

Faust

1986

Tuesday, October 7, 1986 8:00 PM

Friday, October 10, 1986 8:00 PM

Thursday, October 16, 1986 8:00 PM

Wednesday, October 22, 1986 7:30

Saturday, October 25, 1986 8:00 PM

Thursday, October 30, 1986 8:00 PM

Sunday, November 2, 1986 2:00 PM

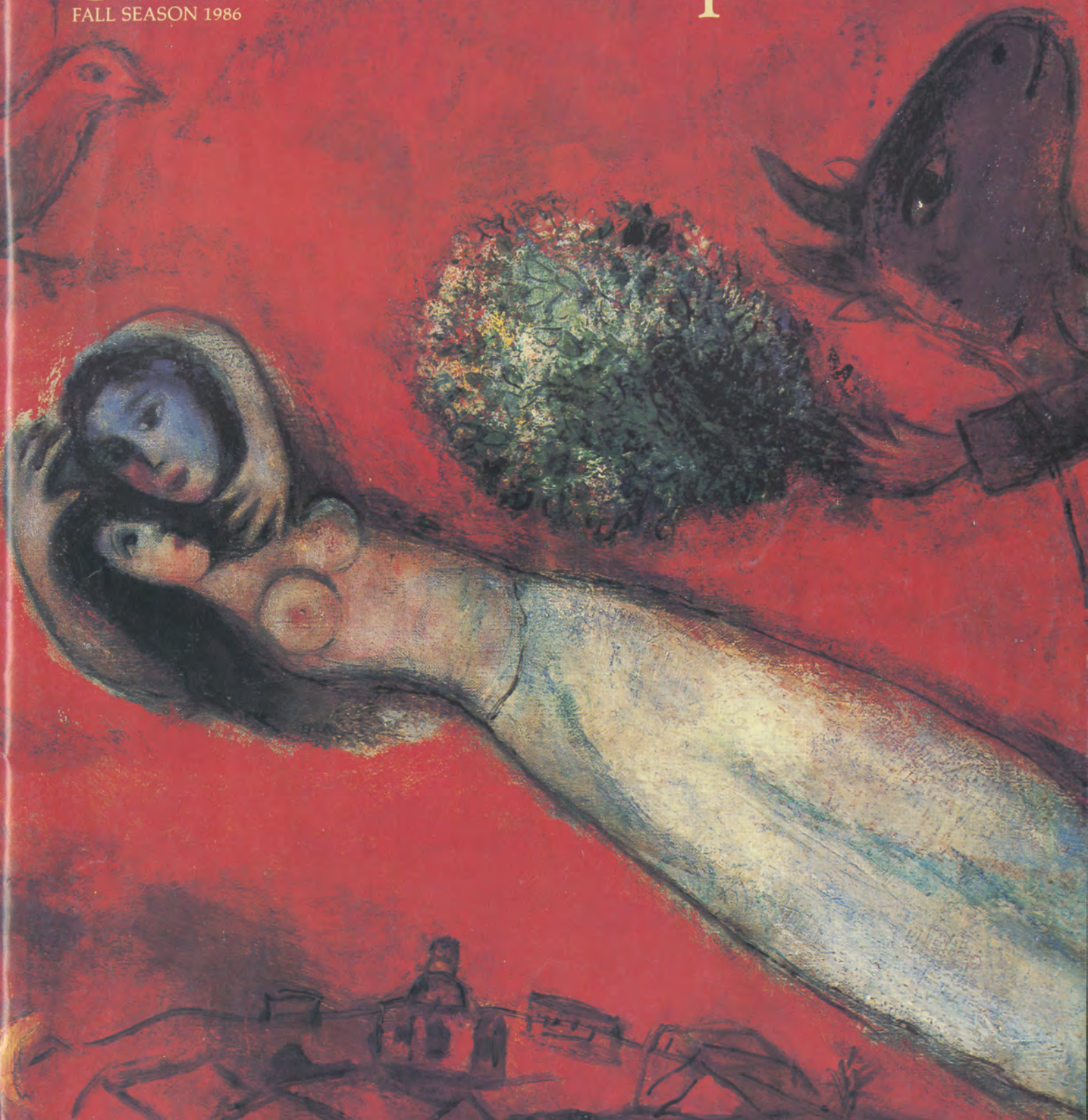
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FALL SEASON 1986



Faust

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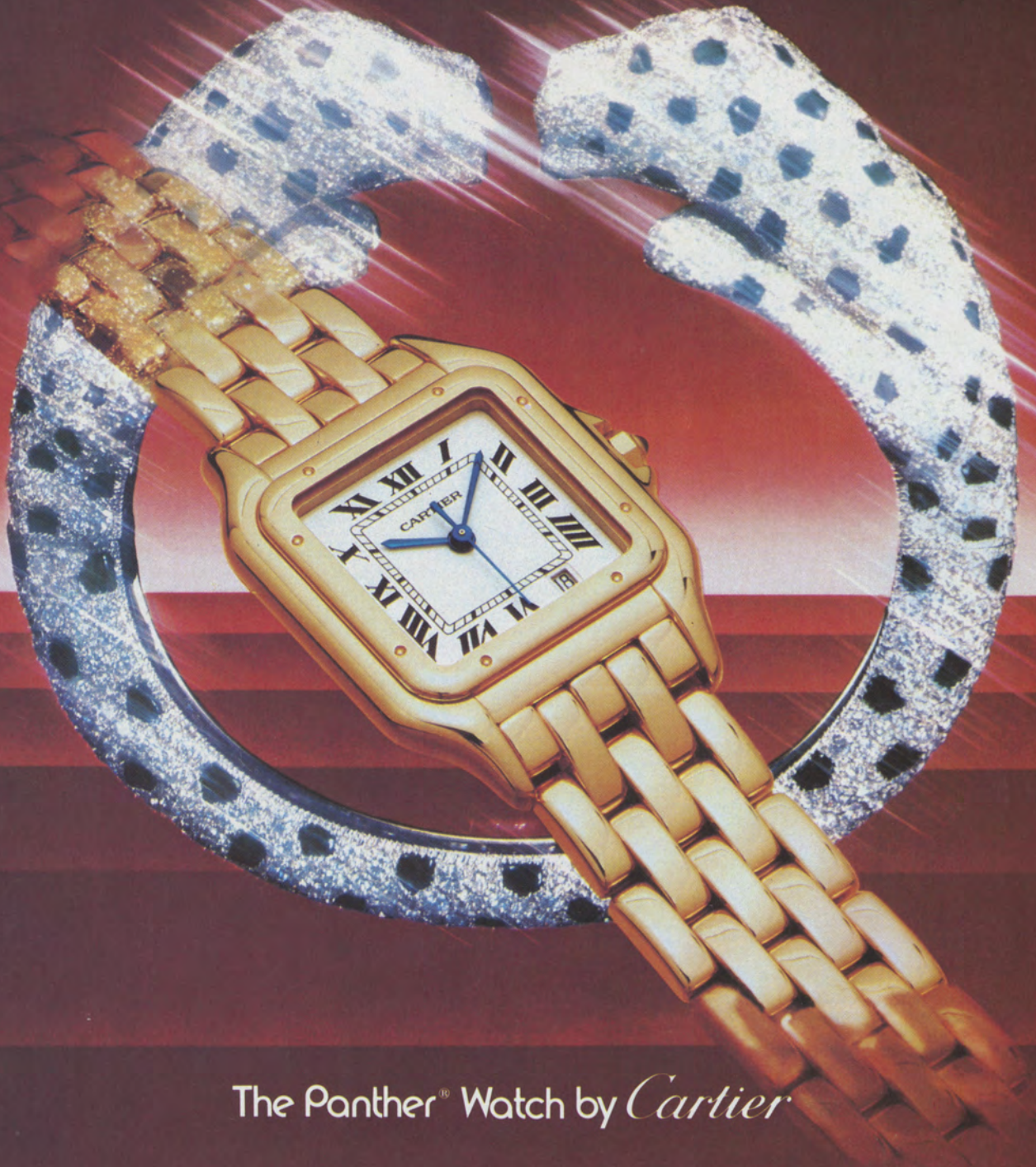
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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

Faust

FALL SEASON 1986

FEATURES

- 26 **The Essential *Faust*** by Jeremy Commons
Basic introduction to Gounod's *Faust*, one of the most popular operas of them all.
- 38 **S.F. Opera Chorus: An Exciting Place To Be** by Timothy Pfaff
A collection of glimpses into the life of the Opera Chorus, a vital (and lively) segment of the San Francisco Opera family.
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S.F. Opera receptionist for the past twenty years proves one can remain calm while in the midst of a hurricane.



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COVER:

Marc Chagall (1887-1985)
Lovers in the Red Sky, 1950
Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 26 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
Gift of Wilbur D. May

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

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Reid W. Dennis



Tully M. Friedman

From the Chairman of the Board and the President

At the beginning of San Francisco Opera's 1986 fall program, we have the pleasure of welcoming you once again to a season that combines repertory favorites with masterpieces less frequently encountered on the opera stages of the western world. During the course of the season, the curtain will go up on ten operas, three of which will be presented in totally new productions. The ten operas that make up our fall repertoire will be staged in both traditional and modern ways and will echo with the sounds of five different languages, all made accessible by a popular innovation, Supertitles.

The San Francisco Opera is fortunate in having a staunch group of supporters, whose generosity is vividly reflected in this fall's season. Our new productions will come to us through the courtesy of three generous donors: Mr. Evert B. Person underwrote our new *Don Carlos*, which will be given for the first time in its original French; a much-needed new production of a repertory favorite, *La Bohème*, will be presented in memory of George L. Quist; and *Macbeth*, in a strikingly new format, will come to us through the generous grant of the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation.

Four of our revival productions will be presented through the courtesy of AT&T (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Bernard and Barbro Osher (*Jenůfa*), Friends of Richard K. Miller (*La Forza del Destino*), and Mr. and Mrs. J. Frederick Kohlenberg (*Manon*).

A generous grant from Chevron U.S.A. will enable us to enjoy Supertitles in *Don Carlos*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Jenůfa*, *La Forza del Destino* and *Faust*; a deeply appreciated gift from Frank Tack will make them available for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

In acknowledging our governmental funding sources this year, we take particular pleasure in announcing that we have achieved the first-year goal of the National Endowment for the Arts' Challenge Grant, a feat that was accomplished through the concerted efforts and contributions of the Opera's Executive Committee, Board of Directors and close friends of the Opera. Funds from the grant and related matching gifts will be used to augment the Company's Endowment Fund. Special thanks are also due the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for its generous three-year grant, earmarked for the development of the San Francisco Opera Center.

The Hotel Tax Fund, Mayor Dianne Feinstein, Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas and the California Arts Council have all once again provided us with their much-appreciated support. The San Francisco Opera Guild, the Merola Opera Program and the War Memorial Board of Trustees also deserve our appreciation for their continued support.

The Board of Directors has this year been enriched by the addition of five new members. Internationally acclaimed

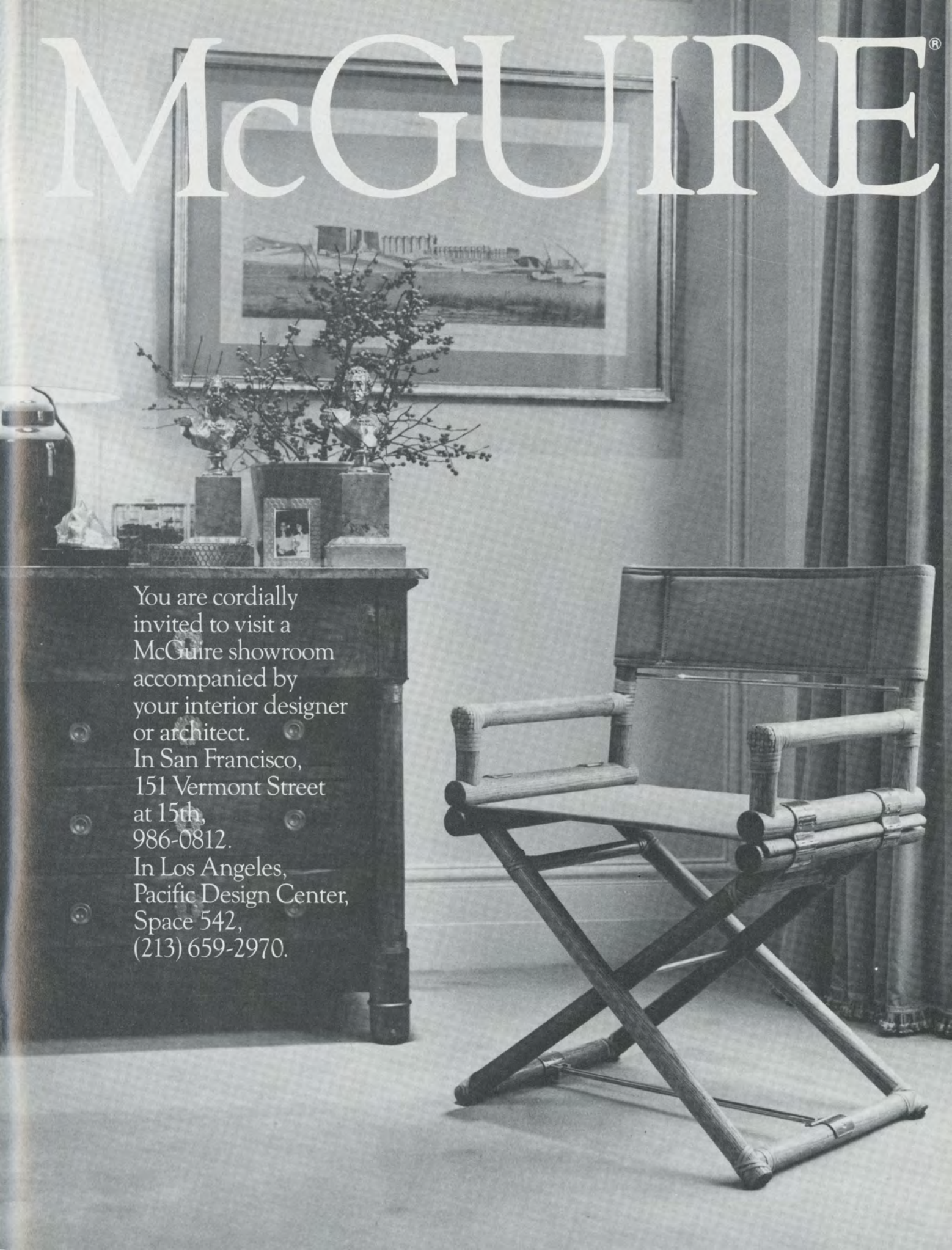
mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne heads the list, the first time a singer has joined our ranks; we are also proud to welcome prominent civic leader Charlotte Mailiard, as well as businessmen Evert B. Person, William Rollnick and F.J. Thomas Tilton. All five new members are active in numerous civic organizations and are significant additions to our Board.

