look terrible, but you look out of this world."

And she'll never forget that cold morning when Friedrich made her run, barefoot, into a wall, over and over again. On the tenth try, she slipped and couldn't get up. It was diagnosed as a pulled muscle.



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They called a taxi and, still in rags, fingernails bloodied, they carted her to the hospital, right to the ambulance entrance.

"You should have seen their faces. They're probably still wondering where they ever found me."

Nevertheless, she emerged from the experience with some very valid ideas about the character.

"There is no doubt that Elektra witnessed the murder of Agamemnon. She was probably about 12 or 13. How else

pite everything, was my mother. He said, 'There must be pain here, not hate. There is already enough hate in this opera.'

"It took me a while," she continued, "to realize that Orest is involved in a power struggle. After the murders, he will very definitely take over."

The hour has almost elapsed. Rysanek is about to fly back to Europe. But, under the circumstances, a couple of questions still demand to be asked. The most obvious: will she ever sing Elektra on the stage?

the low and high notes, and managed to project it over the orchestra, I just wouldn't find the stamina to get through it.

"There's no place to relax. Even in the Klytämnestra scene, where Elektra doesn't have so much to sing, the sheer intensity is simply overwhelming.

"The only other role that demands so much is Kundry, but there it's concentrated. After the second act of *Parsifal*, you have to pick me up off the stage."

Rysanek remains uncertain about the value and quality of opera on film and television.

"Aside from the *Salome*, I haven't yet found one that satisfies me. Either they're taken directly from the stage, or they move too far away from the score. Even at their best, I tend to lose interest after an hour or two.

"Look at Patrice Chéreau's Bayreuth *Götterdämmerung*," she specified, mentioning a recent telecast. "The way Gunther drags Brünnhilde in during the second act, a stroke of pure genius. But, then, I notice that the Rhine is nothing more than a painted strip. It never thrills me the way it does in the house.

"Yet, opera films do bring audiences into the theater. We can't deny that." She muses a moment. "I only hope they don't come with false expectations."

Is it possible that one day Rysanek will share her inimitable dramatic flair with audiences of the legitimate theater, as did her former Viennese colleague, Ljuba Welitsch? Probably not. It would appear that the singing and speaking voice are completely different entities.

And what about another movie? Rysanek hesitates. She went through hell at the Berlin premiere of *Elektra*, burying her head in her hands, refusing to look at the screen, until the film was well underway. One senses she'd rather move on to the next performance.

She feels no envy for the lives of movie stars.

"On the contrary, I pity them. It's a horrible, boring experience, shooting a film. It happens in bits, and you have to keep regenerating the feeling. During *Elektra*, I lost ten pounds that way."

Still she hasn't rejected the possibility of returning to the sound stage. Before his death, German director Rainer Werner Fassbinder even approached her about the possibility of a part in one of his films. He paid her the kind of compliment that might turn the head of a lesser mortal.

Said Fassbinder: "Your talent is almost wasted in the opera house." □



Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (Orest) is greeted by the people.

UNITEL

could she know enough to describe every detail in the monologue? It was too much of a secret around the palace. Nobody would have told her of it."

Rysanek found that, despite the unremitting atmosphere of horror, Friedrich constantly humanized the work.

"When Elektra screams into the palace at Orest, 'Triff noch einmal!' ('Strike her again!'), Götz reminded me that this, des-

The answer, from the soprano who has vivified more Strauss heroines than anyone else in our era, is predictable. It is still disappointing.

"No, for two reasons. On tape, I can get through the extended passages knowing that there is a possibility for retakes.

