

Der Rosenkavalier
(The Knight of the Rose)

1985

Thursday, November 21, 1985 8:00 PM

Sunday, November 24, 1985 2:00 PM

Tuesday, November 26, 1985 8:00 PM

Friday, November 29, 1985 8:00 PM

Monday, December 2, 1985 8:00 PM

Wednesday, December 4, 1985 7:30 PM

Saturday, December 7, 1985 8:00 PM

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Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

Der Rosenkavalier

FALL SEASON 1985

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COVER:

Piet Mondrian (Dutch, 1872-1944),
Blue Rose, c. 1922

Watercolor, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

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From the Chairman of the Board and the President



Reid W. Dennis

As newly elected executive officers of the San Francisco Opera Association, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the San Francisco Opera's 63rd consecutive Fall Season. This "dream season" is a fitting close to a year that will long be remembered as one of significant achievement by our Company.

Our acclaimed 1985 Summer Festival production of Wagner's epic masterpiece, *The Ring of the Nibelung*, which drew worldwide attention, is a testament to the vision and leadership of our General Director and the generous support of our donors, our Board, and the entire staff of our Company.

Our current Fall Season has been made possible by the generosity of many donors. Special recognition goes to those who have underwritten new productions. Handel's *Orlando*, which we will be sharing with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, was made possible by an anonymous gift in honor of Bernard and Barbro Osher. A new Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of Verdi's final opera, *Falstaff*, was made possible by a generous grant from the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation.

Other operas on our schedule are revivals. *Lear* was made possible in 1981 by a grant from the Carol Buck Sells Foundation and the S.F. Opera Guild. This Fall's *Tosca* was originally underwritten by a grant from the Charles E. Merrill Trust, while *Un Ballo in Maschera* was originally sponsored by a gift from an anonymous friend of the Opera.

Revivals of operas allow the Company to utilize its inventory of existing productions while presenting a wide variety of operas from the repertory. However, funds are still required to revive a production, since repairs and alterations must be undertaken before the opera can be presented. The re-mounting of Puccini's *Turandot* is being underwritten by the Ambassador Foundation of Los Angeles; Pacific Telesis awarded the Company funds to revive *Tosca*; while Bernard and Barbro Osher contributed the costs of presenting *Un Ballo in Maschera*. We are deeply grateful to these donors whose generosity further enriches our operatic experience.

It is a special pleasure to recognize our governmental funding sources this year. The National Endowment for the Arts has been a loyal supporter of the San Francisco Opera, and we join with other arts organizations and the citizens of this country to salute them during this, their 20th anniversary year. The Hotel Tax Fund, Mayor Dianne Feinstein, and Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas have consistently demonstrated their commitment to the San Francisco Opera. We join with others in the arts community in commending the Hotel Tax Fund during its 25th anniversary year. In addition, we recognize the importance of the continued support of the California Arts Council to our operations.

Once again, we thank the San Francisco Opera Guild, the Merola Opera Program and the War Memorial Board of Trustees for their ongoing support. They have earned our deepest appreciation.

Our understanding and appreciation of our operas this fall will be heightened by the presence of Supertitles, sponsored by a generous grant from the American Express Family of Companies obtained through the efforts of the San Francisco Opera Guild. In making Supertitles possible this season, American Express has demonstrated its community spirit and sensitivity to the need to make the performing arts accessible to a broader audience.

We are pleased to report that our financial position has improved. We have



Tully M. Friedman

eliminated our accumulated deficit with the assistance of a special matching grant from the Paul L. and Phyllis Wattis Foundation. However, the underlying problem of financing opera, the most expensive of art forms, remains. Our budget for this year exceeds \$20 million, and ticket sales will cover approximately 55% of these costs. Although this earned income ratio is higher than most companies are able to achieve, it still leaves us with about \$9 million to raise in order to end the year in the black. Of this amount, government grants, income from our endowment, the San Francisco Opera Guild, and production sponsorships will provide approximately half. The remainder must come from foundations, corporations and, most important, a large number of individuals.

We have presented a very special year of operatic events. To maintain this operatic legacy that is such an important part of San Francisco life, we need your continued support.

In closing, we would like to commend the leadership of Walter M. Baird, who served for 12 years as President and Chief Executive Officer of this Association. His commitment and dedication played a significant role in ensuring the world-class status of the San Francisco Opera, and we will follow his example and seek his counsel as we lead the San Francisco Opera in the years ahead.

Reid W. Dennis, *Chairman*
Tully M. Friedman, *President*

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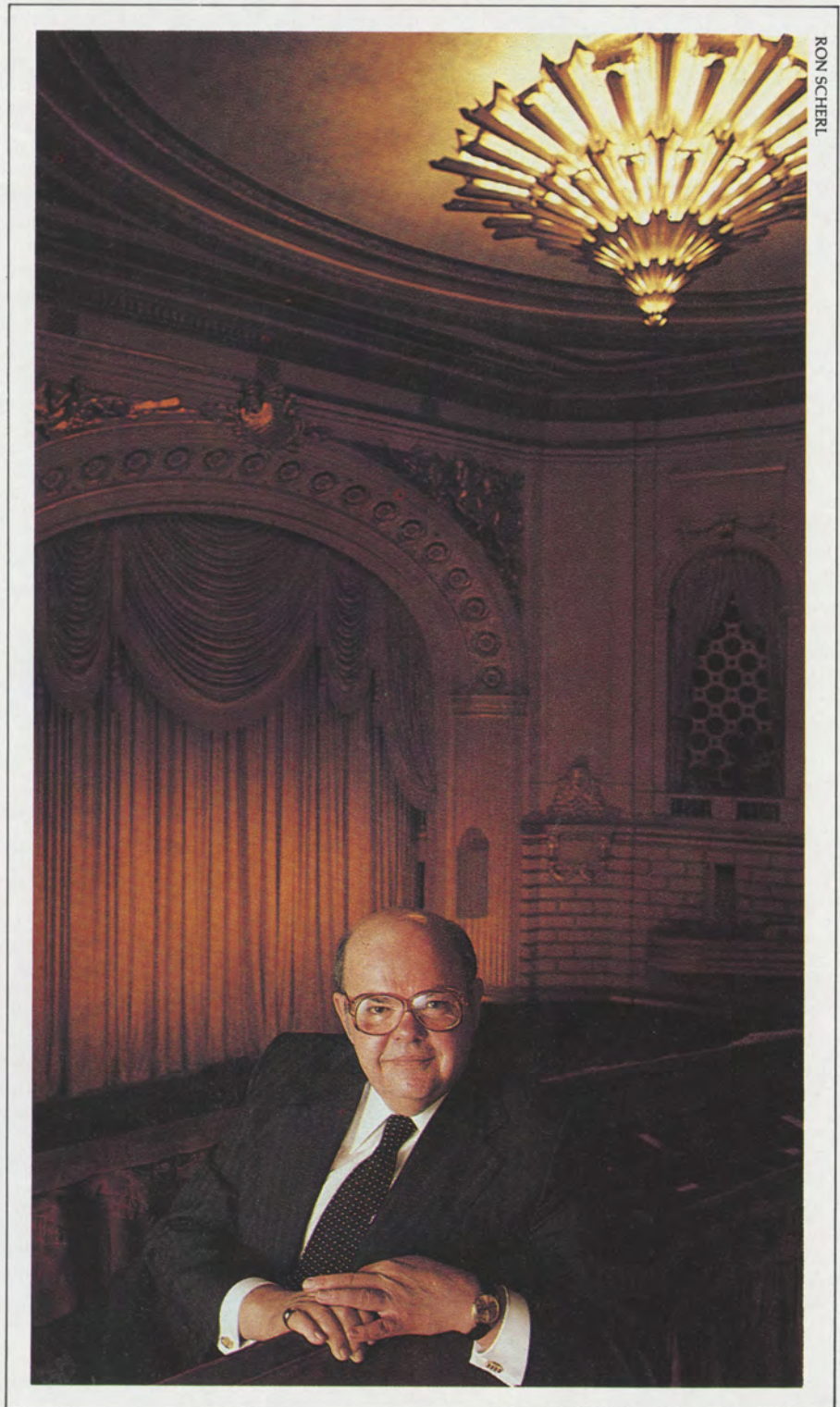
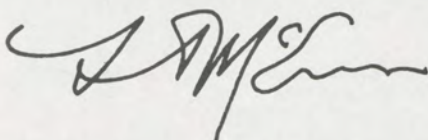
General Director's Message

The year 1985 will undoubtedly go down in the annals of the San Francisco Opera as a very important one for the Company. The reason, of course, is that this year we accomplished a major task: the *Ring*. The international attention we have received and are still receiving because of it is gratifying indeed, and I would like to take this opportunity to salute every member of the Company involved in this endeavor. It was truly a team effort, with all members of the team doing their parts to perfection. We were lucky there were no illnesses or major mishaps, but it takes a great deal more than luck to bring off the monumental task we set ourselves. I am extremely proud to be a member of this San Francisco Opera team.

The 1985 San Francisco Opera Fall Season is a star-studded one, with much glamour and a great variety of repertoire, even though this year we don't have our customary Russian opera. We promise to return to the Slavic repertoire again during the next year.

With three productions new to our City, and the wonderful Supertitles being used in seven out of ten operas, we continue to maintain the excellence that has made the San Francisco Opera one of the leading companies of the world.

Our team welcomes you to the 1985 Fall Season.



RON SCHERL

San Francisco Opera

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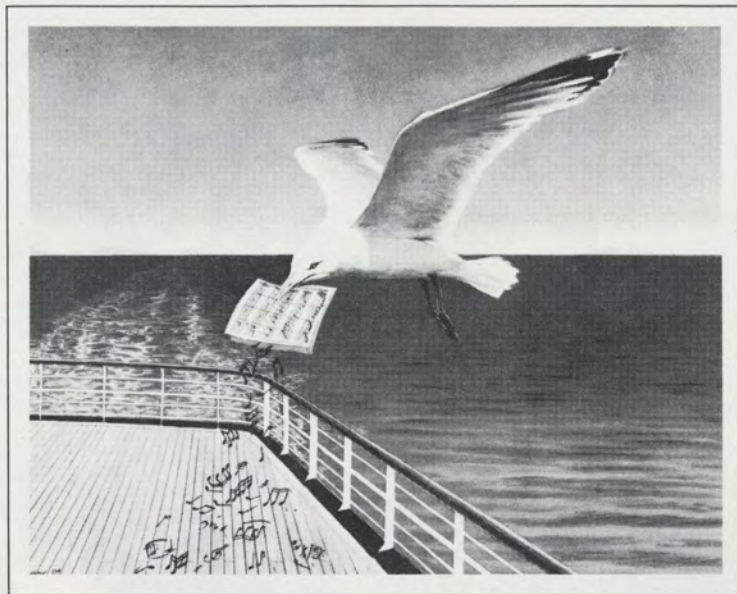


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1985 San Francisco Opera Company (Continued)

Although our program magazines regularly list members of the Administration and Company (please see pages 10 and 13), we know that those lists are by necessity incomplete. In order to give recognition to the many skilled professionals whose work has contributed so greatly to the quality of San Francisco Opera productions, we provide, once a year, a list of everyone involved in our international seasons. In this issue, department heads are listed in front of the magazine, as usual; the many others, upon whom so much depends, are listed below.

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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

1985 Fall Season

Friday, September 6, 7:30

Opening Night

Adriana Lecouvreur Cilea

Scenery and costumes from the Metropolitan Opera Association.

Freni, Ciurca*, Gustafson, Cowdrick*/Mauro, Nucci, Vernon*, Green, Petersen*, Skinner*
Arena/Mansouri/Cristini/Diffen/Sulich/Munn

Saturday, September 7, 8:00

Lear Reimann

This production was originally made possible through generous grants from the Carol Buck Sells Foundation and the San Francisco Opera Guild.

Silja, Dernesch, Greenawald/Stewart, Langdon-Lloyd, Ludgin, Knutson, Trussel, Ulfung, Duykers, Noble, Patterson, Anderson*

Layer**/Ponnelle/Ponnelle/Halmen/Munn

Tuesday, September 10, 8:00

Adriana Lecouvreur Cilea

Thursday, September 12, 7:30

Lear Reimann

Friday, September 13, 8:00

Adriana Lecouvreur Cilea

Saturday, September 14, 8:00

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Orlando Handel

Produced in cooperation with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and made possible, in part, by an anonymous gift in honor of Bernard and Barbro Osher, Mrs. Paul L. Wattis, Mr. & Mrs. Gorham B. Knowles in memory of Richard K. Miller, and Mr. & Mrs. Alfred S. Wilsey.

Horne, Masterson, Swenson/Gall, Langan Mackererras/Copley/Pascoe/Stennett/Munn

Sunday, September 15, 2:00

Lear Reimann

Monday, September 16, 8:00

Adriana Lecouvreur Cilea

Tuesday, September 17, 8:00

Lear Reimann

Wednesday, September 18, 7:30

Orlando Handel

Friday, September 20, 8:00

Lear Reimann

Saturday, September 21, 8:00

Orlando Handel

Sunday, September 22, 2:00

Adriana Lecouvreur Cilea

Tuesday, September 24, 8:00

Orlando Handel

Wednesday, September 25, 7:30

Adriana Lecouvreur Cilea

Thursday, September 26, 8:00

Turandot Puccini

Produced in cooperation with the opera companies of Dallas, Houston, and Miami.

The revival of this production is made possible, in part, through a much-appreciated grant from the Koret Foundation.

Marton (September 26,29; October 2,5), Kelm (October 9, 12, 15, 18), Anelli*/Bonisolli, Macurdy, Kelley, Green, Malis, Harper, Pederson*, Anderson Klobucar/Hebert/Klein/Munn

Friday, September 27, 8:00

Lear Reimann

Saturday, September 28, 8:00

Adriana Lecouvreur Cilea

Sunday, September 29, 2:00

Turandot Puccini

Wednesday, October 2, 8:00

Turandot Puccini

Thursday, October 3, 8:00

Orlando Handel

Friday, October 4, 8:00

Werther Massenet

The revival of this production was made possible through a generous grant from the Ambassador Foundation.

Scotto, Parrish, Kilduff*/Kraus, Dickson, Capecchi, Petersen, Patterson, Maxham* Plasson*/Uzan*/Rubin/Munn, Arhelger

Saturday, October 5, 8:00

Turandot Puccini

Sunday, October 6, 2:00

Orlando Handel

Wednesday, October 9, 7:30

Turandot Puccini

Thursday, October 10, 8:00

Werther Massenet

Saturday, October 12, 8:00

Turandot Puccini

Sunday, October 13, 2:00

Werther Massenet

Tuesday, October 15, 8:00

Turandot Puccini

Wednesday, October 16, 7:30

Werther Massenet

Friday, October 18, 8:00

Turandot Puccini

Saturday, October 19, 8:00

Werther Massenet

Sunday, October 20, 2:00

New Production

Falstaff Verdi

Produced in cooperation with the opera companies of Chicago and Houston. This production is based upon that originally mounted at the Glyndebourne Festival in 1976, sponsored by the Fred Kobler Trust and the Corbett Foundation of Cincinnati, Ohio.

The San Francisco presentation of this production is made possible through a generous grant from the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation.

Lorengar, Horne, Quittmeyer, Swenson/Wixell, Titus, MacNeil, Frank, Corazza, Langan

Arena/Ponnelle/Ponnelle/Munn

Tuesday, October 22, 8:00

Werther Massenet

Wednesday, October 23, 8:00

Falstaff Verdi

Friday, October 25, 8:00

Werther Massenet

Saturday, October 26, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

This production was originally made possible through a grant from the Charles E. Merrill Trust.

The revival of this production is made possible, in part, by a grant from Pacific Telesis Foundation.