In closing, we would again like to remind our loyal friends and supporters that, although our financial position is strong, and while slightly over half of our income is provided by ticket sales—an impressive statistic by any major opera company's standards—we are still left with a large amount that has to be raised in order to end the year in the black.

A very special opera season is about to begin. It continues a tradition of prominence that is sometimes taken for granted. Maintenance of this tradition, such an important part of what makes life in the Bay Area so special, requires dedication. We encourage and urge you to give us your continuing or new support.

Reid W. Dennis, Chairman
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General Director's Message

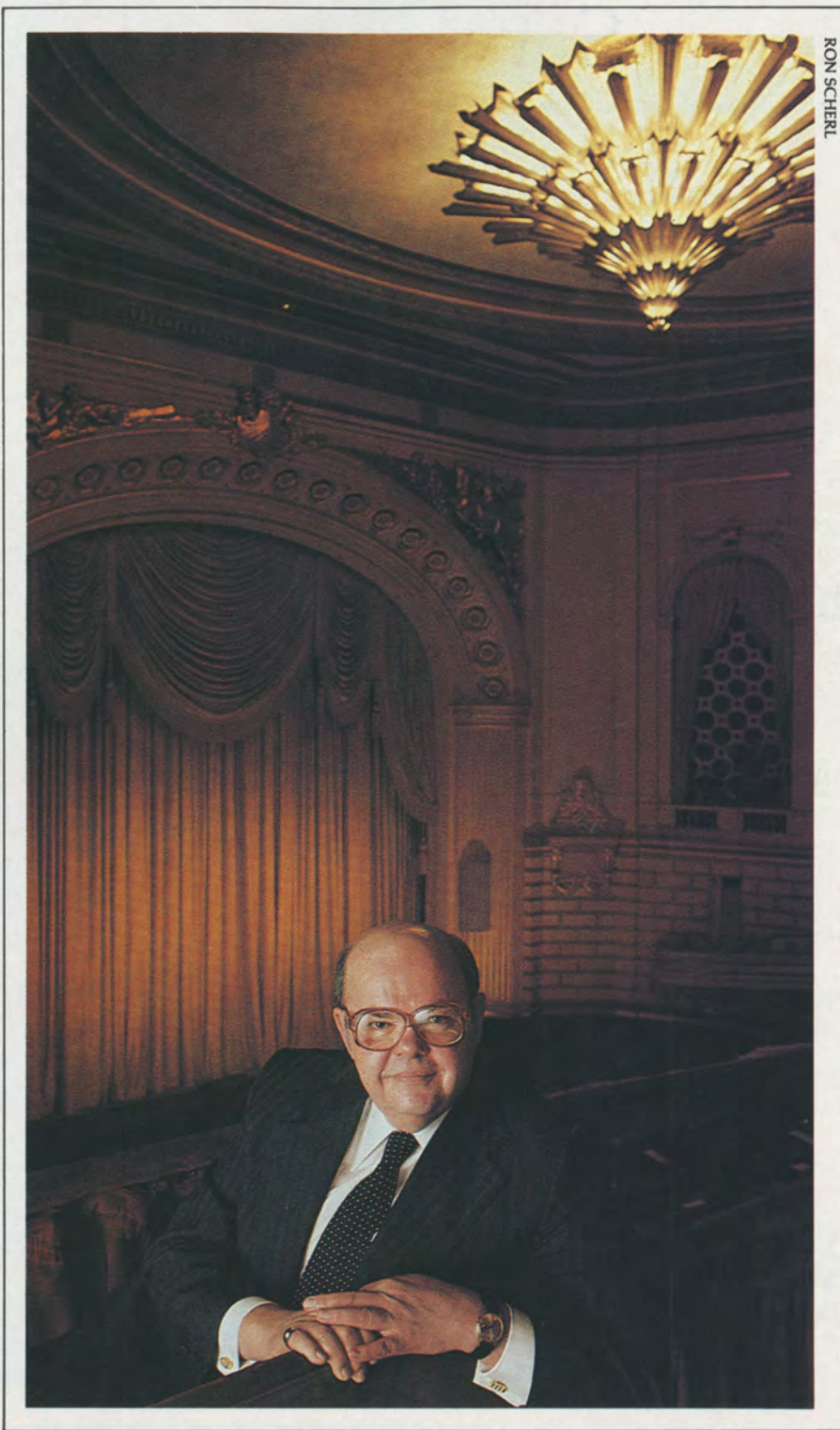
As we begin San Francisco Opera's 64th annual Fall Season, I would like to share with our audiences several thoughts regarding the direction our Company is taking.

It is my belief that no opera company can achieve the steady progress necessary for vital artistic development without firm convictions—and dreams. With the emergence of superior-quality American artists from the ranks of our Opera Center, some of whose achievements you have witnessed recently on this stage, I really believe that we can develop into the kind of opera company Arturo Toscanini dreamed about in the 1920s: an ensemble company, with stars. This kind of company will consist of a solid, defined base of artists, grown and trained in our own environment, with the added number of world-traveling stars who are part of opera's special glamour. Our Opera Center graduates will thus not be restricted to supporting roles; they will share the stage with international stars, both as their support and as their equals. In the 1985 Fall Season, and in this year's Summer and Fall Seasons, we have taken steps in that direction.

I further believe that our Company, which is already respected world-wide, can also become one that will be *envied* world-wide, as a place where audiences are given the deep satisfaction of following brilliant new careers from their beginnings to their integration into the international opera scene.

This year's Fall Season also illustrates one of the challenges I faced when I first moved to San Francisco and saw the necessity of re-building the standard repertoire, since many of our productions for the great masterpieces of the 19th century had grown old. This season, we will unveil new stagings of one Puccini and two Verdi operas, and each has a very special point of interest.

The new *Don Carlos*, musically speaking, should be closer to what Verdi had in mind when he wrote the opera than any major production in recent years. It is performed in the original French, and our



RON SCHERL

production emphasizes the horrors of the Inquisition and the oppressive pall it must have thrown over Europe at the time. Our *Bohème*, in its turn, highlights Paris, the city that gave birth to the bohemian revolution in art and literature, a fact about the background to this beloved Italian opera that tends to be forgotten. The *Macbeth* production promises to

provide as direct an emotional wallop as the Shakespeare play does at first encounter.

Welcome to our 1986 Fall Season!

San Francisco Opera

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Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

1986 Fall Season

Opening Night

Friday, September 5, 7:00

New Production

Don Carlos Verdi

Lorengar, Toczyska, Voigt*, S. Patterson; Shicoff, Titus, Lloyd, Rouleau*, Skinner, De Haan, Anderson, Delavan*
Pritchard (September 5, 10, 13, 17, 20), Johnson (September 28; October 1)/Cox/Lazaridis*/Gardner**/Munn

San Francisco Opera expresses its deep appreciation to Mr. Evert B. Person for his generous gift to underwrite this new production.

Saturday, September 6, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro Mozart

Te Kanawa, Rolandi, Quittmeyer, Christin*, Chen; Ramey, Devlin, Korn*, Dennis Petersen, Harper, Pederson
Tate/Copley/Brown/Arhelger

The revival of this production is made possible, in part, by a grant from AT&T.

Tuesday, September 9, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro Mozart

Wednesday, September 10, 7:00

Don Carlos Verdi

Friday, September 12, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro Mozart

Saturday, September 13, 7:00

Don Carlos Verdi

Sunday, September 14, 2:00

Jenůfa Janáček

Beňačková*, Rysanek, Young, Voigt, Cowdrick, Chen, Hartliep, Shaghoian; Ochman, Rosenshein, Pederson, Coles*
Mackerras/Weber/Bauer-Ecsy/Munn

The revival of this production is made possible by a generous gift from Bernard and Barbro Osher.

Tuesday, September 16, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro Mozart

Wednesday, September 17, 7:00

Don Carlos Verdi

Friday, September 19, 8:00

Jenůfa Janáček

Saturday, September 20, 7:00

Don Carlos Verdi

Sunday, September 21, 1:30

Le Nozze di Figaro Mozart

Tuesday, September 23, 8:00

Jenůfa Janáček

Wednesday, September 24, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro Mozart

Thursday, September 25, 7:30

La Forza del Destino Verdi

Slatinaru, Forst, Bruno; Cossutta, Brendel, Plishka, Fissore, Andreolli, J. Patterson, Skinner, Coles
Arena/Calábria/Samaritani/Munn

This production was originally made possible by a gift from the estate of William H. Noble and friends of the San Francisco Opera.

The revival of this production is made possible by friends of Richard K. Miller and dedicated to his memory.

Friday, September 26, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro Mozart

Saturday, September 27, 8:00

Jenůfa Janáček

Sunday, September 28, 1:00

Don Carlos Verdi

Tuesday, September 30, 7:30

La Forza del Destino Verdi

Wednesday, October 1, 7:00

Don Carlos Verdi

Thursday, October 2, 7:30

Jenůfa Janáček

Saturday, October 4, 7:30

La Forza del Destino Verdi

Sunday, October 5, 2:00

Jenůfa Janáček

Tuesday, October 7, 8:00

Faust Gounod

Johnson, Cowdrick, Christin; Kraus (October 7, 10, 16), TBA (October 22, 25, 30; November 2), Lloyd, Titus, Delavan
Fournet/Zambello/Skalicki, Munn/Mahoney/Munn

Thursday, October 9, 7:30

La Forza del Destino Verdi

Friday, October 10, 8:00

Faust Gounod

Sunday, October 12, 1:30

La Forza del Destino Verdi

Tuesday, October 14, 7:00

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg Wagner

Studer*, Walker; Tschammer, King, Trempont, Rydl, Gordon, Del Carlo, Emde, J. Patterson, Dennis Petersen, Pederson, Duykers, Coles, Harper, Potter, MacAllister
Adler/Brenner/Oswald/Munn

This production was originally made possible by the Robert Watt Miller Memorial Fund.

Wednesday, October 15, 7:30

La Forza del Destino Verdi

Thursday, October 16, 8:00

Faust Gounod

Saturday, October 18, 7:30

La Forza del Destino Verdi

Sunday, October 19, 1:00

Die Meistersinger Wagner

Wednesday, October 22, 7:30

Faust Gounod

Thursday, October 23, 7:00

Die Meistersinger Wagner

Friday, October 24, 8:00

New Production

La Bohème Puccini

Miricioiu, Izzo D'Amico* (October 24, 28, 31; November 4), Gustafson (November 6, 9, 12, 15); Cupido (October 24, 28, 31; November 4), Lima (November 6, 9, 12, 15), Krause, Pendergraph, Langan, Del Carlo, Gudas, Harper, Pederson, Coles
Arena/Freedman/Mitchell/Button*/Munn

This production is dedicated to the memory of George L. Quist.

