

Rigoletto

1984

Saturday, November 17, 1984 8:00 PM

Tuesday, November 20, 1984 8:00 PM

Friday, November 23, 1984 8:00 PM

Thursday, November 29, 1984 8:00 PM

Sunday, December 2, 1984 2:00 PM

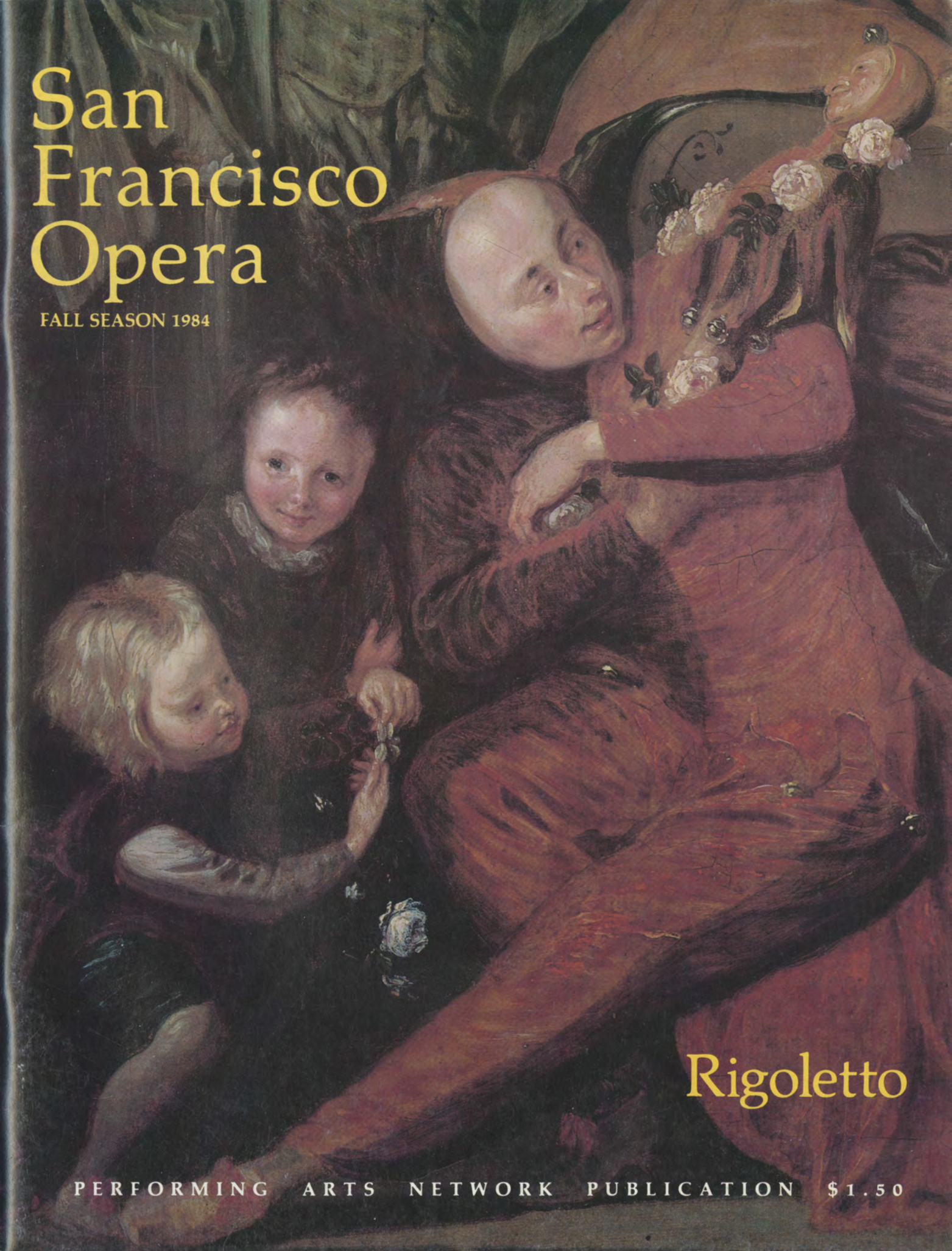
Wednesday, December 5, 1984 7:30 PM

Saturday, December 8, 1984 8:00 PM

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San Francisco Opera

FALL SEASON 1984

Rigoletto

PERFORMING ARTS NETWORK PUBLICATION \$1.50



SOOTH HAMPTON
(Scene v) (P.23)

TAGGE
RY L ST
ROBERT

to trust these tra
nd-by.
bear themselves,

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ
Antiochus, king of Antioch.
Pericles, prince of Tyre.
Helicanus, }
Escanes, } two lords of Tyre.
Simonides, }
Cleon, governor of Pentapolis.
Lysimachus, governor of Tarsus.
Cerimon, a lord of Ephesus.
Thalard, a lord of Mytilene.
Philemon, servant to Cerimon.
Leonine, servant to Dionyza.
A Marshal.
Boult, his servant.
The Daughter of Antiochus.
Dionyza, wife to Cleon.
Thaisa, daughter to Simonides.
Marina, daughter to Pericles and Thaisa.
Lychorida, nurse to Marina.
A Bawd.
Lords, Knights, Gentlemen, Sailors, Pirates,
Fishermen, and Messengers.
Diana.
Gower, as Chorus.
Scene—Differently in various countries.

PERICLES

ACT I.
Enter Gower.

BEFORE THE PALACE OF ANTIOCH.
To sing a song that old was sung;
From ashes ancient Gower is come;
Assuming man's infirmities;
To glad your ear, and please your eyes;
It hath been sung at festivals,
On ember-eyes and holy-ales;
And lords and ladies in their lives
Have read it for restoratives;
The purchase is to make men glorious;
Et bonum quo antiquius, eo melius.
If you, born in these latter times;
When wit's more ripe, accept my rhymes;
And that to hear an old man sing,
May to your wishes pleasure bring,
I life would wish, and that I might
Waste it for you, like taper-light.
This Antioch, then, Antiochus the Great
Built up, this city, for his chiefest seat;
The fairest in all Syria,
I tell you what mine authors say:
This king unto him took a fere;
Who died and left a female heir,
So buxom, blithe, and full of face,
As heaven had lent her all his grace,
With whom the father liking took;
And her to incest did provoke:

TO ALL THOSE WHO STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE.

Only after weeks of rehearsal, when every prop and every actor is in place—when the house lights are dimmed and the curtain is raised—only then is the transformation complete. When all the parts are made to converge and a new reality is created.

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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

Rigoletto

FALL SEASON 1984

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COVER:

Antoine Watteau (1684-1721)
Italian Comedians, ca. 1720
Oil on canvas, 25½ x 30 in.
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Samuel H. Kress Collection 1946
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From the President

ROBERT MESSICK



Welcome to San Francisco Opera's 62nd consecutive Fall Season, a season featuring an exciting array of many of today's greatest singers in repertoire ranging from beloved classics to such less well known masterpieces as *Anna Bolena* and *Khovanshchina*, both being given here for the first time.

Great singers, like priceless jewels, need appropriate settings to show their brilliance to greatest advantage. To provide such settings requires more than the artistry of designers and the talents of the many people required to construct the scenery and costumes; it takes the generosity of numerous individuals and groups who underwrite the enormous costs of

mounting grand opera on the scale our audiences deserve and have come to expect.

Assistance for production funding has come from a variety of sources: *Ernani* has been made possible by a generous gift in memory of George Quist, a member of the Opera Association Board of Directors from 1979 to 1982; presentation of *Khovanshchina* has been made possible through the generosity of the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation; and the expanded orchestra for *Elektra* was made possible through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hoefler, Mr. and Mrs. David Marsten, and Mr. Alex G. Spanos. Three productions were underwritten by generous donors in the past: *Madama Butterfly* was donated by the San Francisco Opera Guild, while *Rigoletto* and *Don Giovanni* were made possible in 1973 and '74, respectively, by generous gifts from the late James D. Robertson. The revival of *Madama Butterfly* is underwritten in part by Pacific Bell, while the remounting of *Don Giovanni* has been made possible in part by a gift from Mrs. Marion M. Miller. Our deepest thanks go to these generous "angels."

We have further cause to be thankful for the supertitles that will enhance our productions of *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Khovanshchina*, as well as selected performances of *Madama Butterfly*, courtesy of a generous grant from Citicorp. In recognizing the public's positive responses to supertitles, Citicorp has demonstrated its innovative spirit and alert sensitivity to the need to broaden audiences for the performing arts.

Grand opera is the most expensive performing art form in existence and, with the addition of our Summer Season and a larger Fall Season commencing in 1981, we have incurred significant losses in recent years, as expected. Thanks to a generous matching grant of \$500,000 from the Paul L. and Phyllis Wattis Foundation and the one-time matching gifts from directors and a limited number of other major contributors, we have received a sum which exceeds the loss for 1983, which was the purpose of this special fund drive. This fantastic result, however, is a one-time effort, and we must increase the amount of annual funds raised to cover current costs and to amortize the remaining accumulated deficit.

Financing our opera is a major undertaking. Our 1984 expenses related to carrying out our total opera program will approximate \$18 million. Ticket sales are estimated to be about \$10 million (just about the same as in 1983). The resulting ratio of ticket sales to costs, 55 per cent, compares favorably with other major companies in the United States, and is far better than that of major European companies. But from where do we get the difference of \$8 million? A variety of sources—government grants, special events, income from our endowment and reserve funds, the San Francisco Opera Guild, production sponsorships—will provide about one-half of the gap. The other one-half, \$4 million (or 40 per cent of the price of your seats), must be raised from our supporting public, if we are not to incur a loss. We are dependent on the generosity of thousands of contributors to continue presenting grand opera of the quality on which our reputation has been built—a quality that we are determined to maintain. If you are not a contributor, won't you please become one? If you are, please accept our thanks with our hope you will consider a significant increase this year.

Once again it is a pleasure to express 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. Their continued support has earned our deepest appreciation.

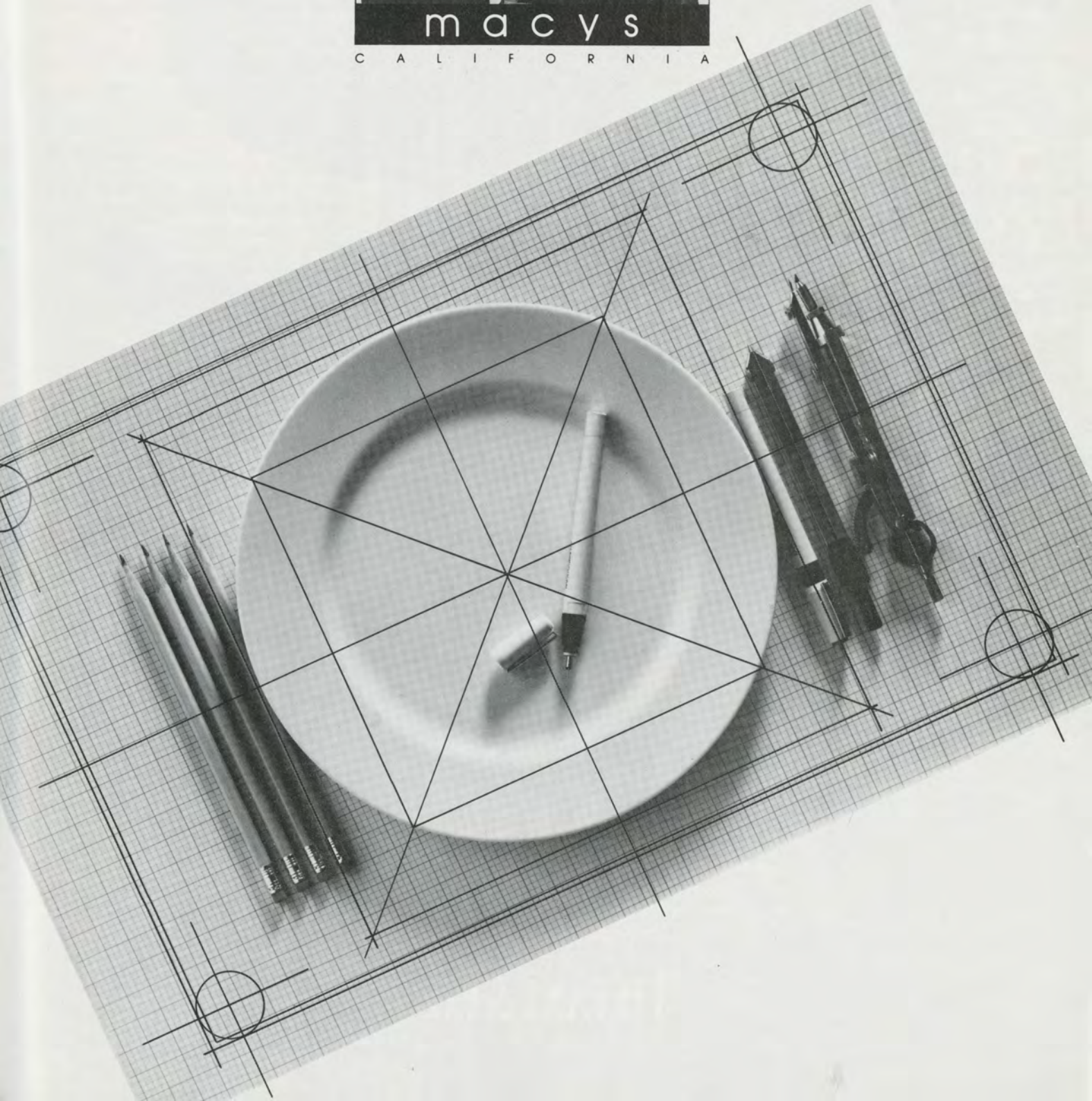
—WALTER M. BAIRD

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General Director's Message

1984 is for us at the Opera House a year of consolidation, a year of artistic progress and administrative stability. We set ourselves some difficult goals and we are well on our way to achieving them.

This is the year we must stay within our budget and yet present to you the standard of artistic excellence that has become San Francisco's trademark. I hope by the end of the season, you will feel we have accomplished that.

It gives me immense personal satisfaction to see so many of the world's finest vocal artists on the Opera House stage this season, a roster that includes many of the superstars who have become household names, as well as some of today's most exciting and fastest-rising young operatic talents.

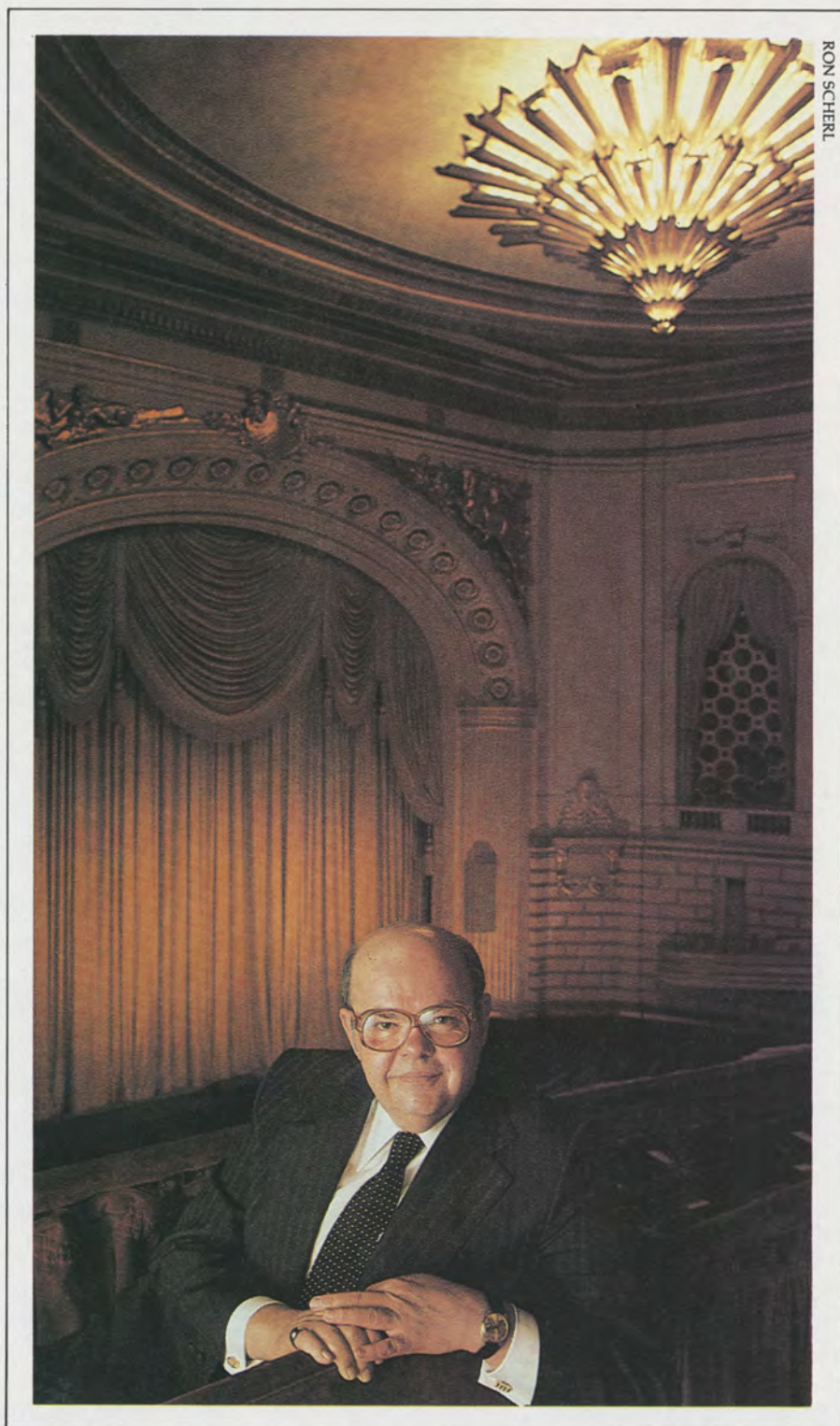
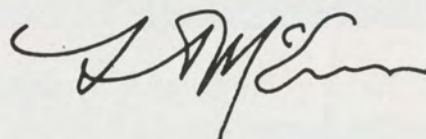
The operas in which they will be heard this season are drawn from the Italian, French, German and Russian repertoires, each exhibiting opportunities for superlative singing while making unique demands posed by widely disparate styles of lyric theater. From early Italian *bel canto* (both comic and tragic) to the landmark developments of Verdi; from Mozart's singular *dramma giocoso* to two verismo favorites; from the saga of 17th-century Russia to the devastating power of Greek tragedy, our 1984 Fall Season illustrates the broad spectrum of operatic expression. Such a season poses an enormous challenge to our Company's artistic resources, a challenge we have welcomed while in the course of preparing this season for you.