"But, more important, you know how emotional I am. If I sang the opening monologue honestly, as written, with all

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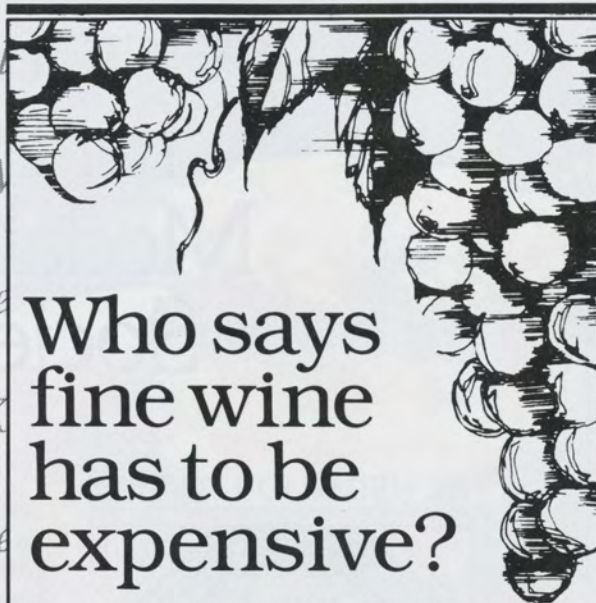
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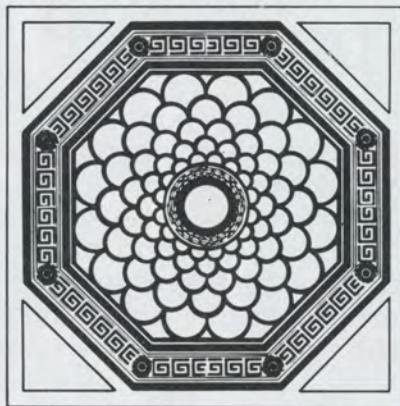
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tions of our gratitude to our friends who do the most to help us. Your support means a great deal to us. Since the Company already does everything possible to insure that performances are of the highest artistic standards, our way of thanking our most generous supporters is to enhance their understanding and enjoyment of those performances as best we can.

For instance, how did you spend your time just before the last opera performance you attended? Chances are you spent it driving around the congested Civic Center area, searching for an elusive parking space. It can certainly take the glow off an evening at the opera to rush in breathless seconds before the curtain goes up or, worse, to be a minute late and have to stand until the first scene is over. Medallion Society members don't have to worry: they receive free, reserved parking when attending their opera subscription series.

After you have parked and entered the Opera House, there is the matter of where you sit. With the San Francisco Opera currently enjoying a subscription renewal rate as high as 85 percent, moving to a better location for your season tickets can take years. Medallion Society members, however, are given the highest priority for improved seat locations when they renew their subscriptions.

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In addition, Medallion Society members receive priority seating at special events sponsored by the San Francisco Opera. The red carpet will always be rolled out for Medallion Society members.

Your enjoyment of any performance can be enhanced if you are more familiar with what goes on behind the scenes. Medallion Society members are invited to dress rehearsals, at which they will sit in box seats and witness those last-minute adjustments that are so vital in bringing a production to world-class standards.

Have you ever wondered how things look from the other side of that great, gold curtain? The wonders of the backstage area of the Opera House will be revealed on personal tours for Medallion Society members, who may arrange a guided visit by calling a special information line. Of course, members will be allowed to bring a guest for this taste of life in the musical theater.

Some events will be given expressly for members of The Medallion Society. Each year, for example, a special operatic recital will be given by invitation only outside of the Company's Summer Festival and Fall Season. Medallion Society members have demonstrated their love of the vocal art; these "command performances" are our way of returning the affection.