Slatinaru/Giacomini, Morris, Capecchi, Wexler, Kelley, Pendergraph*, Pederson Cillario/Ponnelle/Farruggio/Ponnelle/Arhelger

Sunday, October 27, 2:00

Falstaff Verdi

Tuesday, October 29, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

Wednesday, October 30, 7:30

Falstaff Verdi

Saturday, November 2, 8:00

Falstaff Verdi

Sunday, November 3, 2:00

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Tuesday, November 5, 8:00

Falstaff Verdi

Wednesday, November 6, 7:30

Tosca Puccini

Thursday, November 7, 8:00

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

This production was originally made possible through a gift from a friend of the San Francisco Opera. The revival of this production is made possible through the generosity of Bernard and Barbro Osher.

M. Price, Cossotto, Mills/Bergonzi (November 7, 10, 13, 17, 20, 23), Aragall (December 1,6), Carroli, Langan, Patterson, Malis, Petersen, Anderson Pritchard/Frisell/Conklin/Carvajal/Munn

Friday, November 8, 8:00

Falstaff Verdi

Saturday, November 9, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

Sunday, November 10, 2:00

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

Tuesday, November 12, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

Wednesday, November 13, 7:30

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

Thursday, November 14, 8:00

Billy Budd Britten

Costumes from the Royal Opera, Covent Garden

The revival of this production is made possible, in part, by a generous grant from IBM Corporation.

Duesing, King, Morris, Glossop, Busterud, Garrett*, Wexler, Schwisow*, Gudas, Kelley, Harper, Parce*, Pederson, MacAllister, Pendergraph

Leppard/Coleman/Munn, Piper/Munn

Friday, November 15, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

Sunday, November 17, 2:00

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

Tuesday, November 19, 8:00

Billy Budd Britten

Wednesday, November 20, 8:00

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

Thursday, November 21, 8:00

Production new to San Francisco

Der Rosenkavalier Strauss

Sets from the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Costumes from The Royal Theatre, Copenhagen.

Te Kanawa, Fassbaender, Parrish, Cook, Hartliep, Kilduff, Chen, Cowdrick, Shaghoian*/Moll, Di Paolo, Capecchi, Andreolli*, Harper, Petersen, Gudas, Garrett, Patterson, Potter* Pritchard/Neugebauer/Schneider-Siemssen/Schröck*/Arhelger

Friday, November 22, 8:00

Billy Budd Britten

Saturday, November 23, 8:00

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

Sunday, November 24, 2:00

Der Rosenkavalier Strauss

Monday, November 25, 8:00

Family Performance

Falstaff Verdi

Hartliep, Zajic, Cowdrick, Chen/Pendergraph, Malis, Schwisow, Peterson, Harper, Pederson Bradshaw/Ponnelle/Thompson/Ponnelle/Munn

Tuesday, November 26, 8:00

Der Rosenkavalier Strauss

Wednesday, November 27, 7:30

Billy Budd Britten

Friday, November 29, 8:00

Der Rosenkavalier Strauss

Saturday, November 30, 1:00

Family Matinee

Falstaff Verdi

Saturday, November 30, 8:00

Billy Budd Britten

Sunday, December 1, 2:00

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

Monday, December 2, 8:00

Der Rosenkavalier Strauss

Tuesday, December 3, 8:00

Billy Budd Britten

Wednesday, December 4, 7:30

Der Rosenkavalier Strauss

Friday, December 6, 8:00

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi

Saturday, December 7, 8:00

Der Rosenkavalier Strauss

Sunday, December 8, 2:00

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*San Francisco Opera debut

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Tuesday, October 29, 1:00

Friday, November 22, 1:00

Matinee for Senior Citizens and Disabled Patrons

Thursday, October 31, 1:00

These matinees will be performed with Supertitles by Paul Moor.

Kirsten Flagstad Exhibition

The Archives for the Performing Arts invites you to view its exhibition of opera photographs documenting the career of Wagnerian soprano Kirsten Flagstad, currently on display in the War Memorial Opera House Museum. Flagstad, who would have been 90 this year, performed frequently in the Bay Area, making her local debut in San Francisco Opera's first complete *Ring* cycle in 1935. The Opera House Museum is located on the south mezzanine (box) level, adjacent to the Opera Boutique. Materials for the exhibition are from the Archives' Kirsten Flagstad Collection — the largest Flagstad archives outside of Norway.

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The April 6 departure may be combined with the April 27 tour for a total of 44 days. All inclusive costs \$7,475.00, \$875.00 single supplement.

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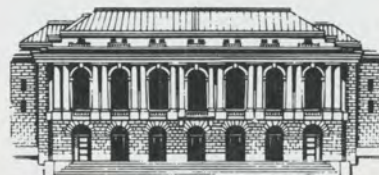
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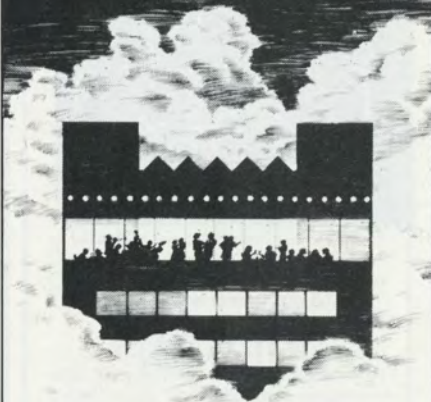
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(inset) Walter Berry, Baron Ochs in Act I of Der Rosenkavalier, starts the silver rose on its way to Sophie von Faninal. Hanna Schwarz as Octavian, shown during the scene of the Presentation of the Silver Rose. Both photos were taken during San Francisco Opera's 1978 season.

Strauss' Passport to Immortality

An Introduction
By WILLIAM MANN

In 1911, Europe was mustering strength for a conflict of military power that would shatter the foundations of society as the aristocracy had known it—even more than the French Revolution purposed to have done. Germany's most celebrated progressive composer, on the

other hand, chose this moment to surprise the musical world with an about-face as brilliantly conceived and executed as it was artistically reactionary. On the 26th of January of that year, in Dresden, Richard Strauss' new opera, *Der Rosenkavalier*, "a comedy for music" to a prose text by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, was performed for the first time.

It was a vintage year for new music. 1911 also brought forth the premieres of Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole*, Stravinsky's *Petrushka*, Debussy's *Le Martyre de St. Sébastien*, and Wolf-Ferrari's *Jewels of the Madonna*, as well as Humperdinck's *The Miracle*. In the concert hall, the first was heard of Scriabin's *Prometheus*, which counts as his fifth symphony; in the same category were Sibelius's fourth, Szymanowski's second, and Elgar's second, too. Webern produced his Five Orchestral Pieces, Opus 10. *Das Lied von der Erde* by Mahler, who died earlier in the year, was conducted at its first performance by Bruno Walter. Some of these are pugnacious avowals, similar to the feeling of Europe at the time; but many (*Der Rosenkavalier* among them) suggest a withdrawal from public oratory to private, inward contemplation.

Not all these pieces proved instantly successful, certainly not all of those which are highly regarded today. *The Miracle*, now virtually forgotten, filled theaters internationally for years. *Das Lied von der Erde* clung precariously to the verges of the symphony repertory until the 1960s, when Mahler at last found an eager world public. But *Petrushka* at once made a hit, and has remained one, likewise *Der Rosenkavalier*; for all the dissimilarity of milieu, both instantly communicate the reality of fairy-tale, the illusion that past times are not better forgotten, let alone vanished forever, but might easily happen again, without the unpleasant physical and social concomitants of life in past time, and with, somehow, a magical enhancement to our dreary aseptic modern scene.

The subject was exactly what Strauss had been creatively seeking. He knew comedy to be his forte, especially comedies

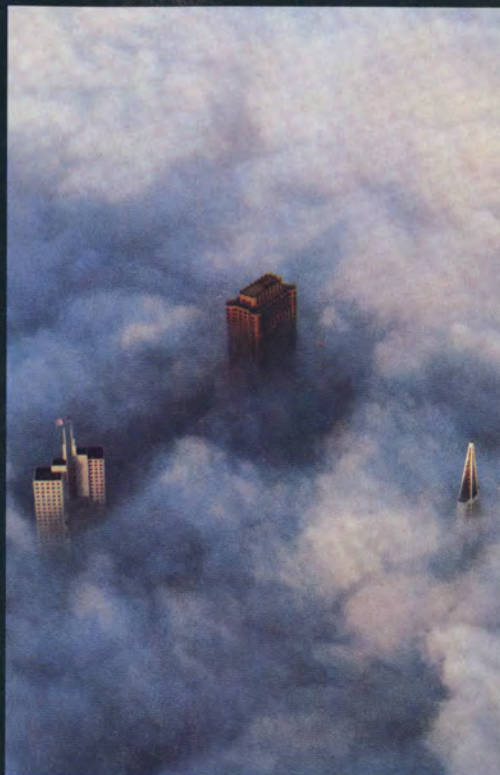
William Mann is the author of books on the operas of Mozart and Richard Strauss. He recently retired from the staff of The Times, London, after 34 years, 22 of them as chief music critic. He is an associate editor of Opera magazine.



Sena Jurinac during the Marschallin's monologue in San Francisco Opera's 1971 staging of *Der Rosenkavalier*.



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of adventure and romance. He had already given the concert hall *Don Juan*, *Till Eulenspiegel* and *Don Quixote*, the critics in *Ein Heldenleben* and the noisy baby in the *Domestic Symphony*, showing in sum where his best talents lay.

He followed his first and painfully serious opera *Guntram* with a comedy, *Feuersnot*, heavy and mainly of local interest to fellow Bavarians, then a lurid adventure story, *Salome*, after which he intended another comedy. He was the more eager for success in operatic comedy because he envied the triumph of Franz Lehár with *The Merry Widow* (1905): he knew how good a musician Lehár was and, while affecting to despise him, continued until his old age to draw the name of Lehár into arguments about what he, Strauss, wanted to compose. *Elektra* more or less wished itself upon Strauss' operatic plans, and perforce he contacted the author of the stage play which had so excited his creative imagination. He wanted permission from Hugo von Hofmannsthal to turn his modern version of the Greek tragedy into an opera. But first, he needed to write a comic opera, and wondered whether Hofmannsthal, an Austrian poet and playwright of some reputation and known flair, could offer such a thing. Hofmannsthal managed to convince Strauss that *Elektra* would suit him best at the moment and he was right: the experience of *Salome* helped Strauss to make *Elektra* even more effective on the audience's adrenaline release.

After *Elektra*, Strauss was determined that this ideal comic opera libretto must be written for him by Hofmannsthal. Such a comic opera, Hofmannsthal knew, needed new invention: he could not borrow and reinterpret, as was his wont and his forte. Do not suppose that he lacked originality, or was deficient in invention: there hardly exists a great drama that is not based on existing material. T.S. Eliot, toward the end of his fertile creative life, gave a broadcast talk in which he admitted that each of his successful modern plays was based on a classical Greek theme, and his thesis may be found proven if you extend it to other great plays, films, opera, et cetera.

The first conception of *Der Rosenkavalier* was communicated to Strauss by Hofmannsthal in a letter headed Weimar, 11 February 1909:

"In three quiet afternoons here I have made a complete, brand-new scenario for

a *Spieloper* [a term used by Albert Lortzing to describe his light operas], with powerful comedy in the characters and situations, colorful and almost mimetically transparent action, opportunity for lyricism, jokes, humor and even a little ballet. I find the scenario charming and Count Kessler, with whom I discussed it, is delighted by it. Two big roles for a baritone and a graceful girl dressed as a man, à la Farrar or Mary Garden.

Period: Vienna under Maria Theresia."

The mentioned scenario was found after the poet's death in 1929, and reads as follows (it will be seen that Hofmannsthal very soon reversed the position of Acts 1 and 2):

1. The house of Geronte. Geronte awaits his son-in-law from good country nobility. Sophie with pretty Faublas talks about marriage. She is surprised that it angers him. Arrival of Pourceaugnac and elderly aunts, pets and marvelous luggage (double bed). Conspirators sent for. Marquise. Rendezvous for the night with Faublas, at which Faublas not so unreservedly delighted. Sophie begs for rescue. The conspirators.

2. Bedroom of Marquise. Love-making by night. Morning. Thanks. Pourceaugnac announced. Faublas remains, in woman's clothes. Faublas so similar: yes, all nobleman's natural children. Hairdresser, servants etc., importuning. Pourceaugnac invites maid for supper. Pourceaugnac parsimonious (meticulous discussion where supper). Pourceaugnac departs. Conspirator comes and tells how to do it.

3. Tavern room. Rehearsal of supernumeraries. Faublas boots under frock. The supper. Arrest. Geronte [Pourceaugnac is meant] compromised in front of courtiers. Enter Marquise. Geronte wants enter bridal chamber. Faublas appears in travesty. Marquise announces that he is a man.

Until the publication of this scenario in sketch, the world could assume that the plot of *Der Rosenkavalier* was completely original, even though Hofmannsthal admitted that original story-invention was not his forte. Thanks to this document, and to the detective work of scholars, we know the provenance of virtually everything in the text of *Der Rosenkavalier*: almost nothing material was newly invented. When afterwards in an "unwritten postface" (*Ungeschriebenes Nachwort*)

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Der Rosenkavalier was part of 14 San Francisco Opera seasons. In four of them, the Marschallin was portrayed by Lotte Lehmann (left); Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (right) did five. Stella Roman, Brenda Lewis, Régine Crespin, Sena Jurinac and Leonie Rysanek round out the list of San Francisco Marschallins, with one season each.

published in 1911, Hofmannsthal declared: "All work is an entity and even the work of two men can be an entity," readers assumed that the "two men" were the poet and composer. Hofmannsthal might however have meant himself and Count Harry Kessler. For the correspondence of Hofmannsthal and Kessler shows that the latter was responsible for much of the initial plot.

Kessler's account of the opera's genesis, written to his sister after the two friends had returned to Berlin from his house in Weimar, shows the other side of the coin. He writes to her in English and French: "... entre temps Hofmannsthal and I had written together the scenario for Rich. Strauss' new opera; it took us only three days to write and, although I am half party to it, I can say it is charming. Strauss immediately accepted it, in Berlin, and is going to set to work on it as soon as Hofmannsthal has written out the parts. It was most amusing doing it together. We used to work about three or four hours a day walking up and down, each of us giving une idée by turns, so that it is now quite impossible for either of us to say which is which and who is the author of this part or that. In three days we thus managed to set down the scenario *dans ses plus petits détails*, jusqu'aux jeux de scène, so that only the words are still missing ... My partnership stops at the scenario,

the plot, and the 'charpente' [framework], and he now has to clothe these dry bones in flesh. Up to now, he has mostly worked upon old pieces, like Elektra or Oedipus; this new method gives him the possibility of working upon new plots and characters. We fix both, the plot and the characters, as well as the scenario, dans les plus petits détails, together, including the 'jeux de scène' etc; he then clothes this in his splendid poetry. We have been working for two or three hours every morning and get on very rapidly and pleasantly together, as we are completely at one on all the principles of drama, the paramount importance of the mimetic part, the necessity of deep foundation in character, and the clarity of the emotional lines, leading up to a knot and a paroxysm either of comedy or of tragedy. We started from two antithetic characters playing around a woman, and the plot grew naturally out of the laws of drama and character, almost as a painter might compose a picture out of the laws of contrast between red and green. Our plots are subsequent to the characters, as dramas are in real life. Both pieces [the other was a comedy for the straight theater] are comedies, and the opera quite light, and even extremely 'libre'; but not so as to prevent it from being acted. Strauss thinks he can compose it within a year; so that it could be brought out simultaneously in Dresden

and Paris (Opéra Comique) towards the end of 1910”

Count Harry Kessler (1868-1937) came from a South German father and an Irish mother (née Alice Bosse-Lynch, a famous beauty). His father, head of a Hamburg bank's Paris branch, had been ennobled by the Kaiser for bravery in the Franco-Russian war. Harry was born in Paris, from where the family moved to London. After primary school at Ascot (Winston Churchill was one of his school-fellows) he completed his education, army service included, in Germany. In 1895 he succeeded to his father's estate, and was able to busy himself with the editing, printing and sometimes writing, of a periodical devoted to the arts, called *Pan*. From 1902 to 1906 he was employed as museum and art curator to the Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar, where he mounted splendid international exhibitions of painting and sculpture. He continued living in Weimar afterwards, though traveling extensively and founded the Cranach Press there in 1912, an outfit specializing in the production of marvelous and costly books.