All of this is possible only because of the kindness and generosity—both public and anonymous—of our special friends. We are also happy to introduce to the Fall Season our use of supertitles, which are underwritten this fall by Citicorp. (We hope to extend the use of supertitles to more operas in the future, as funding becomes available.) Your enthusiastic reception of supertitles in the past has convinced us of our audience's desire to extract the maximum satisfaction from their operatic encounters. It is a heartening trend and it once again confirms our operagoers' reputation as the world's

most dedicated opera audience.

That dedication is matched by the commitment of our entire staff, not only the artists and technicians whose work is visible on stage, but the many supporting personnel who help keep this great Company running smoothly. We are proud of our work and gratified by your recogni-

tion and assistance. It is with gladness that we anticipate the challenges and rewards of our ongoing artistic alliance with you.



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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

1984 Fall Season

Opening Night

Friday, September 7, 9:00

Ernani Verdi

This production is dedicated to the memory of George Quist, San Francisco Opera Board of Directors, 1979-1982.

Caballé, Zajic/Todisco, Milnes, Plishka, Harper, Will
Gardelli/Joël/Benois/Munn

Saturday, September 8, 8:00

Carmen Bizet

Nafé**, Erickson, Gibbons*, Bruno/Ciannella*, Carlson, Thomas, Malis, Patterson, Matthews
Navarro/Ponnelle/Calábria/Ponnelle, Juerke/Munn

Tuesday, September 11, 8:00

Carmen Bizet

Wednesday, September 12, 8:00

Ernani Verdi

Friday, September 14, 8:00

Carmen Bizet

Saturday, September 15, 8:00

Ernani Verdi

Monday, September 17, 8:00

Carmen Bizet

Tuesday, September 18, 8:00

Production new to San Francisco

La Sonnambula Bellini

Production sets owned by Seattle Opera Company.

von Stade, Howe, Rice/O'Neill*, Ramey, Tate, Patterson

Rescigno/Macdonald/Dehò*, Sormani*/Macdonald/Arhelger

Wednesday, September 19, 8:00

Ernani Verdi

Thursday, September 20, 7:30

Carmen Bizet

Friday, September 21, 8:00

La Sonnambula Bellini

Saturday, September 22, 8:00

Ernani Verdi

Sunday, September 23, 2:00

Carmen Bizet

Tuesday, September 25, 8:00

La Sonnambula Bellini

Wednesday, September 26, 7:30

Ernani Verdi

Thursday, September 27, 8:00

Carmen Bizet

Saturday, September 29, 8:00

La Sonnambula Bellini

Sunday, September 30, 2:00

Ernani Verdi

Tuesday, October 2, 8:00 S

L'Elisir d'Amore Donizetti

Ferrarini**, Swenson/Lima, Del Carlo, Duesing

Agler/Sciutti*/Darling/Sakellariou/Arhelger

Thursday, October 4, 7:30

La Sonnambula Bellini

Friday, October 5, 8:00 S

L'Elisir d'Amore Donizetti

Saturday, October 6, 8:00

Madama Butterfly Puccini

This production was originally donated to the San Francisco Opera by the San Francisco Opera Guild.

Kincses* Rice, Gustafson/Cortez*, Krause, Thomas, Albert*, Will, Malis

Meltzer/Farruggio/Businger/Munn

Sunday, October 7, 2:00

La Sonnambula Bellini

Tuesday, October 9, 8:00 S

L'Elisir d'Amore Donizetti

Wednesday, October 10, 8:00

Madama Butterfly Puccini

Friday, October 12, 8:00

La Sonnambula Bellini

Saturday, October 13, 8:00 S

L'Elisir d'Amore Donizetti

Sunday, October 14, 2:00

Madama Butterfly Puccini

Tuesday, October 16, 8:00

Madama Butterfly Puccini

Mitchell, Rice, Gustafson/Cortez, Krause, Thomas, Albert, Will, Malis

Meltzer/Farruggio/Businger/Munn

Wednesday, October 17, 7:30 S

L'Elisir d'Amore Donizetti

Thursday, October 18, 8:00

Elektra Strauss

Martin, Neblett, Crespin, Adler*, Gustafson, Bruno, Hillhouse*, Zajic, Swenson, Howe,

Lancaster*/Bailey, Wimberger*, Patterson, Tate
Tate*/Resnik*/Siercke/Blatas*/Munn

Friday, October 19, 8:00

Madama Butterfly Puccini

Sunday, October 21, 2:00 S

L'Elisir d'Amore Donizetti

Tuesday, October 23, 8:00

Elektra Strauss

Wednesday, October 24, 7:30

Madama Butterfly Puccini

Thursday, October 25, 8:00

Production new to San Francisco

Anna Bolena Donizetti

This production of *Anna Bolena*, originated by the Canadian Opera Company, was made possible by a generous and deeply-appreciated gift from the Gramma Fisher Foundation,

The Archives for the Performing Arts invites you to view its exhibition of opera photographs by San Francisco artist, Ira Nowinski, currently on display in the War Memorial Opera House Museum. The exhibition, featuring a wide array of opera luminaries such as Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, Joan Sutherland, and Leontyne Price, is drawn from Nowinski's acclaimed book, "Backstage at the Opera." The Opera House Museum is located on the south mezzanine (box) level, adjacent to the Opera Boutique. Photographs for the exhibition, courtesy of the Stephen Wirtz Gallery, San Francisco.

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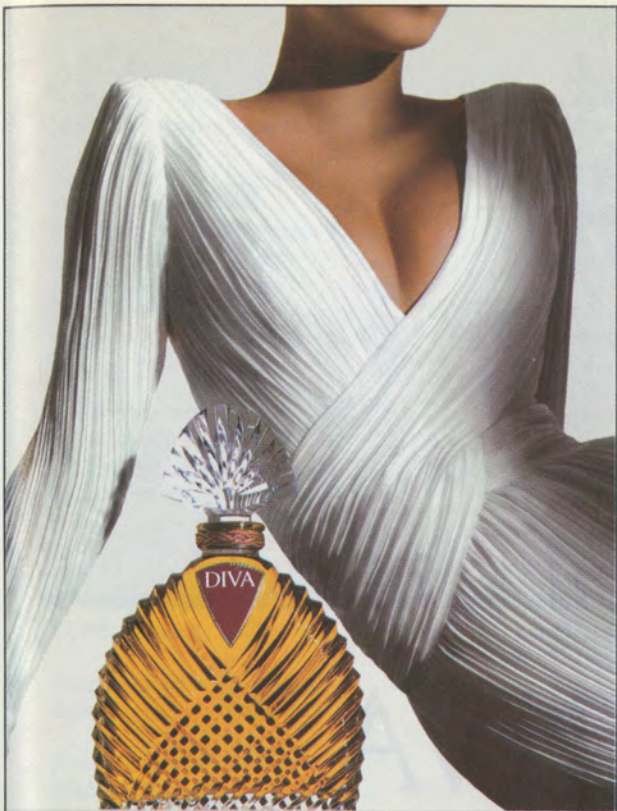
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Wednesday, October 24, 7:30
Madama Butterfly Puccini

Thursday, October 25, 8:00
Production new to San Francisco
Anna Bolena Donizetti
This production of *Anna Bolena*, originated by the Canadian Opera Company, was made possible by a generous and deeply-appreciated gift from the Gramma Fisher Foundation, through the auspices of the Lyric Opera of Chicago.
Sutherland, Budai, Gettler*/Blake*, Langan, Thomas, Will
Bonyngne/Mansouri/Pascoe/Stennett/Arhelger

Friday, October 26, 8:00
Elektra Strauss

Saturday, October 27, 8:00 S
L'Elisir d'Amore Donizetti

Sunday, October 28, 2:00
Anna Bolena Donizetti

Tuesday, October 30, 8:00
Madama Butterfly Puccini

Wednesday, October 31, 7:30
Anna Bolena Donizetti

Thursday, November 1, 8:00
Elektra Strauss

Friday, November 2, 8:00
Madama Butterfly Puccini

Saturday, November 3, 8:00
Anna Bolena Donizetti

Sunday, November 4, 2:00
Elektra Strauss

Tuesday, November 6, 8:00
Anna Bolena Donizetti

Wednesday, November 7, 7:30
Elektra Strauss

Friday, November 9, 8:00
Anna Bolena Donizetti

Saturday, November 10, 8:00
Elektra Strauss

Sunday, November 11, 2:00 S
Production new to San Francisco
Khovanshchina Mussorgsky
The San Francisco presentation of this production is made possible through the generosity of the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation.
Dernesch, Gustafson, Adler/Salminen*, Bailey, W. Lewis, Howell, Noble, Tate, Albert, Busterud, Malis
Albrecht/Frisell/Benois/Sulich/Munn

Tuesday, November 13, 8:00
Anna Bolena Donizetti

Wednesday, November 14, 7:30 S
Khovanshchina Mussorgsky

Saturday, November 17, 8:00
Rigoletto Verdi
This production was made possible in 1973 by a generous and much-appreciated gift from the late James D. Robertson.
Serra*, Richards, Zajic, Parrish/Wixell, Raffanti, Patterson, Albert, Malis, Busterud, Harper
Adler/Ponnelle, Thompson/Ponnelle/
Schlumpf/Munn

Sunday, November 18, 2:00 S
Khovanshchina Mussorgsky

Tuesday, November 20, 8:00
Rigoletto Verdi

Wednesday, November 21, 8:00
Don Giovanni Mozart
This production was made possible in 1974 by a generous and much-appreciated gift from the late James D. Robertson.
Cook, Lorengar, Zimmermann/Brendel, Fissore, K. Lewis*, Will, Salminen
Chung/Copley/Businger, Munn/Munn

Friday, November 23, 8:00
Rigoletto Verdi

Saturday, November 24, 8:00 S
Khovanshchina Mussorgsky

Sunday, November 25, 2:00
Don Giovanni Mozart

Tuesday, November 27, 8:00 S
Khovanshchina Mussorgsky

Wednesday, November 28, 7:30
Don Giovanni Mozart

Thursday, November 29, 8:00
Rigoletto Verdi

Friday, November 30, 8:00 S
Khovanshchina Mussorgsky

Saturday, December 1, 2:00 S
Family Matinee
Madama Butterfly Puccini
This production was originally donated to the San Francisco Opera by the San Francisco Opera Guild.
Hartliep, Bruno, Gustafson/MacNeil, Busterud, Tate, Patterson, Will, Malis
Johnson*/Farruggio/Businger/Munn

Saturday, December 1, 8:00
Don Giovanni Mozart

Sunday, December 2, 2:00
Rigoletto Verdi

Tuesday, December 4, 8:00
Don Giovanni Mozart

Wednesday, December 5, 7:30
Rigoletto Verdi

Thursday, December 6, 8:00 S
Family Performance
Madama Butterfly Puccini

Friday, December 7, 8:00
Don Giovanni Mozart

Saturday, December 8, 8:00
Rigoletto Verdi

Sunday, December 9, 2:00
Don Giovanni Mozart

** American opera debut
* San Francisco Opera debut
S Performance with Supertitles

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San Francisco Opera Guild Presents
Opera for Young Audiences
MADAMA BUTTERFLY
Puccini/in Italian

Wednesday, October 17, 1:00 Wednesday, October 24, 1:00

Matinee for Senior Citizens and Disabled Patrons
Wednesday, October 31, 1:00

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Montserrat Caballé
Rebecca Cook
Viorica Cortez*
Helga Dernesch
Kaaren Erickson
Alida Ferrarini**
Rachel Gettler*
Joan Gibbons*

Nancy Gustafson†
Nikki Li Hartliep†
Wendy Hillhouse*
Francesca Howe
Mary Jane Johnson
Veronika Kincses*
Francine Lancaster*
Pilar Lorengar
Janis Martin
Alicia Nafé**

Carol Neblett
Cheryl Parrish†
Laura Brooks Rice
Leslie Richards
Luciana Serra*
Joan Sutherland
Ruth Ann Swenson†
Frederica von Stade
Dolora Zajic†
Margarita Zimmermann

Donnie Ray Albert*
Dennis Bailey
Rockwell Blake*
Wolfgang Brendel
James Busterud†
Lenus Carlson
Giuliano Ciannella*
Miguel Cortez*
John Del Carlo
Dale Duesing
Enrico Fissore
Daniel Harper†

Gwynne Howell
Tom Krause
Kevin Langan
Keith Lewis*
William Lewis
Luis Lima
John MacAllister
Walter MacNeil
David Malis†
John Matthews
Sherrill Milnes
Timothy Noble

Dennis O'Neill*
James Patterson†
Paul Plishka
Dano Raffanti
Samuel Ramey
Matti Salminen*
Robert Tate
Jeffrey Thomas
Nunzio Todisco
Jacob Will†
Peter Wimberger*
Ingvar Wixell

CONDUCTORS

Kurt Herbert Adler
David Agler
Gerd Albrecht
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Richard Bradshaw
Myung-Whun Chung
Lamberto Gardelli
James Johnson*

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Nicola Rescigno
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John Copley
Matthew Farruggio

Sonja Frisell
Nicolas Joël
Brian Macdonald
Lotfi Mansouri

Regina Resnik*
Graziella Sciutti*
Robin Thompson

PRODUCTIONS DESIGNED BY

Nicola Benois
Toni Businger
Robert Darling

Enzo Dehò*
Thomas J. Munn
John Pascoe

Jean-Pierre Ponnelle
Alfred Siercke
Marialuisa Sormani*

COSTUME DESIGNERS

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Martin Schlumpf Michael Stennett

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**American opera debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

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1984 BROADCASTS

Rebroadcasts of the San Francisco Opera can be heard nationwide on the member stations of National Public Radio beginning October 6th. Check local listings for the time in your area.

Broadcast production was made possible by grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Chevron USA, Inc., and the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation of Oakland, California.

In the Bay Area, the broadcasts may be heard on the following stations:

KCSM 91.1 FM

All San Francisco Opera Broadcasts begin locally at 8:00 p.m.

10/13	<i>Manon</i>
10/20	<i>Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk</i>
10/27	<i>Le Cid</i>
11/3	<i>Wozzeck</i>
11/10	<i>Aida</i> (1981)
11/17	<i>Tartuffe</i> *

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All San Francisco Opera Broadcasts begin locally at 8:00 p.m.

11/2	<i>Manon</i>
11/16	<i>Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk</i>
11/23	<i>Le Cid</i>
11/30	<i>Wozzeck</i>
12/7	<i>Aida</i> (1981)
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Janice McIntosh

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Lev Rankov
Eva Karasik
Lani King
Gerard Svazlian
Tanya Rankov
Julia Kohl
Martha Simonds

VIOLA

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

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Thalia Moore
Samuel Cristler
David Budd
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Charles Siani *Principal*
Jon Lancelle
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Shinji Eshima
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Gregory Dufford

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Jerry Dagg
Robin Elliott

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Robin Elliott

HORN

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The San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges a grant made by Mr. and Mrs. Lennart K. Erickson for the purchase of a Cimbasso.

1984 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 members \$20; Individual tickets are \$5. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432. Programs are subject to rehearsal changes.

Frederica von Stade/Samuel Ramey	9/19
"The Art of Bel Canto" Richard Bonyngel/ Nicola Rescigno/David Agler	10/10
Regina Resnik/Jeffrey Tate	10/24
Gerd Albrecht/Sonja Frisell/ Susanna Lemberskaya	11/7

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

MARIN

Previews held at Park School Auditorium, 360 E. Blithedale, Mill Valley; refreshments served at 7:30 p.m., previews at 8:00 p.m. Series registration is \$20.00 for 6 previews (\$15.00 for students and seniors). Single tickets are \$4.00 (\$3.00 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 388-6789.

ERNANI

Francesca Zambello	9/6
LA SONNAMBULA Robert Jacobson	9/13
L'ELISIR D'AMORE Francesca Zambello	9/20
ELEKTRA Michael Mitchell	10/11
ANNA BOLENA James Keolker	10/18
KHOVANSCHINA Dale Harris	11/1

NORTH PENINSULA

Previews held at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church Meeting Hall, El Camino Real and 15th Avenue, San Mateo. Lectures begin at 7:30 p.m. Series registration is \$20.00; single tickets are \$6.00. For further information, please call (408) 735-3757.

LA SONNAMBULA Robert Jacobson	9/12
L'ELISIR D'AMORE Francesca Zambello	9/27

ANNA BOLENA

James Keolker	11/11
KHOVANSCHINA Dale Harris	11/25

SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant Street, at 8:00 p.m. (with the exception of 11/20, which will be held at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Road and the 10/2 Opera Gala which will be held at the Lucie Stern Community Theater, 1305 Middlefield Road, in Palo Alto). Series registration is \$18.00; single tickets are \$4.00. For further information, please call (415) 941-3890.

LA SONNAMBULA

Robert Jacobson	9/11
L'ELISIR D'AMORE Francesca Zambello	9/18
FALL OPERA GALA Ramona Rockway	10/2
ANNA BOLENA James Keolker	10/23
KHOVANSCHINA Dale Harris	10/30
DON GIOVANNI Ramona Rockway	11/20

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

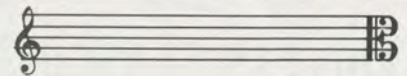
Previews will be held at the Saratoga Community Center (Senior Wing), 13777 Fruitvale Ave., Saratoga. Series is open to the public at a cost of \$4.00 per lecture, \$3.00 for students and senior citizens (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild members). For further information, please call (408) 741-1331.