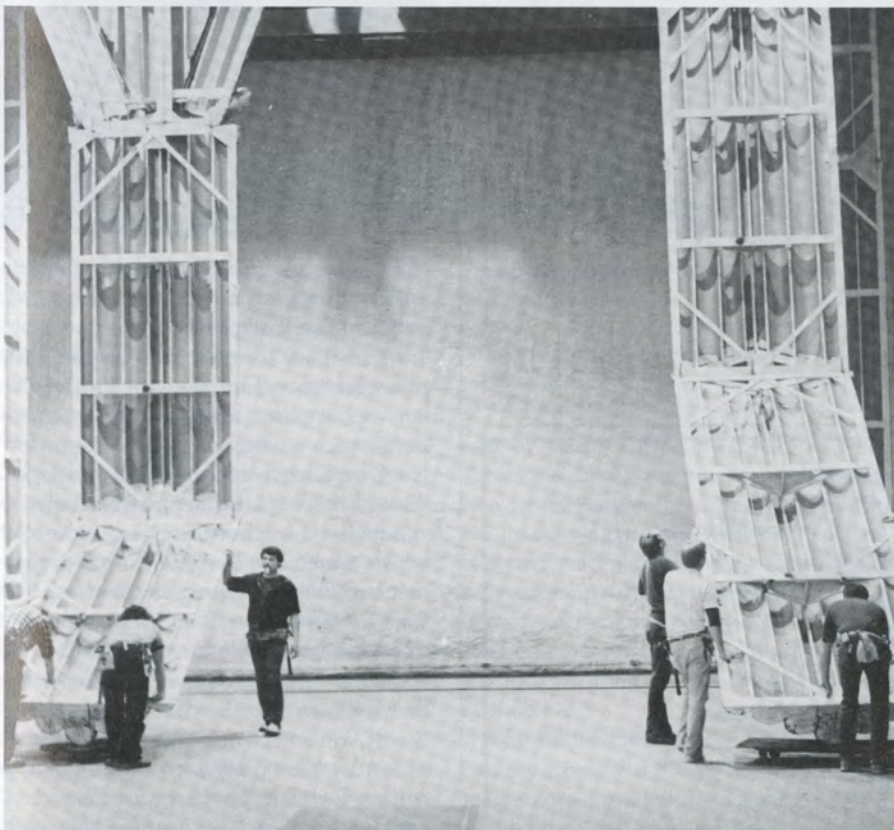
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Above: During their subscription series, members of The Medallion Society will receive free, reserved parking in the brand-new Performing Arts Center Garage, less than one-half block from the Opera House.

Below: "Sponsor" members of The Medallion Society will view a "tech" rehearsal after a buffet lunch on the mezzanine level. Here, stagehands erect part of the Nibelheim set for Wagner's Das Rheingold.



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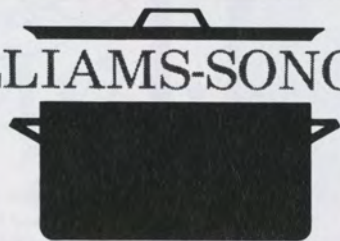
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All of these services and events will be provided for each member of The Medalion Society, but those whose contributions reach or exceed \$2,500 ("Sponsor" level) are accorded further privileges. Among these is a buffet lunch on the mezzanine (box) level of the Opera House, at which a member of the technical department will discuss the mechanical marvels that transform the War Memorial stage into an ancient castle, an arid desert or lush forest, or whatever seemingly impossible demands are made by the librettist. Afterwards you will be able to see this magic in action by attending what is known as a "tech rehearsal." There the arcane technical mysteries of 20th century stagecraft

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will be demonstrated as you watch the physical aspects of a production being coordinated. It is "tech rehearsals" such as the one you will witness that keep the elaborate technical facilities inconspicuous, so that only the illusion remains.

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What else could you possibly want to know about operations at San Francisco Opera? Whatever it is, why not ask the

A special tour will take "Sponsor" members of The Medallion Society to places rarely viewed by the public, such as the enormous Scene Shop, where sets for San Francisco Opera productions are built and stored. Shown here are the enormous portals from The Ring of the Nibelung under construction.

man in charge, Company general director Terence A. McEwen, when you dine with him in the Lower Lounge of the Opera House before a dress rehearsal? His articulate eloquence, long demonstrated on the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts and his popular local radio appearances, is sure to elucidate the most complex of art forms in a way few other people in the world are qualified to.