Hofmannsthal was a frequent visitor to Kessler's house in Weimar, sometimes with his wife and family, this time, relaxing after the premiere of *Elektra* in Dresden, alone. They discussed Richard Strauss' urgent desire to compose a comic opera with Hofmannsthal. The obvious prototype was Mozart's (and Beaumarchais's as well as Da Ponte's) *Le Nozze di Figaro*. When the characters of *Der Rosenkavalier* were being created, it was Kessler, I think, who linked Octavian with Mary Garden and Geraldine Farrar, and who thought of Baron Ochs in terms of Lucien Fugère or Antonio Pini-Corsi. Both baritones were popular interpreters of Mozart's Leporello. Garden, most famous as Charpentier's Louise and Debussy's Mélisande, also created the part of Cherubino in Massenet's *Chérubin* in 1905. Geraldine Farrar, before becoming the darling of the Met, spent some years at the Berlin State Opera, where Kessler and Strauss may both have seen her early in her career, a small, very pretty young lady, and a noted Cherubino in Mozart's *Figaro*.

Hofmannsthal and Kessler, walking one day in Tiefert Park, discussed Da Ponte's librettos for Mozart, I am driven to believe, and invented new parallels for Cherubino, Countess Almaviva, and the others in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. We know from



Backstage group at the San Francisco Opera 1946 *Rosenkavalier*: (sitting) Lotte Lehmann, Lorenzo Alvary; (standing) conductor Georges Sebastian and Jarmila Novotná.

Kessler that the characters were invented before the plot. From Beaumarchais they modulated to another French playwright, Molière. Then Kessler remembered a delightful French *opéra comique* which he had seen in Paris, and so they proceeded with the literary treasure hunt. Because the initial planning was done in conversation, the exact partition of literary effort can never be determined. But the sketch shows an indebtedness to Molière's plays, of which Hofmannsthal had made an intense study, and to a romantic novel, *Les Amours du Chevalier de Faublas*, by Beaumarchais's contemporary Louvet de Couvray, which Kessler first knew through its adaptation as an *opérette* composed by Claude Terrasse (brother-in-law to Pierre Bonnard the painter), libretto by Louis Artus, produced in Paris in December of 1907. This libretto is crucial to the plot of *Der Rosenkavalier*, and Hofmannsthal is likely to have learned the significant details from Kessler, since he did not read Artus's libretto until July 1910, when *Der Rosenkavalier* was far advanced.

Kessler was a scholar rather than a creator. Yet it may be hazarded, when one knows the uncertainty and caprice of Hofmannsthal's creative muse, that

Kessler at least suggested a basic plot, elaborated from Artus's *L'Ingénu Libertin*, which he and Hofmannsthal then tricked out gradually with convincing detail. From Molière's *Les Fourberies de Scapin* Hofmannsthal borrowed his Geronte, the old man who later became Faninal. Pourceaugnac, Molière's provincial lawyer, a fat old man (his name suggests a pig), who brought to Paris a pretty young girl he wanted to marry, and was scared away by the ingenious and degrading machinations of her young lover, supplied the idea of Baron Ochs (a change of farmyard animal); and the play also suggested the conspiratorial figures of Annina and Valzacchi—who assume, in Molière, a variety of hilarious French regional disguises and accents that one wishes Hofmannsthal had been able to transfer more fully to Austria; in *Der Rosenkavalier* we simply have their Italianate German and Annina's Bohemian mimicry in Act 3 as a reminder, though the pseudowife and her "Papa"-screaming children also hail from Pourceaugnac. Sophie's Duenna can be traced to Molière's *Médecin malgré lui* where another Geronte is found. Couvray's novel gave Hofmannsthal Faublas, the prototype of Octavian, and his trans-

vestist escapades; the name and nature of Sophie; the Marquise, later Feldmarschallin; also numerous smaller points such as the rendezvous during a ride in the Prater, the episode of the sword left lying in the Feldmarschallin's bedroom while its owner is concealed, and the allusion to a *Qui pro quo*. The *schadenfreudig* pantomime in the inn derives from a Viennese rococo comedy by Philipp Haffner, the frustrated Ochs-Sophie betrothal from *Don Pasquale* and many similar *commedia dell'arte* plots. The levee with attendant hairdresser, the black page-boy, and the singer with flute obbligato have been traced to Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and Hogarth's *Mariage à la mode*, the Marschallin's clock-stopping ploy to Alfred Musset's *Emmeline*, the Presentation of the Silver Rose to a papal custom of giving a golden rose to virtuous and noble ladies.

Kessler the scholar could cudgel these literary recollections, and check them in his library, after Hofmannsthal and he had returned from their walks. At first, it is clear, they were happy to create a new *commedia dell'arte* plot, the same old clowns subjected to a few new antics, as Italian comedy writers (and others such as Molière) had done. Hofmannsthal the poet soon found himself probing further into character: as a creative artist he could not help blowing life into the nostrils of his given cardboard characters.

The content of the comedy quickly changed from "pantomime transparency" into a human drama where farce and seriousness normally coincide to a disturbing degree. At first he was inspired by his favorite theme of Love at First Sight, here centered on the "Presentation of the Rose" scene. The first act had been speedily written, and as rapidly put to delightful, far from puppetesque music. Kessler, intent on their original "pantomimic" conception, began to raise objections about Hofmannsthal's excessively poetic diction. Baron Ochs's defense of rustic lechery was too full of "fine writing" for a country bumpkin; the Feldmarschallin, at the end of the first act, expressed herself "too emotionally and profoundly." But Hofmannsthal's creative imagination had advanced far beyond Kessler's decorative puppets, though paradoxically it may have been through Kessler's scorn of the "profound" Marschallin that Hofmannsthal was inspired to upgrade her, from a mere mistress (in two senses) to the *dea ex machina* of the third act, "the character

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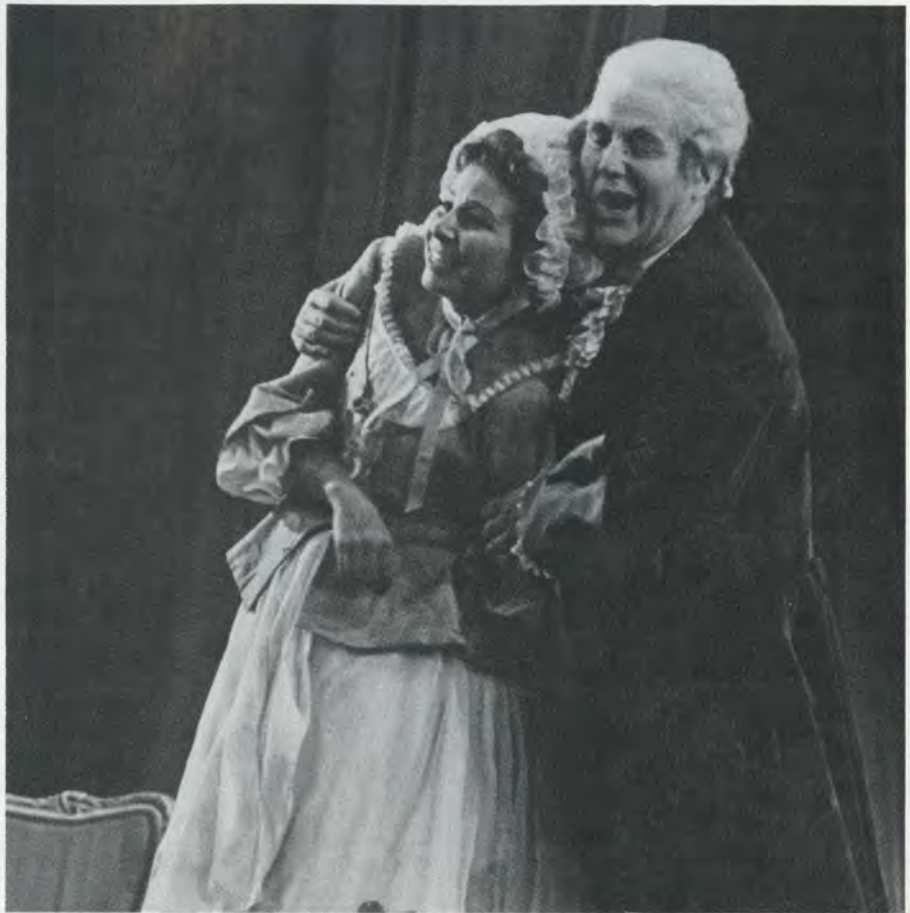
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with whom most of the audience, especially the women, will chiefly identify," as he reminded Strauss. The composer, by no means as coarse and unfeeling as Hofmannsthal sometimes described him ("everything that he says and wishes and leans towards, disgusts me fairly strongly"), had already realized the greatness of the character in his music for her at the end of the first act. When Hofmannsthal, terrified at the eleventh hour of having written too long an opera, offered Strauss an abbreviated version of the penultimate scene (from Ochs's exit to the Marschallin's), Strauss had to explain, out of superior experience, that the composer, given the necessary inspiration, can justify an excess of words, just as a shortage of them may embarrass his invention. Even the poet does not know just what music his words will bring into being.

Kessler continued, throughout work on *Rosenkavalier*, to bombard Hofmannsthal with epistolary criticisms. He was concerned that Sophie should, throughout the second act, not betray her low-class origins, and that Octavian, a woman dressed as a man who then plays a comic scene in female drag, must be presented throughout as a proper man, not a "wet Cherubino." Again Strauss took care of these reservations, which Hofmannsthal passed on as his own criticism: even before the curtain goes up, the orchestral prelude tells us in no uncertain terms how manly a lover Octavian is.

One unique feature of *Der Rosenkavalier* is the language of its text. Hofmannsthal wanted to create an imaginary but persuasive world in his drama. His characters express themselves, deliberately, in sundry dialects of German: country folk (including Ochs) in rustic phraseology, Faninal and Sophie (born into the plain cloth of trade) vulgarly but with pretensions of politeness except when roused, the aristocratic characters subject to engrained polite etiquette according to personality and situation. Even the Princess of Werdenberg, the Feldmarschallin, falls into Viennese dialect at the emotional climax of the opera, when she whispers "Ich weiss auch nix, gar nix."

The niceties of language, the nicknames and historical references, sometimes the very names of characters, were carefully researched. Much of it may be found in the diaries of Prince Johann Joseph Khevenhüller-Metsch, published



Christa Ludwig as Octavian/Mariandel and Manfred Jungwirth as Baron Ochs in San Francisco Opera's 1971 *Rosenkavalier*.

just before work on *Rosenkavalier* began, as "Diary from Maria Theresia's Times." Here we learn that Ochs was a Viennese banker, Greifenklau a bishop, and find the name of the Neapolitan General mentioned by the Marschallin. The name Rofrano was famous in Mozart's Vienna: their palace there is now called after the Auersperg family who subsequently owned it. Freiherr von Faninal may derive from Congreve's Fainall in *The Way of the World*. One of Mozart's patrons was Count Orsini-Rosenberg whose titles included that of Freiherr of Lerchenau, here borne by Baron Ochs. Hofmannsthal, a great snob, retitled his Baron "auf" Lerchenau, a specimen of unlanded gentry, a mere caretaker, and parsimonious in Vienna (how he contrasts with the generous Mandryka in *Arabella!*). Octavian's nickname "Quinquin" came from Count Franz Esterházy, of the family of Haydn's employers, a member of Mozart's Masonic Lodge in Vienna, for whose obsequies the *Masonic Funeral Music* was composed. The libretto is full of references, but some are invented, especially

dialect phrases: Hofmannsthal later declared that the most credible words were invented; the extravagant ones were genuine.

The special virtue of the libretto is Hofmannsthal's achievement in creating a complete society of his own invention, place, people, circumstances, action, personal confrontation and private response, even language. All these Hofmannsthal researched and invented freely, so that each character, down to the Innkeeper and the Blackamoor, would remain real to the audience, hours after the show was over. And that was just where Strauss could most help to induce and convince listeners and spectators to leave the modern world and, for a while, become inhabitants of this imaginary, apparently quite realistic world on stage. Hofmannsthal had the great advantage, over all his librettist predecessors, that he lived and worked in the Vienna of Sigmund Freud. We may not notice that in *Der Rosenkavalier* as we do in *Elektra*, or in Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, where the naked soul is laid bare to the bone, and remorselessly

scraped. Roughness, crudity, bad manners are all part of *Der Rosenkavalier*. But the prevailing tone is civilized gracefulness, polite behavior, or simply good manners, which enable people to preserve their own discreet privacy from which communications may be made with others, at a suitable level of personal sacrifice. That was Hofmannsthal's way: he deeply loved his wife, family, and his closest friends, and sought to keep the rest of the world at some decent personal remove, for the good of his creative soul. He might have insisted that one cannot touch pitch without being defiled. It lessened him as a writer for a posterity keen on realism, but there is a wealth of quite imaginary realism in the world of *Der Rosenkavalier* which is certainly of Hofmannsthal's own making.

The early letters make no mention of a title for the opera. The first mention comes in a letter from Kessler, objecting to "The Country Cousin" (*Der Vetter vom Land*) as banal (so that must have been its name for at least a while). Kessler proposed *Quinquin* and Hofmannsthal suggested *Mariandel* or else *Der Rosencavalier* (October 8, 1909). Shortly afterwards, he and Strauss were referring to their new opera as *Ochs von Lerchenau*, but on May 4, 1910, Alfred Roller, the Viennese scenic artist in charge of the production-book with illustrations of scenery and all costumes, told Strauss that *Der Rosencavalier* was Hofmannsthal's choice. Pauline Strauss banished her husband's qualms by insisting that the title must be *Der Rosenkavalier* with a "k." This was on the 6th of May. The central emphasis had swung from the Baron to Octavian: a month later Hofmannsthal, having at last completed the revised text of the third act, was telling Strauss that the principal character in it must unmistakably be the Marschallin. Nobody thought to call it *Marie Therese*, though for Strauss it was unmistakably her opera, in spite of her absence from the stage after the first act until shortly before the end of Act 3.

For the musical avant-garde of 1911, *Der Rosenkavalier* marked Strauss' retreat from the front line of progressive composers, a loss of face, a grave disappointment. Anton Webern, after seeing the opera for the first time, took this view, as one who had hitherto greatly admired Strauss and his music, though he still admitted the feat of musical virtuosity that the score represents. Yet this was the sort of drama that

Strauss had, for years, most wanted to set to music, and this was the only sort of music that could suit it.

Strauss could have defended his retrogression by pointing out that he is as completely himself in *Der Rosenkavalier* as in any of his earlier works, the invention perfectly idiosyncratic and pertinent, the use of orchestral color more masterly than ever—listen to the ecstatic shimmer (rather modern!) that greets Octavian's entrance with the silver rose in the second act, or the cool balmy freshness with which birdsong breaks into the lazy tranquillity of the bedroom when the curtain rises for the first time. And Strauss had written nothing more exhilarating, in pace and light allusiveness, than the orchestral introduction to the third act.