ERNANI Arthur Kaplan	10 a.m. 9/7
LA SONNAMBULA Robert Jacobson	10 a.m. 9/14
L'ELISIR D'AMORE Francesca Zambello	7:30 p.m. 9/25
ELEKTRA Michael Mitchell	7:30 p.m. 10/10
ANNA BOLENA James Keolker	7:30 p.m. 10/17
KHOVANSCHINA Dale Harris	10 a.m. 11/2

MAHLER #8, ERNANI, & EN VILLE.

Q: *What do they all have in common?*

A: *A grand opening this fall in San Francisco.*



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All previews held at 10:30 a.m. at various locations (see below). Series registration is \$12.00 for 3 previews. Single tickets are \$5.00. For additional information, please call (707) 539-7157.

LA SONNAMBULA	9/12
Robert Jacobson	Piper-Sonoma Vineyards 11447 Old Redwood Hwy Healdsburg
ELEKTRA	10/17
Michael Mitchell	Vintners Inn 4350 Barnes Rd. Santa Rosa
KHOVANSCHINA	11/5
Dale Harris	El Dorado Hotel 405-1st St. West Sonoma

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 noon and there is no admission charge. For information, please call Peggy Olsen at (415) 342-7030.

ERNANI	9/11
Arthur Kaplan	
LA SONNAMBULA	9/18
Robert Jacobson	
ELEKTRA	10/16
Michael Mitchell	
ANNA BOLENA	10/22
James Keolker	
KHOVANSCHINA	10/31
Dale Harris	

NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES

"Adventures in Opera" is a 10-week course, now in its 12th year. The course, which accompanies the Saturday and Sunday series at the San Francisco Opera, will be held at 7:30 p.m. in St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1917 Third Street, in Napa. Ernest Fly will again teach the course. Cost for the entire series is \$20.00. Individual lectures will be \$3.00. For further information, please call (707) 224-6162.

ERNANI	9/13
CARMEN	9/20
LA SONNAMBULA	9/27
MADAMA BUTTERFLY	10/4
L'ELISIR D'AMORE	10/11
ANNA BOLENA	10/18
ELEKTRA	10/25
KHOVANSCHINA	11/1
RIGOLETTO	11/8
DON GIOVANNI	11/15

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of operas of the 1984 Fall Season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera

Education International, both in San Francisco and Hillsborough.

Hillsborough: Lectures will be presented on Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Crocker School, 2600 Ralston Avenue, at Chateau Drive. Series admission is \$55; individual admission at the door is \$6.00.

LA SONNAMBULA	9/10
L'ELISIR D'AMORE	9/24
MADAMA BUTTERFLY	10/1
ELEKTRA	10/8
ANNA BOLENA	10/22
KHOVANSCHINA	10/29
RIGOLETTO	11/5
DON GIOVANNI	11/19

San Francisco: Lectures are given in the auditorium of the Dr. William Cobb School, 2725 California Street, between Scott and Divisadero, at 7:30 p.m. Series subscription for five opera previews is \$27.50; individual admission at the door is \$6.00. For further information on both Hillsborough and San Francisco previews, please call (415) 526-5244.

ERNANI	9/6
LA SONNAMBULA	9/13
ELEKTRA	9/27
ANNA BOLENA	10/11
KHOVANSCHINA	11/8

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HILLBARN THEATRE

Semi-staged dramatic readings of plays that served as inspiration for operatic masterpieces will be held in the Green Room of the Hillbarn Theatre, 1285 E. Hillsdale Blvd., in Foster City. All performances are on Sunday evenings at 7:30. Tickets are \$5 for individual performances, \$16 for the complete series. For information and reservations, please call (415) 349-6411.

HERNANI/Hugo	9/9
MADAM BUTTERFLY/Belasco	9/23
ELECTRA/Sophocles	10/7
LE ROI S'AMUSE/Hugo	10/21

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Rigoletto: Life

By WILL CRUTCHFIELD

Everyone knows about Verdi's mercifully brief battle with the censors over *Rigoletto*. First sortie: The story is absolutely forbidden on grounds of the "repulsive immorality and obscene triviality." Re-engagement: Acting on sympathetic suggestions from within the censor's office, Piave prepares a libretto in which a few offending details are removed, to wit: the Duke's profligacy, the jester's deformity, the reason for the curse, and, of all things, the idea of putting the prima donna into a sack after she is stabbed. Final skirmish: After haggling at Sant'Agata, a six-point memorandum is drawn up changing the opera's venue from the court of France to an independent duchy, stipulating the omission of one scene from the Hugo play, and otherwise conceding every dramatic point to the composer. Victory for Verdi!

But how many operagoers realize that to win these things for the premiere in Venice was to win a battle only—the most important one, of course, but not yet the war, which was fought on various fronts through the next decade? The local censors in different parts of Italy had their own shots at the scandalous new score. It might have to be done as *Viscardello*, *Lionello*, or *Clara di Perth*. In the introduc-

Will Crutchfield is a music critic for The New York Times.

tion to the critical edition of the opera, Martin Chusid paints a vivid picture of the nonsense that accompanied the opera's triumphant progress through Italy. The maid Giovanna, for instance, sometimes accompanied Gilda to the Duke's palace and even emerged from the bedchamber with her. The seduction scene (and with it Rigoletto's first cry of "la maledizione") was sometimes suppressed, so that the act ended with the courtiers' comic declaration of malevolent intent, "Zitti, zitti."

In many of the censored versions, Professor Chusid continues, "Gilda and the Duca meet not at the 'tempio' but 'al parco.' Ceprano's wife becomes an unmarried sister. Rigoletto is not deformed . . . In some versions Gilda, though wounded, does not die. Instead Rigoletto sings 'O clemenza del Cielo!' to the same music as 'La maledizione.'" (But surely it was changed from minor to major.) And, censorship aside (as mercifully it was before too many more years), the opera was subject to various cuts. Prima donnas continued to censor the sack, or at least their presence in it: even into the early 20th century it was quite usual for Rigoletto to drag out the body, hear the Duke's song, open the sack to find a chorus girl or supernumerary, and cry immediately "E morta!" without any duet having been sung. One playbill for Modena in 1853 announces the omission of the tenor aria

and the termination of the opera with the quartet!

That last is a bit bizarre, but the suppression of "Parmi veder le lagrime" is an interesting point, and a practice by no means confined to Modena. One often finds orchestral parts from 19th century performances marked so as to omit the Duke's andante aria and its cabaletta, but retaining the chorus between them as an independent "coro d'introduzione," telling the story of Gilda's abduction to no one in particular.

The reason this is worth noting is that the aria in question is the single most old-fashioned piece in the score—the one most out of harmony with the reforms Verdi was striving for in *Rigoletto*. It is the opera's only solo cast in the old double-aria form that dominates Donizetti and



RON SCHERL

After Birth



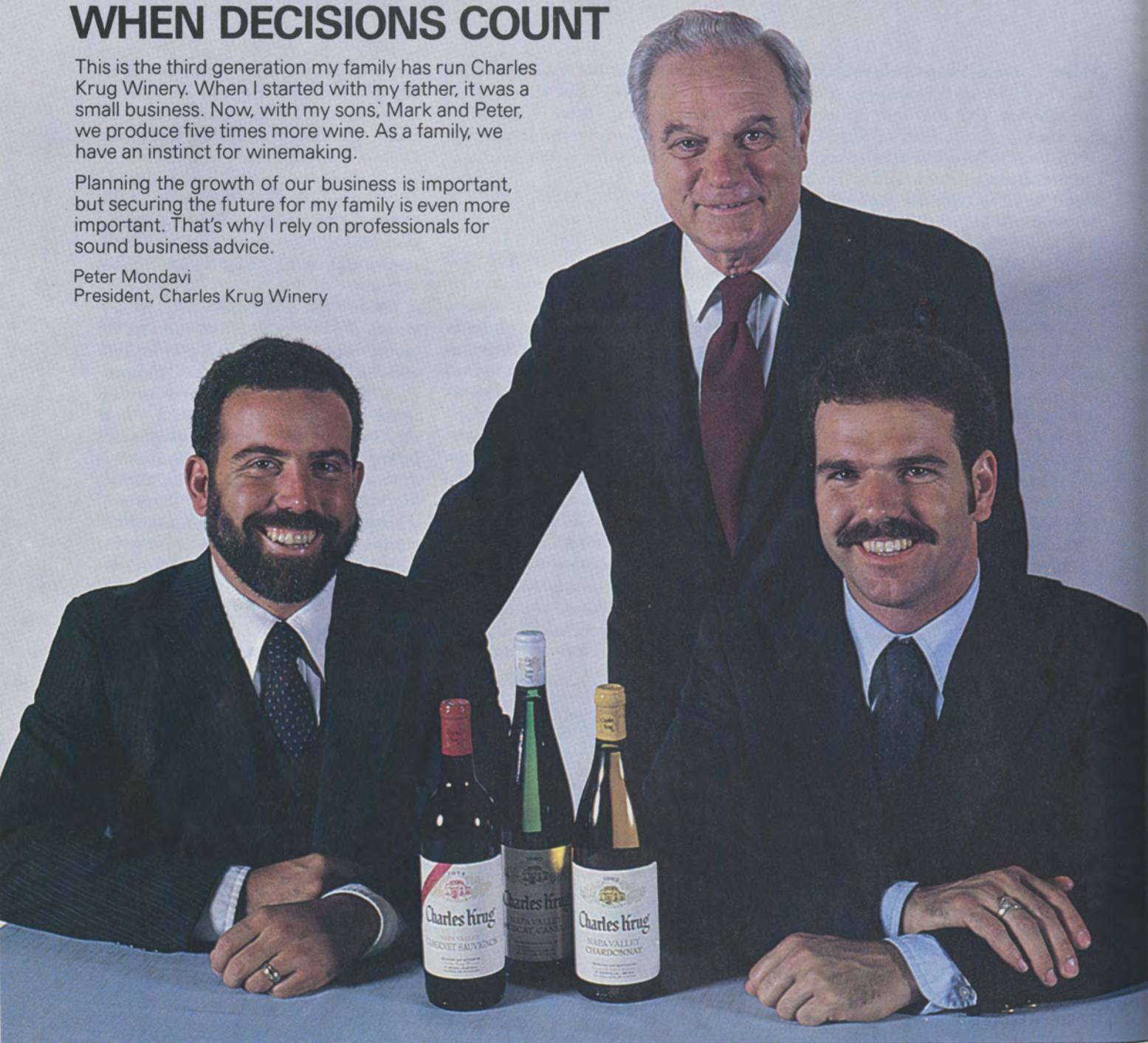
Carbis Boyagian in the title role and Patricia Wise as Gilda in San Francisco Opera's 1981 Summer Season production of *Rigoletto*.

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Giovanni Mario (1810-1883) as the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*.

Bellini (and early Verdi). *Rigoletto's* companion operas, *Traviata* and *Trovatore*, have three and four such scenes, respectively—and there, too, the element that was fast going out of date, the solo cabaletta, was usually cut in half or if at all possible dramatically, omitted altogether. If, as one often reads, Verdi's operas were mangled by reactionary performers who didn't know what he was about and who wanted the good old days of Rossini back, then they should have reveled in precisely these numbers. Instead, they were the first to go.

The point is that for all its propensity to hectic preparation and potential for sloppiness, Italian operatic performance in the 1800s was not a frivolous activity, and Italian performers were not bent on thwarting the composers whose music they served and whose music in turn served them. Rather, they worked, often with flawed and incomplete understanding, but often with nobility and inspiration, to carry forward a tradition that was recognized around the world as a pinnacle of human artistic achievement. Their approach to any given score changed pragmatically on the basis of the audience before whom it was to be given and the artists who were to sing it, and it also changed with the times, progressively, reflecting the values of each succeeding generation. This is why it is worth observing how a staple of the repertory like *Rigoletto* has been performed, not just in its composer's day, but through the years down to our own.

Early performances necessarily fol-

lowed assumptions we would now think of as belonging to the era of Donizetti—as, after all, *Rigoletto* itself does: *Don Pasquale* was less than a decade old when it was new; so seemingly old-fashioned an opera as Rossini's *Semiramide* was closer to Verdi's first audience than, say, *Peter Grimes* is to us. So it can hardly be a surprise that for a while performers looked for the usual opportunities to rearrange, cut and augment their roles to advantage. Rossini himself suggested that Nicolai Ivanov ask Verdi to write him a special aria for the Duke; the tenor had been similarly accommodated in *Ernani* and *Attila* (if the request was made, though, all trace of it is lost). The husband of Teresa de Giuli Borsi, who had been Verdi's first choice for Gilda but who did not sing it at the premiere, wrote in 1852 to request an additional aria for the part when his wife did eventually undertake it; Verdi refused, but not indignantly. For the first French performance (Brussels, 1858), a Verdi song was cobbled into an aria for Maddalena, quite possibly with the composer's permission (his own publisher issued it in sheet music with the *Rigoletto* words).

Today's audiences would also doubtless find the amount of rhythmic freedom and ornamentation of Verdi's heyday shocking. That is: the amount of these things still present in the early 20th century, which we can observe directly through recordings, shocks many musicians, and all the evidence suggests that there was more of it yet in the 1850s and '60s. Many favorite interpreters of *Rigoletto's* leading roles were singers who had won their fame with operas of the old school.

Giovanni Mario, the tenor who for

VERDI NELLE IMMAGINI, 1943
COURTESY, LIM M. LAI



Marietta Brambilla (1807-1875) sang Gilda at the world premiere of *Rigoletto* at Teatro La Fenice in Venice.

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VERDI NELLE IMMAGINI, 1943 COURTESY, LIM M. LAI

Felice Varesi (1813-1889), the first interpreter of *Rigoletto*.

London especially was the very embodiment of the romantic tenor ideal, had great success as the Duke. He was a very high, light-voiced, ardent and decorative singer (his decorations survive in annotated scores at the Santa Cecilia library in Rome, though none for *Rigoletto* has yet been found). Verdi admired him enough to compose an alternate aria for his appearances in *I Due Foscari*, though his preference was for the harder-hitting new style of tenors like Gaetano Fraschini. Gilda was one of Adelina Patti's great successes right from the first decade of her ascendancy, the 1860s. Verdi heard her and described in a famous letter the impact her artistry made on him in *Barbiere*, *Don Giovanni*, *Sonnambula* and *Rigoletto*. Later he had occasion to admire her in *Traviata* and *Aida*. (Several of her elegant cadenzas and embellishments survive in various sources; it was even claimed when a New York critic questioned her taste that Verdi had written one of them for her personally, and that she had the autograph on hand to prove it.)

But opera was moving in the direction of a more overtly impassioned, powerful and declamatory singing style. Felice Varesi, the very first *Rigoletto*, pointed in that direction: his declamation and acting were almost universally praised; his singing aroused reservations in some, and when he sang the elder Germont, whose points have to be made with the old-fashioned virtues of *bel canto*, he had little success.

As the century wore on, and the dramatic values associated with Wagner and Massenet made themselves felt in Italy, *Rigoletto* was not unaffected. A famous



Felice Varesi as *Rigoletto* in a photograph he personally touched up and colored.

exponent of the title role in the generation after Varesi was Victor Maurel, Verdi's first Iago and Falstaff. On the occasion of his Roman performances in 1883 he aroused considerable controversy with his slow tempo for "Si, vendetta," "with the triplets *ben marcato*" according to one account, and with a striking alteration of the rhythms, according to another. "You have done something psychological, Maurel," Verdi is supposed to have said: "When *Rigoletto* was written our singers had nothing—well, psychological in them." At the same time, ironically, Verdi and his middle-period operas were, on the grounds of dramatic unsophistication, approaching that nadir of critical esteem that makes so many leading music critics of the day look so foolish now. Early in the new century Henry Krehbiel reported in the *New York Tribune* that Antonio Scotti had "warmed all hearts capable of feeling warmth for such an old-fashioned marionette as the Hugo-Piave-Verdi operatic hunchback."

By this time the performing tradition in Italy must be distinguished from that elsewhere. Wagner was an influence in Italy, but the real fever was for Italian verismo operas of Mascagni, Giordano and then Puccini. Italians applied the new vocal fashions arising out of these works more and more to the older operas like *Rigoletto*. In the English-speaking world, Wagner was the dominant presence for

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Victor Maurel (1848-1923), the noted French baritone who was Europe's leading interpreter of the role of Rigoletto towards the end of the 19th century.

the progressive observers and performers, with the result that middle Verdi was more or less given up as an anachronism and a lost cause. This had the odd effect of preserving a more "authentic" 19th century Italian style in, say, London than in Milan—but it was a style afflicted by the malaise of anachronism. Warbling sopranos like Luisa Tetrazzini, marvelous as they may have been in their way, could make Gilda seem a quaint caricature.

Around this time, meanwhile, perhaps also for "psychological" and dramatic reasons, the final duet began to be reintroduced. George Bernard Shaw heard it with Ancona and Melba in 1894: "... as far as I know, it has never been done on stage since its excision immediately after the opera was first produced." (If librettos are to be trusted, though—they can't always be—it had never vanished entirely in Italy. In London, on the other hand, it had to wait a couple of decades more to be fully established, because it was again occasion for comment when Ivogün sang it in the '20s. Shaw suspected Mancinelli "or someone with all the latest discoveries at his fingers' ends" of touching up the orchestration, but the players' parts from that era at Covent Garden, unaltered beyond the competing instructions for inclusion, exclusion and transposition, suggest that it was Verdi's own forward-looking skill that impressed him here.)

The matter of the duet, though, shows that the performing text of *Rigoletto* at the turn of the century was still fluid. No insert arias would have turned up, and the Duke's cabaletta was universally suppressed, but elsewhere the cuts, tempi,

cadenzas and ornaments were still things that might change to a greater or lesser extent from interpreter to interpreter and even from one performance to another. Angelo Masini (1844-1926), a tenor for whom Verdi showed his admiration in the most practical way (engagement for performances), is supposed to have had seven different cadenzas for "La donna è mobile." When Fernando de Lucia (1860-1925) sang the aria four times with four different endings in an 1895 Montevideo performance, it was to Masini that he was compared.