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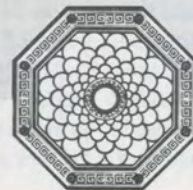
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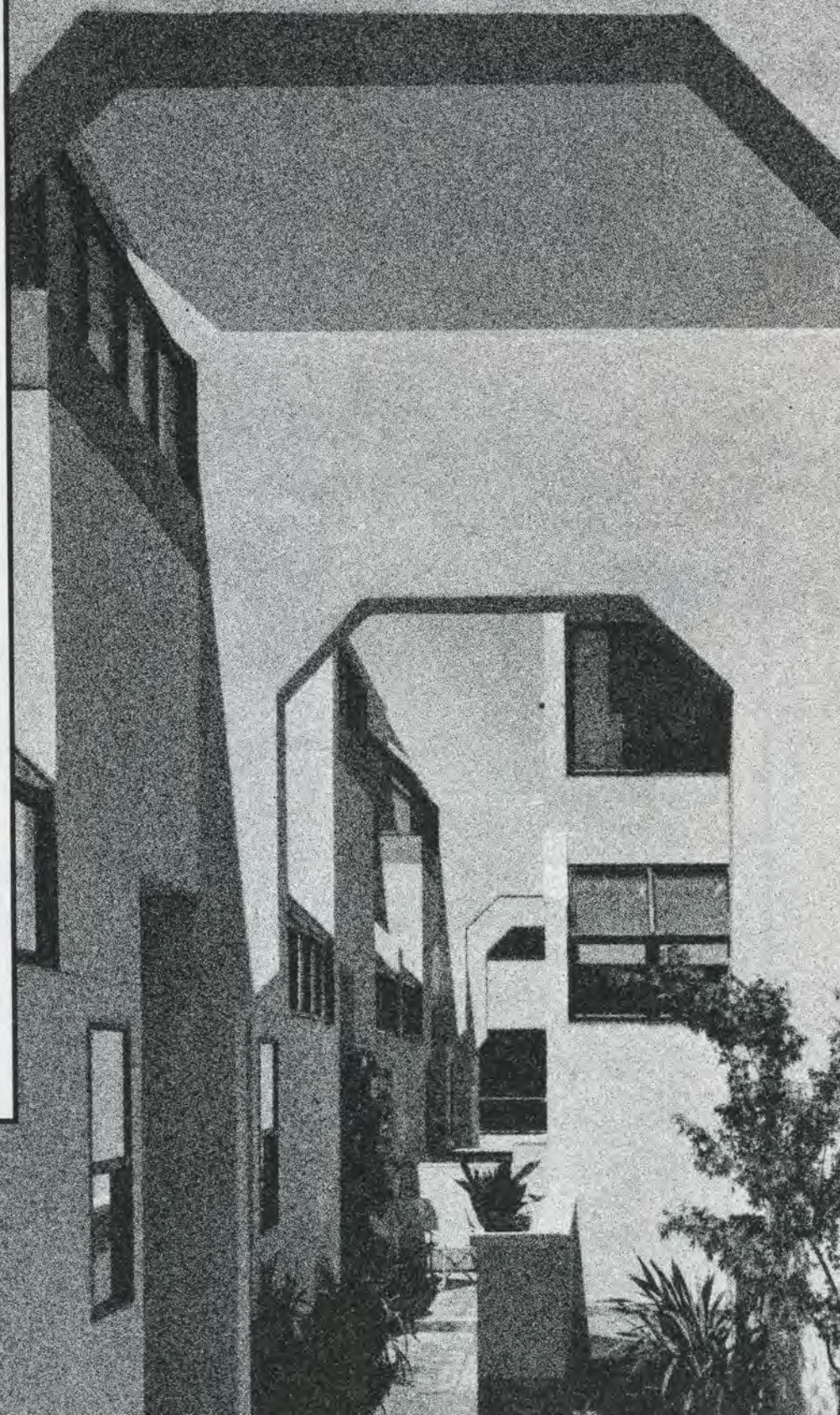