Der Rosenkavalier was also the first opera in which he showed, but not for the last time, how sensitively he could write for the female singing voice, a subject in which he was a specialist. Given Hofmannsthal's casting of Octavian as a travesty role, Strauss was able to rise fully to the occasion, when he reached the long duet-scene at the end of Act I for Octavian and the Marschallin, likewise the duetting of Sophie and her rose-cavalier twice in the second act, and the extended scene towards the end of Act III which culminates in the trio for three sopranos, spacious, sublime in its uplifted emotion, the voices twining marvelously round one another, as Octavian is passed by one lover to the next (for how long?).

For Webern it was morally wrong of Strauss to want to compose such an opera: for Strauss himself, *Der Rosenkavalier* allowed him to exercise his creative talent to the fullest, in every branch of musical communication that he most excelled in. He preferred to continue along this particular track, in subsequent years, even though he was soon branded a fuddy-duddy among living composers, an anachronism in the history of music. After 1919, music developed along other lines, and Strauss' subsequent operas did not take their place in the international repertory as *Der Rosenkavalier* had, until some years after his death. If this was a backward step, it was honorably taken—there is no cheap music, nor empty brilliance nor sham antique, to be found in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and it has proved to be of durable value. It can be seen, even, as Strauss' passport to immortality. ■

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Helping to Make It Happen: S.F. Opera's Production Assistants

By TIMOTHY PFAFF

"Stand by," commands production assistant Elizabeth Bachman, as forcefully as she can while still maintaining a whisper. Trembling with excitement on a scaffold above her is a children's chorus, ready to file out on the stage to join more than a hundred others for the crowd scene of the first act of *Turandot*. At a precisely predetermined moment Bachman calls out, "GO," and the first child in line starts out for the stage.

"GO."

Off goes the next.

"GO."

Bachman has, in addition to giving individual choristers their cues, adjusted a few costumes, helped an excited child hold his lantern straight, convincingly reassured another, and pointed out the interesting features of the process to an amazed backstage visitor. All without missing a single cue. As one of four production assistants (PAs) working the show, it is Bachman's responsibility not to miss a cue, no matter what other demands the situation may be making on her at the time.

Although it usually comes late in a PA's day, "working a show" is a taxing business. It demands of a PA nothing less than the precision of a watchmaker, the agility of a dancer, the stamina of an athlete, the timing of a comedienne, the authority of a policeman, and the calm and tact of a group psychotherapist, whose work the whole process more often than not resembles. And much more is involved than the giving of accurate cues. While the curtain is up, it is as much a part of the PA's job to make sure that props are where they need to be, that the necessary passageways are clear for quick entrances and exits, that music stands and closed-circuit television monitors are where they need to be—and not where they need not be—that backstage noise is held to allowable levels, that the glass of water a prima donna expects is waiting in the wings, and, in short, that everyone is happy. In sum, it is work that demands on the one hand eye-crossing levels of concentration and, on the other, the ability to spring into action the instant action is required. Daydreaming creative types need not apply.

In the months before the curtain finally goes up, the PAs play a central role in every rehearsal on the company's busy schedule, performing functions that range from the handling of rehearsal costumes to the meticulous notation of a director's blocking of a complicated scene. Laurie Feldman, an experienced PA who is also the assistant stage director for *Turandot* and *Billy Budd* this season, explains, "What we do depends on the show, who's directing, who's performing, whether it's a new production or a revival, and the mood everyone's in at the time."

Production assistants "walk roles" for the lighting designers and serve as stand-ins for principal singers during the special rehearsals for "cover" singers. They work closely with the costume and properties departments, to assure that the necessary rehearsal costumes and props are ready on time and that they fit and work. In the instances in which adjustments are needed, it often is the PA's job to coordinate with various technical departments in transporting the articles back and forth between the shops and the rehearsal stages.

Mostly, however, the PAs write, and the tools of their trade are the writer's tools. Peter McClintock, the company's only male PA, carries with him everywhere "Peter's Magic Box." In it are all the PA's essentials: paper clips, tape, scissors, gummed tabs, pencils, and, perhaps most important of all, erasers. "One of the most important things we do," Feldman explains, "is to take down comprehensive staging notes."

For people whose backstage vocabulary is made up almost exclusively of the three words "Stand by" and "Go" ("Sometimes we have to give cues in other languages," Feldman allows, "but everyone understands 'Go'"), the company's PAs turn out to be uncommonly articulate people. It is a quality that serves each of them in good stead, since clarity and conciseness of expression is critical for the important work of maintaining the staging notes. No sooner has the director or assistant director arranged the 16 boys who sing in the first act of *Tosca* than the PAs at a chorus staging rehearsal have noted the exact position of each on a staging chart. Those positions are indicated by the boys' actual names, gleaned quickly from name tags. To facilitate the charting during regular chorus stagings, the PAs have memorized all the names of all the company choristers. "We write fast," Feldman volunteers. "We really do."

The staging rehearsals finished, the PAs retreat to their office to translate their hasty jottings and charts into formal Chorus Notes and Super Notes (for the company's supernumeraries). The finished notes are as elaborate as the musical

continued on p.51

MESSICK



The "stand by" sign is demonstrated by San Francisco Opera's 1985 Fall Season Production Assistants: (l. to r.) Elizabeth Bachman, Laurie Feldman, Lori Harrison, Peter McClintock, Caroline Moores and Bess Sherman.

And the next.

A more insistent "GO" to a child who has jumped the beat.

"That on e never listens GO."

And so on, until all the children have made their way to the stage. Working entirely from memory at this, the fourth *Turandot* performance of the season,

Timothy Pfaff is Associate Editor of the U.C. Berkeley Alumni Magazine, California Monthly, and a free-lance writer on the arts.

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KIRI TE KANAWA



BRIGITTE FASSBAENDER



CHERYL PARRISH

Internationally celebrated soprano **Kiri Te Kanawa** is the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, a role she has sung to acclaim at Covent Garden, the Paris Opera and New York's Metropolitan Opera, where she was seen in the role in a nationwide "Live from the Met" telecast. Last seen here in the title role of *Arabella* for the 1980 Fall Season, she made her Company debut as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 1972 and returned in 1975 to sing Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* and the first *Magic Flute* Pamina of her career. Born in New Zealand, she became a member of the Royal Opera at Covent Garden in 1970, and it was there in 1971 that she attracted international attention as Mozart's Countess, a success she repeated at Glyndebourne in 1973 under Sir John Pritchard and for her 1971 American debut at Santa Fe Opera. She made a triumphant debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1974 as Desdemona in *Otello* and returned the following season as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, a role she sang in Joseph Losey's film version of that work and for her 1975 debut with the Paris Opera, where she has been a favorite ever since. She appeared with the Australian Opera during the 1976-77 season, singing in *La Bohème* and *Simon Boccanegra*. In the autumn of 1977 she made a tour of major European music festivals with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Claudio Abbado in Strauss' *Four Last Songs* and Mahler's Fourth Symphony, a program she repeated at La Scala in Milan. She made her first European and North American recital tour in 1978-79, including a Covent Garden performance that was filmed and recorded. She was invited to sing "Let the Bright Seraphim" at the wedding of HRH The Prince of Wales and the Lady Diana Spencer, and that same year was created a Dame Commander of the British Empire. Recent engagements have included *Arabella* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Met; *Rosenkavalier* at Covent Garden; and recitals in New York, Lyons and Marseilles. In May 1986 she will appear in recital at the War Memorial Opera House as part of the "Royal Family of

Opera" series. Her television and film credits include an internationally televised production of *Die Fledermaus* from Covent Garden and Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's film of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Her extensive discography ranges from complete operas (*Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen*, *La Rondine*) to song and aria collections and, most recently, such "crossover" albums as Bernstein's *West Side Story* and a record of popular classics arranged by Nelson Riddle.

Acclaimed around the world for her interpretations of the mezzo-soprano repertoire, **Brigitte Fassbaender** has won special praise for her portrayal of Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, a role she has sung at the Metropolitan Opera, the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden, La Scala, and her home theater, the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, which featured her in an international telecast of *Der Rosenkavalier* under the baton of Carlos Kleiber in 1979. Now she brings that portrayal to San Francisco Opera, where she made her triumphant American debut in 1970 in the title role of *Carmen*. Not seen on an American opera stage in over 10 years, she has concentrated her activities in European houses, singing frequently in Vienna, Salzburg, Hamburg, Munich, Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris, Milan, Bayreuth and Geneva in such roles as Sesto in Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Charlotte in *Werther*, the title role of *Carmen*, Brangaene in *Tristan und Isolde*, Amneris in *Aida*, and Octavian. In 1982 she sang the role of Countess Geschwitz in *Lulu* for the first time in her career at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, repeating the assignment in London, Vienna and at this year's Munich Festival. Last year she returned to the American concert stage for performances of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the New York Philharmonic, and this year for Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Chicago Symphony under Solti and the Verdi Requiem

with the San Francisco Symphony. Recently she completed a film of *Werther* directed by famous Czech producer Petr Weigl. A busy recitalist, Miss Fassbaender sings upwards of 25 recitals every year, throughout the European capitals. She also holds a professorship at the Munich Hochschule and, as a painter, has had exhibitions of her drawings and paintings in Vienna and Geneva. Her extensive discography includes complete recordings of *Lulu*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, *Così fan tutte*, Mozart's *La Finta Giardiniera*, Pfitzner's *Palestrina*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, *Das Lied von der Erde*, Bach's Mass in B Minor and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, as well as eight recital records and an aria disc. In 1985 she was awarded the prestigious Frankfurt Music Prize for services to the cultural life of Germany.

Soprano **Cheryl Parrish** appears as Sophie in *Werther* and the character of the same name in *Der Rosenkavalier*, a role she has sung to acclaim with Los Angeles Opera Theater. A participant in the 1981 and '82 Merola Opera Programs, she won the Schwabacher Memorial Award in the 1981 San Francisco Opera Center Auditions Grand Finals and was seen in numerous roles, including Papagena in *The Magic Flute*, Sally in *Die Fledermaus*, Alice Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and Gilda in *Rigoletto*, a role she also performed on Western Opera Theater's 1982 national tour. She was chosen to inaugurate the Schwabacher Debut Recital series in 1983, the year in which she made her Company debut as Naiade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and appeared in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* with Régine Crespin, with whom Miss Parrish has studied in France. She was awarded an Adler Fellowship for 1984, and won acclaim in the 1984 Opera Center Showcase as Blonde in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, a role she will sing with the Dallas Opera and St. Louis Opera Theater next year. During 1983, the Texas native was soprano soloist in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* performed during a pontifical high



CARLA COOK



NIKKI LI HARTLIEP



BARBARA KILDUFF

mass celebrated by the Vatican Secretary of State to mark the opening of the Vatican art exhibit in San Francisco. She sang the Forest Bird in *Siegfried* in the summer of 1984, repeating the role for the complete Ring cycle performances in 1985. Operatic engagements outside of San Francisco have included Fiametta in *The Gondoliers* with the Fort Worth Opera Association; Eurilla in Haydn's *Orlando Paladino* for the Carmel Bach Festival, where she has also sung Mozart's C Minor Mass and Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*; Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* for the Marin Opera; and Adele in *Die Fledermaus* with the Cleveland Opera. Miss Parrish has a special affinity for the light music of Vienna, and has sung concerts of Viennese music at the Ravinia and Chautauqua Festivals, a task she will undertake this December for the San Francisco Symphony conducted by Franz Allers. Last summer she also appeared at the Lake Tahoe Music Festival and the San Francisco Symphony Pops series. October 1985 finds her in recital at Cal Tech University in Pasadena, and she returns to her alma mater at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, for a recital next February. She will appear as Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* for Portland Opera next year.

Mezzo-soprano **Carla Cook** is Annina in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Most recently seen with San Francisco Opera as Rossweisse in the 1985 Ring Festival production of *Die Walküre*, she also sang Wagner's *Wesendoncklieder* in a chamber concert in the Veterans Building Green Room. She made her Company debut during the 1983 Fall Season, when she sang the roles of Glasha in *Katya Kabanova*, Charlotte in *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* and Flora in the Family performances of *La Traviata*. A member of the 1982 Merola Opera Program, Miss Cook appeared in Merola productions of *The Magic Flute* and *Rigoletto* and won the Jean Donnell Memorial Award in the Grand Finals of that year's Opera Center Auditions. The following year she was a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Auditions and the Munich International Vocal Competition, and appeared

in the Opera Center's Showcase productions of *L'Ormino* and *The Rape of Lucretia*. Last year saw her first performances at the Metropolitan Opera as a Girl of Mahagonny in *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* and as Waltraute in *Die Walküre*, and her Seattle Opera debut as Waltraute, and as Venus in *Tannhäuser*. She has also sung such roles as Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Charlotte in *Werther* and Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* with the opera companies of Mississippi, Des Moines, Utah and the Lake George Opera Festival. It was under the auspices of the Metropolitan Opera that she made her Carnegie Hall debut with the National Orchestra of New York. Born in Salt Lake City, Miss Cook has directed opera workshops, classes in diction and vocal literature, chorus, and private and group voice lessons at Utah State University, Virginia Commonwealth University and the College of St. Rose in Albany, New York.

Soprano **Nikki Li Hartliep** is Mistress Ford in the family performances of *Falstaff* and portrays Marianne in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Last fall she sang the title role in the family performances of *Madama Butterfly*, a role she has also sung with the Marin Opera and Minnesota Opera. She made her Company debut as Anna in *Nabucco* during the 1982 summer season and returned as the Slave in *Salome* that fall. Miss Hartliep was a participant in the 1983 Merola Opera Program, during which she appeared as Antonia in *The Tales of Hoffmann* at Stern Grove. For the Showcase series in Herbst Theatre, she has appeared as Mimì in *La Bohème* (1982), the Female Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia* (1983) and in the title role of *Rodelinda* (1985). On Western Opera Theater tours she has portrayed the Countess in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Mimì. A 1984-85 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center,

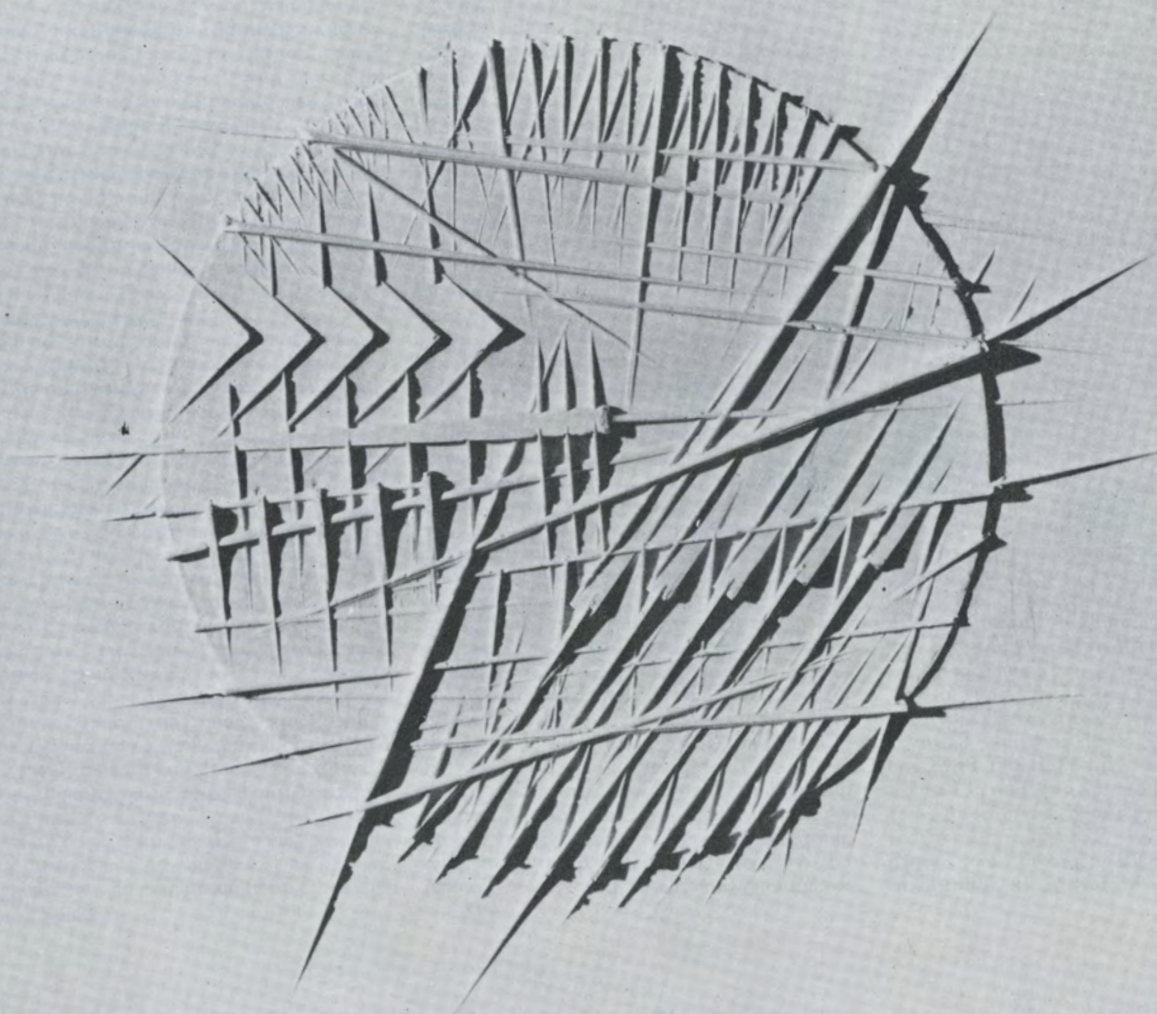
Miss Hartliep was the winner of the first prize Schwabacher Memorial Award in 1983, and was featured in the 1984 series of Schwabacher Debut Recitals. During the 1985 Ring Festival, she sang the *Wesendoncklieder* on a program of Wagner's chamber music.