This sort of thing is unheard of today, but the fact is that "La donna è mobile" was not a settled matter even in the first decade or two of our century. It is not an aria that by its formal construction unequivocally demands a cadenza, and many tenors—Caruso, Bonci, Anselmi, Martinelli, Erb, Slezak and others—made recordings of it without any. Instead they used a *rallentando*, a sustained note or two, and some brief ornament. And when a cadenza was sung (some of the same artists, on other days, would include one), it was not always what we now think of as the "traditional" one. Although one gathers that the variety was much less than it had been in earlier generations, it is still easy to find on records eight or ten distinct variants of the basic idea. The five shown here belong, respectively, to De Lucia (recorded c. 1918), Bonci (1913), Caruso (1908), Domenico Russo (1908) and Joseph Schmidt (1933-6—by then an anachronism).

De Lucia e di pen-sier

Bonci e di pen-sier

Caruso e di pen-sier

Russo ah (e?) di pen-sie

Schmidt [e di pen-sier]

But composers were no longer writing such fluid, changeable scores. One of the most powerful dynamics in Western music has been the composer's gradual assumption of ever greater control over

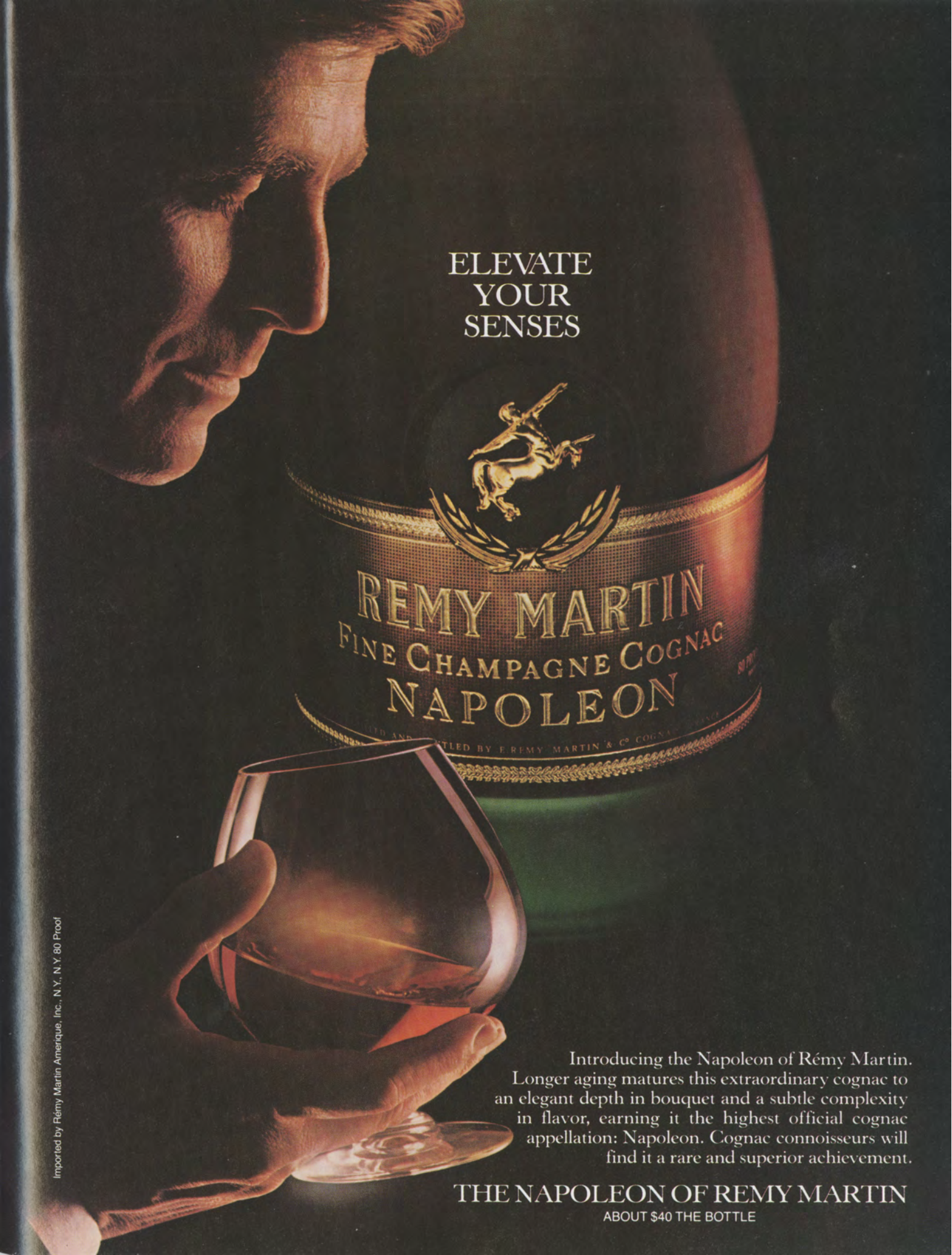
the details of execution; another has been the need to update performing styles in older music to reflect the values asserted by the newer. These twin processes of shifting and fixing reached their peak, as far as Italian opera is concerned, in the period associated with Arturo Toscanini's directorates of La Scala (1898-1908), the Metropolitan (1908-1915), and above all La Scala once more during the 1920s.

The Toscanini revolution lay not so much in fidelity to the composer's intentions (though certain of his reforms did work in that direction) as in settling on a workable performing text and style for operas like *Rigoletto*, and making it *the* text, *the* style. What has often been damned as the accretion of outmoded "traditions" in Verdian scores is not that at all, but rather the freezing of a once-flexible tradition at a certain moment in its history. (It is not quite right to lay all of this at Toscanini's door—the trend had been going on before him—but not unfair either, since he embraced these principles and was their most influential exemplar.)

In the case of *Rigoletto*, the fixed text survived pretty well intact until the last decade; the occasional exceptions to it were mostly on recordings. The final father-daughter duet was in; the repeats in the first one (and one gorgeous non-repeating passage) were out. The Duke's andante aria was sung but not his cabaletta (this left a bleeding chunk of an unresolved dominant seventh). Verdi's cadenzas to "Parmi veder" and "E il sol dell'anima" were out: "Troppo florido,"

says Tullio Serafin dismissively in his *Styles, Traditions and Conventions of Italian Melodrama*, a sort of bible for the "traditional," post-Toscaninian way of perform-

continued on p. 77



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Of Jesters, Buffoons and Fools

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the quality of persons and their times . . ."

Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

Fool cards and jokers
from assorted decks of
tarot and ordinary playing cards.

By CHRISTOPHER HUNT

When Verdi and his librettist Piave were obliged by the Austrian censors to revise their operatic version of Victor Hugo's *Le Roi s'amuse* so as to conceal its royal and historical origins, they chose a new name for their hunchback jester with what may have been subtle linguistic wit. In the pre-censorship version the opera's protagonist was called Triboletto, a simple Italianization of Hugo's Triboulet, the historical name of the court jester to 16th-century France's libertine king, François I. As a name, Triboletto evoked in Italian, as it had in French, a verb meaning to suffer or (in its transitive form) to irritate: *tribolare*. It has of course an English parallel in the noun "tribulation." Tribouletto's new name makes a different linguistic reference to the opera's subject, for it echoes the colloquial French *rigolo*, "laughable," usable in the funny-peculiar as well as the funny-ha-ha sense. Though Verdi was not notably given to such word-play, he and Piave may have enjoyed having the last laugh on the humorless censors.

Funny, of course, is what jesters were

supposed to be, though their functions were more than merely amusing, and their origins are obscurely rooted somewhere deep in pre-history. Our common image of the jester, for which Rigoletto may stand as a tolerable stereotype, is only one late manifestation of a remarkably widespread phenomenon that has ramifications far in the human psyche. The European court jester, whose apogee was reached in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and among whom the original Triboulet was a particularly celebrated instance, is a facet of a universal human trait: the Wise Fool, whose disordered wits have some special connection with truth and whose babbling is permitted a license that society forbids to normal people.

When Cortez reached Montezuma's court he found among the Inca king's retainers a dwarf who functioned as court jester; in Tibet there is an ancient tradition of the "Savant Fool"—teachers whose crazy ways conceal deep philosophical patterns; in Russia the Holy Fool, or *Yurodive*, has a long and honored history, recalled operatically by the Simpleton in *Boris Godunov*; in Attic Greece, philosophers like Diogenes were revered for their wisdom at least partly because their eccentric lifestyles fitted them into an

older belief that the mad speak with the voice of the gods (Diogenes's followers were named "cynics" after the Greek word for dog, since their back-to-nature way of living was derided as dog-like); in the Middle East, one of the oldest mythologies concerns a certain mad savant Marcolf who ridiculed King Solomon with impunity; in Indian tradition, the mischievous Vidusaka, like the later European Till Eulenspiegel, represents another facet of prophetic frenzy or of madness and humor directly linked to godliness. And there are innumerable further instances discoverable among Australian aborigines, Pacific Islanders, and in various Oriental and African cultures, in fact on so universal a scale that it is plain that foolishness and truth are linked in the values of virtually every human society. And recent American studies have produced statistical evidence for one aspect of this, the long-held folk belief that genius and madness go together: the incidence of psychiatric illness among a large random selection of contemporary creative artists was shown to be way above any predictable norm.

All engravings featured in this article are provided through the courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library.

Christopher Hunt is director of PepsiCo Summerfare, the summer festival at SUNY/Purchase, New York.



Doug Blackwell, lecturer, designer, credentialed consultant, musician, and owner of db audio.

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Tomb of Triboulet, court jester to François I.

That seeming digression may serve as a background to a closer look at the phenomenon of the court fool or jester, of whom Rigoletto is one of the most sophisticated literary examples. The etymology of the two words, fool and jester, is reflective of their original applications: "Fool" is derived from the French *fol* or *fou*, meaning mad, but the French words stem originally from a colloquial use of the Latin *follem* ("bellows") meaning "wind-bag"; "Jester," on the other hand, though it came to mean something connected with humor, in its Latin source (*gesta*) meant action or doings, and is thus intimately linked to the jester's physical functions. Now one of the most common physical skills for jesters was juggling; the normal word in French for a jester was *jongleur*, a corruption of the Latin *joculator* (as the English word juggler is of *jongleur*); and *joculator* means one who jests. It will be recalled that in the old French tale *Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame*, a simpleton who had no gift to offer to the Holy Virgin but his skill at juggling, was vouchsafed an appearance by the Virgin herself in testimony to faith. In the old French literature this story is mixed up with a different legend, that of the hunchback of Notre-Dame cathedral. Thus the threads begin to come together: a simpleton whose wits are deficient and whose body is deformed has some special access to the divine, often involving rare physical skills. We shall see further how those traits came together in the flowering of the court jester in 16th-century Europe.

In medieval Latin documents, the word most commonly used to describe jesters, jugglers, or minstrels alike was *ministrelli*; the next most usual word was *mimus*. That modern "mimes" use no words at



The Jester, engraving by E. Mohn after the 1869 painting by Albert Lambron des Tiltières.

all may only reflect a time when the dumb often earned a living by clowning antics. And at the other vocal extreme, the minstrels of the Middle Ages were certainly very often also court clowns, amusing or entertaining their royal patrons with their vocal skills. Blondel, the minstrel who discovered the whereabouts of Richard Coeur de Lion's prison, was probably King Richard's court jester. In a 15th-century French manuscript, a gloss on the Latin text explains that *Poeta regius* (Royal poet) "signifies in good French 'the royal fool' (*Le Fou du Roi*). One of the stories told of Rigoletto's ur-original Triboulet is that he regularly composed pithy little verses which François I was not above passing off as his own. Perhaps it was the jester and not the king who originally composed one such quatrain of doggerel attributed to the debonair François:

Souvent femme varie,
Bien fol est qui s'y fie;
Une femme souvent
N'est qu'une plume au vent!

Victor Hugo has his stage King in *Le Roi s'amuse* sing those words ("Women are fickle, only a fool would trust them; a woman is often just a feather in the wind"—my italics). Piave made little change in his Italian version:

La donna è mobile
Qual piuma al vento

continued on p. 62

San Francisco Opera

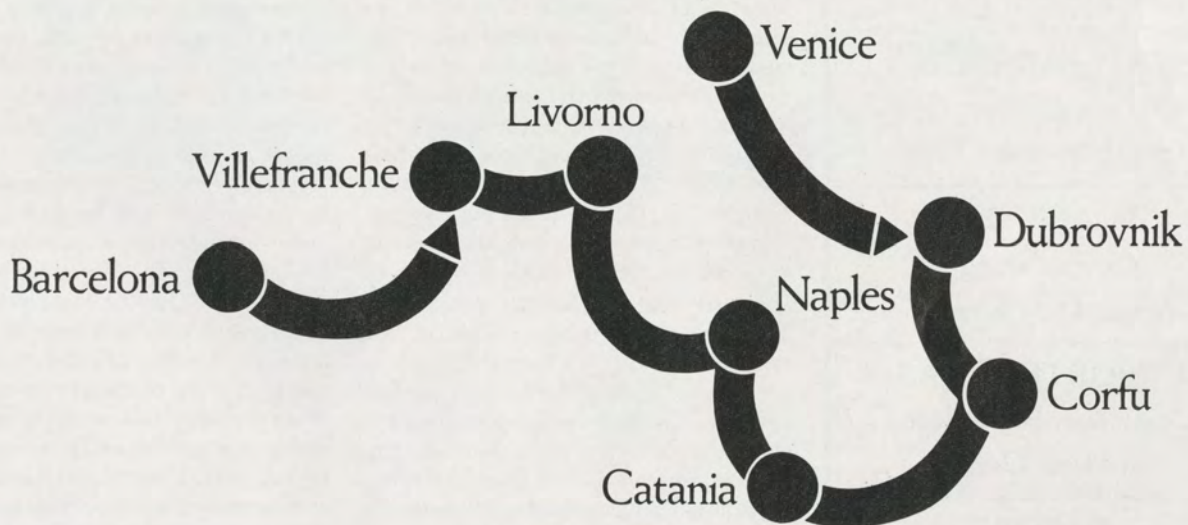
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


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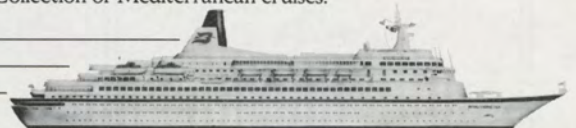
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LUCIANA SERRA

Soprano **Luciana Serra** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, a role she sang last year in Naples. While still a student at the conservatory in her native Genoa, she performed in a number of 18th-century operas. Under the guidance of her teacher, Michele Casato, she went to Iran and for seven years sang before the Imperial Court with the Tehran Opera. In 1976 she returned to Italy and began singing in the houses of Mantua, Como, Pisa and Palermo. She was invited by Gian Carlo Menotti to appear as Violetta in *La Traviata* for the 1978 Spoleto Festival U.S.A., and she scored a major triumph in 1979 when she sang Amina in *La Sonnambula* at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna. She went on to sing in Genoa, Trieste, Turin and Rome before making her debuts at the Hamburg Staatsoper and at London's Covent Garden during the 1980-81 season, both times singing Olympia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. Miss Serra returned to Covent Garden the following year as Olympia (a role she recorded on videodisc with that company), in 1982 for *La Sonnambula*, and last year for *Don Pasquale*. Last year she also made her La Scala debut in the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, a role she has also sung in Genoa and Naples. Earlier this year she bowed at Lyric Opera of Chicago in the title role of *Lakmé*. In September she made her South African debut as Lucia, and the following month sang in *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Florence, where she won acclaim in 1983 as Philine in *Mignon*. Next year she returns to Covent Garden as the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, to Trieste as Lucia, and to La Scala for appearances in *Don Pasquale* and Handel's *Alcina*.

Mezzo-soprano **Leslie Richards** is Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, the role of her 1983 Hawaii Opera Theater debut. After studying at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, she made her company debut during the 1980 Fall Season in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *Jenůfa*. Since then she has sung in over a dozen productions on the War Memorial stage, and last fall won high acclaim when she stepped in on short notice to sing the role of Dalila for an ailing Marilyn Horne. A participant in the 1980 Merola Opera Program, Miss Richards was a 1982 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco



LESLIE RICHARDS

Opera Center and sang Leonora in Scarlatti's *The Triumph of Honor* for that year's Showcase series. She created the roles of Mme. Pernelle in the American Opera Project's world premiere of Mechem's *Tartuffe* in 1980 and Marla in the world premiere of Mollicone's *Emperor Norton* with Brown Bag Opera the following year. The Los Angeles native made her debut with San Diego Opera as Sofia in Verdi's *I Lombardi* in 1979. Other operatic assignments have included the title role of a concert version of *Carmen* with the Ventura Symphony and, with Hawaii Opera Theater, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, a role she previously sang for 1981 Spring Opera Theater. Last April she was featured with San Francisco Ballet in Michael Smuin's *Songs of Mahler*, and in October made her European debut in a recital at the Como Autumn Music Festival in Italy. The recipient of the 1984 Richard Tucker Study Award Grant, she will sing her first Amneris in *Aida* for her Fort Worth Opera debut next year and will appear as Gertrude in Thomas's *Hamlet* for the Canadian Opera Company with Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyge.

Mezzo-soprano **Dolora Zajic** sings three roles during the 1984 Fall Season: Giovanna in *Ernani*; a Maid in *Elektra*; and Giovanna in *Rigoletto*. Last summer she made her San Francisco Opera debut as a Priestess in *Aida*. A native of Nevada, she has appeared with the Nevada Opera Association as the Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Siebel in *Faust*, the Third Lady in *The Magic Flute*, Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*, the Third Witch in *Macbeth*, Mrs. Ott in *Susannah* and Kate in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Other credits include the Principessa in *Suor Angelica* with the John Brownlee Opera Theater, Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* with the Regina Opera Company in New York and the same role with the Metropolitan Orchestra in New Jersey. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, she participated in the 1983 Merola Opera Program and sang in *The Tales of Hoffmann* at Sigmund Stern Grove. She also portrayed Suzuki at Villa Montalvo and sang the same role in Western Opera Theater's 1983 touring production of *Madame Butterfly*. A regional finalist in the 1981 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, she was winner of



DOLORA ZAJIC

the Leona Gordon Lowin Memorial Award in the 1983 San Francisco Opera Auditions Grand Finals. She scored a major triumph when she earned the bronze medal at the VII International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, making her the only non-Soviet winner and the first American to place in that event in 12 years. This year she created the role of Marcolfa in the world premiere of Conrad Susa's *The Love of Don Perlimplin*, produced by the San Francisco Opera Center.