Saturday, October 25, 8:00

Faust Gounod

Sunday, October 26, 1:00

Die Meistersinger Wagner

Tuesday, October 28, 8:00

La Bohème Puccini

Wednesday, October 29, 7:00

Die Meistersinger Wagner

Thursday, October 30, 8:00

Faust Gounod

Friday, October 31, 8:00

La Bohème Puccini

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Saturday, November 1, 7:00
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Sunday, November 2, 2:00
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Tuesday, November 4, 8:00
La Bohème Puccini

Thursday, November 6, 8:00
La Bohème Puccini

Friday, November 7, 7:00
Die Meistersinger Wagner

Saturday, November 8, 8:00
Production new to San Francisco
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky
Freni, Walker, Cook, Donna Petersen; Allen*,
Gulyás, Ghiaurov, Tate, Skinner, Delavan
Bradshaw/Copley/Don/Stennett/Munn/
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*This production is owned by the National Arts
Centre of Canada and was originally produced for
Festival Ottawa 1983.*

Sunday, November 9, 2:00
La Bohème Puccini

Tuesday, November 11, 8:00
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky

Wednesday, November 12, 7:30
La Bohème Puccini

Friday, November 14, 8:00
Manon Massenet
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*This production was originally made possible by
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*The revival of this production is made possible by
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Saturday, November 15, 8:00
La Bohème Puccini

Sunday, November 16, 2:00
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky

Wednesday, November 19, 8:00
New Production
Macbeth Verdi
Verrett, Voigt; Noble, Tomlinson, Popov*
Harper, Skinner, Potter, Coles
Kord/Pizzi/Pizzi/Munn

*The San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges
the generous grant from the L.J. Skaggs and
Mary C. Skaggs Foundation to underwrite this
new production.*

Thursday, November 20, 7:30
Manon Massenet

Friday, November 21, 8:00
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky

Saturday, November 22, 8:00
Macbeth Verdi

Sunday, November 23, 2:00
Manon Massenet

Tuesday, November 25, 8:00
Macbeth Verdi

Wednesday, November 26, 7:30
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky

Friday, November 28, 8:00
Manon Massenet

Saturday, November 29, 8:00
Macbeth Verdi

Sunday, November 30, 1:00
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky

Sunday, November 30, 8:00
Manon Massenet

Tuesday, December 2, 8:00
Macbeth Verdi

Wednesday, December 3, 8:00
Manon Massenet

Thursday, December 4, 7:30
Manon Massenet

Friday, December 5, 8:00
Eugene Onegin Tchaikovsky

Saturday, December 6, 8:00
Manon Massenet

Sunday, December 7, 2:00
Macbeth Verdi

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The Essential *Faust*

By JEREMY COMMONS

When I was a boy, living in Auckland, New Zealand, a touring Italian opera company came to town. For months in advance I saved up my pocket-money, and when the time came I duly went to *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Aida* and others. But well before the season ended my savings had run out, and I found myself forced to choose between *Il Trovatore* and *Faust*. In perplexity I consulted my music master at school. He, too, found it difficult to decide. "They are both great operas," he told me. "You would love them both. But *Faust*—anyone who wants to appreciate opera should know *Faust*."

And so, scarcely turned fourteen, I was introduced to "the most popular French opera ever written." I was enthralled by the color and movement of the Kermesse Scene; I was agog at the brilliance of the Jewel Song; my pulse-rate must have risen with each upward tonal shift in the final trio, "Ange purs, ange radieux." And I fully determined that, if my then-breaking voice became a tenor, I would sing "Salut, demeure chaste et pure" ("All hail, thou dwelling pure and lowly"); if a baritone, "Avant de quitter ces lieux" ("Even bravest heart may swell"); and if a bass, that greatest of all bass arias, "Le veau d'or" ("The calf of gold").

What I did not then realize—and what I suspect few people who go to hear *Faust* really appreciate—is the fascinating and complicated history that lies behind the opera. So involved is the textual history of this work that no one has ever succeeded in unraveling all its problems.



Gounod, we know from his autobiography, first read Goethe's *Faust* at the age of twenty, and in 1839, when he left for Italy as winner of the Prix de Rome, he carried a copy of it in his trunk. It was his constant companion, and he took it with him when, the following year, he visited Naples and Capri. On Capri he admired:

... the splendor of the nights ... the vault of heaven literally throbbing with stars ... During the two weeks that my visit lasted, I would often go to listen to the 'living silence' of those phosphorescent nights. I would spend hours at a time sitting on the top of some steep rock, my eyes fixed upon the horizon, sometimes sending some large fragment of stone rolling down

Jeremy Commons, a New Zealander, teaches English literature and Music at Victoria University at Wellington. A lecturer and broadcaster on Italian and French opera, he is also involved with a number of N.Z. operatic organizations, in addition to his work for the London-based company, Opera Rara. He has written numerous recording notes for Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngé.

Kermesse Scene in the San Francisco Opera 1977 production of Faust.

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the precipitous cliff-face and following the sound right to the surface of the water where it threw up a curl of foam as it was swallowed up. . . It was during one of these nocturnal excursions that the first idea came to me for the Walpurgis Night in Goethe's *Faust* . . .

Though the idea was not to grow to fruition for many years to come, Gounod was able to reply, when eventually it was suggested to him that he set *Faust* as an opera, "*Faust?* But I've had it inside me for years!"

From just whom the suggestion came is not quite clear, for the honor was subsequently claimed by two people: Jules Barbier, one of the two authors of the libretto, and Léon Carvalho, impresario of the Théâtre-Lyrique where the opera was first given. Whatever the exact truth, about the year 1856 Gounod began serious work on the score. Jules Barbier habitually collaborated with another writer, Michel Carré, and by happy coincidence Carré had, a few years earlier in 1850, produced a "drame fantastique," *Faust et Marguerite*. It was from this play that the general contours of the action were drawn; so, too, were the words of Marguerite's "Chanson du roi de Thulé." And though in 1856 Carré was already heavily committed elsewhere, preparing the text of *Le Pardon de Ploërmel* (*Dinorah*) for Meyerbeer, so that he had to remain very much a sleeping partner in the collaboration, he did later supply the verses for "The calf of gold."

Gounod made rapid progress, and when the score was completed he offered it to Alphonse Royer, the director of the Opéra. Somewhat unexpectedly, Royer rejected it, declaring that it offered little opportunity for spectacle. It was accepted instead by Léon Carvalho at the Théâtre-Lyrique.

Even so, the unforeseen intervened. In 1857, the production of another *Faust*—a play, but with considerable incidental music—was announced at another Parisian theater, and rather than have two rival *Fausts* running concurrently, Carvalho told a disappointed Gounod that the production of his opera must be delayed for a year. It was not until late 1858, therefore, that *Faust* was eventually scheduled for production. The cast, as first drawn up, was to consist of Mme Delphine Ugalde as Marguerite; Guardi, a young tenor who was making his debut, as Faust; Mathieu Emile Balanqué as

Méphistophélès; Osmond Raynal as Valentin; and Mlle Marimon as Siebel. Major changes were to take place here, too. Before rehearsals ever began, Mme Ugalde was replaced by Carvalho's wife, the very accomplished and popular prima donna, Caroline Miolan-Carvalho; and much later, at what was intended to be the dress rehearsal, Guardi's immature and defective vocal technique landed him in such severe problems that he had to be replaced by another tenor, Barbot. Siebel was eventually sung, not by Mlle Marimon, but by Mlle Faivre, who later

fragment of the scene as originally written.

Carvalho also persuaded the composer—much to the latter's distress—to suppress a duet for Marguerite and Valentin which, placed originally at the beginning of the Kermesse Scene, marked Marguerite's first entry. It was much better, Carvalho argued, that we should see her for the first time coming out of church, deflecting Faust's advances with her enchantingly simple, modest yet lyrical lines:

Non, monsieur, je ne suis pas demoiselle, ni belle,

Et je n'ai pas besoin qu'on me donne la main.

Benevolent but despotic, Carvalho gained his point: after "sulking" for an evening, Gounod agreed.

Then, in the course of a dinner-party, there occurred one of those totally unexpected moments that change the course of history. Gounod was asked if he would play a chorus which he had composed for an unfinished, unperformed opera, *Ivan le Terrible*. He obliged, and the music caused such a sensation that his guests, who included Carvalho and the painter Ingres, immediately urged him to introduce it into *Faust*. Inserted in place of a song which Valentin was originally to have sung as he returned from the wars, it became the celebrated Soldiers' Chorus.

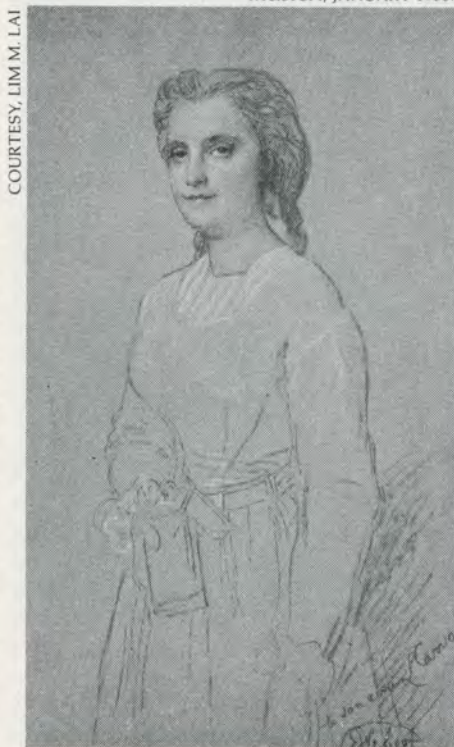
Nor was this the only music which Gounod borrowed from his earlier compositions. The final trio, "Ange purs, ange radieux," came from the *Dies irae* of a Requiem Mass which he had had performed in Vienna in 1842, as he returned to France from his student days in Italy.

Enough has been said to indicate the fluid state of the score in the weeks leading up to its first performance. But perhaps the most telling example of all is "The calf of gold." In the form we know it, it is said to have been the thirteenth aria Gounod wrote for Méphistophélès at this point.

Not surprisingly under these circumstances, rehearsals took longer than expected, and it was not until March 19th, 1859 that *Faust* was actually performed. Its reception would seem to have been mixed. Certainly it was not an uncontested success, for Carvalho could record that "Many found its music unintelligible," while Barbot related:

The public scarcely applauded anything except Marguerite's air [the

MUSICA, JANUARY 1906.



Caroline Miolan-Carvalho, the first (1859) *Marguerite*, in a contemporary sketch by E. Hébert.

became the wife of the next director of the Théâtre-Lyrique, Charles Réty.

If the vicissitudes so far recounted might have befallen any opera, there now began a series of changes which altered the very music itself. The first "discovery" made at rehearsals was that Gounod's score was too long. Consequently he was prevailed upon to suppress a whole scene which took place in Act IV in the Harz mountains, and which Carvalho later described as "very remarkable for its sonorities of orchestration and symphonic power." The short episode which survives in the vocal score is probably only a

COURTESY, LIM M. LAI

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Charles Gounod in a photo taken in 1859, the year of the premiere of *Faust*.

Jewel Song] ... and the Soldiers' Chorus. The admirable love duet, the Church Scene and even the stirring final trio did not move the audience at all. At that time I heard people of taste, singers, composers ... asking what Gounod was trying to do. It was not music, but musical aberration, 'an incomprehensible work.'

Extraordinarily enough, Act III, for us nowadays Gounod's supreme achievement, is said to have been received with indifference at every performance. And yet there was another side to the story, too, for Carvalho could record that the box office receipts were extremely good. In that first year alone, *Faust* achieved a total of 57 performances.

There were, as Barbot's statement has already made clear, two items in

particular which saved the day: the Jewel Song, so tailor-made to the clarity and brilliance of Mme Carvalho's voice, and the Soldiers' Chorus. In Caroline Miolan-Carvalho, Gounod would appear to have had the perfect Marguerite. Nowadays it is fashionable to denigrate this singer, drawing attention to the changes she and her husband demanded in the scores she created—the technically brilliant but emotionally brittle arias which she insisted on having inserted. But few people in her own day would have criticized her in this way. Perhaps the most complete representative of French vocal art in her time, she was a reigning star, and scintillating display-pieces were expected of her. She had a keen eye to success with the public—her husband to box office receipts—and if questions of

artistic integrity threatened to jeopardize immediate appeal, they became luxuries that neither could afford to indulge. Certainly Gounod recognized his good fortune in securing her, and realized moreover that she was physically, vocally and temperamentally ideally suited to the part. Writing more than two months before the premiere, he commented:

Mme Carvalho has some ravishing things: her Jewel Song, several passages in the quartet, her great duet with [Faust] in the garden, her spinning song in the third act, etc. I believe she will make a very sympathetic Marguerite. She will give a superior performance in the Church Scene, one of the good pieces in the work; she moves excellently and strikes excellent attitudes; she is adorable in the eight bars she sings in Act I [sic], when Faust accosts her for the first time.

Marguerite became, needless to say, her

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Mattia Battistini as Valentin in *Faust* is the subject of a postcard printed in Russia in the last decade of the 19th century. The role is inscribed in the artist's own hand.

most successful role. She was the sole interpreter of the part in Paris until 1867, and it was still as Marguerite that she made her farewell, twenty-six years later, in 1885.

The critics of the first performance in 1859 were divided in their reactions, just as the audience was, but by and large their accounts do not suggest that the public's reaction was as totally uncomprehending as Carvalho and Barbot would have us believe. Léon Durocher (Gustave Héquet), writing in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*, found much to praise in Acts II and III. The opening chorus of Act II, he tells us, was encored. "Nothing more original, nothing better turned, nothing more witty or finer than this old-fashioned little melody that Grétry might have been proud to have hit upon." He praised the grandeur and energy of the chorale in which Valentin and the soldiers repulse Méphistophélès by holding up the hilts of their swords before him in the form of the cross; he approved of the "graceful and original" waltz.

Act III pleased him even more. Faust's "Salut, demeure chaste et pure" clearly delighted him:

It is a graceful, tender melody, whose effect is enhanced by the answering phrases of a solo violin. This charming dialogue for voice and orchestra finishes too soon for the liking of the audience.