Lyric-coloratura soprano **Barbara Kilduff** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Käthchen in *Werther*, and also appears as a Milliner in *Der Rosenkavalier*. A participant in the 1984 Merola Opera Program, Miss Kilduff appeared in Western Opera Theater's 1984-85 touring production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola*. During the San Francisco Opera Center's 1985 Showcase season, she was seen as the Mother in Conrad Susa's *The Love of Don Perlimplin*. For the Fredonia Opera Theatre she appeared as Marie in Smetana's *The Bartered Bride* and Pamina in *The Magic Flute*. She portrayed Yum-Yum for a production of *The Mikado* given by Western New York Opera Theatre at Art Park, and for Hartford's Nutmeg Theatre she won praise as Adele in Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*. Miss Kilduff won the Florence Bruce Award at the 1984 San Francisco Opera Center Auditions Grand Finals, and as a result of winning the 1984 D'Angelo Young Artists Competition, she appeared in concert with the Erie Philharmonic and the Chautauqua Festival Orchestra. This last July she made a concert appearance with the Chautauqua Music School Festival Orchestra and attracted critical attention for her performances at Wolf Trap in Rossini's *Signor Brusolino*, Donizetti's *Le convenienze Teatrali (Viva la Mamma)* and Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, in which she sang Papagena.

continued on p.44

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This production of *Der Rosenkavalier* is owned by the Lyric Opera of Chicago and is a generous and deeply appreciated gift of Mr. and Mrs. B. Edward Bensinger.

Opera in three acts by RICHARD STRAUSS

Text by HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL

(By arrangement with Boosey and Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner)

Der Rosenkavalier

(in German)

Conductor

John Pritchard

Production

Hans Neugebauer

Set Designer

Günther Schneider-Siemssen

Costume Designer

Sophia Schröck*

Lighting Designer

Joan Arhelger

Chorus Director

Richard Bradshaw

Musical Preparation

Jeffrey Goldberg

Kathryn Cathcart

Robert Morrison

James Johnson

Philip Eisenberg

Prompter

Philip Eisenberg

Assistant Stage Director

Sharon Woodriff

Stage Manager

Gretchen Mueller

San Francisco Boys Chorus

Louis Magor, Director

Girls Chorus San Francisco

Elizabeth Appling, Director

Sets from the Lyric Opera of Chicago

Costumes from the Royal Opera,
Copenhagen

First performance:

Dresden, January 26, 1911

First San Francisco Opera performance:

October 16, 1940

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24 AT 2:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29 AT 8:00

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7 AT 8:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Octavian Brigitte Fassbaender

The Marschallin Kiri Te Kanawa

Mohamed Suzette Morales*

The Marschallin's major-domo Dennis Petersen

The Marschallin's footmen David Burnakus, Ric Cascio,
Anthony Lord, Gregory de Silva

Baron Ochs auf Lerchenau Kurt Moll

Three noble orphans Li-Chan Chen, Vicki Shaghoian*,
Kathryn Cowdrick

A milliner Barbara Kilduff

An animal vendor Dale Emde

Valzacchi Florindo Andreolli*

Annina Carla Cook

An Italian singer Tonio Di Paolo

A notary Eric Garrett

Leopold Thomas Potter*

Faninal Renato Capecchi

Sophie Cheryl Parrish

Marianne Nikki Li Hartliep

Faninal's major-domo Paul Gudas

An innkeeper Daniel Harper

A police commissioner James Patterson

A scholar, a flute player, a hairdresser, Haiduks, musicians, a footman, couriers, lackeys, maids, a physician, cook boy, waiters, coachmen, guests, children, policemen, various personages of suspicious appearance

*San Francisco Opera debut

PLACE AND TIME: Vienna, during the early years of the reign
of the Empress Maria Theresia

ACT I The Marschallin's bedroom, early morning

INTERMISSION

ACT II Faninal's house, two days later

INTERMISSION

ACT III A run-down inn on the outskirts of Vienna, the
following evening

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

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

The performance will last approximately three hours and fifty minutes.

1985 Fall Season Supertitles underwritten through a generous grant from
American Express via the San Francisco Opera Guild.

All performances of *Der Rosenkavalier* feature
Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera.

Der Rosenkavalier/Synopsis

ACT I

As morning sunlight streams into her boudoir, the Princess von Werdenberg (the Marschallin) is embraced by her young lover, Octavian, Count Rofrano. The youth hides while a little blackamoor, Mohamed, enters briefly with a tray of breakfast chocolate. At the sound of loud voices in the antechamber, the Marschallin at first fears that her husband has unexpectedly returned from hunting but then laughs as she recognizes the voice of the coarse Baron Ochs. Octavian, to amuse himself and avoid discovery, puts on the dress of a chambermaid, "Mariandel." The Baron gains entrance to discuss his pending marriage to Sophie von Faninal, daughter of a wealthy bourgeois; he is looking for a cavalier to present her with a silver rose in token of the engagement. During the conversation, Ochs flirts with "Mariandel." The Marschallin suggests Octavian as bearer of the rose and shows his picture to the Baron, who is struck by its resemblance to the chambermaid. As the room fills with retainers and petitioners for the Marschallin's levee, Ochs is unable to keep "Mariandel" from escaping. An Italian tenor offers a sentimental aria, rudely cut short by the Baron's wrangling with a notary over Sophie's dowry. The Baron hires a pair of Italian intriguers, Annina and Valzacchi, to locate "Mariandel." When the room is cleared, the Marschallin muses on her waning youth. Octavian returns and is perplexed by her wistful mood; stunned when she suggests that one day he will tire of her, he leaves without a kiss. The Marschallin tries to call him back, but he has already left the palace. Summoning Mohamed, she sends him to Octavian with the silver rose.

ACT II

In their ornate reception hall, Faninal and Sophie excitedly await the Baron's cavalier, while the girl's duenna, Marianne, stands by a window describing the arrival of his coach. Heralded by a swarm of lackeys, Octavian enters in magnificent attire and presents the silver rose to Sophie, who accepts it rapturously. The servants retire. After a few words of polite conversation, chaperoned by Marianne, the two young people begin to feel a mutual attraction. Faninal and Ochs interrupt them. The middle-aged bridegroom disgusts Sophie with his

crude attentions and amorous boasting; when he goes off to discuss the dowry with Faninal and Marianne is called away to help control the Baron's lecherous retainers, Sophie turns to Octavian for help. No sooner does he embrace her than they are seized by Annina and Valzacchi, who promptly summon Ochs. Octavian, protecting Sophie's honor, draws his sword and wounds the Baron in the arm. Amid the ensuing confusion, Faninal is enraged to hear Sophie declare she will never wed Ochs. Meanwhile, Octavian enlists the services of Annina and Valzacchi. The Baron, left alone with his servants, soothes his wounded vanity with wine. As it begins to take effect, Annina waltzes in with a note from "Mariandel" asking for a rendezvous. Ochs, intoxicated with his own charm, fails to tip Annina, who vows revenge.

ACT III

At Octavian's instigation, Annina and Valzacchi help prepare a room in a seedy inn. Before long, Ochs and "Mariandel" arrive for a private supper. As the counterfeit chambermaid coyly leads her suitor on, grotesque heads pop out of trap doors and secret panels, terrifying the guilty Baron. Annina, disguised as a widow, runs in shrieking that Ochs is the father of her children. Next the police arrive, followed shortly by Faninal, who calls Sophie in to disprove that "Mariandel" is Ochs's fiancée. Collapsing with rage, Faninal is escorted from the room. Just as Octavian confides to the officer in charge what really happened and withdraws to remove his disguise, the Marschallin, summoned by Leopold to help his father out of distress, majestically enters. She forces the Baron to renounce Sophie and then dismisses him; he leaves, pursued by waiters and lackeys clamoring for payment. The Marschallin now realizes the truth and, lamenting that she must relinquish her lover so soon, gives the bewildered Octavian to Sophie. She slips unnoticed from the room as the young people marvel at their dream come true. Accompanied by Faninal, the Marschallin passes by in a last farewell. Octavian and Sophie renew their vows and run from the room. After a moment, Mohamed returns to look for Sophie's lost handkerchief, finds it and trips out.



The San Francisco Opera has lost a very special friend through the recent death of Allen M. Hillebrandt. Executive director of the San Francisco Opera Guild for the past seven years, Allen was a worker of tireless energy and patience. His enthusiasm and warmth will be missed by all who knew him.



Der Rosenkavalier

Photos taken in rehearsal by David Powers

Brigitte Fassbaender



(above) Brigitte Fassbaender, Kiri Te Kanawa

(below) Kiri Te Kanawa



Tonio Di Paolo

Cheryl Parrish





(above) Kiri Te Kanawa



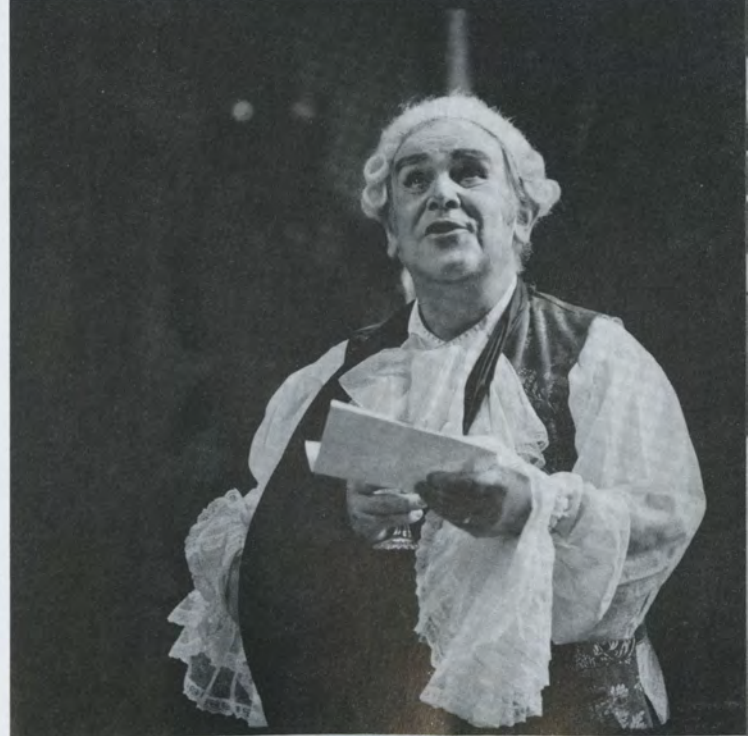
Brigitte Fassbaender, Kurt Moll



Kurt Moll, Cheryl Parrish



(below) Kurt Moll



(right) Carla Cook, Florindo Andreolli



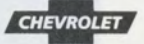
Renato Capecchi, Kurt Moll



(below) Nikki Li Hartliep, Kurt Moll, Thomas Potter, members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus



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LI-CHAN CHEN



VICKI SHAGHOIAN



KATHRYN COWDRICK



KURT MOLL

Soprano **Li-Chan Chen** appears this season as Nannetta in the family performances of *Falstaff* and as a Noble Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier*. She made her San Francisco Opera debut as the Fourth Bridesmaid in *Der Freischütz* during the 1985 Ring Festival. Miss Chen has performed extensively with the major orchestras of her native Taiwan, including the Taipei City Orchestra and the Taiwan Symphony. Her operatic debut as Pamina in *The Magic Flute* with the Taipei Opera Theater was followed by performances as Marguerite in *Faust* at the Taipei Music and Arts Festival. She participated in the 1984 Merola Opera Program, during which she was heard as Nannetta at Stern Grove and won four awards at the San Francisco Opera Center Auditions Grand Finals. She returned to Taiwan in December 1984 to sing the role of Musetta in *La Bohème* with the Taipei City Orchestra. Currently an Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, she appeared as a member of the Chorus in this year's Showcase production of *The Love of Don Perlimplin* and is a member of the touring Center Singers.

Mezzo-soprano **Vicki Shaghoian** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as a Noble Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier*. A native of the San Joaquin Valley, she made her operatic debut as Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* with the Fresno Opera Association and sang the lead in two world premieres: Alan Rea's *The Fete at Coqueville* and Earl Robinson's *David of Sassoun*. A regular performer with Pocket Opera, she appeared in that company's "Offenbachanalia" as Cupid in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Amoro in *The Bridge of Sighs*, the Duke of Mantua in *The Bandits*, and Julie in *La Vie Parisienne*. Other Bay Area credits include Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* with Oakland Opera; Nancy in *Albert Herring* and Mrs. Ford in *Sir John in Love* with Berkeley Opera; the title role of *La Cenerentola* and the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland* with California Coast Opera (formerly Scholar Opera); Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* for West Bay Opera; and the title role of Handel's *Faramondo* in the work's 1985

American premiere with the Handel Opera Company in Berkeley. Recently she won praise as the Serpent in the world premiere of Ron McFarland's *Song of Pegasus* with the Marin Community Playhouse and as Lazuli in Chabrier's *L'Etoile* with the Prometheus Symphony. This coming year will see her San Francisco Symphony debut in their "New and Unusual" concert series, and with the Pamiro Opera of Green Bay, Wisconsin, where she will appear as Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*.

Mezzo-soprano **Kathryn Cowdrick** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Mlle. Dangeville in *Adriana Lecouvreur*, appearing also this season as Mistress Page in the Family performances of *Falstaff* and as an Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier*. A participant in the 1984 Merola Opera Program, Miss Cowdrick performed the role of Mistress Page in *Falstaff* at Stern Grove and appeared as Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* at Villa Montalvo. She returned to the Center to tour with Western Opera Theater's production of *La Cenerentola*, in which she sang both Tisbe and the title role. Miss Cowdrick currently holds an Adler Fellowship with the Center. A professional speech therapist as well as a singer, she received much of her professional opera training at Juilliard's American Opera Center. In 1983, she appeared in Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* at Charleston's Spoleto Festival and in *Madama Butterfly* at the Spoleto Festival in both Charleston and Italy.