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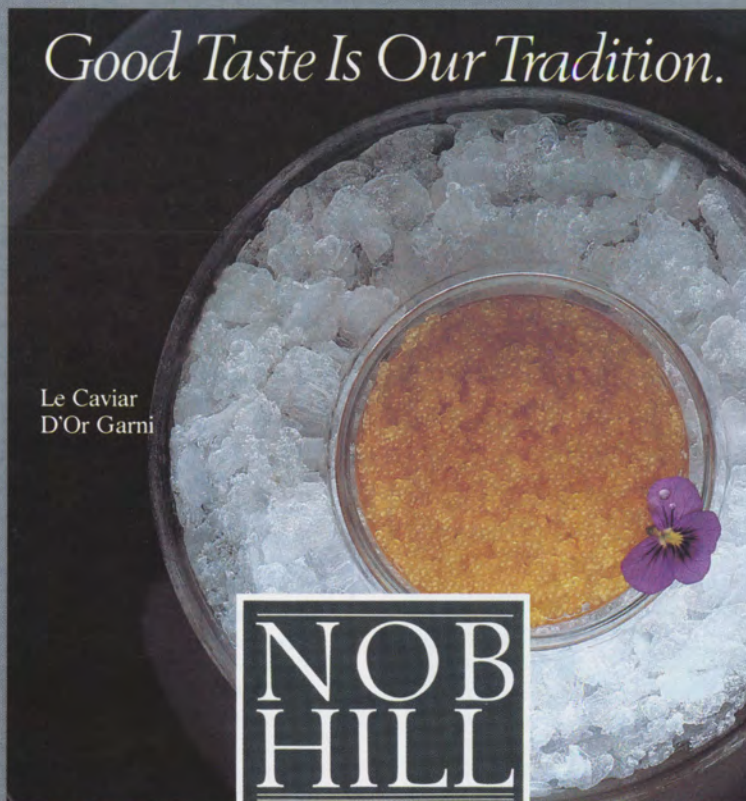
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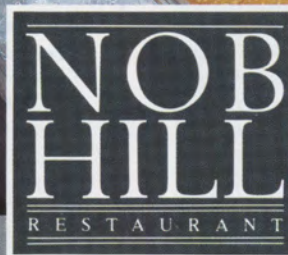
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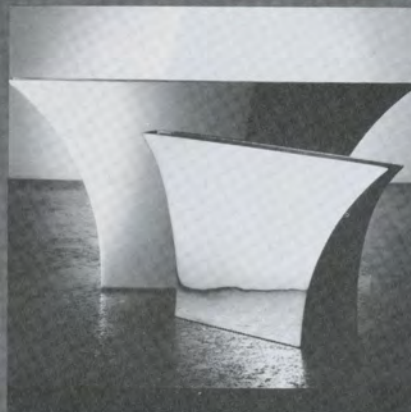
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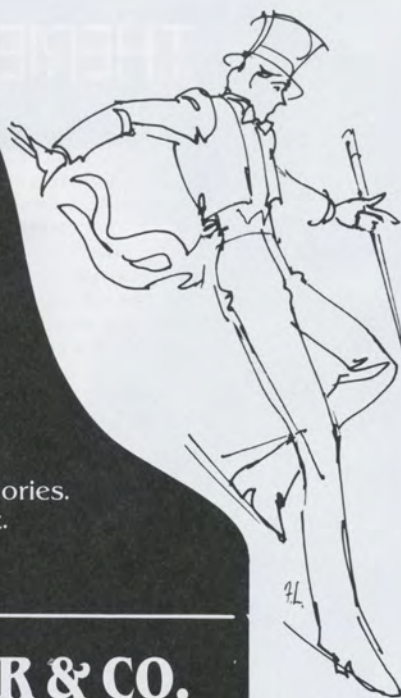
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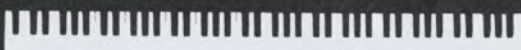