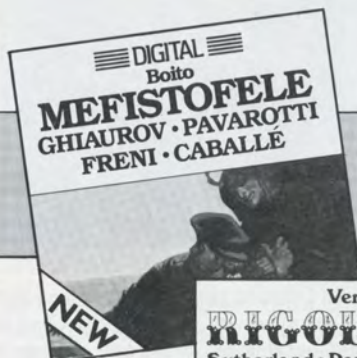


INGVAR WIXELL

Returning to the site of his 1967 American debut as Valentin in *Faust*, Swedish baritone **Ingvar Wixell** sings the title role of *Rigoletto*, the vehicle of his 1973 Metropolitan Opera debut and a part he recently performed in a film version by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. Wixell's San Francisco Opera credits include Marcello in *La Bohème* (1967 and '69); Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (1967, '69 and '75); the title role of *The Barber of Seville*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* and Ping in *Turandot* (1968); Germont in *La Traviata* and Don Carlo in *La Forza del Destino* (1969); Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1972); Scarpia in *Tosca* (1972 and '76); Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* and the title role of *Simon Boccanegra* (1975); Tonio in *I Pagliacci* (1976); Amonasro in *Aida* (1977); and, most recently, Mandryka in *Arabella* (1980). One of the foremost operatic baritones today, Wixell made his professional debut as Papageno with the

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DANO RAFFANTI

Stockholm Opera in 1955. In 1962 he appeared for the first time with the Deutsche Oper in Berlin as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, the role of his British debut at Glyndebourne that same year. A frequent performer at Covent Garden, he was first heard there in *Un Ballo in Maschera* with the Stockholm Opera in 1960 and has since appeared with the Royal Opera as Simon Boccanegra, Scarpia, Belcore, Mandryka and Rigoletto. In the fall of 1979 he took part in performances of *Tosca* on the Royal Opera's tour of Korea and Japan, and earlier this year was Belcore in Sir Geraint Evans's farewell performances of *L'Elisir d'Amore* at Covent Garden. Since his 1973 Metropolitan Opera debut as Verdi's hunchback jester, he has appeared there in *Il Trovatore*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Salome*, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, *Aida* and *La Traviata*. Other American companies he has performed with include Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, Washington Opera, Miami Opera and the Lyric Opera of Chicago, with whom he has just completed a series of performances of *Arabella*. He regularly sings in the world's great opera houses, and in 1978 the King of Sweden conferred upon him the "Litteris et Artibus" gold medal. His numerous recordings include complete operas by Donizetti, Mozart, Puccini and Verdi. He returns to Covent Garden next season as Amonasro in *Aida*, a role he sang there last season.

Italian tenor **Dano Raffanti** is the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, a role he sings at the Metropolitan Opera later this season. His first San Francisco Opera appearance was as Count Almaviva in the 1982 Summer Season production of *The Barber of Seville*. Originally a student of law, he auditioned for the school associated with the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, where he studied before making his professional debut in the 1976 Scala production of Bussotti's *Nottetempo*. Shortly thereafter he won the Puccini Competition, launching a career that has taken him to the major opera houses of Italy, Spain and America as well as Salzburg and Hamburg. He has frequently appeared opposite mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne, singing with her at Verona in 1978 in Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso*, repeating that work for his 1980 American debut in the Dallas Opera's American premiere of that work, as well as singing in Rossini's *La Donna del Lago* for



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JAMES PATTERSON

his Houston Grand Opera debut during the 1981-82 season and again at Carnegie Hall the following year. Raffanti made his Metropolitan Opera debut in April 1981 in a new production of *La Traviata*, returning in the same production the following season. Subsequent Met credits include *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Bohème* and Handel's *Rinaldo*, as well as the Met's Centenary gala televised nationally in 1983. Last season he sang *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* at Covent Garden and opened the Naples season in *Rigoletto*. His numerous concert engagements have included Liszt's *Psalm 13* and Mozart's *Vespers* at the Teatro Comunale in Florence, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* at the Salzburg Festival and the Rossini Festival in Pesaro, and Verdi's *Requiem* in Zurich and Basel.

Bass **James Patterson** returns to San Francisco Opera for four roles: Zuniga in *Carmen*, Alessio in *La Sonnambula*, Orest's guardian in *Elektra* and Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he made his Company debut as a Customhouse Guard in the 1983 Summer Season production of *La Bohème* and sang Fafner in the last performance of *Das Rheingold*. During the 1983 Fall Season he appeared in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *La Traviata*, *La Gioconda* and *Boris Godunov*, while the 1983 Summer Season saw him as Fafner in *Siegfried* and the King of Egypt in *Aida*. As a participant in the 1982 Merola Opera Program he appeared in productions of *Rigoletto* and *The Magic Flute*, and went on to portray Sparafucile in Western Opera Theater's 1982 touring production of *Rigoletto*. During the 1983 Showcase series, Patterson appeared as Ariadeno in *L'Ormindo* and Collatinus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, and he portrayed Osmin in this year's Showcase production of *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. During the summer of 1981 Patterson was an apprentice artist with Santa Fe Opera, where he appeared as Simone in *Gianni Schicchi*. His concert credits include Herod in Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ* with the Marin Symphony and, during last year's Festival of Masses, the bass solos in the *St. Matthew Passion* and the Verdi *Requiem* under Robert Shaw. This last summer he appeared as Fafner in both *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* at the Pacific Northwest Wagner Festival in Seattle.



DONNIE RAY ALBERT

Bass-baritone **Donnie Ray Albert** sings three roles in his debut season with San Francisco Opera: The Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*, Varsofiofiev in *Khovanshchina* and Monterone in *Rigoletto*, the role of his 1979 debut with Lyric Opera of Chicago. A native of Louisiana, he served two apprenticeships at Wolf Trap, and later became a resident artist with Memphis Opera Theater, taking on such assignments as Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*, Zuniga in *Carmen* and Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. He made his first appearance with Houston Grand Opera in 1975, in Joplin's *Treemonisha*. Since then he has appeared in Houston as Monterone, Joe in *Showboat*, the Villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Don Fernando in *Fidelio* and Jake Wallace in *La Fanciulla del West*. In 1976, he was the Priest in Spring Opera's staging of the Bach *St. Matthew Passion*. Albert gained international recognition, however, when he sang the role of Porgy in the Houston Grand Opera production of *Porgy and Bess* that toured the United States and Europe and was recorded by RCA. He has made the role his own, having performed it with Connecticut Opera, in Detroit, Baltimore, Orlando and in numerous concert presentations. Other companies with which he has appeared include Fort Worth, Edmonton, Vancouver, Boston Concert Opera and the Opera Orchestra of New York, in addition to numerous symphonic engagements. Next season he returns to Houston as Porgy and Timur in *Turandot*.

Baritone **David Malis** undertakes three roles this season: Dancäre in *Carmen*, Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly* and Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut during this year's Summer Season, portraying a Notary in *Don Pasquale*. A native of Georgia, he participated in the 1982 and 1983 Merola Opera Programs, appearing at Villa Montalvo in *Madama Butterfly* and as Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*. At Sigmund Stern Grove, Malis was seen in Merola productions of *The Magic Flute*, in which he sang the role of Papageno, and *The Tales of Hoffmann*, singing *Dapertutto*. During Western Opera Theater's 1983 tour of *Madame Butterfly*, he appeared as Sharpless and Yamadori. He is currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, and this last August he created the title

continued on p. 56

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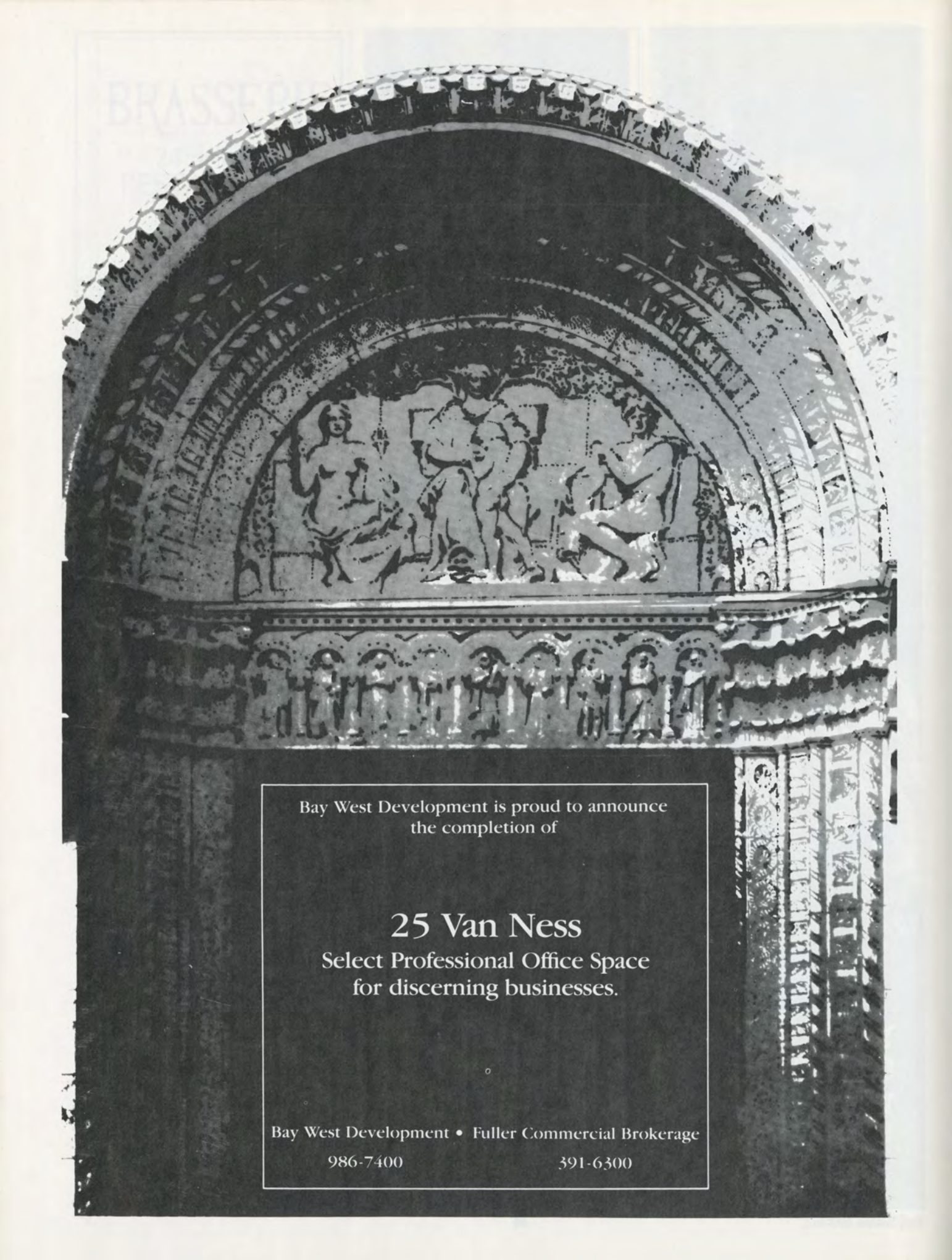
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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 2:00

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8 AT 8:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>Rigoletto</i>	Ingvar Wixell
<i>Gilda</i>	Luciana Serra*
<i>The Duke of Mantua</i>	Dano Raffanti
<i>Borsa</i>	Daniel Harper
<i>Countess Ceprano</i>	Kathleen Roland
<i>Marullo</i>	James Busterud
<i>Count Ceprano</i>	David Malis
<i>Monterone</i>	Donnie Ray Albert
<i>Sparafucile</i>	James Patterson
<i>Maddalena</i>	Leslie Richards
<i>Giovanna</i>	Dolora Zajic
<i>A page</i>	Ann Moreci
<i>An usher</i>	Mark Coles
<i>Courtiers, nobles, soldiers</i>	

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 16th century;
Mantua and vicinity

<i>ACT I</i>	<i>Scene 1:</i>	The Duke's palace
	<i>Scene 2:</i>	A street
	<i>Scene 3:</i>	Rigoletto's house

INTERMISSION

<i>ACT II</i>	The Duke's bedchamber
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INTERMISSION

<i>ACT III</i>	Sparafucile's inn
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is strictly forbidden.*

*The performance will last approximately
three hours.*

Rigoletto/Synopsis

During the prelude, Rigoletto kneels over the dead body of his daughter Gilda. As the action begins, the events leading to her death flash through his mind as in a terrible nightmare. Dazed, he carries the lifeless Gilda through a crowd of jeering courtiers.

ACT I

Scene 1—The Duke of Mantua surveys his court to choose a woman with whom to pass the night and selects the Countess Ceprano. She is flattered but nervous; her husband is present. This leads to an impasse. Marullo enters with news for the courtiers that Rigoletto, the jester, has a mistress in town. The Duke then discusses his impasse with Rigoletto, who suggests the following alternatives for Ceprano: prison, exile or beheading. Ceprano and the courtiers are outraged and swear vengeance on Rigoletto. Monterone, an old nobleman, comes to denounce the Duke and his dissolute court. With the Duke's consent, Rigoletto mocks the old man and dishonors his daughter before his very eyes. Monterone curses both Rigoletto and the Duke for laughing at a father's grief. Rigoletto suddenly fears for the safety of his own daughter, whom he has kept carefully hidden from the court.

Scene 2—Later that evening Rigoletto is accosted by the hired assassin, Sparafucile, who offers his services. Rigoletto spurns his offer and then reflects on their encounter. He sees Sparafucile as his alter ego: one kills with a sword, the other with words. Monterone's curse continues to haunt him.

Scene 3—Rigoletto returns home and greets his daughter, Gilda, declaring that she means the world to him. She reciprocates his feelings but questions why he has kept her concealed at home. He fears the courtiers and warns the nurse to guard Gilda carefully. Hearing a noise in the street, he goes out to investigate. The Duke, disguised as a student, enters and is astonished to discover that the girl he had seen in church is Rigoletto's daughter. He and Gilda declare their love. Then, fearing Rigoletto's return, he leaves. Left alone, Gilda rhapsodizes on the student's name, Gualtier Maldè, while outside the courtiers gather to kidnap the woman they believe

to be Rigoletto's mistress. To exact their revenge on the jester, they will present the girl to the Duke. Rigoletto returns to find the courtiers near his house, but they fool him into thinking they have come to abduct the Countess Ceprano, who lives next door. Too late Rigoletto discovers the trick.

ACT II

Following the abduction, the courtiers have locked Gilda in a secluded room in the Duke's palace. The Duke, unaware of what has occurred, laments the fact that when he returned to Gilda's house he found it deserted. The courtiers describe how they stole Rigoletto's mistress for the Duke, and they bring her to him. When Rigoletto enters, a remark from the page alerts him to Gilda's whereabouts. He rages at his tormentors, but is soon reduced to begging them for pity. When Rigoletto discovers Gilda in the Duke's bed, the courtiers leave her alone with her father. She explains how she met the Duke, whom she had taken to be a student, at church. Rigoletto comforts her. Monterone, on the way to his beheading, laments that no one has yet struck down his daughter's seducer. Rigoletto promises to do so. Gilda begs mercy for the Duke.

ACT III

Rigoletto has brought Gilda to Sparafucile's inn to show her the real nature of the man she loves. The Duke, incognito, flirts with Sparafucile's sister, Maddalena, using the same words he spoke earlier to Gilda. She laments his faithlessness, but still continues to love him. Rigoletto sends her home and hires Sparafucile to kill the Duke. Maddalena urges her brother to spare him, and he agrees, provided another victim can be found as a substitute so that he can keep his pact with Rigoletto. Gilda, unable to follow her father's orders, returns and, overhearing the conversation, presents herself as the victim. Rigoletto returns to collect his victim and is given a body. Hearing the Duke's voice in the distance, he quickly uncovers the wraps and finds the dying Gilda. Monterone's curse has been fulfilled.

Rigoletto

Photos taken in rehearsal
by David Powers
and Ron Scherl

Luciana Serra, Ingvar Wixell





Ingvar Wixell



Luciana Serra



Ingvar Wixell



Donnie Ray Albert

Kathleen Roland, Dano Raffanti

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DAVID MALIS

continued from p. 49

role in the world premiere of Conrad Susa's *The Love of Don Perlimplin* at the State University of New York at Purchase.



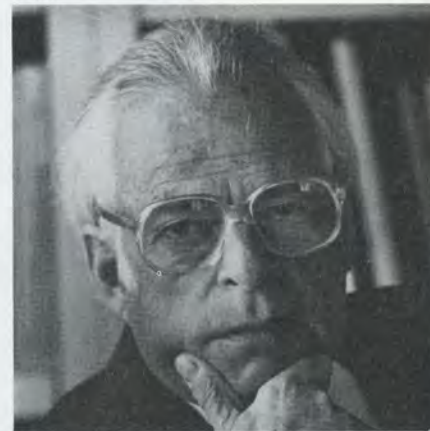
JAMES BUSTERUD

Baritone **James Busterud** returns to San Francisco Opera as Sharpless in the Family performances of *Madama Butterfly*, Marullo in *Rigoletto* and as Streshnev in *Khovanshchina*. He made his Company debut during the 1982 Fall Season, when he appeared in *Salome*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites* and *Cendrillon*. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he sang the role of Sharpless in Western Opera Theater's 1983 national tour of *Madama Butterfly* and was a participant in the 1983 Merola Opera Program. During the Center's 1983 Showcase series he appeared as Armida in Cavalli's *L'Ormino*, and this last year sang in the 1984 Seasons' Preview at Herbst Theatre. In 1982, Busterud participated in the Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Artist Program, in which he sang Ford in *Falstaff* and the Music Master in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. In April of this year he made his Carnegie Hall debut singing in *Mignon* with Frederica von Stade, and this last summer appeared at the Aspen Music Festival as the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* and made his debut with Opera Theater of St. Louis in *Madama Butterfly*. His concert work has included performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Bach's *St. John Passion*, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 14 and Stravinsky's *Les Noces*. Future engagements include *The Merry Widow* with Florentine Opera in Milwaukee, Silvio in *I Pagliacci* for Ft. Worth and the roles of Eisenstein and Falke in the SFO Center's 1985 Singers Tour of *Die Fledermaus*.