Renowned German bass **Kurt Moll** returns to San Francisco Opera as Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, a role with which he is closely identified, and has sung in Hamburg, Paris, Berlin, Bordeaux, Salzburg, at the Metropolitan Opera and, of course, in Vienna. He made his San Francisco Opera debut in 1974, when he appeared as Gurnemanz in *Parsifal* and King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde*. He began his career with the Cologne Opera, of which he became a member at the age of 20. He was next invited to

Aachen, where he added such roles to his repertoire as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* and Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer*. He sang his first King Marke and Ramfis in *Aida* in Mainz, where he stayed for three years before becoming a member of the Wuppertal opera company for five years. His career began to take on international dimensions after he bowed with the Hamburg Staatsoper in 1969, followed by debuts at Paris, Munich, Vienna, Salzburg and Bayreuth. Moll made his La Scala debut in Milan as King Marke in 1974 and the following year made his first appearance at Covent Garden, where he sang Kaspar in *Der Freischütz*. Today he sings in all of the world's major houses as well as with the major orchestras as a concert soloist. He makes his home with his wife and three children in Hamburg, where his recent performances have included *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Boris Godunov*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Turandot*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and *La Bohème*. Other recent engagements include *Rosenkavalier* in Salzburg, *Entführung* in Barcelona, *Barbier von Bagdad* and *Fidelio* in Munich, *Boris Godunov* and *Meistersinger* in Vienna, *Parsifal* at the Met, and *Der Fliegende Holländer* and *Entführung* with Chicago Lyric Opera. An acclaimed recitalist in Europe, he made his North American recital debut last November at Carnegie Hall and has recently appeared at Herbst Theatre as part of the San Francisco Performances series. His lengthy discography includes *Der Rosenkavalier* under Herbert von Karajan, as well as *Entführung*, *Don Giovanni*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Pfitzner's *Palestrina*, Strauss' *Daphne*, Mozart's *Bastien und Bastienne*, *Der Freischütz*, and Wagner's *Die Feen*, *Parsifal*, *Tristan und Isolde* and two recordings of *Die Meistersinger*, in addition to Schubert Lieder and aria collections.



RENATO CAPECCHI



TONIO DI PAOLO



FLORINDO ANDREOLLI



JAMES PATTERSON

Italian bass-baritone **Renato Capecchi** returns to San Francisco Opera in three roles: the Bailiff in *Werther*, the Sacristan in *Tosca* and Faninal in *Der Rosenkavalier*. He made his 1968 Company debut in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and has since returned for nine additional productions, including *La Forza del Destino*, *La Cenerentola*, *Tosca*, *Così fan tutte* and *Manon Lescaut*. He made his professional debut with the Italian Radio in 1948, followed by his stage debut as Amonasro in *Aida* with the Teatro Comunale of Reggio Emilia in 1949. A familiar figure on the world's foremost operatic stages, Capecchi has a repertoire of over 300 roles and has recorded more than 30 operas complete, as well as several special programs of Italian music. For the 1976 Merola Opera Program, he directed the American stage premiere of Donizetti's *L'Ajo nell'Imbarazzo* and Gazzaniga's *Il Convitato di Pietra* at the Paul Masson Winery, and instructed the young singers in classic commedia dell'arte traditions. Other directorial credits include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with the Chautauqua and New Orleans Opera, *Il Matrimonio Segreto* in Santa Fe, *Così fan tutte* in Connecticut and *La Fille du Régiment* at New York City Opera. Among his many engagements last season were *La Bohème* at the Met, *The Marriage of Figaro* at Avignon, Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* for Dallas Opera, Geronimo in *Il Matrimonio Segreto* for Santa Fe Opera, and Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville* at the Vienna Staatsoper. On this year's Met tour he will be seen in *La Bohème* and *L'Italiana in Algeri*, and will make his American recital debut at Carnegie Hall in March. Especially interested in working with young singers, Capecchi holds teaching positions with the American Opera Company at Juilliard, the University of Colorado at Boulder (where he has directed *The Barber of Seville*) and at the Music School in Detmold, West Germany, where he has staged Galuppi's *Il Filosofo di Campagna*.

Tenor **Tonio Di Paolo** returns to San Francisco Opera as an Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*. In 1978 he appeared as Steva in the American Opera Center production of *Jenůfa*, Offenbach's *Pomme d'Api* with the Brooklyn Academy of Music's New Opera Theatre, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at the first annual Sarah Lawrence Festival, and at the Aspen Music Festival in Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* and Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. In 1979 he appeared in the series of televised master classes given by Luciano Pavarotti at the Juilliard School of Music. That same year he made his San Francisco Opera debut as Isèpo in the internationally televised production of *La Gioconda* and also appeared as Joe in *La Fanciulla del West*. He made his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut as Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* during the 1981-82 season, when he also sang Faust in Boito's *Mefistofele* in Boston, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with the Washington and Houston opera companies, and Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with the Youngstown Symphony. Since then he has appeared with Boston Concert Opera, St. Louis Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, the Spoleto Festival both in the United States and Italy, and the companies of Utah, Connecticut and Vancouver. Last season he bowed with Seattle Opera as Nemorino and returned as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, in addition to performances in Des Moines, Atlanta, Orlando and Mississippi.

Tenor **Florindo Andreolli** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Valzacchi in *Der Rosenkavalier*. A native Italian, he made his professional debut in Palermo as Paolino in Cimarosa's *Il Matrimonio Segreto* and went on to win acclaim at theaters throughout Italy, including Milan's La Scala, Venice's La Fenice and the companies of Genoa, Rome, Modena, Parma, Bologna, Trieste and many others. Outside of Italy, his busy schedule has taken him to Berlin, Madrid, Brussels, Lisbon,

Buenos Aires, Paris, London, Amsterdam, Barcelona and Lyons, among others. He made his American debut in 1968 with the Lyric Opera of Chicago and has since appeared in more than 20 different roles with that company. He bowed at the Metropolitan Opera in 1969. Recent assignments have included Misail in *Boris Godunov* in Avignon, Bardolfo in *Falstaff* in Florence, *Khovanshchina* in Paris and Turin, *Turandot* at La Scala and in Naples, and a Scala production of *Pagliacci* with Plácido Domingo, filmed for television. He has participated in recordings of *Madama Butterfly*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Otello*, *La Forza del Destino* and *Adriana Lecouvreur*.

Bass **James Patterson** sings four roles for San Francisco Opera's 1985 Fall Season: The King of France in *Lear*, Johann in *Werther*, Tommaso in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and the Police Commissioner in *Der Rosenkavalier*. A graduate of 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*. He was heard in Opera Center Showcase productions of *L'Ormino* and *The Rape of Lucretia* in 1983, and for the 1984 Showcase was Osmin in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. Since his Company debut as a Customhouse Guard in the 1983 Summer Season production of *La Bohème*, he has sung nearly a dozen roles here, including Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata*, the King of Egypt in *Aida*, Zuniga in *Carmen*, Alessio in *La Sonnambula*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Orest's Guardian in *Elektra*, a Border Guard and Cherniakovsky in *Boris Godunov*, and a Monk in *La Gioconda*. His most recent Company appearances were as Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* during the 1985 Ring Festival. Last year, he sang both Fafners for the Pacific Northwest Wagner Festival in Seattle. During the summer of 1981, he 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 for the 1983 Festival of Masses he was bass soloist in the *St. Matthew Passion* and the Verdi Requiem under the baton of Robert Shaw.



DANIEL HARPER



ERIC GARRETT



DENNIS PETERSEN



PAUL GUDAS

Tenor **Daniel Harper** sings four roles during San Francisco Opera's 1985 Fall Season: Altoum in *Turandot*, Dr. Caius in the family performances of *Falstaff*, Maintop in *Billy Budd* and the Innkeeper in *Der Rosenkavalier*. As a member of the 1983 Merola Opera Program, he sang the title role in the Stern Grove performance of *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly*, a role he also performed on Western Opera Theater's 1983 nationwide tour. He made his Company debut in *Aida* during the 1984 Summer Season, and was seen last fall as Don Riccardo in *Ernani* and as Borsa in *Rigoletto*. During the Opera Center's 1985 Showcase series he sang the role of Grimoaldo in Handel's *Rodelinda*. In April of 1984 he participated in concert performances and a recording of Schönberg's *Moses und Aron* with the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti, and returned to Chicago last April as Judge Danforth in Ward's *The Crucible* with Chicago Opera Theater. A graduate of North Park College in Illinois, Harper has extensive concert credits in the Chicago area, including performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Handel's *Messiah*, the Mozart Requiem and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*. Currently in his second year as an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, Harper made an unscheduled debut with the San Francisco Symphony when he was called upon to replace an ailing colleague as tenor soloist in the Verdi Requiem conducted by Edo de Waart. He has been recipient of numerous awards, including the Opera Society of Chicago Young Artists Award, the Society of American Musicians Young Artists Award and third place in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Central Region Auditions.

English bass-baritone **Eric Garrett** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Dansker in *Billy Budd*, and also appears as A Notary in *Der Rosenkavalier*. After completing his studies at London's Royal College of Music he made his Covent Garden debut in 1962, singing the roles of Benoit and Alcindoro in *La Bohème*. He continued his studies with Eva Turner and Tito Gobbi, and has appeared in over 50 roles with the Royal Opera, including the Sacristan in the historic Zeffirelli production of *Tosca* with Maria Callas and Gobbi, the title role of *Gianni Schicchi*, and roles in *Hamlet*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Fidelio*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Jenůfa*, *Peter Grimes*, and *Die Fledermaus*. He has won acclaim with the leading opera companies and television studios of Great Britain, Belgium and France in such roles as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Dr. Bartolo in both *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *The Barber of Seville*, Fra Melitone in *La Forza del Destino*, and the title roles of *Don Pasquale* and *Falstaff*. Last year he made his American debut as Baron Ochs in the Los Angeles Opera Theater's production of *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Iowa-born tenor **Dennis Petersen** undertakes five roles in his debut season with San Francisco Opera: Poisson in *Adriana Lecouvreur*; Schmidt in *Werther*; Bardolfo in the family performances of *Falstaff*; a Judge in *Un Ballo in Maschera*; and the Major-Domo in *Der Rosenkavalier*. He made his professional opera debut in 1979 in two Bizet operas produced by the Theater Opera Music Institute, *Don Procopio* and *Djamileh*. His 1980 engagements included Don José in *Carmen* with the White Water Opera Company of Indiana, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with the Natchitoches Symphony Society of Louisiana, and Count Almaviva in Cleveland Opera Theater's production of *The Barber of Seville*. That fall, he sang his first Rodolfo in *La Bohème* with the Brooklyn Lyric Opera, a performance that led to an invitation to tour in that opera with the Texas Opera Theater. After a year of study in

Europe, he returned to the United States to sing Rodolfo with the Center for Opera Performance and a concert production of Wagner's *Rienzi* with the Opera Orchestra of New York. Subsequent engagements with that group include *Benvenuto Cellini* in 1983, and *Nabucco* and *William Tell* in 1984. During the 1982-83 season, he added four new roles to his repertoire: Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Faust in *Mefistofele*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Edoardo in Verdi's *Un Giorno di Regno*. Recent engagements have included *La Traviata* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Eugene, Oregon; a tour of *Rigoletto* with the New York City Opera National Company; Mendelssohn's *Die Erste Walpurgisnacht* with the New York Choral Society; and a major triumph as a last-minute replacement for the tenor soloist in Britten's *War Requiem* with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Tenor **Paul Gudas** is Red Whiskers in *Billy Budd* and Faninal's Major-Domo in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Born and raised in Chicago, he attended the Lyric Opera of Chicago School and made his 1971 debut with that company in *Werther*, with subsequent appearances in *Wozzeck*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Peter Grimes*, *La Bohème*, *Don Quichotte* and *Manon*. Other Chicago area credits include *La Périchole* and *The Bartered Bride* with Chicago Opera Theatre, where he will return next February in Floyd's *Susannah*. He was also heard in Chicago Symphony performances of *La Traviata*, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* and excerpts from *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Gudas spent three years with the Zurich Opera, where he appeared in a variety of character roles. A member of the San Francisco Opera Chorus since 1983, he made his Company debut in that year's family performances of *La Traviata*, appearing the same season in *Manon Lescaut* and the following fall in *Madama Butterfly*. His most recent debut was in concert performances of *Salome* with Linda Kelm and the St. Louis Symphony under Leonard Slatkin.

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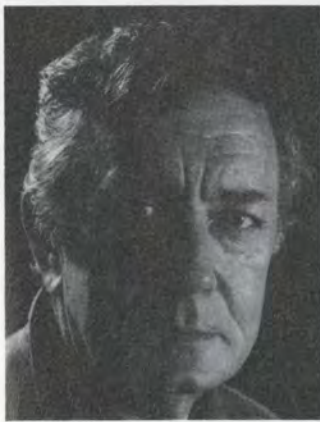
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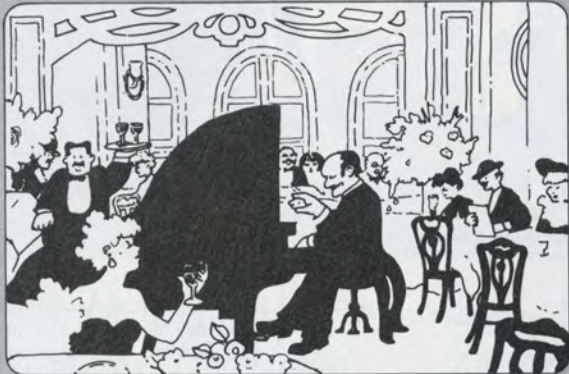
HANS NEUGEBAUER

Director **Hans Neugebauer** returns to San Francisco Opera to stage *Der Rosenkavalier*. He previously worked on numerous productions of Strauss operas as assistant director to Josef Gielen, the famous Viennese Strauss specialist, at Frankfurt during the late 1950s, when Sir Georg Solti was the artistic director there. He staged his first production of *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1965 at the invitation of Günther Rennert, then artistic director of the Glyndebourne Festival, with Montserrat Caballé, Teresa Zylis-Gara and Edith Mathis under the baton of John Pritchard. The same opera was the vehicle of his 1970 American debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago with Yvonne Minton, Christa Ludwig, Judith Blegen and Walter Berry, with Christoph von Dohnányi conducting. The huge success this production enjoyed prompted its revival in 1973. Neugebauer returned to the Lyric Opera in 1981 to direct *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Johanna Meier, Ruth Welting and William Johns, with Marek Janowski conducting. He made his San Francisco Opera debut with the same opera during the 1983 Fall Season. In addition to his renown as a director of Strauss operas, Neugebauer is also widely acclaimed for his productions of 20th century operas, including a highly praised *Wozzeck* in Brussels with Anja Silja, a production that then traveled to Paris and, under the baton of John Pritchard, to Tel Aviv; *Lulu* with Carole Farley; Henze's *The Young Lord* with Helen Donath; Hindemith's *Cardillac* with Edda Moser; Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudon*; Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*; and, again in collaboration with Maestro Pritchard, Britten's *Peter Grimes* and Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*, to name only a few. Neugebauer's productions have been seen at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Royal Opera of Copenhagen, the Gran Liceo of Barcelona and in the opera houses of Brussels, Rome, Zurich, London, Geneva, Budapest, Warsaw and Tokyo, among others. He is currently head of production and resident stage director for the Cologne Opera, where he directed the 1965 world premiere of Bernd Alois Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten*.