The "Chanson du roi de Thulé," the Jewel Song, the quartet and the love duet—all met with his approbation. Of the love duet he wrote:

There are admirable cantilenas here, tender and filled with that terrible intoxication of the imagination and the senses which silences the reason and enchains the will. This beautiful piece would leave nothing to be desired, if its rhythms were more varied, and if the marking *andante* did not occupy such a large place in it. Then it would produce even greater effect: even as it is, it produces much.

If one reads the whole of Durocher's review, two interesting points emerge: first, that Balanqué apparently made little impression that first night as Méphistophélès (even though Gounod, during rehearsals, described him as "marvelous"), for none of his major items—neither "The calf of gold" nor the Serenade nor the Church Scene—is mentioned with appro-

val; and secondly, that he felt the last two acts fell away. After praising the Soldiers' Chorus, he remarks that the death of Valentin took too long, and that the Church Scene offended against common sense. How, he asks, could the Devil enter a church, make himself so much at ease there, and shout so noisily? By the time Act V was reached, he was, he frankly admits, too satiated—too bombarded with musical impressions—to take in more:

As for the final trio . . . we heard it, but at the same time we did not hear it. That is something which often happens at the end of these operas in five acts, so cruelly crammed with music. When a vase is full, one simply cannot pour more into it.

If I have concentrated on this particular review, it is because I find it particularly revealing and because it is not often quoted. But it is only fair to add that other critics—notably Berlioz, writing in the *Journal des Débats*—confirm its findings. Berlioz also singled out Act III for the warmest praise, and wrote with great sensitivity of his reactions to "Salut, demeure chaste et pure," the quartet and the love duet, declaring this last the "chef-d'oeuvre of the score."

But it is time to move on to the later history of the opera, for the changes that took place in the text did not end with actual production.

As first performed, *Faust* was an opéra comique: that is to say, it consisted of musical items linked by spoken dialogue. Exceptionally for an opéra comique, it was in five acts, certainly the result of Gounod's composing it with production at the Opéra in mind; and while some of the music looks back to such masters of opéra comique as Hérold and Auber (Siebel's "Faites-lui mes aveux," for example), much else was more sustained and lyrical in character (Act III, for instance, and especially the love duet), while some (such as the "Scène des épées," the Soldiers' Chorus and the final trio) carried the imprint of Meyerbeerian grand opera. With some reason Gounod felt that both the subject and his treatment of it required a more continuous musical fabric than the opéra comique form allowed. His opportunity to recast the work, substituting recitatives for the spoken dialogue, came in 1860, probably when Carvalho, finding himself unable to make the Théâtre-Lyrique pay, relinquished his directorship—temporarily, as it turned

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The San Francisco Opera presented *Faust* for the first time in 1926. On that occasion, the eminent French bass Marcel Journet gave the 1000th Mephisto performance of his career. This photo dates from 1924.

out—and took *Faust* on a tour of the provinces, beginning in Strasbourg. From this time on, the opera has nearly always been performed in this totally sung form.

Four years later, in 1864, for a performance in London, Gounod composed the aria "Avant de quitter ces lieux" ("Even bravest heart may swell") at the request of the great English baritone, Charles Santley, basing it on a melody which already appeared in the score as part of the prelude. Even later he added yet a further aria, "Si le bonheur" ("When all was young"), for the mezzo-soprano Zélia Trebelli in the part of Siebel.

Finally, in 1869, *Faust* received the ultimate accolade of production at the Paris Opéra, and was, as it were, officially recognized as a cornerstone of the 19th-century French repertory. At this point



Ninon Vallin as Marguerite and Ezio Pinza as Méphistophélès in San Francisco Opera's 1934 staging of Gounod's *Faust*. The year was Mme. Vallin's only one with the Company. Signor Pinza, on the other hand, was a regular here between 1927 and 1948, and sang the role of Méphistophélès in eight seasons.

Gounod completed the transformation from opéra comique to "grand opera" by inserting the ballet in Act IV. Popular though the music to the ballet is, it makes this opera inordinately long, and is often omitted.

Indeed the question of what to per-

form and what to exclude is one of the greatest problems posed by *Faust*. Thanks to Gounod's many revisions and additions, there is simply too much music. If we were to perform all the music which survives and which is still readily available, it is estimated that the opera would

last for some four hours without intermissions; if we were able to recover all the music which is known to have once existed, a performance without intermissions would probably take between five and five-and-a-half hours.

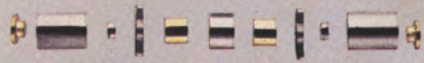
Musical tastes change, and overexposure is often followed by neglect. In our own century, the popularity of *Faust* has slumped sharply, so that productions are now something of a rarity. Yet this may be to our advantage: at least we are able to come to it with fresh eyes and ears. There is, of course, much prejudice and foolish snobbery to be overcome. Here one reads that the Jewel Song was a sop to the vanity of Mme Carvalho—a judgment which completely overlooks the intrinsic beauty of the music and the psychological progression from the "Chanson du roi de Thulé," as Marguerite finds and opens the casket; there one finds Siebel's "Faites-lui mes aveux" condemned as "trivial"—a verdict which overlooks both its opéra comique ancestry and its suitability to an ardent adolescent boy. More serious is the criticism that Gounod was never sure what kind of opera he wished to write—opéra comique or grand opera. But this problem, too, may be resolved. The heart of *Faust*—and the new note that it sounded in its day—lies in its lyricism, in those many passages which still sound as fresh as the day they were written, simply because their fervor is rooted in absolute sincerity and simplicity. The exchange between Faust and Marguerite as the latter comes from church ... Faust's "Salut, demeure chaste et pure" ... "O nuit d'amour, ciel radieux!"—with passages such as these as its center of reference, its center of stability, *Faust* can move, now towards Auber-like opéra comique, now towards Meyerbeerian grand opera, without ever losing its essential character and equilibrium. To call it "grand opera" is misleading: it is a prime example of what would be better called "opéra lyrique" of the third quarter of the century. So lyrically, so generously attractive in itself, it opened the door to so many composers who followed. Without *Faust*, it would be impossible to imagine a Bizet ... a Delibes ... a Massenet ... In the event of a universal cataclysm, Gabriel Fauré maintained, the score of *Faust* should be saved before all others, since its richness and variety would enable future humanity to reconstruct the musical art ... ■

J JEAN LASSALE

s.a. Genève



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Soprano **Mary Jane Johnson** returns to San Francisco Opera as Marguerite in *Faust*. She made her Company debut as Freia in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* during the 1983 Summer Season, when she also performed one of her signature roles, Musetta in *La Bohème*. The Texas native returned in the fall of 1983 to create the role of Jenifer in the American premiere of Sir Michael Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage* and was most recently seen here as Elvira in *Ernani*. A winner of the first Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition, she bowed with the Opera Company of Philadelphia in 1982 as Musetta opposite Pavarotti in a production of *La Bohème* that was telecast nationally by PBS, as well as singing Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. She made her Chicago Symphony debut under Sir Georg Solti during the 1982-83 season, singing Freia in concert performances of *Das Rheingold* both in Chicago and in Carnegie Hall. That same season she also sang in *La Bohème* at Miami Beach. She made her Santa Fe Opera debut during the summer of 1982 as Rosalinda in a new production of *Die Fledermaus* and also sang Xanthe in Strauss' *Die Liebe der Danae*. She returned to Santa Fe in 1983 as Miss Jessel in *The Turn of the Screw*, in 1984 for the title role of Korngold's *Violanta* and in 1985 she performed her first Countess in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* with that company. In the spring of 1984 she bowed at the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. with her first performances in the title role of *The Merry Widow*, a role that also served as the vehicle for her debut with the Washington Opera in 1985. Miss Johnson recently made her Italian debut at the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago as Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West*, prompting public and critical raves. The soprano's engagements for the 1986-87 season include performances of *La Fanciulla del West* with Opera North, *La Traviata* in Fort Worth, *Trovatore* in Cincinnati, *Falstaff* in Houston and *Doktor Faust* with the Netherlands Opera.

In her second year as an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, mezzo-soprano **Kathryn Cowdrick** is Karolka in *Jenůfa*, Siebel in *Faust* and Rosette in *Manon*. The Pennsylvania native made her 1985 Company debut in the Fall Season production of *Adriana Lecouvreur*, appeared in *Der Rosenkavalier* and portrayed Meg Page in the matinee performances of *Falstaff*. She returned this past summer as Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Mrs. Gobineau in *The Medium*. A participant in the 1984 Merola Opera Program, Miss Cowdrick received the Gropper Memorial Award in the program's Grand Finals after appearing as Meg Page at Stern Grove and Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* at Villa Montalvo. During Western Opera Theater's 1984-85 national tour of *Cenerentola*, she was featured both as Tisbe and in the title role, and with the San Francisco Opera Center Singers performed the roles of Orlofsky and Flora in concert performances of *Die Fledermaus* and *La Traviata*, respectively. In the 1986 Opera Center Showcase, she portrayed Zaida in Rossini's *The Turk in Italy* and Genevieve in Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner*. In 1983 she was heard in Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* at Charleston's Spoleto Festival, later issued on a Grammy-winning recording, and in *Madama Butterfly* at the Spoleto Festival in both Charleston and Italy. Most recently she appeared as Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Carmel Bach Festival, and will open the 1986-87 Schwabacher Debut Recital Series this December, along with her husband Robert Swensen, a 1985 Merola Opera Program participant.

Mezzo-soprano **Judith Christin** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the vehicle of her 1982 debut with Santa Fe Opera, and also appears as Marthe in *Faust*. A native of Rhode Island, Miss Christin performs frequently at New York City Opera and

has recently been seen there in *Cendrillon*, *Carmen*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Candide* and *Madama Butterfly*, in which her interpretation of Suzuki received national attention when it was seen on a "Live from Lincoln Center" telecast. Her performance in *Albert Herring* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis was also televised nationwide and in Europe. Miss Christin's 1983 debut with the Opera Company of Philadelphia was in the role of Flora in *La Traviata*, and later that season she performed in *Anna Karenina* with Los Angeles Opera Theater and in *Turn of the Screw* and *Orpheus in the Underworld* at Santa Fe, where she has most recently been seen in *The Magic Flute*, *Il Matrimonio Segreto* and *Die Liebe der Danae*. During the 1984-85 season she performed in the Menotti double bill of *The Medium* and *Amelia Goes to the Ball* with the Dallas Opera; with San Diego Opera in *Peter Grimes*; and with Washington Opera in *La Sonnambula*, *Eugene Onegin* and *L'Italiana in Algeri*. Her assignments for the current season include Antonia's Mother in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Aunt Hannah in *A Death in the Family* in St. Louis, Meg Page in *Falstaff* in Indianapolis and Suzuki with Netherlands Opera. Miss Christin has sung in several American premieres, including Iain Hamilton's *Anna Karenina* with Los Angeles Opera Theater and Massenet's *Cherubin* at Carnegie Hall. A noted guest soloist, she has sung in *Messiah* with the Oratorio Society of New York, and has appeared with the National Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic and the Houston Symphony.

Widely hailed as one of the leading exponents of the French repertoire in our time, **Alfredo Kraus** portrays the title role of Gounod's *Faust*, after making a long-awaited return to the Company last fall in the title role of Massenet's *Werther*. Born in Las Palmas, he made his 1956 profes-



ALFREDO KRAUS

sional debut in Cairo as the Duke in *Rigoletto*. Within the next three years, he had scored major successes in Venice, Turin, Barcelona and Lisbon (where he appeared in *La Traviata* opposite Maria Callas). He bowed at Covent Garden as Edgardo opposite Joan Sutherland's Lucia in 1959, and made a triumphant debut at La Scala as Elvino in *La Sonnambula* the following year. He made his American debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1962, singing Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and was first heard at the Metropolitan Opera as the Duke in *Rigoletto* during 1966. The 1966-67 season saw his San Francisco Opera debut as Arturo in *I Puritani* (again with Miss Sutherland); subsequent Company credits have included Verdi's Duke, the title role of *Faust*, and Nemorino. Renowned also as a supreme master of the bel canto style, Kraus has won accolades in *Don Pasquale*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *La Favorita*, *La Fille du Régiment*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *I Puritani*. In the French romantic repertoire he is identified with such roles as Faust, Hoffmann, Werther, Des Grieux in *Manon*, Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, Gerald in *Lakmé* and Gounod's Roméo. In 1983 he appeared at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in Massenet's *Manon* with Renata Scotto and was seen on nationwide telecasts of the Met's Centennial celebrations and in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Miss Sutherland, who also appeared with him in critically acclaimed performances of *La Fille du Régiment*. His assignments last season included *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Metropolitan Opera, Roméo, *La Traviata* and *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Barcelona, *A Life for the Tsar* in Florence, *Don Pasquale* in Milan, *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Bilbao and Parma, as well as *Faust* in Parma. Later this year, Kraus will return to the Met for performances of *Roméo et Juliette*, while next year, he will be awarded the title of Kammersänger at the Vienna State Opera.