DANIEL HARPER

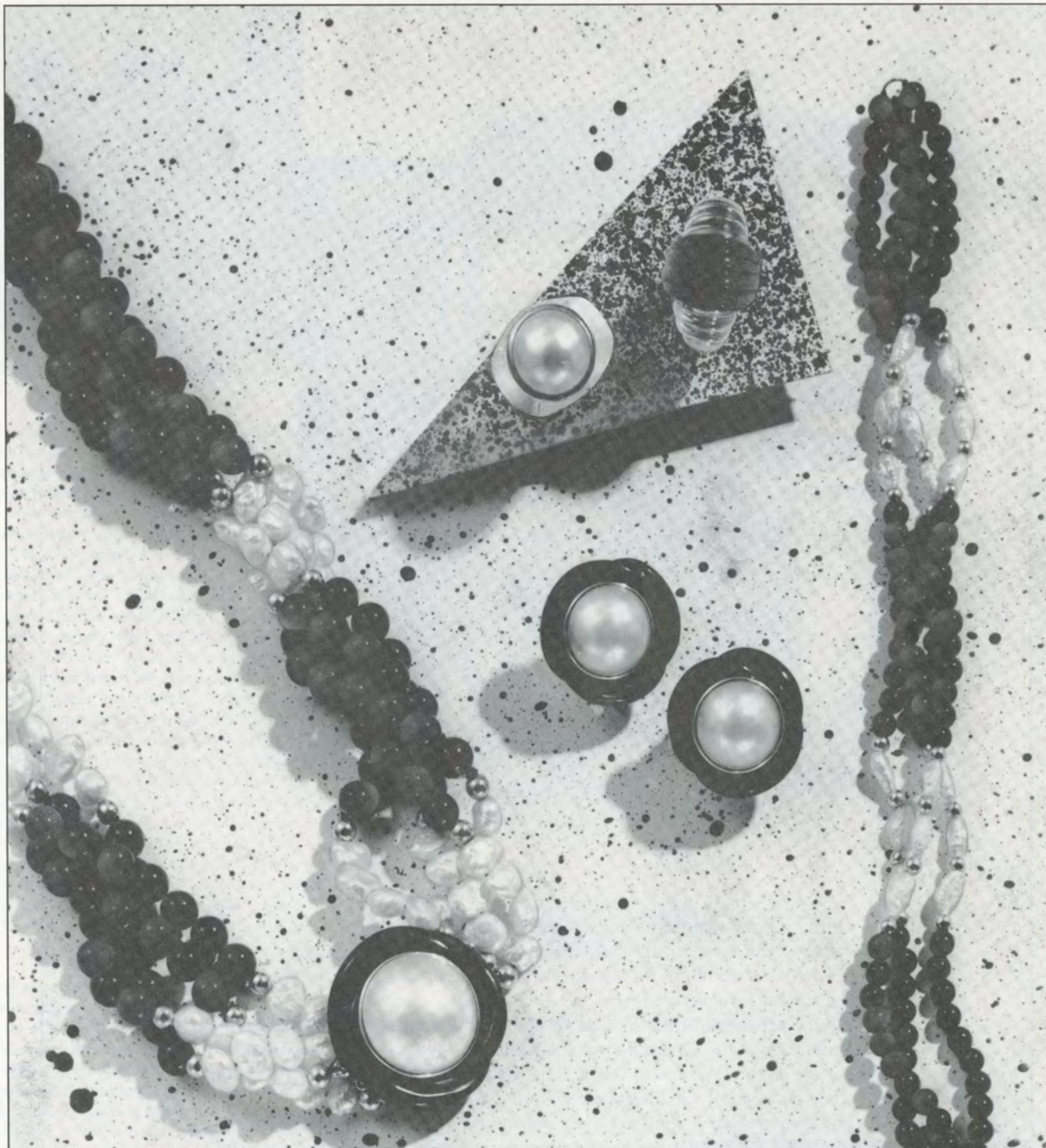
Tenor **Daniel Harper** is Don Riccardo in *Ernani* and Borsa in *Rigoletto*. He made his Company debut as a Messenger in this year's Summer Season production of *Aida*. As a member of the 1983 Merola Opera Program, he sang the title role of Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann* at Stern Grove and won the Gropper Memorial Award at the 1983 San Francisco Opera Auditions Grand Finals. He appeared as Pinkerton in the 1983 Western Opera Theater touring production of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, and is a 1984 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center. A graduate of North Park College in Illinois, Harper has extensive concert credits in the Chicago area, including performances of *Elijah*, *Messiah*, the Mozart Requiem and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*. He was heard this year in the Verdi Requiem with the San Francisco Bach Choir, and in April he participated in concert performances and a recording of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* with the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti.



KURT HERBERT ADLER

Kurt Herbert Adler, general director emeritus of the San Francisco Opera, returns to conduct *Rigoletto*. Adler, who retired as Company general director in 1981, began his long musical career in 1925 in Vienna, coming to America in 1938 and spending five years with the Chicago Opera before joining the San Francisco Opera in 1943 as chorus director and conductor. He made his podium debut with *Cavalleria Rusticana* and was made Company artistic director in 1953, becoming general director in 1957. He has led such memorable productions in the War Memorial as *Aida* with Renata Tebaldi and Mario del Monaco in 1950; *Madama Butterfly*

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Richard K. Miller
(1926-1984)

Until his untimely death on September 27, 1984, Richard K. Miller, Chairman of the Board of the San Francisco Opera Association, served the Opera with a rare dedication, one that stemmed from a lifelong passion and concern for his favorite art form.

A Vice-president of Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Richard K. Miller was a member of the Opera Board since 1965 and was on the Executive Committee of the Board since 1967. At the time of his election as Chairman, in 1982, he was head of the Endowment Fund Committee.

His love for San Francisco Opera began early. His father, Robert Watt Miller, served as President of the San Francisco Opera Association from 1937 to 1942 and again from 1951 until 1966. Born and raised in San Francisco, Richard Kendall Miller began attending San Francisco Opera in 1935, at the age of nine. His devotion to the lyric theater and to this Company in particular grew through the years, and his supportive attention to the needs of San Francisco Opera distinguished his years of service as a member of the Board.

Richard K. Miller was admired and respected by everyone in the Company who came into contact with him. An active philanthropist, he was involved in numerous Bay Area charitable organizations. The example he set in both his personal and professional life will not be soon forgotten by the city and opera company that he served so well and unselfishly.

San Francisco, October 1984.



JEAN-PIERRE PONNELLE

with Licia Albanese in 1953 and with Renata Scotto in 1974; *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 1958 and *Così fan tutte* in 1960, both with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf; *La Traviata* with Beverly Sills in 1973; *Il Trovatore* with Miss Scotto in 1975; *La Forza del Destino* with Leontyne Price in 1979; *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* with Karl Ridderbusch in 1981, as well as the Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of *Carmen* with Teresa Berganza and Plácido Domingo; and *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Montserrat Caballé and Luciano Pavarotti in 1982. He has also been conducting the popular "Opera in the Park" concerts in Golden Gate Park since 1973. Other organizations for which he has appeared on the podium include the San Diego Symphony, the Tulsa Opera, Central City Opera, the Philadelphia Opera, the Oakland Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, London's Royal Philharmonic, the opera company of Marseilles, and the opera and symphony in the People's Republic of China. He has just returned from his Australian Opera debut, leading performances of *Fidelio*. On records, Adler has collaborated with such artists as Luciano Pavarotti, Maria Chiara, Renata Scotto, Plácido Domingo and Leona Mitchell, with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of London. A recipient of numerous academic honors and foreign government titles, Adler has also been active as an arts advocate and has served on a number of government panels. He is a member of the National Council on the Arts.

One of the world's most noted and discussed directors and designers, **Jean-Pierre Ponnelle**, conceived the productions of *Carmen* (first seen at San Francisco Opera during the 1981 Fall Season and repeated for the 1983 Summer Season) and *Rigoletto* (originally mounted in 1973 and seen again during the 1981 Summer Season). Ponnelle's productions have been seen in all of the world's major opera houses, and several 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 he

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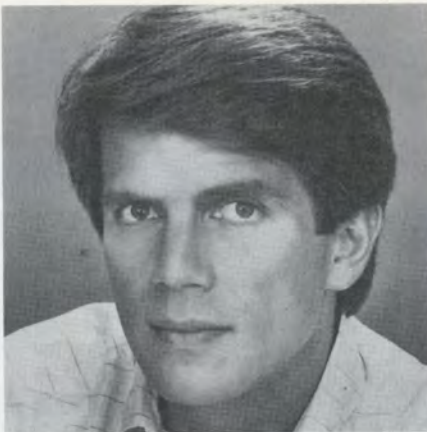
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ROBIN THOMPSON

was responsible last year for *Die Zauberflöte* (seen in a taped telecast in this country) 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 '82 Fall Seasons. Other Ponnelle San Francisco productions include *Così fan tutte* (1970, '73, '79 and '83 Summer Season), *Otello* (1970, '74, '78 and '83 Fall Season) *Tosca* (1972, '76, '78 and '82), *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 Season). Ponnelle has created productions of *Falstaff* for Glyndebourne; *Moses und Aron* for Geneva; *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* 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 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 productions of *La Cenerentola* and *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. His film credits include *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Madama Butterfly*, also seen on American television.

Robin Thompson stages the Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of *Rigoletto*. He began his association with San Francisco Opera as assistant director in 1979, and made his Company directorial debut with the 1982 English-language production of *The Marriage of Figaro*. His most recent assignment here was *La Gioconda* during the 1983 Fall Season. A California native, Thompson received his operatic training at Indiana University with the recommendation of distinguished American bass George London, sponsored by a grant from James B. Pendleton Foundation of Los Angeles. His master's thesis production of Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* was chosen by the Israel Philharmonic to tour Israel as part of a festival of that composer's works. He has received both a National Opera Institute Grant and the San Francisco Opera Guild Scholarship. Earlier this year he made his Canadian debut with Montreal Opera, staging the Bliss Hebert production of *Turandot*, seen here

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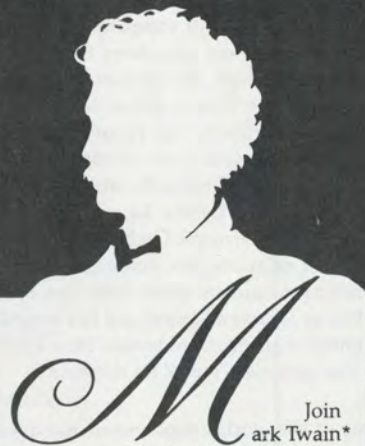
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THOMAS J. MUNN

during the 1982 Summer Season. He followed that assignment with his Santa Fe Opera debut for which he staged a new production of *The Magic Flute*. Another important debut was his first New York City Opera project, directing Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* in the famed David Hockney sets from San Francisco Opera. Later this fall Thompson returns to Montreal for new productions of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Suor Angelica*.

In his ninth year with San Francisco Opera, **Thomas J. Munn** is responsible for lighting seven productions this fall: *Ernani*, *Carmen*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Elektra*, *Khovanshchina*, *Rigoletto* and *Don Giovanni*. Since 1976, he has designed the lighting and special effects for over 70 San Francisco Opera productions. He created the lighting for all of the 1984 Summer Season productions (*Don Pasquale*, *Siegfried*, *Aida* and *Die Fledermaus*) and his 1983 assignments included new lighting designs for *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein*, *Boris Godunov* and the American premiere of *The Midsummer Marriage*. He has also designed the scenery as well as the lighting for *Nabucco* and *Salome* in 1982, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in 1981, *Roberto Devereux* and *Pelleas et Melisande* in 1979 and *Billy Budd* in 1978. In addition to his numerous design credits for the War Memorial stage, Munn has designed for Broadway, Off-Broadway and regional theater companies throughout the United States and Europe. Recent projects include productions for the Hartford Ballet, Netherlands Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. His television credits include San Francisco Opera productions of *La Gioconda* (for which he received a 1979 Emmy Award), *Samson et Dalila* in 1980, *Aida* in 1981 and the Pavarotti concert in 1983. He is currently a consultant on new theater projects for the Netherlands Opera.

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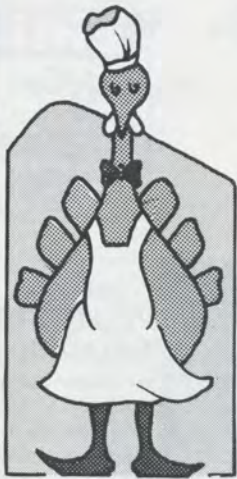
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Jesters continued from p. 44

The jester we see in Verdi's opening scene, cruelly taunting Monterone for resenting what his libertine master has done with his daughter, would have been quite in character as author of that little rhyme. A contemporary of Triboulet's, writing in England about Charles Chester, the English royal fool, called him "one of those fools who resemble those official French jesters who find more delight in annoying the courtiers with his sarcasms than amusing them or his Sovereign by his wit." It is a description that fits the operatic Rigoletto as it may also have fitted Triboulet, though the French poet Clément Marot (Verdi/Piave's Marullo) said of François's jester that he "lived perpetually fooling until his death, which was much regretted, for it was said of him that he was more happy than wise." There are incidentally further historical echoes, albeit confusedly intermingled, in Hugo's largely unhistorical play and thus in Verdi's opera: according to often conflicting sources of the time, Triboulet, "who had as much wit when he was thirty as he had had when he was three," formed a profound attachment to François's mistress Diane de Poitiers. Now Diane's father, the Constable de Bourbon, was sentenced to death by François for treason. From that conjunction of facts sprang not only the idea of Rigoletto's love for his own royally-seduced daughter, but the tragedy's plot-mainspring, for de Bourbon is Monterone and it is his curse on the sarcastic Fool that brings about the tragedy's dénouement.

That court jesters' jokes were more often practical or sour than genuinely witty seems clear from the sources. The same few witticisms are reported in different manuscripts from different periods, attributed to different jesters. One of the few that is both witty and pertinent to Verdi's opera is told of others beside Triboulet, though he may have been the originator in this instance. Triboulet had so incensed one of François's courtiers with his jibes, that the courtier threatened to have him murdered. "If he does," said François when Triboulet complained to him, "I shall hang him a quarter of an hour afterwards." "Ah, Sire!" responded Triboulet, "Couldn't you hang him quarter of an hour before?"

It is entirely appropriate that Rigoletto should be shown hunchbacked (though Triboulet may not have been). Physical deformity was a regular attribute of clowns, fools and jesters. Deformity has always been a source of amusement for

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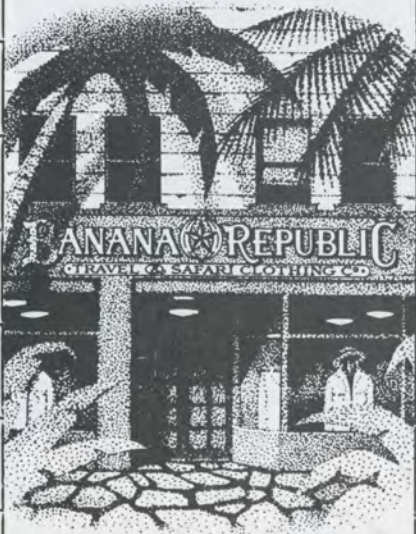
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The Dwarf Sebastián de Morra. Painting by Diego Velázquez, made around 1644. The dwarf was in the service of Cardinal Infante Ferdinand, and then, until his death in 1649, in attendance of Prince Baltasar Carlos.

others, a trait we now like to think is both discreditable and disappearing. From the earliest times, dwarfs and hunchbacks are recorded in special places in centers of power. A dwarf named Danga was a court favorite in Fifth Dynasty Egypt; although ancient Greek literature has no direct reference to dwarfs as entertainers, ugliness was a characteristic of Greek clowns, as it was often also of philosophers. Roman history, on the other hand, abounds in references to dwarf or hunchbacked entertainers in the houses of the rich; and in Roman circuses, freaks were as much a feature as they were 2000 years later in their American counterparts at the start of this century. Attila kept a favorite dwarf as a clown, and by 572 A.D. we have even the name, Bertoldo, of an ugly dwarf entertainer in the court of the Lombards in Italy. In the German language the word *Narr* means both dwarf and fool. Deformity, then, has been a facet of the clown since earliest times; and we have seen that witlessness in various forms was also seen as a link with divinity. Gradually, the logical consequence of these traits emerged in the form of official court jesters, men (and sometimes women—female Fools were not infrequent) whose wit, clowning and absurdity gave them special powers, powers by which they might be rude to those in power without incurring the penalties normal courtiers did.

There were of course prices to pay for such license: court fools were not allowed

to sleep anywhere but in the royal palace. It is a forgotten memory of this that explains why Rigoletto can only occasionally visit his daughter. Jesters were obliged to wear their motley uniform at all times, and they could not carry arms (though wooden swords were permitted!). And there was always the danger of a capricious prince deciding that legitimate license had been exceeded, and having the offending jester executed. Courtiers, too, could take their own revenge for a jester's taunting: Triboulet was once, so one version goes, nailed by his ear lobe, on tiptoe, to the local gallows by a group of aggrieved courtiers. It is a curiously apt punishment for the figure who represented a late trace of so many primitive social traits: the ridiculous echo of Christian crucifixion is but one resonance.