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GÜNTHER SCHNEIDER-SIEMSSSEN

German-born designer **Günther Schneider-Siemssen** designed the production of *Der Rosenkavalier*, originally seen at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1970. He made his San Francisco Opera debut with the 1977 production of *Katya Kabanova* that was revived for the Company's 1983 Fall Season. He has designed extensively for television, films and theater, as well as opera. Trained in Munich, he made his debut as scenic designer for Menotti's *The Consul* in Salzburg and as costume designer for Handel's *Ariodante* in Bremen in 1956. A turning point in his career came in 1962 with the first of his numerous collaborations with conductor-director Herbert von Karajan, with whom he founded the Salzburg Festival. Schneider-Siemssen has designed for the major companies of Europe and the United States; among his many credits are five complete productions of Wagner's *Ring* cycle, in Bremen (1956), Covent Garden (with Solti conducting, 1959), the Salzburg Festival (1967), subsequently seen at the Metropolitan Opera (1972) and at Teatro San Carlo in Naples (1981-82). Among the world premieres he has designed are Orff's *De Temporum Fine Comoedia* (1973) at the Salzburg Festival, Von Einem's *Besuch der alten Dame* (1972) in Vienna, Hochhuth's play *Death of a Hunter* in Salzburg (1977) and Robert Ward's *Minutes Till Midnight* for the 1982 New World Festival of the Arts in Miami. Among his projects in the last few years have been *Arabella* at the Metropolitan Opera, *La Fanciulla del West* at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, *Orfeo ed Euridice* and *Parsifal* in Munich; *Luisa Miller* and *Tannhäuser* in Vienna; and *The Tales of Hoffmann* for Houston Grand Opera.



JOAN ARHELGER

San Francisco Opera Associate Lighting Designer **Joan Arhelger** is the lighting designer for *Der Rosenkavalier*. She joined the Company in the fall of 1983 as lighting designer of *Manon Lescaut* and lighting supervisor for *La Traviata*. Last fall she was responsible for lighting productions of *La Sonnambula*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Anna Bolena*. Her work has been seen locally in Bill Irwin's *In Regard of Flight* (featured on the PBS Great Performances series) and with various dance companies, including the Bay Area Dance Coalition's "Dancemakers '82" Festival in Herbst Theatre. Miss Arhelger's opera credits in lighting design include productions for Wolf Trap Company, and the opera companies of Louisville, Fort Worth, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Omaha, and repertory seasons with the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Central City Opera. A student of Gilbert Hemsley, Miss Arhelger served as assistant lighting designer for American presentations by the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, the Stuttgart Ballet, the Bolshoi Opera and the Berlin Opera. For five seasons, she was resident lighting assistant for the Washington Opera at the Kennedy Center.

Production Assistants *continued from p.32*

situation requires. Bachman reports that her notes for last season's *Khovanshchina*, in which the chorus plays an unusually large, complex, and important role, ended up being 26 legal-sized pages compiled from the notes she took during the chorus stagings. Distributed to appropriate parties, those xeroxed notes have the obvious value of reminding the choristers and supers of the exact details of their various stagings. But the notes serve an important function for the PAs as well. "Suppose we're in the third performance," Feldman explains, "and a chorister in a key role is absent. We can consult the notes and in no time at all figure out how to put in an alternate. There have been times we have had to do that." Bachman, who works or has worked for at least five other opera companies around the country, says she knows of no other company that keeps comparable chorus and super notes.

"For that matter," she continues, "I've never worked at another company that goes through as much paper as this one does. But take it from me, it's worth it." Another kind of record keeping important to the company is the "running list," a written record of the proceedings of each opera, act by act and from first note to last. Broken down into 30-second increments, the running list keeps a precise tally of every entrance and exit, the appearance and disappearance of every prop, the timing and cues for off-stage music, and locations and timings of every costume change. "You don't see documentation like this at other companies," Feldman says.

"And now that we can put the notes and the running list on computer, we can document more and more. Since other companies somehow get by with less, I suppose one might question the importance of keeping records as completely as we do. But the practical value of documentation at the level at which we do it has been proved to us time and again. When we revived our 1981 *Aida* production for Leontyne Price two summers ago, we were able to stage the entire Triumphant March and Procession scene in one two-hour rehearsal, using the notes we had from '81. When that rehearsal was over, Price gave us a 'Bravo.' She said that of all the *Aida* productions she's sung, she'd never seen that unbelievably complicated scene staged so quickly."

If the running list is the New Testament of the San Francisco production canon, the Old Testament is the anno-



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Elizabeth Bachman helps Renée De Jarnatt, a supernumerary who impersonates Princess Turandot during the first act of *Turandot*, into the plastic "pearl." The Peking guard on the right is chorister Peter Girardot.

tated score. The two most important such scores in any production are the assistant director's and the first PA's. Both contain complete notations of entrances, exits, props, and all other proceedings to be cued, all inscribed at the very measure in which they occur. "I'm the third PA for *Falstaff*," Feldman says. "When it comes time for a particular run-through, it's conceivable that I'll be there for the first time. But the first PA will have handed me so much information that I can sit down for a couple of hours and know all the entrances without having been to a rehearsal. That's really valuable.

"I had the assistant director's score for *Turandot* this year, but I worked as a PA when we did the production in '82. When we began this revival late last summer, we compared the two scores. There were a few discrepancies because the PAs were actually backstage and knew what the exact cues were. Things apparently had changed slightly and been adjusted during the production. It was very valuable to have both marked scores to work with. We required far fewer hours of staging time this year, because we were prepared."

When a production's run is over, the annotated scores and all other pertinent documents are stored in production stage manager Jerry Sherk's office. Their value goes well beyond the time and money they save the company during revivals. When other opera companies lend their productions, what they tend to export are sets, costumes, a prop list, and good

wishes. When San Francisco lends a production, the company includes such extensive documentation that its production could be staged by virtually anyone with a basic knowledge of stagecraft. San Francisco Opera is now known worldwide for the completeness of its production records.

The irony, as Feldman perceives it, is that "the better we get the more people we need. The thing is, the more we develop, the more is required of us. The idea of making production notes is not new, of course, but we've certainly become more intense about it over the past four years." Sherk, who hires and supervises the PAs, thinks that having six is adequate but "hardly luxurious. In the past there may have been fewer production assistants, but that meant that there were more musical assistants backstage, giving the cues that we give now. In opera, not just music per se, but things like gunshots and other off-stage sounds count as musical cues. All the PAs now read music expertly, so they can give those cues. That frees up the musical staff to have more time for things like coaching, and for conducting the off-stage choruses and bandas."

When assistant director Sharon Woodriff joined the company in 1974, she was the only PA. She comments that the combination of more PAs and a computer to help reduce typing time has transformed the life of a PA "from hell to heaven. And over the years we've developed systems of assigning and doing the

work, which also helps. Now the PAs don't have to invent the job as it goes along. There isn't a school that trains people to do this, so essentially people have to do their learning at what is already a high-pressure job. Let's face it. Time is money everywhere in this house, and chorus and orchestra time is particularly expensive. The pressure comes from the fact that things simply can't screw up. PAs need to do their work right every time. Some leave because the pressure is just too much. But the good ones take to it and stay."

Sherk, who calls his PAs "the best production staff in the United States," insists that his PAs be "very strong in music." Beyond that, qualifications for the job are flexible. "The most important qualification," Sherk continues, "is that they have the right attitude and the right spirit, and that they be willing to work as part of a team. I'm looking for people who will get along and help each other out. We're not in competition with one another; we all strive to make each other look good. We can teach people how the company works, and what the job entails, but I can't teach people to have the right attitude."

His team bears out that thinking to an almost astonishing degree. Production assistant Caroline Moores says, "I look at this job as dealing with people. It makes it easier that we PAs all enjoy each other's company. The fact that we keep strange hours means that our social lives are somewhat limited, and it turns out that we spend a good deal of our free time together too. However individual we are, we do have similar personalities—and tempi. We seem to share a kind of quickness." From the outside observer's point of view, there is no real reason why people this bright and talented, working around so much artistic temperament and under such relentless pressure, should remain civil, let alone warm. But the atmosphere of mutual concern and support is unmistakable nevertheless.

It may be that strong group identity undergirds that elusive personal quality all PAs deem essential to the successful performance of their jobs. Feldman calls it "diplomacy. You have to be able to get along with all kinds of artistic personalities." Bachman perceives it as an absence of "attitude. A large part of this job is to shut up and smile, which is awfully hard. You simply take whatever grief there is."

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Feldman adds that the stakes are particularly high in big rehearsals. "Most often the director is there, and if the cue is wrong, suddenly this voice booms out, 'Who called that cue?' So you just come out in front of 200 people and say, 'I called it.' That's hard to do whether you're right or wrong, but it's especially hard if you were right." Moores adds that the long hours are not a help in the endless process of "being nice to everybody. On one level it's the PA's job to keep everyone happy, and you yourself have to be pleasant enough to get what you want without seeming like you're telling people what to do. You simply have to keep yourself on an even keel—even on the twelfth hour of your twelfth day in a row."

The other quality PAs find indispensable is, of course, organization. Woodruff comments that although systems are in place and "the way of working here is set, if someone is wildly inventive, has a good new idea, and is very aggressive, that idea will be accepted." Most innovations, it seems, are in the direction of greater organization. Frustrated by the fact that it is a major chore to keep track of rehearsal props and costumes, and considering that the company rehearses in four different locations, Feldman devised an enormous chart "to make sure where every skirt, hat, and sword belt is; when it is needed next; and how to get it back and forth from shop to rehearsal hall." First-year PA Lori Harrison started using gummed tabs instead of paper clips to mark cues in her PA score, a seemingly small innovation but one that Feldman praises. "Paper clips fall out."

Although everyone concedes that it would be possible to do the job without knowledge of other languages, none of the San Francisco PAs think that would be very practical. Most of the PAs are fluent in several other languages, and between them, the bases of Italian, French, and German are covered several times over. "In this house it's hard if you're not speaking other languages," Bachman says, "because there are many artists who come through here who don't speak very much English. The German artists are the most likely to know English, but then, if you're working on the *Ring*, it really helps to know German." Rehearsals of productions like the company's new *Falstaff* are conducted in a free-flowing mix of French, Italian, German, and English. For PAs like Bachman, "That's part of the fun."

MESSICK



Production assistant Laurie Feldman is unraveling some of the "loot" used in Act 3 of *Turandot* with Kent Barnes of the San Francisco Opera Property Department.

Ask the PAs what's hardest about their work, and you might think someone cued the answer. "The hours," comes the chorus. But that situation seems tolerated—even accepted—rather in the way an eccentric relative is. For one thing, everyone seems well aware that long hours come with the turf. Production assistant Bess Sherman notes that it is not unusual for a PA to work 15-hour days for weeks on end. "But the experience is so great," she adds, "that we're willing to do it. And there are other ways of looking at it. I may not get any weekends, but then I do get four months off a year." There is undisguised envy in Feldman's observation that "some people have weekends off," but she is content to work her own company's rehearsal schedule. "I could suddenly find myself in a situation like the one last summer, for the *Ring*. We worked from 8 a.m. to midnight every day. You simply have to have endurance." Bachman, too, appreciates the fact that "if there's nothing to do, you don't have to come in. But the reality is, there's always something to do, and we work as long as there is work to do."

Among the long-range rewards of the arduous work is the prospect of working as a stage manager, assistant director, and even director in years to come. But there are shorter-term rewards

as well. For Harrison, the gratification is in "knowing that a production has run smoothly because of something you did." Moores, too, finds satisfaction in "making it through the rehearsals to opening night, and knowing that you've had a hand in the success."

Sherman is thrilled at the opportunity of working with great directors. "The world's best directors work here. I'm the first PA for Mr. Ponnelle in the new *Falstaff*, and I'm responsible for props, usually a big responsibility in a Ponnelle production. It's true that he's demanding and expects everything to run smoothly. But then he's a genius, and working with him is a tremendous experience." McClintock is fascinated at how varied directors are, and at how differently they work, but most gratifying for him is "being able to be behind the scenes, listening to the most beautiful music in the world."

Bachman, too, finds it a ceaseless pleasure "to walk down the halls and hear Mozart coming from behind one door, and Wagner from behind the other. One of the 'perks' of this job, and I consider it a very big life perk, is to have all this sublime music a part of your everyday life. And there are others. Although all of my work is in opera now, I come from a theater background. So I get some of my kicks walking roles for people who are not in rehearsals. That can be done by just holding a score and standing there—or it can be done by really acting the part. Since I don't get to act in front of a real audience any more, I do it in rehearsals."

Bachman clearly speaks for all her colleagues when she says that the big reward is "being right in the thick of things, getting to know the singers and watching them work. And knowing that it can't happen without you. It's hard to describe the pleasure of having a whole opera in your head, of knowing it down to the last detail. There's deep satisfaction in that.

"We don't get to step out and take a bow, and we don't get the real applause. But that doesn't mean we don't feel it. On the great nights, when that curtain comes down, it feels like it's being blown upstage by the force of 3,000 people yelling and clapping their hands. Maybe that's a fancy, but you can hear and feel the roar right through that heavy curtain. When you know you helped make that happen, it's all worth it. When it works, there's nothing like opera." ■

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The Don Hits The Road

By NINA BECKWITH

The traveling troupes of 17th-century *commedia dell'arte* players, whose performances popularized the legend of Don Juan throughout Europe, had nothing on Western Opera Theater. And even the lively barnstormers of Cole Porter's *Kiss Me Kate* who "opened in Venice, and next played Verona . . ." only got as far as Parma and back, some 250 miles. Along the way, maybe they, too, played Uno and Backgammon to pass the time.

By late February, when Western Opera Theater (WOT) winds up its 1985-86 tour, the company will have given 50 performances of *Don Giovanni*, the masterpiece Mozart created from that legend, and will have covered 25,000 miles, criss-crossing our vast continent in four and a half months.

These modern-day operatic vagabonds have been on the road since 1967 when San Francisco Opera's then-general director Kurt Herbert Adler developed the idea of bringing fully staged live opera in English within the financial reach of schools, colleges, and community centers in the smaller cities and towns of the West, where flesh-and-blood musical



Jacob Will as Don Giovanni and Kathryn Cowdrick as Zerlina during a rehearsal for the 1985 Western Opera Theater production of *Don Giovanni*.

theater was seldom (if ever) seen. At the same time, young singers would be getting the best and hardest kind of performing experience.

WOT was one of the first recipients of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Its support has continued ever since and has been joined by that of several foundation and individual donors.

Over the years, WOT productions have become more and more professional—and more costly—and the Company's outreach has extended from the Western states, including Alaska and Hawaii, to the South, the Midwest, and the East, all the way to Brooklyn, New York, where *Don Giovanni* will be seen

this year. Thus far, well over a million and a half people have experienced live opera, many of them for the first time, through WOT's touring productions. In all, WOT has presented over 1,400 performances of 33 operas in 391 communities.

Don Giovanni, one of the most popular of operas, is also a difficult one to stage convincingly, even in a major opera house. Imagine, then, creating the warm stone of a sunlit plaza in Seville, the Don's country villa in festive array, the ghostly cemetery—and making it all fit into a 24-foot truck along with lights, costumes, props, luggage, even a harpsichord. And doing it so that the entire production can be set up, broken down and repacked in a few hours, and can fit into a theater of almost any size.

Jay Kotcher, San Francisco Opera's head scenic artist, designed *Don Giovanni* for WOT. He was also responsible for its three previous productions, *La Cenerentola* in 1984, *Madame Butterfly* in 1983, and *Rigoletto* in 1982. "I could make a list as long as my arm of the limitations and the restrictions and the problems," Kotcher says, "but between us, Pierre Cayard (the Opera's head of scenic construction) and I have been able to make it as easy as possible for the crew, and save money, and make everything look very professional, whether it's in a little 300-seat theater or a colosseum showplace of 5,000 seats or more."

For *Don Giovanni* Kotcher's basic set, with three central archways and two

Nina Beckwith is a free-lance writer specializing in arts. A former Time magazine overseas correspondent, she has been associated with the San Francisco Opera and the Spoleto Festival in Italy.

lateral doors, measures 40 by 26 feet. It is on two levels, as stage director Albert Takazauckas wanted an upper rear balcony visible through the arches for such scenes as the Don's pursuit of Donna Anna and Leporello's invitation to the three masked revellers.