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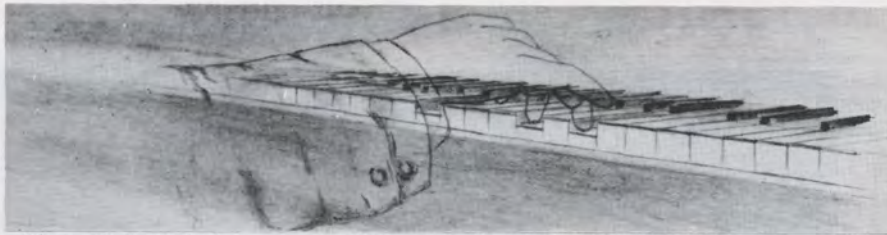
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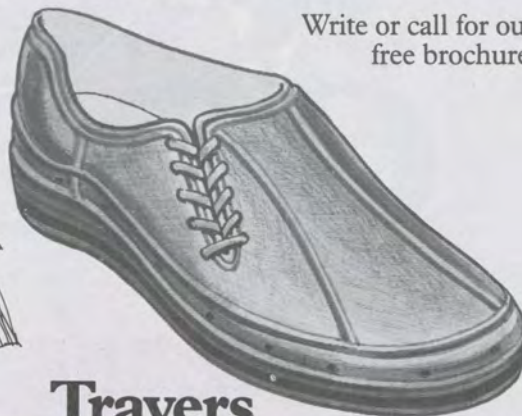
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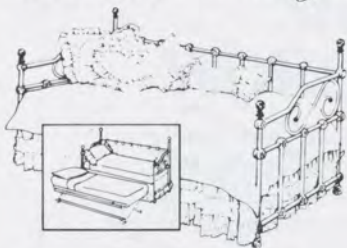
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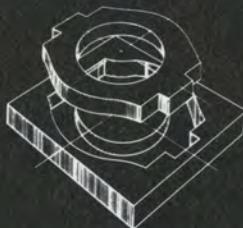
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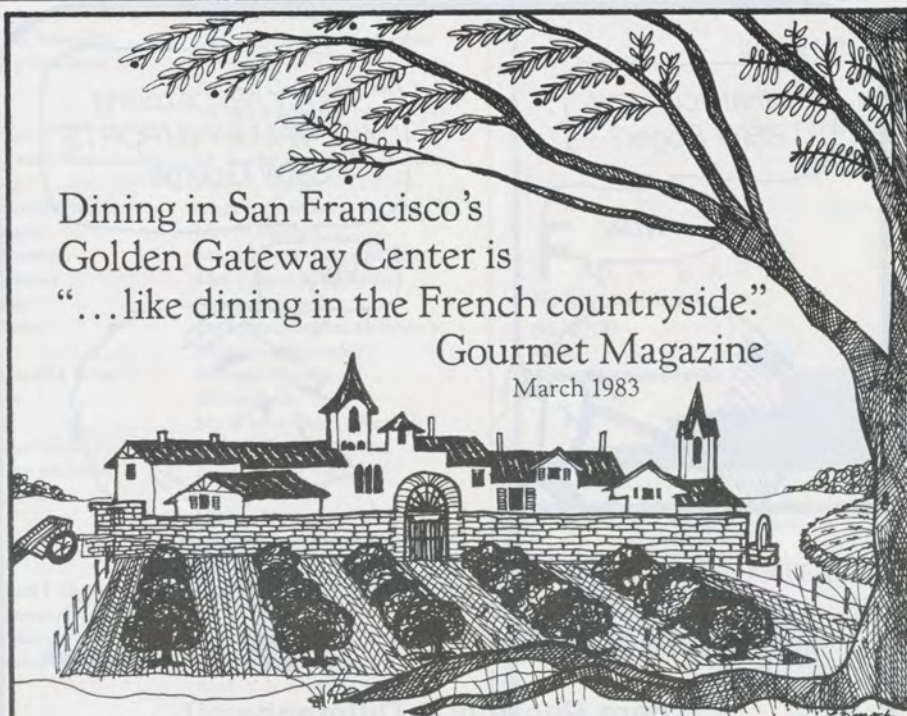