The jester's compulsory uniform was not so uniform as operatic convention suggests. Fools did not always wear striped outfits, though bi-colored clothes were normal—usually yellow (the color of executioners and criminals as well as of cowardice) and green (for envy). The cockscomb that often crowned a jester's hood (which in turn covered head and shoulders rather like a monk's cowl) may go back to Roman times when common clowns shaved all but the central tuft of their heads as a mark of their profession. It is tempting if improbable to see in the contemporary teenage fad for Mohawk hairstyles an unconscious echo of the clown's trademark. The jester's *marotte* or bauble (from the French word for a child's plaything) —a stick with either a miniature clown's head on it, or an inflated pig's bladder with dried peas rattling around inside — has no certain origin but was certainly later regarded as a parodic scepter, symbol of the Fool's power as the royal scepter was of regal authority. Jester's hoods, too, normally had long asses' ears sewn on them; the symbolic stupidity is fairly obvious, though its parallel association with rampant virility, common in Roman and many other early societies, is now often forgotten: early clowns, Roman dwarf statuettes, and other realizations in literature of the clown-archetype, often have exaggeratedly large genitals. And that, too, links with the rest of the jester's uniform, the traditional ragged, multi-colored motley: in parallel with other parti-colored costumes, from Italian *commedia dell'arte* to old English mumming plays, such patterning may without excessive fantasy be traced back to forgotten pre-Christian fertility rituals in which perhaps the holy simpleton, in the colors of nature, is



Thonin, court fool of Henry II of Valois.

ritually killed before being reborn in the new seasonal cycle. It is still a common European superstition to touch a hunchback's hump for good luck or (in its older survival) in a prayer for fertility.

In the early days, jesters doubtless fulfilled the needs of a society where idle talk could easily lead to execution at the whim of a capricious lord; it was a useful safety valve to allow one harmless (because witless and/or deformed) section of society the freedom others lacked. By corollary, court fools may have gone out of fashion precisely because their talk was dangerously free. That freedom is exactly represented by the Joker in a pack of cards—dressed in a clown's motley and free to rove anywhere, but increasingly excluded from newer games, despite being in design so like a court card. As the institution of court fool became regularized, so we see a growing dichotomy in his image between our conventional picture of jesters in the Rigoletto mold (men of whole wits who played the fool for a living, a sentiment well known to Shakespeare whose gallery of fools culminates in that wiser-than-wise riddler of the playwright's old age, the Fool in *King Lear*) and the more accurate historical truth of a pathetic half-idiot at whose expense King and Court laughed: for from early times there were two species of court fool—the touching, childlike imbecile, and the cynical, crafty “artificial” fool who walked a perpetual tightrope with his jests at the expense of his employers. Both types were laughing-stocks themselves, “he who gets slapped” as St. John Chrysostom formulated it, the butt of as many practical jokes and as much bawdy, rude and not always

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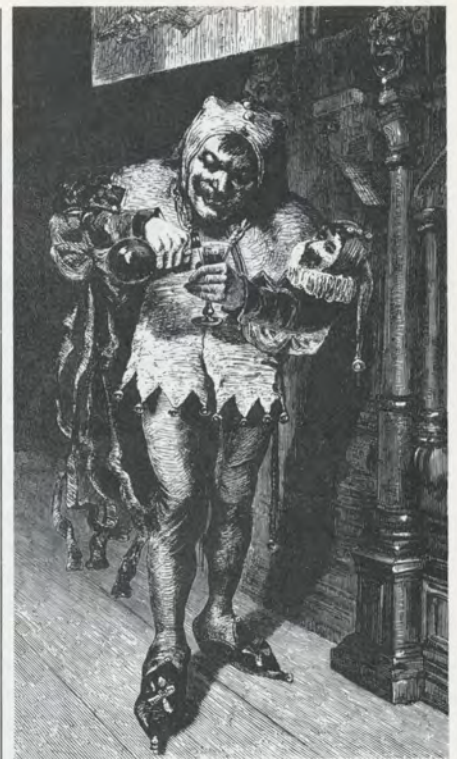
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Court Jester, engraving by William Merritt Chase, 1849-1916.

harmless laughter as he was himself activator of his own practical jokes and witticisms. There was a sense in which the Fool who lives to laugh another day demonstrated that blows are harmless, the opposite of the truth that the less comfortable past brought cruelly home to most people every day. It is the same sympathetic self-pity that the great 20th-century jester-equivalents evoke, Charlie Chaplin or Buster Keaton, or the rebounding elastic characters of animated cartoons.

The court jester thus marks the end of only one train of human psychological development: one channel for necessary laughter, even if in fact he probably represented (more often than it is pleasant to contemplate) Hobbes's theory that all human laughter is caused by our "sudden glory at the sight of an inferior." That court jesters did help to relieve the pressures of state was also undoubtedly often true: Queen Elizabeth I was by no means the only monarch to have her clown brought to her in difficult times to "undumpish" her. One may wonder what later statesmen have done to compensate for the disappearance of so valuable a political figure; it is tempting to accept the theory that monarchs and heads of state have increasingly absorbed the function of clown into their own persons, proportionate with the freedom of speech becoming an enfranchised reality. ■

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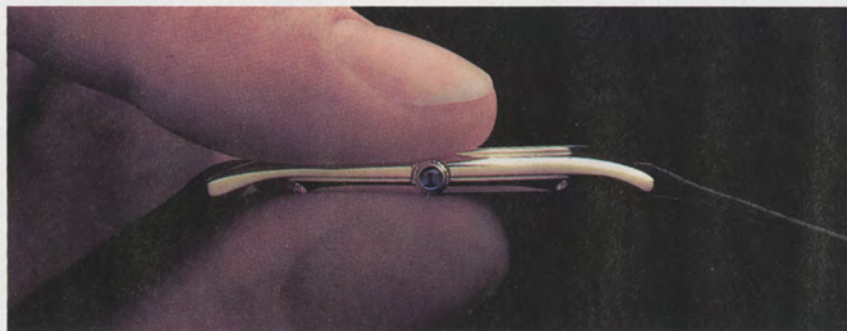


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Hervé Le Mansec talks to the invisible Timothy Pfaff in the course of preparing for this article.

Le Mansec: Ten Years at San Francisco Opera

By TIMOTHY PFAFF

Ever since Alexis de Tocqueville wrote his prolix and insightful commentaries on his travels in America, some 150 years ago, the French have proved themselves among the most trenchant observers of the political and cultural affairs of their fellow republic across the Atlantic. Continuing the de Tocqueville tradition not only in our time but also in our very neighborhood is the 40-year-old French teacher and writer Hervé Le Mansec. A practicing music critic for the past 16 years, he has, since 1974, written regularly about San Francisco Opera productions for the prestigious *Opéra-International*, a Parisian monthly magazine devoted entirely to opera and featuring reviews of opera productions around the world.

It bears noting now that *les écrits de Le Mansec* are not the protest of an exile cut off from the opera capitals of Europe. "I've been attending and reviewing performances in this house for ten years now," says the suave, boyishly handsome critic in the kind of accented English that used to result in lucrative movie contracts, "and I must say, it is a 10. It is probably one of the greatest opera houses in the world, and I think it is the best in America." The judgment comes from a not uncritical man who has seen—and reviewed—opera performances in all the prominent opera houses of both continents. Gallic displeasure registers on his face only at the

thought of being based somewhere else. "I think that if I left the Bay Area, what I would miss most would be the opera," he says. "Where else would you go to live and see opera of this quality?"

Le Mansec first experienced San Francisco Opera in 1966, as an audience member, not a critic. Somewhat against his will, he was sent to the U.S., and to Stanford University in particular, by his major professor in his Ph.D. program at the Université de Nantes. When that professor made his going to Stanford a condition of earning his degree, Le Mansec packed his bags. Swallowing his fears that he would be stopped at U.S. Customs by the FBI or the CIA ("As a student I had been involved in many demonstrations—against everything, of course, but mostly against America, since to our minds then America was responsible for everything bad in the world"), he arrived to discover "something completely different. I discovered a country I didn't even know existed. And I also discovered San Francisco Opera. It was fantastic!"

And over, for Le Mansec, in a single season. "The French Army caught up with me, so I went back to France, where you have a choice between a year in the army or three years in our equivalent of the Peace Corps. So I spent three years in Ethiopia, at the end of Haile Selassie's reign. There was no opera, but political life was highly theatrical." After Ethiopia,

Le Mansec returned to America, voluntarily this time, to settle in the South Bay. He has taught French at San Jose State University, Cabrillo College, and UC Santa Cruz, where he is now a visiting lecturer. In addition to his reviews for *Opéra International* (which cover Seattle, San Diego, and Santa Fe as well as San Francisco), he has served since 1970 as music critic for *France-Amerique*, a New York-based weekly French newspaper for which he reviews primarily French concert artists, who are regular visitors to Bay Area concert halls. (In September he took on an additional post as well. He was appointed Consul Honoraire de France for the San Francisco-Santa Cruz area by the government of President François Mitterand—mainly, he thinks, "because the French government now has a strong interest in the Silicon Valley.")

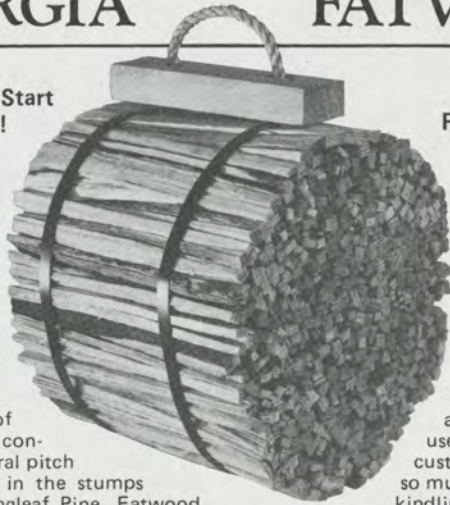
Although he is careful with words like "influence," he sees that his own criticism has changed since moving to the United States, that it has become "more journalistic. When a European critic writes a performance review, it usually begins with pages of rather philosophical writing, like a treatise. It can be very pompous and boring. I was taught to write that way, but now I do more reporting. When I write about San Francisco Opera for

Timothy Pfaff is Associate Editor of the U.C. Berkeley Alumni magazine, California Monthly, and music reviewer for The Daily Californian.

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Paris, I know that my readers are not likely to see the production I review, so I want to describe how the production looks. It makes more sense to help people visualize and hear the productions I review than to write about the influence of such and such a composer. That's fine for a journal like *The New Yorker* but not as important for my readership. People like to say that they don't read the critics, but they do. Singers especially say that they don't read reviews. But I know they do."

In his view, the signal difference between European and American opera lies in the expectations of the respective audiences. Americans, he finds, "go to the opera to listen to voices" and are "more conservative about theater." In Europe, on the other hand, at least since World War II, "people want to go to the theater. In Europe the director, and even the *metteur en scène*, has become an increasingly important figure. People go to the Zeffirelli *Bohème*, not to Puccini's or Scotto's. People go to a production because it's by Zeffirelli, or Lavelli or Strehler or Chéreau. Or Ken Russell.

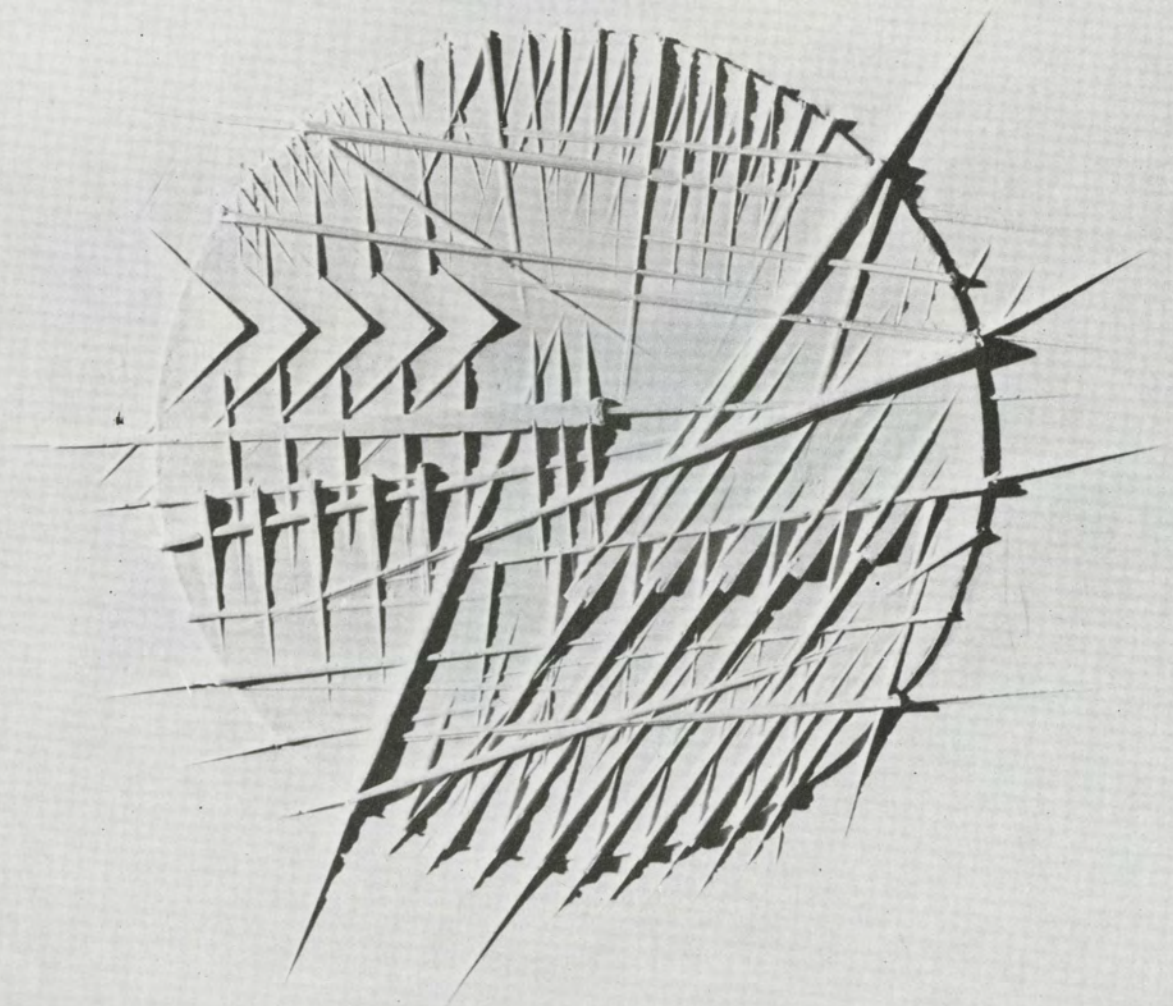
"I don't mean to say that they are behind, but American audiences are most like European audiences of years ago. They come to hear voices, because that's what they enjoy. People want to listen to great singing—and they sure have it in San Francisco!

"I wish San Francisco could get more people like Zeffirelli, but I also understand that Zeffirelli has priced himself out of the market. No one can afford him any more. It's ridiculous. Money is probably a major reason that San Francisco is, to my mind, conservative about productions. If people don't like a new production, which costs a lot of money, what do you do with it? Whereas in Europe, they don't have to worry about it as much. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. Just send the bill to the government. I sometimes wonder what Terry McEwen could do if he had the kind of money Rolf Liebermann had at the Paris Opera a few years ago. What he could do with that in San Francisco!"

A prime example of the kind of production that appealed to Le Mansec's admittedly more European tastes, but that he knows did not appeal to most Americans, was the Pier Luigi Pizzi *Semiramide*, unveiled here in 1981 to open former general director Kurt Herbert Adler's last season. "Pizzi is much appreciated in Europe, for trying something new," Le Mansec explains. "And I must say, I liked everything about that production, the

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architectural sets and costumes, the colors—or, rather, the lack of color—and even the so-called aria ramps, those bridges over the orchestra on which the singers appeared to sing their main arias. I know it all looked very modern, but I must say, that production was the first time in my life when I realized what the great singers of the past must have been like. With Caballé and Horne, it was tremendous. I went back to several more performances of that *Semiramide*."

Another controversial production he finds memorable is the 1977 *Turandot* by his countryman Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. Although he recognizes that its stark, imposing sets and bold, almost lurid colors upset those who prefer to see the piece as a charming fairy tale, he is a champion of its imagination and quick to add: "Opera is not a museum." He is open about his dismay that the production was overlooked in the 1982 Summer Festival, when it was replaced by the Bliss Hebert production borrowed from Dallas, Houston and Miami. Complaining that that production was "what we call in French 'chinoiserie,'" he found it as garish "as a window in Chinatown."

The Ponnelle production that has, in his view, weathered best is *Così fan tutte*, an Adler commission that McEwen openly admires and has brought back to the San Francisco stage. "It's not only fresh and visually beautiful, but so intimate, dramatically, as well." Although *The Flying Dutchman* is the only Ponnelle production he claims not to have appreciated, Le Mansec adds that too-frequent revivals of some Ponnelle productions have tended to call attention to their "gimmicks." "The first time I saw the new *Carmen*," he says, "I thought it was stunning, that Ponnelle had captured perfectly the sun, the light, and the heat of Spain. I still think it's very beautiful, but now the impact is gone."

He hastens to add that it was San Francisco Opera that helped him appreciate another stage designer, Beni Montresor. "I used to think that his productions were all alike, and that if you'd seen one, you'd seen them all. But even though they do have a certain 'look'—say, the similarity between the soft colors and gauzy textures of the 1974 *Esclarmonde* and the 1978 *Lohengrin*—I've come to appreciate each one for its own merits. At the time, it may have seemed that San Francisco was just doing its bit for the Massenet revival that was taking place all over the world, but I think it was ahead of many of the other houses by choosing *Esclarmonde*. I think it's one of his strongest operas."

Le Mansec makes no secret of his pleasure that San Francisco has made such a strong showing in the area of French opera. He also had made regular pilgrimages to San Diego, where Tito Capobianco made a practice of mounting productions of rarely performed French operas, like Thomas's *Hamlet* and *Mignon* and Chabrier's *Gwendoline*. "I was also an admirer of the Verdi Festivals he was giving there. But I have to admit, I lost interest when Capobianco left, and I haven't been back."