The set is only 16 feet high, the maximum that can fit in a number of theaters on the tour, but it allows solutions for tricky problems such as making the statue of the slain Commendatore fearsomely believable and getting it on and off the stage without a scene change. It—or he—is seated on a platform, draped like an ancient bronze funerary figure whose patina gives forth an eerie greenish glow. At the scene's end, the platform slowly rolls back through the center archway door and the Commendatore disappears.

"I wish I'd had a couple more feet," Kotcher says. "When José García plays the role, his head has just an inch to spare under that arch. But when it's Philip Skinner, who is six feet two, he has to duck." In the opera's final scene the Commendatore stands like a bronze Roman emperor, and there's even a wisp of infernal smoke when he drags Don Giovanni to his doom.

"WOT has taken a quantum leap since 1982," in Kotcher's view. "Before that they used to go out with two operas and, frankly, the scenery was very skimpy and had to do double duty. Now they have leapt into professional visuals, including the lighting they take in the truck."

It was in 1982 that Terence McEwen, San Francisco Opera general director, formed the San Francisco Opera Center in order to coordinate all of the Opera's affiliated training and performing programs for young artists, and it was with that new vision that it was decided WOT would concentrate its resources on one opera each season.

Using costumes and scenery elements from San Francisco Opera and being able to call upon its technical experts are not the only quality resources which distinguish WOT. Most of the singers touring in *Don Giovanni* are graduates of the Merola Opera Program Class of 1985, an exceptionally talented and cohesive group. The others are Merola alumni of previous years. Jacob Will, one of the WOT Giovanni's, appeared in the opera as Masetto in the 1984 Fall Season. Susan Neves, one of the Donna Annas, made her



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Funding Western Opera Theater

Many resources must be marshalled to present Western Opera Theater's annual tour which includes 30 company and 32 orchestra members, 2 buses, and 8 tons of scenery. The troupe also requires a large infusion of dauntless resolve in the face of a sometimes grueling schedule with many one-night stands in remote areas.

Salaries and expenses for artists, musicians, production and technical personnel, the building of new sets, refurbishing costumes, and the development of educational and promotional materials to assist presenters with publicity and audience development efforts are some of the new requirements for a successful tour. All this requires money, and touring requires both earned and contributed income to sustain the effort.

Touring is one of the most expensive operations an opera company can undertake. Just this year the largest opera company in America, the Metropolitan, announced that it would discontinue its long-established touring program. This decision was prompted because escalating costs of the touring program were continually outpacing revenues, causing too large a drain on the company's overall finances.

The popularity of WOT ensures that there will be a high percentage of earned income for the touring company. Yet even this large base of income is not adequate to underwrite all expenses associated with the tour.

There are four major components comprising the funding package for WOT. The largest percentage of the needed revenue comes from earned income, the performance fees paid to Western Opera by presenters throughout the United States. This income comprises approximately 60% of the yearly budget.

Earned Income

Western Opera Theater receives income from fees collected from presenting and sponsoring organizations throughout the country. WOT is associated with a number of regional service organizations who alert the company to potential presenters. In the western region WOT is linked with the

Western States Arts Foundation. As a member of their touring roster, WOT is notified of potential presenters through the agency's computer service, Western Booking Exchange.

Since the company now tours to all regions of the country on a rotational basis, Western Opera has established relationships with the Mid-America Arts Alliance for presenters in the midwest region, New England Foundation for the Arts, and the Southern Arts Federation, among others. These are some of the umbrella organizations who maintain lists of potential presenters; this arrangement allows Western Opera to tour to these regions in the most cost-effective manner, booking engagements which are in the same geographic areas. In this state, the California Arts Council Touring Program underwrites fee support to presenters in the state.

The additional 40% of the budget is comprised of contributed income. This is derived from four major sources: federal, state, and local funding sources as well as from foundations, corporations and individuals.

Western Opera Theater was founded in 1967 through the impetus of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. It has been touring every year since, bringing performances of live opera to more communities in more states than any other opera company in the United States. The National Endowment remains the largest single sponsor of the company, and has awarded WOT an annual gift every year since its inception.

On the state level, the California Arts Council awards a grant to WOT via the San Francisco Opera that is earmarked for underwriting expenses associated with the rehearsal of the touring performances. Western also receives a small portion of the S.F. Hotel Tax Fund awarded to the San Francisco Opera. This is also earmarked for expenses incurred during the rehearsal period.

Gifts from corporations, foundations and individuals account for 20% of Western's budget. An effort is under way to secure additional contributions from foundations and to obtain corpo-

rate underwriting for Western Opera's California and national tours.

Gifts in kind also play a significant role in WOT's operations with donations of building materials, food, advertising, and artwork helping the company's bottom line. Additionally, insurance, transportation, publicity, leasing fees, and hotel accommodations are donated, thus saving the company money on necessary expenses.

Western Opera: A Key Component of the San Francisco Opera

The San Francisco Opera remains committed to Western Opera Theater because the company plays such a key role in fulfilling the main company's goals of reaching underserved audiences and of training young artists. The continued excellence of this high-quality and unique touring program is dependent both on commitments from current funding sources and the development of new revenues from corporations, foundations, and individuals. Counting on its loyal donors, Western Opera Theater has ambitious plans to continue on its three-fold mission:

- to present professional-quality performances of opera in English to diverse audiences with limited options to experience live opera
- to develop new audiences and encourage appreciation for opera through workshops and student performances
- to provide a critical period of experience and artistic development of singers as they progress through the San Francisco Opera Center programs to the main stage of the San Francisco Opera, as well as to provide experience and employment opportunities for young American artists and technicians.

While celebrating its 20th anniversary year in 1986, Western Opera Theater looks forward to another era of presenting opera to all segments of the American population in all sections of the country. This is contingent, of course, on raising adequate funds to sustain Western Opera Theater.

For further information about Western Opera call: (415) 565-6435.

—Ron DeLuca



George Hogan rehearsing the role of Leporello in Don Giovanni.

debut in *Die Walküre* last summer, and Evelyn de la Rosa, one of the Zerlinas, has sung frequently on the War Memorial stage.

The WOT Don Giovanni has multiple casts who share both the rigors and rewards of touring. There are three Giovannis, three Donna Annas, three Don Ottavios, and two singers in each of the other major roles: Donna Elvira, Zerlina, Masetto, Leporello, and the Commendatore. When they are not appearing as principals, all the singers alternate as peasant chorus and Sevillian civilians, while two of the stage crew double as bewigged footmen.

There is, however, only one conductor. Evan Whallon, who is also Merola Opera Program's Music Director, is making his fourth successive WOT tour. Whallon accompanies the recitatives on the harpsichord, just as Mozart did, when there is room for it in the orchestra pit. At other times, it is on the stage. The opera is being given entirely as Mozart wrote it for its first performance in Prague in 1787.

Whallon was music director and conductor of the Columbus Symphony

for 25 years and held the same posts with the Chautauqua Opera Association for 16 seasons, in addition to appearing as guest conductor with many American and European orchestras.

"One of the most interesting things is to see how WOT has grown," he says, "and how more and more places are responding to the operas we give. And it's very gratifying to see the development of our young singers. Cheryl Parrish and Ruth Ann Swenson and James Patterson were all on the 1982 *Rigoletto* tour and now they're regulars in the Opera House."

Ruth Ann Swenson, who sings important roles in *Orlando* and *Falstaff* this fall, feels that her WOT tour was invaluable. "It's not easy to get off the bus and sing Gilda two hours later. I'm proud that I could do that time after time. I learned how to pace myself," she says. "I stood the test. In the 1984 Fall Season I covered (understudied) Gilda and I was confident because I knew the role forwards and backwards and inside out."

The intensity of touring is a career litmus test for young singers. Once the



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Richard Rebilas, one of Western Opera Theater's 1985 Masettos, begins applying makeup before a performance of Don Giovanni.

glamour rubs off, they have to decide whether they really want to work as hard as they must for a career, if they want to keep rehearsing and performing not only opening nights but the tenth, or in the case of WOT, the 30th or 50th time, living out of a suitcase for long periods away from home and family. "It's the same if you're a WOT performer or Marilyn Horne," Whallon says. "You have to give up a lot of personal life for professional gratification."

He recalls many years ago reading an interview with Bruno Walter. The renowned conductor admired the gumption of young American singers, "but he lamented the fact that there was virtually no place in this country where they could stay while they grew at the right pace from small roles into bigger ones, as happens in some European houses. I think the nearest thing we have in America is the Opera Center with concentrated training and the intensive performing of the WOT tours and the Brown Bag and Showcase productions."

Experienced performers find that they keep fresh even on a long tour. "It's fun to see how audiences respond in all the different places WOT goes," Whallon says. "Sometimes they are meeting opera for the very first time—that's great because they don't have a lot of preconceptions and they're not afraid to laugh—or they've had very little opera. Last year in McAllen, Texas, we had a wonderful surprise. San Antonio used to send opera and symphony down there but they quit

producing opera a few years ago and their symphony was on strike. So it turned out that we were the only show in McAllen's music festival.

"They loved us. Busloads of people came from Vera Cruz over the border in Mexico. The bravos, the hoots and hollers—it was just like being in Italy. You think you're doing the same opera one more time, and then you walk out and it's a beautiful theater or a very responsive audience and all the magic comes back."

There can also be surprises which are not so wonderful. WOT tours in winter and the truck with all the scenery and costumes has been known to break down. That happened on the *Rigoletto* tour in Baton Rouge. The women singers all had one dressy dress to wear at the many receptions given for the company, but the men had only a business suit. Tuxedos were found for them, for a more homogeneous look. The orchestra was placed on stage behind the singers and the show went on, to the audience's delight.

In addition to *Don Giovanni*, WOT is touring this year with a young people's program, *An Hour for the Opera*, written by Takazauckas and James Keller, featuring full-length arias. WOT also offers a number of participatory workshops for young local singers, and opera educational programs for all levels from grade school to university.

Among the 32 members of this year's orchestra, composed mainly of young Bay Area musicians, are a number of WOT veterans. Two of them, a flutist and a

timpanist, met on an earlier tour, got married, and are touring again this year.

It's the largest orchestra ever for WOT since it must include those three trombones whose enormous sound opens the gates of hell in *Don Giovanni's* final scene. The concertmaster is Elyn Pesavento; this time, along with her violin, she has taken a mandolin to accompany the Don's serenade.

Having served as concertmaster and road tour manager for *Madame Butterfly* two years ago, she has a wealth of WOT experiences. Like stuffed tomatoes for breakfast. "We were on a plane, as we sometimes are for the very long hops," she recalls. "Six people had asked for vegetarian meals but somebody in the airline punched 60 into the computer, so the whole orchestra and everybody else on board had to eat veggies.

"That was a tough tour. People got sick, our luggage got lost in airports, the opera itself was emotionally draining. But we manage to have a good time together—we have to. We eat together, share rooms, and spend most of our days on the Greyhound. It gets to be our home, with all our pillows, books, tape players, tournaments of Uno and Backgammon, and my astrological readings."

All kinds of traveling troupes have to get used to togetherness—ball clubs, theatrical road shows, the Canterbury pilgrims who told tales to pass the time. Gone are the days of private railroad cars for opera singers.

"Last year we called the bus *Craftorama*," says Company Manager Debra Girard. "Everyone was into needlepoint, the boys, too, so when we stopped you'd see 20 people crowding into a yarn shop before they even went to eat. We do *Busercise* every day to keep fit, but there comes a time when people start turning up in the morning with Band-Aids on their heads. They got up in the night and turned the wrong way to the bathroom because that's where it was in last night's hotel."

For all the "If It's Thursday, It Must Be Texarkana" traveling, (October 17 was the date there), there isn't a singer or a musician who would trade the thrills of ever-renewing audience response or the tour experience itself.

"With Mozart, more than ever before, I think we all really have the chance to grow and develop," Elyn Pesavento says. "The music is transparent and

also very deep. There are those tremendous D minor moments that he touched only in a few other works. There's nothing like this kind of music to reveal to you not only its greatness but your own weaknesses, where you need to improve. This year we knew we were a good orchestra when we started out and that sense of quality gives us pride."

For many of the 1985 Merola graduates, the first stops on the tour were their first performances as professional opera singers. One of the Donna Elviras, Karen Wicklund, felt that after her third performance at the Concord Pavilion, "it's growing, getting better already. Albert (Takazauckas) has created a really good characterization. She's funny and also tragic. The experience of being able to do a great role like this is wonderful. Mozart is so kind to the voice and keeps you in line."

Deborah Voigt, who had sung Donna Anna as a student but not professionally, has mixed feelings. "I think that the hardest part of this tour is going to be making yourself look presentable for the receptions. Between Bus Coif, from sitting with your head squashed all day, and Wig Rot, from having your pin-curlled hot head in a wig all night, we're not such pretty sights.

"Seriously, it's very challenging to maintain that professional performance level every night, whether you feel like it or not," Voigt says. She returns to San Francisco this fall before the tour is over to cover the role of Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*.

Jacob Will is doing his first Giovannis on the tour and realizes that "it's an expensive show to do and one that can be risky for an opera company unless it's San Francisco or the Met. So—for a young singer to get the chance to do this role ten times in a couple of months—it's fantastic."

After only three performances, Mark Coles intends to keep refining the role of Leporello, one of the most challenging for his voice in all opera. "I only hope I don't make a mistake and start the Catalogue aria with 'Madamina,' which is the way I learned it, because it would take me a while to get back to the English. When I'm 60 I would still like to be doing this role. For now, I'm going to sleep by day and wake up at night so I'll see America by stars."

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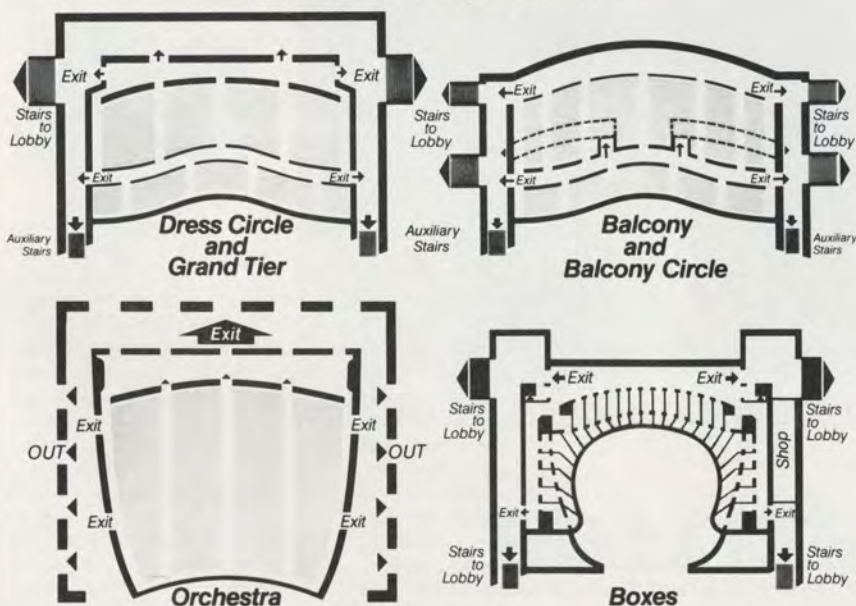
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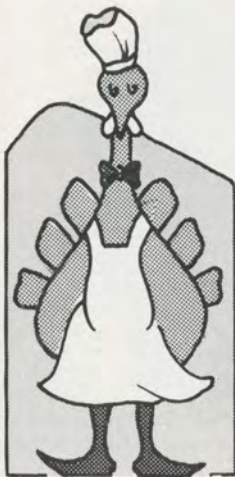
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