PETER DVORSKÝ

Czech tenor Peter Dvorský returns to San Francisco Opera in the title role of Gounod's *Faust*. He made his Company debut as the Duke in *Rigoletto* during the 1981 Summer Season. After studying voice in Pressburg, Dvorský became a prize winner at the prestigious Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow in 1974, then continued his studies in Milan. In 1975 he began a series of appearances at the Vienna Staatsoper in the Italian repertoire, becoming a popular favorite at that house. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut the same year as Alfredo in *Traviata*, with additional assignments at the Bavarian State Opera and Covent Garden. Since then he has sung regularly at all of the major opera houses of the world. A frequent guest artist at La Scala in Milan, he toured with that company to Japan in 1981, performing in Tokyo and Osaka under Carlos Kleiber opposite Mirella Freni, with whom he has established a particularly fruitful collaboration. In March of this year he returned to Japan, this time with the Vienna Staatsoper, to sing in *Manon Lescaut* under Giuseppe Sinopoli, again opposite Miss Freni. His assignments for the 1985-86 season included new productions of *Madama Butterfly* at La Scala and Lyric Opera of Chicago, a new *Manon Lescaut* in Vienna, where he also appeared with Edita Gruberova in *La Traviata* under Kleiber, and *Eugene Onegin* at La Scala this past summer. His busy schedule has him booked through 1990 to appear in numerous new productions for such companies as the Vienna Staatsoper, Covent Garden, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, La Scala and the Bavarian State Opera. Earlier this year he was awarded the coveted title of Kammersänger with the Vienna Staatsoper, having previously been named a National Artist in Prague. His discography includes recordings for the Decca (London), Ariola, Hungaroton, Supraphon and Erato labels.



ROBERT LLOYD

Returning to the site of his 1975 American debut as Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, prominent English bass Robert Lloyd sings Philippe II in *Don Carlos*, a role for which he has been widely acclaimed, and Méphistophélès in *Faust*. Lloyd came to singing relatively late in life, having studied history at Oxford University. He received his training at the London Opera Center and at the Sadler's Wells Opera (now English National Opera) from 1969-72. For ten years he was a member of the Royal Opera at Covent Garden and became known as Britain's leading bass singer. Since 1982, Lloyd has taken his place in the front rank of international artists performing many of the major bass roles such as Boris Godunov, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra*, Méphistophélès, Procida in *Les Vêpres Siciliennes*, Philippe II and many others. In February of 1984, he performed the role of Rocco in a new Berlin production of *Fidelio* conducted by Daniel Barenboim, followed by *La Forza del Destino* in the same city. During the Glyndebourne Festival 50th anniversary celebrations in 1984, Lloyd sang the role of Seneca in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and his performance was recorded on video tape. Following his Glyndebourne appearances, he traveled to Los Angeles with the Royal Opera for performances of *Turandot* and *The Magic Flute* as part of the Olympic Games celebrations. In addition to his performances here in *Don Carlos* and *Faust*, his 1986 engagements include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Covent Garden and *Simon Boccanegra* at the Glyndebourne Festival. A frequent guest artist with the major orchestras in Britain, he has also performed Act III of *Parsifal* with the San Francisco Symphony and was a soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Cleveland Orchestra, a performance which has also been recorded. Lloyd has made some 50 record albums, the most recent being *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Neville



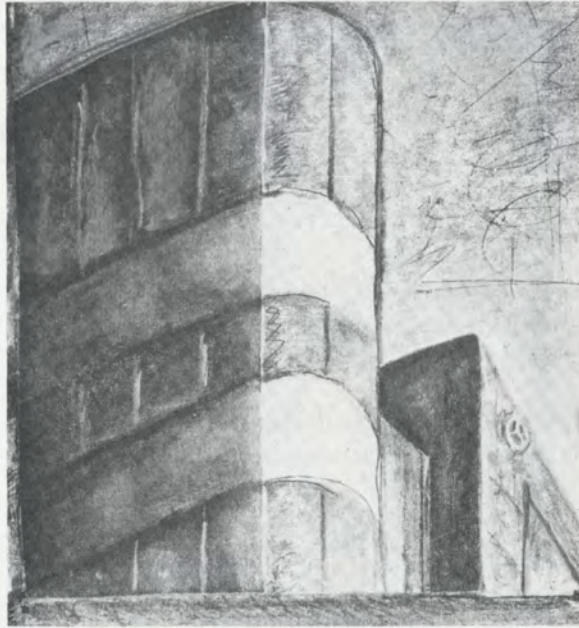
ALAN TITUS

Marriner. He has appeared as Gurnemanz in the Syberberg film *Parsifal* and portrays Philippe II in the video recording of the 1985 Covent Garden production of *Don Carlos*. In addition to his performance career, Lloyd is known as a frequent B.B.C. radio broadcaster of documentary programs.

Baritone **Alan Titus** is Rodrigue in *Don Carlos* and Valentin in *Faust*. The New York native first appeared in San Francisco as Figaro in Spring Opera Theater's 1972 production of *The Barber of Seville*, and made his Company debut in 1975 as Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*. He was seen here as Arlecchino in the 1983 *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the role of his 1975 Metropolitan Opera debut, and most recently in 1985 as Ford in *Falstaff*. He first attracted international attention when he created the role of the Celebrant in the 1971 world premiere of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* at the opening of the Kennedy Center, and bowed the following season at New York City Opera, where he appeared regularly until 1985. He has participated in a large number of world premieres: Hoiby's *Summer and Smoke* (St. Paul, 1971), Henze's *Rachel La Cubana* (for NET), and Floyd's *Bilby's Doll* (Houston Grand Opera); as well as several American premieres in Santa Fe including: Britten's *Owen Wingrave*, Honegger's *Antigone*, and Reimann's *Melusine*. In his debut with Lyric Opera of Chicago Titus performed in Prokofiev's *Love for Three Oranges*. He made his European debut with Netherlands Opera in 1973 as Pelléas in *Pelléas et Mélisande* and has since appeared at the Hamburg Staatsoper as Amida in *L'Ormino*, at the Paris Opera as Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, in Düsseldorf with his first Don Giovanni, at Glyndebourne as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* and at the Aix-en-Provence Festival in *Dido and*

continued on p.48

R. A. B. M O T O R S

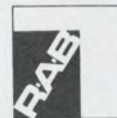


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THE MARK HOPKINS INTER-CONTINENTAL SAN FRANCISCO □ NUMBER ONE NOB HILL

By TIMOTHY PFAFF

As though it were not enough that the San Francisco Opera choristers had learned the tricky choruses from Janáček's *Jenůfa* in impeccable Czech, now, at a long, often tedious, stop-and-start staging rehearsal, some 36 of them find that they have to make a quick exit, through a standard-sized door, all in the space of a few seconds of music. The first time through it's like a cartoon version of the elephants boarding Noah's ark: sticky, and no go. The music's all gone before the choristers are.

"You see," interjects director Wolfgang Weber, who has produced *Jenůfa* to critical acclaim around the world. "Even the San Francisco Opera Chorus can make a mistake." That, in a sentence, is the kind of "criticism" that can put bounce back into the gait of the most wrung-out musician. And, suffice it to say, it works its magic, and the next take is a go.

Minutes later it's the same scene, taken from the top—with an equally harrowing entrance, through the same door, at the same clip. The choristers have made it to their places on stage in the requisite number of bars, but their relief at having done so gives the scene something of the look of a bus stop at rush hour—a shade undercharacterized for a group of people who've just been con-

continued on p.50

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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Text by JULES BARBIER and MICHEL CARRÉ
After the epic drama by JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Faust

(in French)

Conductor

Jean Fournet

Stage Director

Francesca Zambello

Set Designers

Wolfram Skalicki

Thomas J. Munn

Costume Designer

Walter Mahoney

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director

Richard Bradshaw

Chorus Preparation

Ernest Fredric Knell

Christopher Larkin

Musical Preparation

Mark Haffner

John Fiore

Joseph De Rugeriis

Ernest Fredric Knell

Prompter

Jonathan Khuner

Assistant Stage Director

Sharon Thomas

Stage Manager

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First San Francisco Opera performance:

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2 AT 2:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Faust Alfredo Kraus
(October 7,10,16)

Peter Dvorský
(October 22, 25, 30;
November 2)

Méphistophélès Robert Lloyd

Wagner Mark Delavan

Valentin Alan Titus

Marguerite Mary Jane Johnson

Marthe Judith Christin

Siebel Kathryn Cowdrick

Students, soldiers, townspeople

TIME AND PLACE: Medieval Germany

PROLOGUE Faust's study

ACT I Outside the town

INTERMISSION

ACT II Marguerite's garden

INTERMISSION

ACT III *Scene 1:* A street by Marguerite's house

Scene 2: A church

Scene 3: A prison

Supertitles for *Faust* underwritten by
a generous grant from Chevron U.S.A.

Supertitles by Paul Moor.

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 and one-half hours.

Faust/Synopsis

PROLOGUE

Alone in his study, old Dr. Faust laments that his lifelong search for knowledge has yielded nothing but despair. Twice he raises a goblet of poison to his lips but falters when he hears the songs of youthful merrymakers outside. Cursing his fellow men, the envious philosopher calls on Satan for help. The Devil appears, and Faust tells him of his longing for youth and pleasure. Méphistophélès replies that these desires can be fulfilled if he will forfeit his soul. Faust hesitates until the Devil conjures up a vision of a lovely maiden, Marguerite. A magic potion transforms Faust into a handsome youth, and he leaves with Méphistophélès in search of Marguerite.

ACT I

Soldiers and townspeople gather for a fair. A young officer, Valentin, holding a medallion from his sister Marguerite, asks his friends and God to protect her in his absence and then bids a touching farewell. A student named Wagner starts the revels with a lively song but is interrupted by Méphistophélès, who delivers an impudent hymn in praise of greed and gold. The Devil refuses a drink from Wagner and amazes the crowd by causing new wine to flow from a fountain. When he delivers a brazen toast to Marguerite, Valentin draws his sword, but it shatters; the other soldiers, recognizing Satan, hold their swords like crosses before Méphistophélès, who cowers before them. As the crowd begins a dance, Faust speaks to Marguerite. She demurely refuses to let him escort her home. The soldiers depart for war.

ACT II

Siebel, a youth in love with Marguerite, visits her garden to leave her a bouquet of flowers. The romantic young man is followed by Faust and Méphistophélès, who goes in search of a gift to outshine Siebel's. Left alone, Faust hails the simple beauty of Marguerite's home. The Devil returns with a box of jewels, which he places near Siebel's flowers. When Marguerite arrives, she sings a ballad, interrupting the verses with

reflections on the stranger she has met. Discovering the flowers and the box, the girl exclaims in delight as she adorns herself with jewels. A middle-aged neighbor, Marthe, arrives, and Méphistophélès pretends to woo her so that Faust may make his conquest. As night falls, Marguerite confesses her love but, overcome with maidenly scruples, she begs Faust to leave. Just when Faust is about to comply, the Devil mockingly sends him back and laughs as Marguerite yields to her lover's embraces.

ACT III

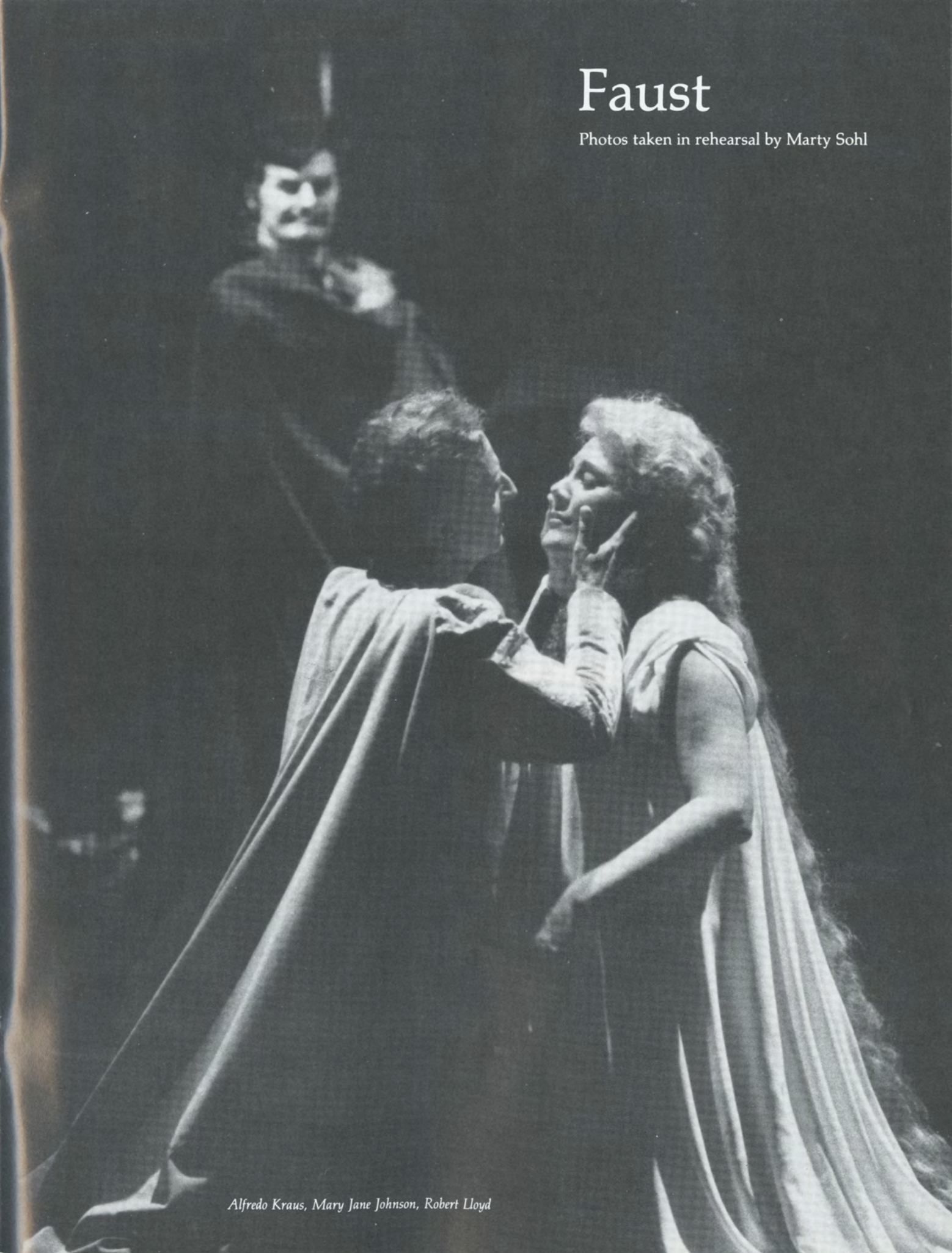
Scene 1—Having borne Faust's child, Marguerite has been abandoned by her lover. Valentin and his comrades return from war, singing the glory of those slain in battle. The soldier questions Siebel about Marguerite but receives only evasive replies. Puzzled, he enters his house. Faust, remorseful at having abandoned Marguerite, arrives with Méphistophélès, who serenades the girl with a lewd ballad. Valentin, stepping forth to defend his sister's honor, fights a duel with Faust, who, guided by Méphistophélès, kills him. As the Devil drags Faust away, Marguerite kneels by her fatally wounded brother, who curses her.