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San Francisco Opera Box Office. Lobby, War Memorial Opera House: Van Ness at Grove, (415) 864-3330. 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. Monday through Saturday. 10 A.M. through first intermission on all performance days.

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

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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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Engineered for maximum performance, the design of the Porsche 944 does not lend itself to ease and speed of assembly. We cannot increase our production schedule because to do so

would mean to compromise the outstanding quality and performance that created the exceptional demand for this automobile in the first place.



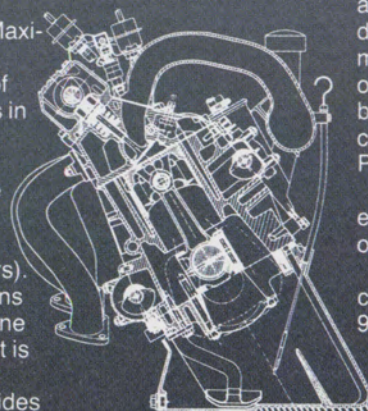
The Porsche 944 accelerates from 0 to 50 mph in 5.9 seconds. Top speed is 130 mph. Maximum torque is achieved as low as 3000 rpm.

Behind these impressive numbers is one of the largest, most powerful 4-cylinder engines in production: 2.5 liters, 143 hp.

To counter the vibrations an engine of this magnitude would normally produce, Porsche engineers have incorporated a system of counter-rotating silencer shafts and special engine mounts (actually mini shock absorbers).

The result: a 4-cylinder power plant that runs with the smoothness of a 6. Building the engine is, by necessity, a slow process, but the result is a high performance automobile.

Porsche's exclusive transaxle design provides



an almost perfectly balanced front/rear weight distribution. This design requires drive train elements to be constructed as a single unit, instead of as individual components. Difficult to assemble, it contributes to the exceptional handling, cornering and directional control unique to Porsche.

From its internal mechanics to its ergonomics, every aspect of the Porsche 944 is designed to optimize performance.

To insure high performance and quality, every car is inspected, every engine is tested, and every 944 is run on the open road prior to shipment.

The Porsche 944 is the antithesis of the mass produced automobile. But then, at Porsche, excellence is expected. **PORSCHE + AUDI**
NOTHING EVEN COMES CLOSE

NEWEST RELEASE!

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

U.S. Gov't Report:

Carlton Box—Lowest Tar King. No Brand Listed Lower

Less than 0.5 mg. tar, 0.05 mg. nicotine

Carlton—Lowest Tar Menthol

Less than 0.5 mg. tar, 0.1 mg. nicotine

Carlton—Lowest Tar 120's

Regular & Menthol—6 mg. tar, 0.6 mg. nicotine

Carlton 100's Regular & Menthol

Less tar than over 160 brands—4 mg. tar, 0.4 mg. nicotine



19th Consecutive Report: No Brand Listed Lower Than Carlton.

Carlton Box 100's

Less than 1 mg. tar, 0.1 mg. nicotine

*Read the numbers
on the packs* →



Box King—lowest of all brands—less than 0.01 mg. tar, 0.002 mg. nic.

Carlton is lowest.



Box: Less than 0.5 mg. "tar", 0.05 mg. nicotine; Menthol: Less than 0.5 mg. "tar", 0.1 mg. nicotine;
Soft Pack and 100's Box: 1 mg. "tar", 0.1 mg. nicotine; 100's Soft Pack and 100's Menthol: 4 mg. "tar", 0.4 mg. nicotine;
120's: 6 mg. "tar", 0.6 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Mar. '83.