Generally speaking, the San Francisco productions that have excited him most are the ones which, whether or not they look "modern," brought a new perspective to a work. He has high praise for the John Conklin *Un Ballo in Maschera* for its restoration of the familiar work to its proper historical setting. But he was equally pleased with David Hockney's highly picturesque updating of *The Rake's Progress* and Nikolaus Lehnhoff's bold modernization of *Salome* in 1982. "Lehnhoff tried something new with this familiar piece, and I think he really gave us a fresh view, especially of *Salome* herself. He gave us *Salome* as a little brat, and I think it worked well. I find that I am impressed with Lehnhoff's work in general. His *Frau ohne Schatten* in 1976 had tremendous visual and musical impact, and I think the new *Ring*, which he has done with Conklin, is one of the best things I've seen here. I think it compares favorably with what Chéreau did at Bayreuth, which I liked very much.

"What I particularly like about the new *Ring* is that you can look at it on whatever level you like. On the first level, like a child's fairy tale, it tells a beautiful story, with the dragons and smoke and all the magic there for everyone to see. But you can also read it on the second, more philosophical level, without having already read the complete works of Freud and Marx. There's something there for everyone, which is the way all great works of art should be. I felt the same way about the John Copley/Robin Don production of *The Midsummer Marriage* last year. I doubt that many people in the audience had read Jung, but the clarity and sheer visual beauty of the production allowed people to enjoy the opera on the simplest story level."

Speaking yet more generally, Le Mansec adds, "What makes San Francisco Opera such a great house is the cleanliness, the finish, of every production. Everything is neat and professional, from the lead tenor down to the smallest super on stage. From the minute the spectacle starts, it's magic theater, with nothing to perturb it. You don't hear people yelling

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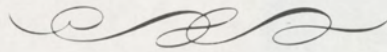


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"There's a wonderful mix of repertory here, a really sophisticated mélange of the old and the new, of war-horses and modern experiments. But whatever the opera is, there's always something you can look forward to, be it a new production or an important singer taking a new role for the first time. This is the house where Pavarotti sang his first Radames and Rysanek her first Ortrud. I heard her Ortrud here, and then I heard her sing the part again a few months later in Marseilles. I think she was better here, and I think she was better because of the high quality of all the artists and the whole production she was a part of. I don't mean to say that the Marseilles company is not as serious, because I think that of all the opera houses in France, it is most like San Francisco. And I must say that that is because its general director is Jacques Karpo, who worked with the company in San Francisco for years. I think he is trying to make Marseilles the San Francisco of France—which would be great!"

Le Mansec is similarly pleased with the prevailing level of singing in San Francisco. "Let's face it," he says, "there is a star system. And the stars are not only willing but eager to come here. The only major singer I haven't heard in ten years of reviewing here is Alfredo Kraus, whom I've heard often in France. And I hear that he will sing here very soon. When Terry McEwen arrived, I heard many people express a concern that the company would become a kind of London Records on stage. But I am impressed not only with the big-name singers he knows and brings here, but with the risks he takes with young singers, too. I think that in some ways, Adler was more adventurous and took more risks with new productions. But it seems to me that Mr. McEwen takes more risks with singers. And those risks are paying off.

"To come this far from the world's opera center—and let's face it, Europe is

still the major center in terms of the number of major houses—is not a great financial deal for singers, but they still come. Both Adler and McEwen have been amazingly successful in attracting great singers from so far away. I spoke with a French singer, Danièle Perriers, who sang in *Così* here in 1979, and asked her why she came so far to sing Despina. She told me she would have done anything to come here, and she accepted the minute she heard she had been hired.

"It's the same with the critics. Every time I attend a performance here, I'm amazed at how many other critics are in the audience. Here I am, reviewing in French for a magazine in Paris, and I meet people who review regularly for newspapers in Germany and Italy and Great Britain. Obviously, people come here because it is worthwhile. And every time I am in Europe, when people learn that I live here, one of the first things I hear is, 'Oh, there is a great opera house there.' So you see, it's not all the Golden Gate Bridge and Castro Street."

Given the company's international reputation, Le Mansec is surprised whenever he discovers that people here are unaware of it. He sees it as part of a more general "inferiority complex Americans have about their art—which has to some extent been encouraged by Europeans, who have a superiority complex about theirs. But I encounter this lack of confidence on the part of the American public at all levels. When it comes to judging things, be it opera or art or wine, Americans have the notion—which is totally false—that Europeans know everything about everything. That a Frenchman automatically will know everything about wine, or an Italian everything about opera. They're now saying that American singers no longer have to go to Europe to break into opera—but they're still doing it. They go to the small houses in Germany, where they sing everything—and risk wrecking their voices. The feeling is still very pervasive.

"I am currently writing a book on Charles Ives. When people here find that out, the first thing they wonder is why I am writing such a book. It seems perfectly obvious to me that although Ives is the most American of composers, he is also a great composer by any measure. What amazes *me* is that mine will be the first book on Ives in French!"

The most pernicious aspect of the American inferiority complex, as he sees it, is manifested in audience behavior at the opera. "Sometimes a public that is not sure how to react can be inconsiderate to performers. People are always saying



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that European audiences are rude, that they yell and boo and throw vegetables and all. But I'd rather have an audience boo and throw vegetables at the tenor—he can go home and make a good soup—than simply not to react. When singers have been working for four hours on the stage and they come out for their bows to see people getting up and leaving their seats, that must be terrible. And it annoys me. I understand that people have to get up and go to work in the morning, and that they have buses to catch. But to turn your backs, literally, on the artists onstage is another form of rudeness."

But he also knows that, at least in San Francisco, public enthusiasm for opera is high. "Because of the way the seasons are organized in San Francisco, even the international fall season has a festival character to it. For the three months between September and December you can see an opera almost every night in San Francisco, and that puts a special kind of excitement in the air throughout the whole city—one which I'm not sure could be kept up if the seasons were year-round. The whole city seems to live Opera Time, and although I haven't had opportunity to experience it myself, I'm told that even the taxi drivers know all about the opera season—who's singing and everything.

"Think of it. We live in a city which is relatively small, but look at the cultural life. If you consider the cultural life of a European city of equivalent size, it doesn't compare. On the same evening in San Francisco, you have the choice of the opera, the symphony, and an array of chamber concerts—to mention only the world-class events. There's so much, you can't keep up with everything. It's crazy."

But it's also, he's convinced, the place to be. There's yet more culture, and more opera, to be had in New York. But Le Mansec thinks that the festival aspect of opera in San Francisco is one of the things that makes it superior to the Met. Because the Met is bigger, better known, and has a longer season, he thinks, many Americans persist in the belief that it is a greater house. "But in San Francisco," he is the first to argue, "you never have the sense of a performance being routine, which you sometimes do at the Met. Don't misunderstand. I've seen some wonderful things at the Met. But for me, San Francisco is greater, in terms of overall musical satisfaction. I can't honestly say that I miss hearing opera in the European houses, which are supposed to be better because they are smaller in size or greater in reputation, or whatever. Not when I have the chance—the luck—to be in San Francisco." ■

ing Italian opera. But added cadenzas for "Questa o quella" and "La donna è mobile" were in, pretty much always the same ones, with the exception that as florid technique declined, they could be sung more and more vaguely. The cadenza to "Caro nome" was always added to in the same way; if you couldn't make a henpeck at high D-sharp, you couldn't sing Gilda. If you couldn't bawl out the top Cs and A-flats—exciting if they're available, but by no means inherently necessary—you couldn't sing *Rigoletto*. There is even a spot in the tenor's first aria where a chuckle is mandatory ("... degli amanti le smanie—ha ha!—derido").

This version began to falter as scholars, critics and conductors began to feel queasy about cuts and interpolations on principle. Some of this questioning arose out of the very different tradition that grew up in Germany during the interwar Verdi revival there. One can hear it vividly in the psychologically acute, word-oriented performances of artists like Lotte Lehmann, Heinrich Schlusnus, Gerhard Hüsch, Julius Patzak and their contemporaries. And as 20th century composers became still more insistent on the exactitude of notation, a growing desire to find similar exactitude in older scores was naturally felt.

It is in this context that the literal Verdi performances of conductors like Riccardo Muti and Claudio Abbado demand to be understood. In an important way, they are a manifestation not of fidelity to Verdi but of fidelity to Boulez, to Carter, to Babbitt. And they are defensible on those grounds. There is also, of course, an inevitable loss as 19th century notation is asked to bear a burden it was never meant to bear, and as the performing traditions that once bore so much of the creative burden recede farther into the past and become less and less capable of meeting that responsibility.

How, if it is conceded that the performing tradition has been more or less lost, can *Rigoletto* be approached today? The essential challenge is to develop a style that is genuinely of today. Perhaps—only perhaps—that style might take the form of a quasi-scientific reconstruction of authentic practices from Verdi's day. That approach has yielded some thrilling results, some sterile ones, in the areas of baroque and earlier music to which it has been most assiduously applied. It can only be welcomed if the reconstruction leads to a genuine emotional re-entry, if the sentiment eventually transcends the science. That, of course, is a big *if*—but a noble goal. ■

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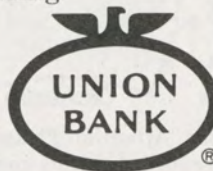
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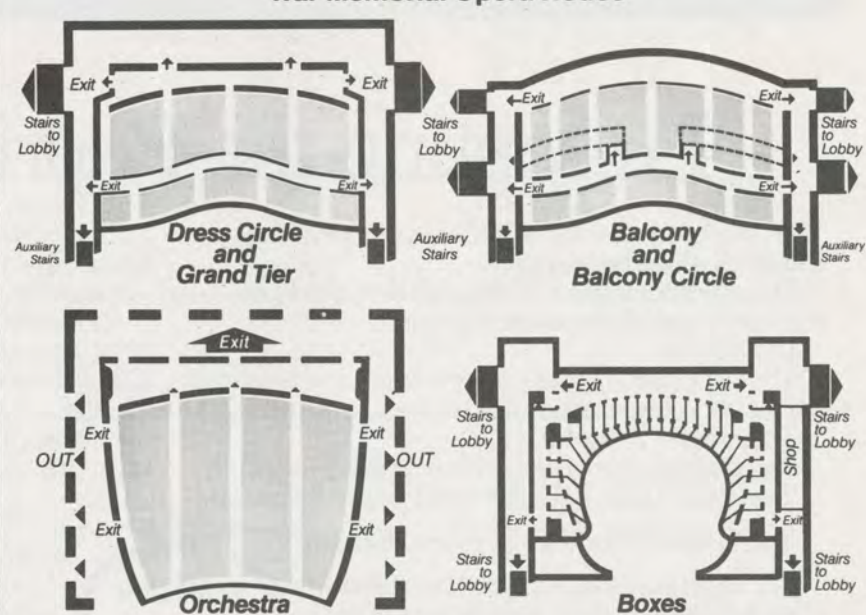
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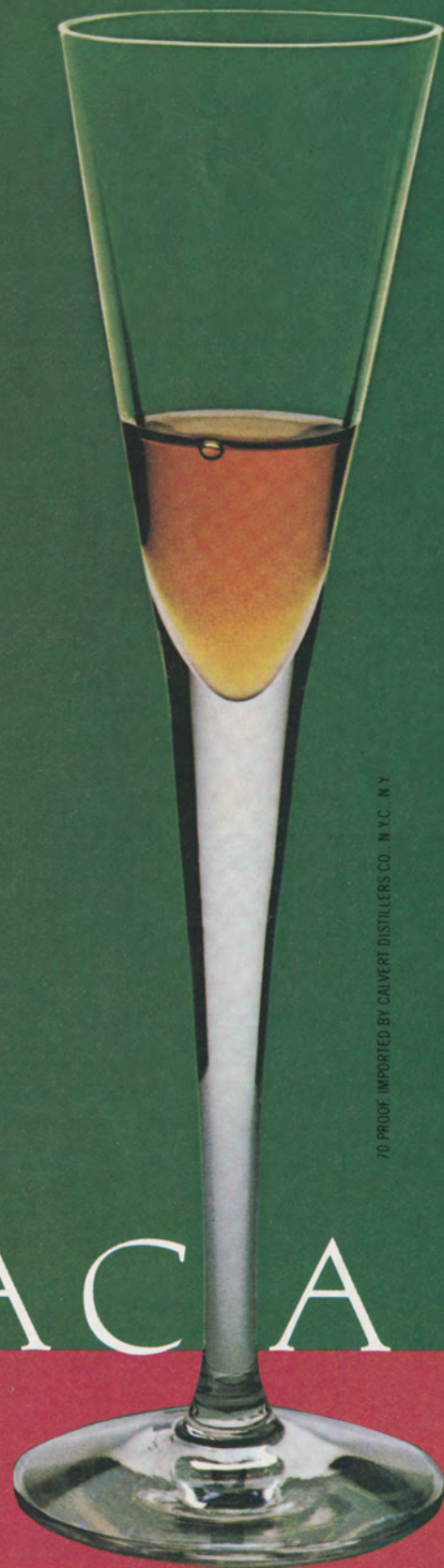
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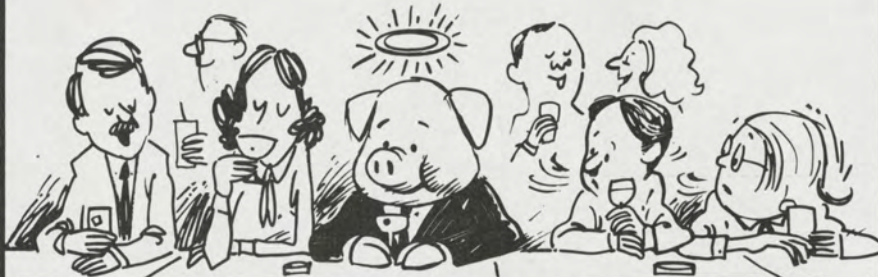
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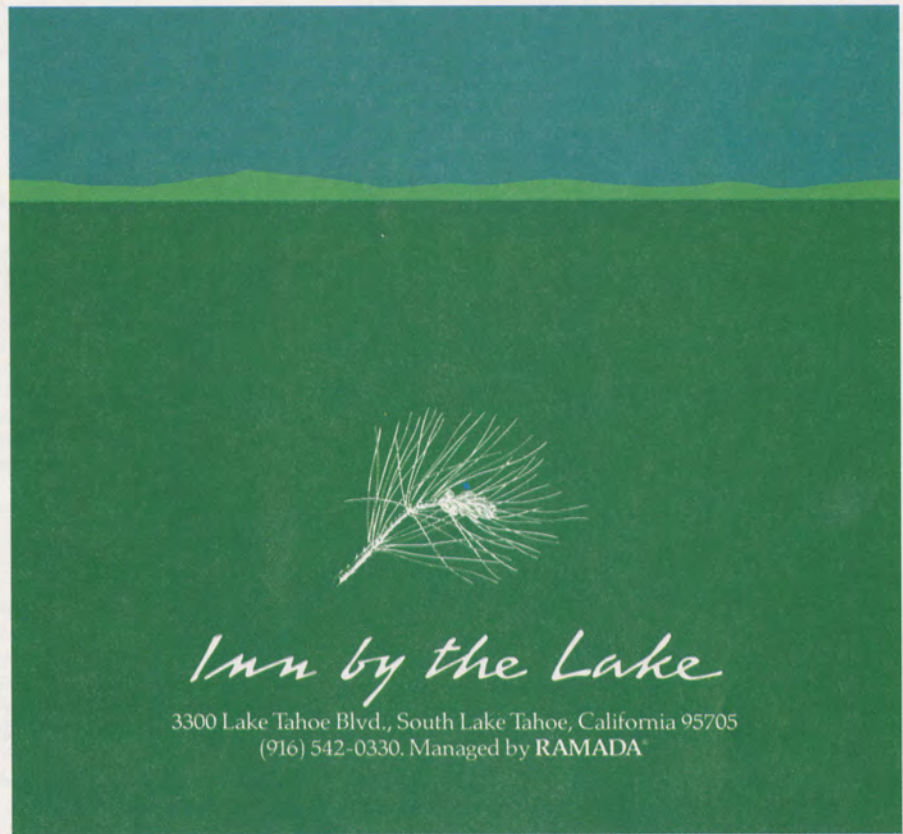
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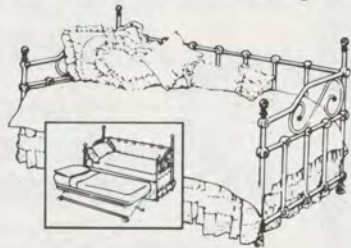
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 I. Magnin
 Inn by the Lake

Ivy's Restaurant
 Jackson Travel
 Jaeger
 Just Desserts
 R. Kassman Piano and Organ
 La Mere Duquesne
 Las Brisas
 Laykin et Cie
 Le Trianon
 Livingston's
 London Records
 Mama's
 Marco Polo Restaurant
 Mark Cross
 Mark Hopkins Hotel
 McGuire Company
 Modesto Lanzone
 Napa Valley Balloons
 Neiman-Marcus
 Northwest Orient Airlines
 O'Plume
 Ocean Cruise Lines
 Ondine
 Opera Plaza
 Pacific Plaza Hotel
 Pan Am Airlines
 Paul Bauer
 Pearl Cruises of Scandinavia
 Peninsula Group
 Pierre Deux
 Ramada Renaissance Hotel
 Republic Airlines
 Ron Scherl
 Rooney's

Royal Viking Line
 Saks Fifth Avenue
 Sam's Grill
 Santa Fe Bar and Grill
 See's Candy
 Selix Formal Wear
 Shaklee Corporation
 Sidney Mobell
 Silverado Country Club
 Singapore Airlines
 Sitmar Cruises
 Snow Peas
 Squaw Valley USA
 Squirrel's Nest
 Stouffer's Wailea Beach Resort
 Stroheim & Romann
 Sue Fisher King
 Sunset Magazine
 Swanson Art Galleries
 Swiss National Tourist Office
 TWA
 Tante Marie's Cooking School
 Tiffany & Co.
 Tower Records
 Trader Vic's
 United Airlines
 Varig Brazilian Airlines
 Victoria Station
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