Scene 2—Marguerite seeks refuge in church, only to be pursued by Méphistophélès, who torments her with threats of damnation. She collapses in terror.

Scene 3—Marguerite lies asleep in prison, condemned to death for the murder of her illegitimate child. Faust and Méphistophélès enter, bent on taking her away. As the Devil keeps watch, Faust wakens Marguerite. At first the distracted girl is overjoyed to see her lover, but instead of fleeing with him she begins to recall their days of happiness. When Méphistophélès emerges from the shadows urging them to escape, Marguerite calls on the angels to save her. As she dies, the Devil pronounces her condemned, but angelic choirs proclaim her salvation and she ascends to heaven.

Faust

Photos taken in rehearsal by Marty Sohl



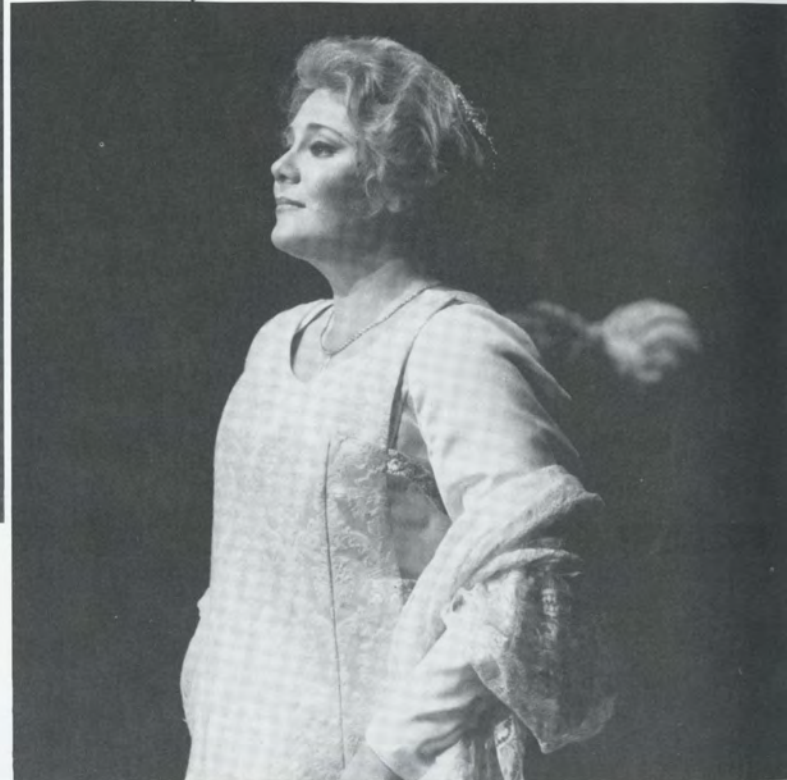
Alfredo Kraus, Mary Jane Johnson, Robert Lloyd



Alfredo Kraus



Robert Lloyd



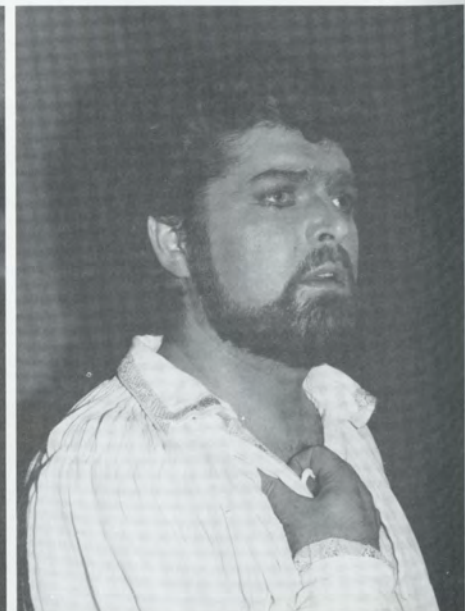
Mary Jane Johnson



Kathryn Cowdrick



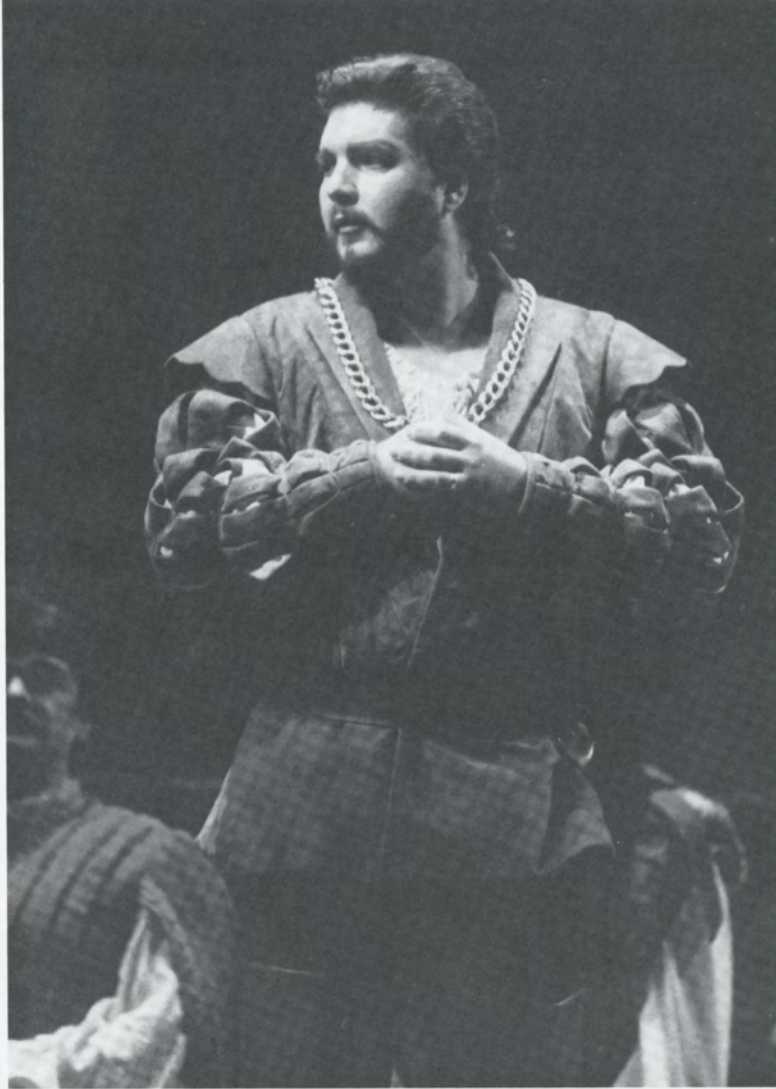
Judith Christin



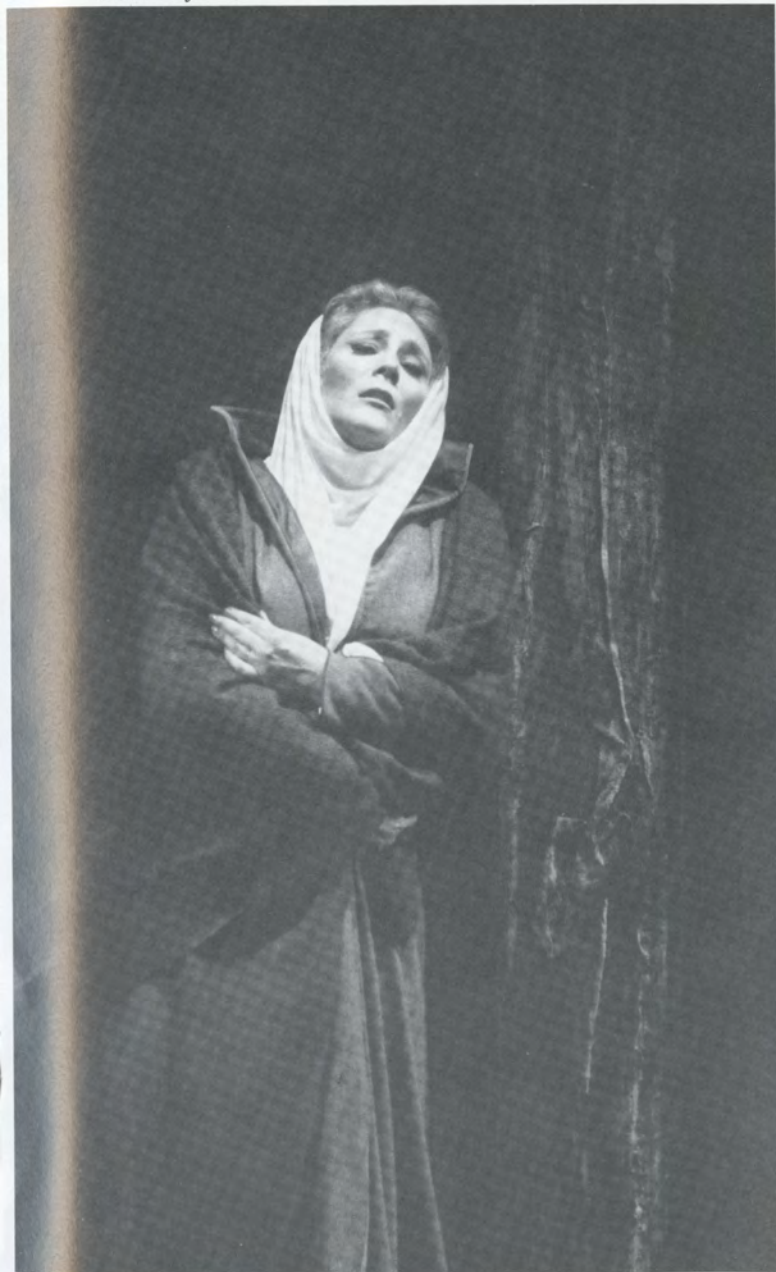
Peter Dvorský



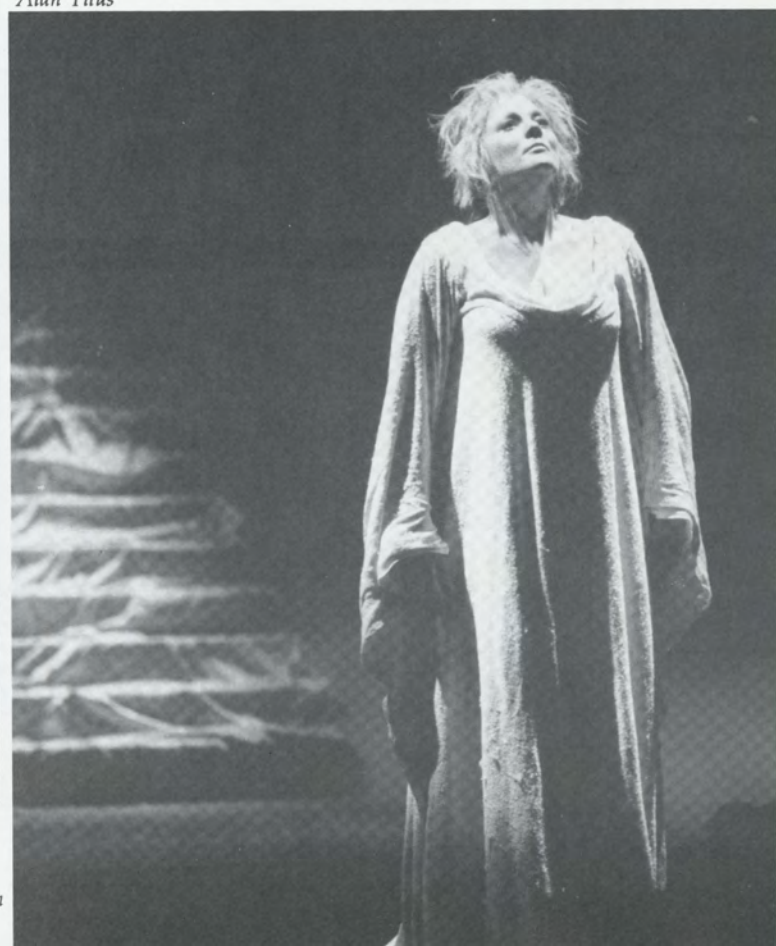
Robert Lloyd



Alan Titus



Mary Jane Johnson



Mary Jane Johnson

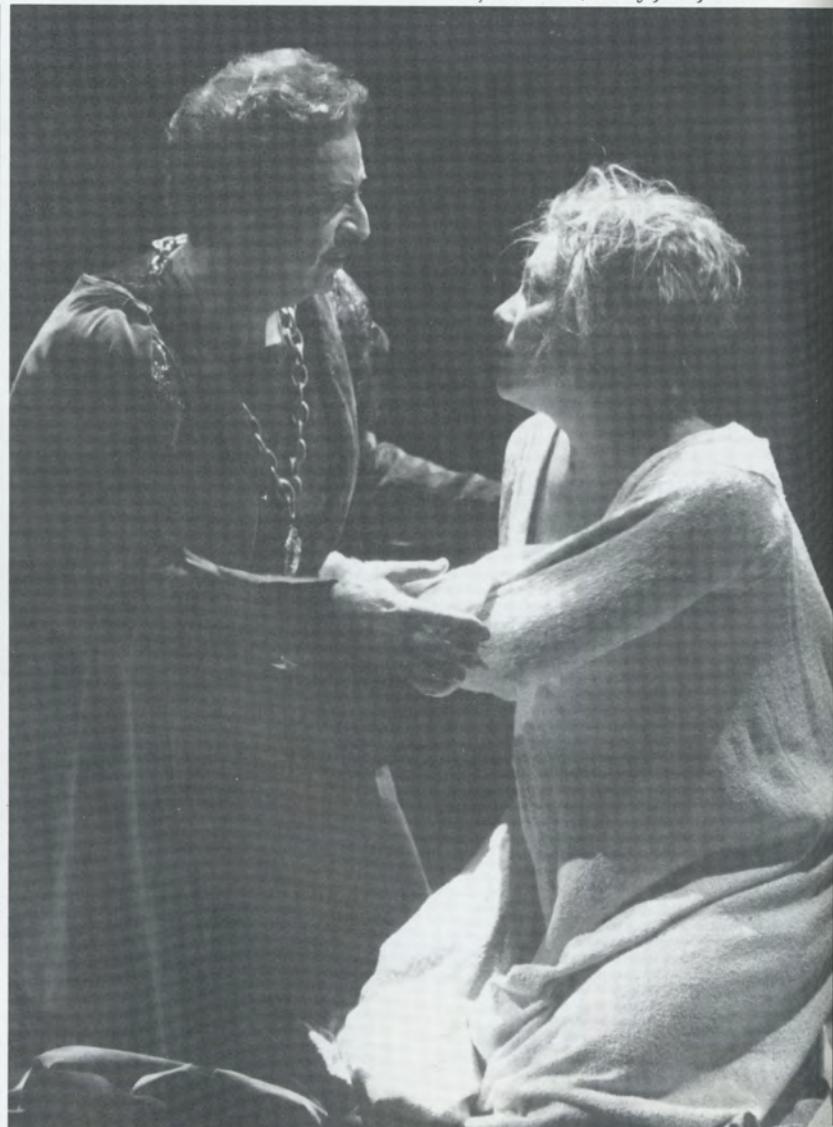


Robert Lloyd, members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus

Alfredo Kraus, Mary Jane Johnson



Mary Jane Johnson, Alfredo Kraus



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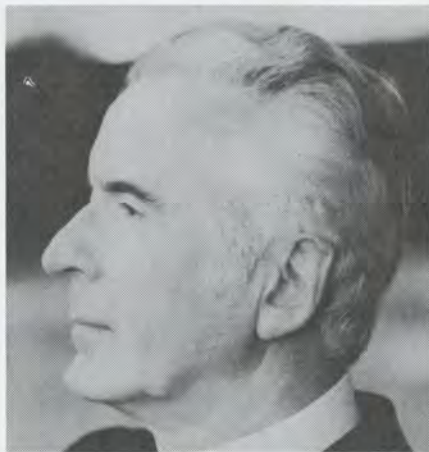


MARK DELAVAN

continued from p.37

Aeneas with Janet Baker, which was filmed for French television. He has also sung with the Frankfurt Opera, Scottish National Opera, and the companies of Strasbourg, Brussels and Marseilles. His television credits include "Live from Lincoln Center" telecasts of *Madama Butterfly*, *Il Turco in Italia*, *La Cenerentola*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *The Merry Widow* and most recently in the "Pavarotti Plus" telecast. Titus has recorded several albums including *Don Pasquale* with Beverly Sills, Bernstein's *Mass*, Haydn's *Paukenmesse* and *Le Fedeltà Premiata*, Leoncavallo's rarely heard *La Bohème*, and *The Merry Widow*, which won a Grammy Award as the best opera recording of the year. Most recently he sang the title role on a recording of *Don Giovanni* conducted by Rafael Kubelik.

Baritone **Mark Delavan** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as a Woodsman in *Don Carlos* and also appears as Wagner in *Faust*, Valentin in the student matinee performances of *Faust*, a Captain in *Eugene Onegin*, and a Guardsman in *Manon*. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, Delavan was a participant in the 1985 Merola Opera Program and performed the title role of *Don Giovanni* on Western Opera Theater's 1985-86 national tour. In the Center's 1986 Showcase series, he appeared as Roderick/Sam in the American professional premiere of Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* and as the Poet in Rossini's *The Turk in Italy*. He received his training at Grand Canyon College and Oral Roberts University, and has performed in *The Mikado* and *The Daughter of the Regiment* for the Charlotte Opera Association. For its touring affiliate, the North Carolina Opera Company, his credits include Papageno, Mephistopheles and Don Magnifico. He has also been an



JEAN FOURNET

apprentice at Inspiration Point Fine Arts Colony. Recent engagements include the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* for the 1986 Carmel Bach Festival and Escamillo in a concert performance of *Carmen* with the Stockton Symphony. Upcoming assignments include Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* for Marin Opera, the elder Germont in *La Traviata* for Sacramento Opera, and Amonasro in a concert performance of *Aida* with the Stockton Symphony.

Famed French conductor **Jean Fournet** returns to San Francisco Opera for performances of *Faust*. The maestro made his American debut in San Francisco in 1958, conducting *Medea* (the first staged performances in America), *La Bohème*, *Manon* and *Rigoletto*. After an absence of more than 25 years, he returned in 1983 to conduct *Samson et Dalila*. Until 1957, Fournet was in charge of the musical direction of the Opéra-Comique, and often wielded the baton at the Paris Opera. In France, he has conducted the orchestras of the Conservatory, Colonne, Pásdeloup (of which he was president), the National Orchestra and the Orchestre de Paris. On the international front, he has conducted the Concertgebouw of Amsterdam, and prestigious orchestras in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and in Japan, where he conducted the Japanese premiere of *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1958. In 1961 he was named Permanent Principal Conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra of Dutch Radio and Television and in 1968 was elected to the post of Artistic Director of the Philharmonic Orchestra of Rotterdam, making numerous tours with these orchestras to Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Great Britain and the United States. He is currently the director of the Orchestre of the Île de France. The distinguished conductor has to his credit a list of important recordings,



FRANCESCA ZAMBELLO

including several that have won the coveted "Grand Prix du Disque" award. He has conducted for major opera companies in Argentina, France, Holland, Monte Carlo, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. The 1986-87 season will see his Metropolitan Opera debut conducting *Samson et Dalila* as well as his debuts at the Canadian Opera Company and the Opera de Montréal conducting Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* for both companies. Apart from his numerous conducting appearances throughout the world, Fournet is a sought-after panelist in many international competitions and has served for many years as President of the Jury of the Besançon International conductors' competition. In addition, he frequently gives conducting master classes in various countries of the world.

Francesca Zambello, stage director of *Faust*, is an Artistic Director of the Skylight Opera of Milwaukee, and co-founder of Opera Colorado in Denver. She recently collaborated with Jean-Pierre Ponnelle on a new production of Rossini's *Otello*, which was shared by Teatro La Fenice in Venice and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. This success has led to her reengagement for a new production of Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* which will open the 1987-88 season in Venice. This past season she directed new productions of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* in Miami and Fort Worth, *Don Giovanni* in Milwaukee, *Carmen* for Texas Opera Theater, *Faust* in Houston, and a double bill of Rossini's *Il Signor Bruschino* and Donizetti's *Viva la Mamma* at Wolf Trap. This season's assignments include *Salome* in Houston, *La Cenerentola* in St. Louis, *Faust* in Seattle, Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* in Milwaukee and *L'Occasione Fa il Ladro* at the Pesaro Festival, in addition to another collaboration with Ponnelle for *The Magic*



WOLFRAM SKALICKI

Flute in Zurich. Miss Zambello, who made her San Francisco Opera debut directing the Family Matinee performances of *La Traviata* during the 1983 Fall Season, recently staged Poulenc's *La Voix humaine* during the Company's 1986 Summer Season. An innovator of the system of Supertitles, she has authored over fifteen English translations for San Francisco Opera productions, including all four operas of the 1985 *Ring* cycle.

Wolfram Skalicki is the designer of *Faust* as it was originally seen here in 1967 and repeated in 1970 and '77. His long association with San Francisco Opera began in 1962, with his designs for the Company premiere of *The Rake's Progress*. Other Skalicki settings seen here include *Il Trovatore*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Fidelio*, *Parsifal*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Tannhäuser*, *Les Troyens*, the complete 1967-72 *Ring* cycle, *Aida*, *L'Africaine*, *Andrea Chénier* and *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk (Katerina Ismailova)*. A native of Vienna, the stage designer launched his career with the sets and costumes for a production of *Così fan tutte* at the Vienna Burgtheater. With his wife, costume designer Amrei Skalicki, he has collaborated on productions in Vienna, Lyons, Marseilles, Strasbourg, Dortmund, Munich, Geneva and other cities. They include designs for *Lulu*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, *Boris Godunov* and *Tristan und Isolde*. Other productions designed by Skalicki include *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *Pelléas et Mélisande* in Innsbruck, *Un Ballo in Maschera* for Fort Worth Opera, and *Falstaff* and *Death in Venice* for the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, the latter a Canadian premiere. In addition, his designs have been exhibited in Vienna, Zurich, Bayreuth, New York and San Francisco.



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WALTER MAHONEY

Resident Costume Shop Manager for the San Francisco Opera, **Walter Mahoney** designed the costumes for *Faust*. Previous Company credits include the designs for Mirella Freni in *Manon Lescaut* (fall 1983) and *La Sonnambula* with Frederica von Stade (fall 1984). He also designed the individual costumes for Marilyn Horne in *Samson et Dalila* (fall 1983); Katia Ricciarelli in *La Traviata* (fall 1984); Renata Scotto and Cheryl Parrish in *Werther* (fall 1985); and Ghena Dimitrova in *Il Trovatore* (summer 1986). The native San Franciscan began his local association in 1943 in the Wardrobe Department, and worked with Goldstein & Company, the then-supplier of costumes for San Francisco Opera, until 1971. Since then, he has been devoting all his time to S.F. Opera's Costume Shop. In addition to his operatic designs, Mahoney's creations have also been seen at numerous Bay Area theater companies, including the Actor's Workshop.



THOMAS J. MUNN

Thomas J. Munn is the lighting designer for San Francisco Opera's 1986 Fall Season productions of *Don Carlos*, *Jenůfa*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Faust*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *La Bohème*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Manon* and *Macbeth*. This past summer he was responsible for lighting *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci* and *La Voix humaine*. In his eleventh year with the Company, he has been responsible for lighting over 80 productions for San Francisco Opera, including the lighting and special effects for all four of the operas of the 1985 Ring Festival. He has also designed the scenery as well as the lighting for *Nabucco* and *Salome* in 1982, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in 1981, *Roberto Devereux* and *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1979, and *Billy Budd* in 1978. In addition to his numerous design credits for the War Memorial stage, Munn has designed scenery and lighting for Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theater, ballet and film. His television credits include San Francisco Opera productions of *La Gioconda* (for which he received a 1979 Emmy Award), *Samson et Dalila* in 1980, *Aida* in 1981 and the Pavarotti concert of 1983, in addition to Copland's *The Tender Land* for Michigan Opera Theatre, and the world premiere of Robert Ward's *Abelard and Heloise* for the Charlotte Opera. Recent projects include productions for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera and the Netherlands Opera, in addition to the scenery and lighting designs of *Copélia* for the Hartford Ballet. Munn is consultant for the Muziektheater in the Netherlands, a new opera house scheduled to open at the end of September this year.

Opera Chorus

continued from p.39

fronted with the specter of a drowned baby.

"Care!" shouts Weber, imploringly. And, in an instant, 36 brows furrow, 36 bodies lean into the action, 72 fists clench. Voilà! Tragedy. And the chorus is dismissed.

Weber, who has worked with the San Francisco Opera Chorus since he directed *Boris Godunov* here in 1973, describes the group as "fantastically trained, tremendously disciplined, and hardworking. Better, I think, than the Vienna State Opera Chorus, which is considered the best in Europe. I just love them!" He told the choristers themselves that they were as good a *Jenůfa* chorus as he could hope for from Vienna or Prague—and that he could ask things of them he wouldn't dream of asking of their European counterparts. Applause is one thing, good reviews another—and both have been increasing steadily for the chorus over the years. But it's words like that, from an artist of Weber's stature, that put a song in a chorister's heart.

San Francisco Opera resident conductor Richard Bradshaw, the Company's chorus director since 1977, whose work in that capacity will cease at the end of this season, came to the Company (on the recommendation of director Jean-Pierre Ponnelle and conductor, now S.F. Opera music director, Sir John Pritchard) from the Glyndebourne Festival, and has heard and conducted other opera choruses around the world (so much of late that he calls himself the chorus's "absentee landlord"). "Having now worked all over the world," he comments, "I've come to realize that there is nowhere that a day-in, day-out opera chorus can match festival standards such as one hears at Glyndebourne or Bayreuth, because the pressures on a house chorus are so different. But I think that on their day, when they're working at their peak, this chorus is as good' as any 'big house' chorus in the world. They're one of the most alive groups I've ever worked with, and they have a very individual sound—that sound they get, say, at the beginning of *Otello*, when there's real imagination and dramatic flair. I miss that sound elsewhere—and I genuinely miss this chorus when I'm away."

The chorus has enjoyed a special place in San Francisco Opera from the very beginning. For decades, it was the only performing branch that was entirely

the Company's own. Conductors, directors, and stars were shared with opera houses around the world, and the Company shared its orchestra with San Francisco Symphony. The orchestra became the Opera's own when Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall opened, and the resulting overlap of opera and symphony seasons meant that players had to choose between the two. But in the very next season, fall of 1981, the Opera Chorus, which for years had been a paid, unionized (through AGMA, or the American Guild of Musical Artists) group, became a full-time, fully professional organization.

It is both significant and no accident that that transformation occurred during the final season of General Director Emeritus Kurt Herbert Adler. As chorister and AGMA steward James Meyer, who has sung in the chorus since 1974, points out, "Part of the reason this company has taken the chorus seriously is that Mr. Adler always had a great appreciation of everyone in the company, at every level." Adler himself had joined the Company in 1943 as chorus master and resident conductor, at a time when the chorus's ranks were filled largely by grocers, bankers, and barbers, many of them denizens of then-general director Gaetano Merola's beloved North Beach. A far less musically sophisticated bunch than the choristers of today, those people gave of their evenings largely for the love of it.

A steady upgrading of the chorus was a signal feature of the Adler regime, and a trend which clearly reached its peak with Bradshaw. "If, during my tenure, we've achieved anything," Bradshaw comments, "it has been to raise the status of being a chorister to what it should be, to what it is now. There is no longer the stigma attached to being a chorister that there once was, that if you were in the chorus it was because you failed elsewhere. We have choristers now who not only can but *do* go out there and sing as principal artists."

The range of things San Francisco Opera choristers do apart from singing in the chorus is, if anything, broader than ever before. In the current ranks are contractors, real estate agents, stockbrokers, nurses, travel agents, and policemen. Three of the women have worked as professional models, and one still does. One woman, besides being a musicologist, is an ordained minister; another raises and shows horses. Predictably, there is a plethora of artistic vocations and avoca-



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During a rehearsal for the 1983 American premiere of Tippet's *The Midsummer Marriage*, the San Francisco Opera Chorus provides a sonorous and exuberant complement to the solo dancers.

tions. One chorister is a calligrapher for Neiman-Marcus, another is a poet, another an instrument builder, yet another a songwriter, and several are artists and photographers. In addition to the significant number of choristers who sing in other choruses and perform solo parts elsewhere, yet others who hold outside musical and operatic posts include a number of choir directors, a church organist, a song arranger, and several others who take directing assignments in smaller opera organizations. Baritone Gregory de Silva, who has directed productions for Marin Opera, is a Ph.D. candidate at Stanford who is doing his dissertation on this year's season opener, Verdi's *Don Carlos*.

Still, to a man and a woman, these multi-talented individuals are choristers first, and their sense of professionalism runs high. "We get upset when we hear people talk about how we do this for love," says mezzo-soprano Dotty Dean, who has sung with the chorus for seven sea-

sons. "It's true that we love doing it, but we're also professionals, and being paid for it." According to baritone Eugene Lawrence, an opera chorister for 29 years as well as the elected chairman of the executive committee of AGMA, choristers at the top seniority levels make upwards of \$24,000 per year. He adds that good rapport with the Company over many years has netted the chorus, beyond salary guarantees, guaranteed days off, improved working conditions, and good benefits. While he plainly sees the need for yet more improvements, he comments, "In opera, nothing is done quickly."

Meyer agrees that although it's not perfect, and needs some adjustments, "We have a splendid contract. And a very understanding company. Just before I came here, I was hired as one of the first members of the new San Francisco Symphony Chorus. In some ways I miss being able to sing that repertoire, too, but the prospect of being able to actually make a living singing in the Opera Chorus was

irresistible. The most rewarding part of this job is being able to make a living doing something I enjoy."

To audition for the chorus, a singer must perform two pre-prepared arias as well as sight-read music. "When you're singing the arias," Dean recalls, "you're being watched not just for your vocal qualities, how you handle the music and words, but also for your projection of character—your presence, your concentration level, how you use your hands, and whether you flow with the emotions." Bradshaw says, "One looks for good, healthy voices, the kind that will not give out in the middle of a season that comes with the kinds of pressure ours does. And just to be able to memorize the amount of music we perform in a year demands a reasonable musical intelligence.

"In deciding which singers we hire, it also depends on where the gaps are. Sometimes one is looking for a light soprano who will work in a small choral group, as in *Figaro*. Other times one is

desperate for a big soprano voice that can carry things in *Meistersinger*. And always one looks for a voice that will blend." Associate chorus director Ernest Knell, who has worked with the group for four years and has had primary responsibilities for preparing the chorus this season, when Bradshaw has been away on conducting assignments, adds, "It's important to keep our options open as much as possible. Unlike other kinds of choruses, an opera chorus needs people with a strong dramatic instinct. The thing is, the voices that tend to come with people with those instincts—who often have operatic training as well—tend to have an individual cast. The challenge is to get a variety of sounds to function as an entity without killing the vitality of the sound.

"One can't have only voices that are large and operatic if they lack the control to do things at the other end of the spectrum," he continues. "With a judicious selection of the voices, we need to be able to get, on the one hand, a Palestrina-like sound and, on the other, an extremely virile sound, one with perhaps even a slight edge of roughness around it. In *Faust*, for example, you have the famous Soldiers' Chorus, but, contrasted with that, there's an exquisite few-bar choral phrase just after the death of Valentin, which needs to be done with the utmost of blend and with dramatic emphasis on a very small scale. One has to do certain things in a choral manner, that is, there has to be ensemble, the cut-offs have to be exact, vowel sounds must match, and so on. But in this kind of chorus, the singers can never fully lose their individuality, or the artistic rewards are not great enough, and they lose interest. The challenge comes in balancing those two things."

Bradshaw recalls that, when he arrived in 1977, the chorus was in sore need of discipline. He adds that, even with the higher quality of musicians in the chorus today, imposing discipline is still important. "With that many personalities on stage—and believe me, there are more characters per square inch in this chorus than I've found anywhere else in the world—there sometimes has to be a considerable amount of subduing of individual egos. If one asks for a certain vocal color, it takes a particular level of selfishness on the part of 60 individuals to get that color. If you're going to get a group of people to do what an opera chorus has to—often in what will be lousy

circumstances once they are on stage—it can take a mixture of cajoling and coercion and anything else one may bring to bear to prepare them, for what often are quite unreasonable difficulties. Sometimes a certain amount of temperament on my part has not gone amiss, although nowadays I try to restrict my tantrums to rare occasions."

Meyer allows that Bradshaw's style at first "took some adjusting to. But once things settled down, people began to appreciate what he was getting at. He brings tremendous energy to the job, and he likes to keep things on the edge—but in a positive way. I think the chorus has improved markedly under him. Since Richard's been here, there's been a strong emphasis on individual character performance, as well as on voice quality."

"Richard's energy takes over the room," remarks Dean. "People have been scared of him at times, but his temperament is part of his passion. He knows how to get us to work hard, when we're being lazy. But he also knows when he's pushed us as far as he can, and it's time to stop and tell a story or a joke. He uses his charm and charisma to get us to sing meaningfully."

Everyone agrees the work is grueling. "Kurt Adler, who has more energy than any other man I ever met, told me, when he hired me, that the tireddest he'd ever been in his life was when he was chorus director," Bradshaw relates. "When we're doing musical rehearsals, working seven hours a day, in two sessions, basically, the drain is enormous. You're using your whole body. Of course no singer can sing full out seven hours a day, so sometimes we have them just mark, while they're learning the notes and going through the enormously tedious process of memorization. But unlike orchestra musicians, the singers do not have an instrument to fall back on, and we spend a tremendous amount of time trying to get them out of the score. That whole process is the most tiring thing I know."

And once what Bradshaw calls the "note bashing" is done, the work has only begun. Unlike other choral directors, the opera chorus master prepares his singers for someone else to conduct and direct. While all agree that there seems to be no way to make a chorus "conductor-proof," there are things that can be done to make it more conductor-resilient. To attain

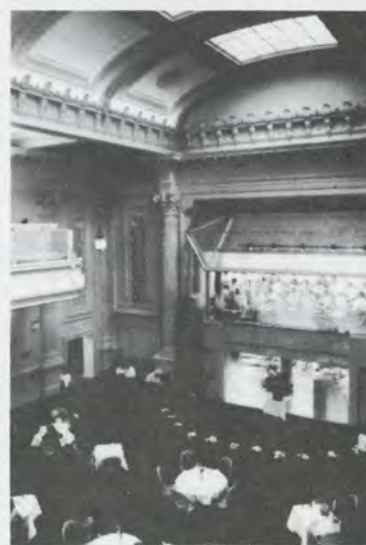
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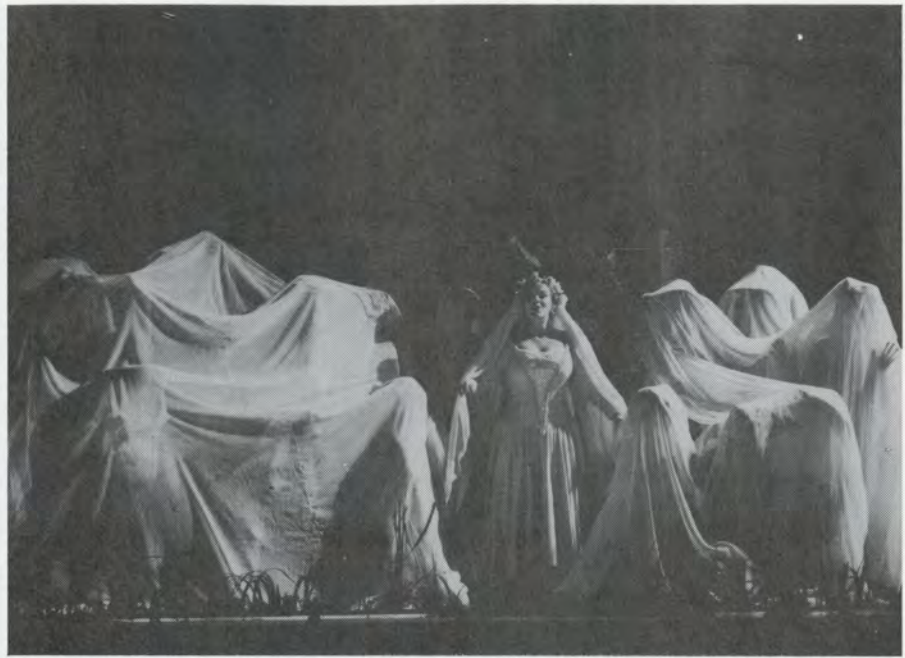
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In one of their more unusual assignments, women of the San Francisco Opera Chorus accompany Nannetta's (Ruth Ann Swenson) aria in Act 3 of Verdi's Falstaff while covered with white silk.

maximum flexibility, Knell explains, "We take different tempi in rehearsal. And if it is possible that a passage could be conducted in two or in four, we'll do it in both. And if we can see that there are various ways a cadence could be handled, we'll note that it could be done one way or another, so the chorus isn't totally confused in the event.

"At the beginning, we have the singers learn all of the music appropriate to their voices. That way we have maximum flexibility when we have to create smaller groups of choristers. Sometimes the ideal person vocally for a particular group will not work in terms of the director's or designer's concept—and sometimes there are even costume considerations."

"No chorus is going to be as conductor-proof as an orchestra," Bradshaw says. "Orchestra players have their parts in front of them, so if something goes wrong, at least they have something to refer to. And they're much closer to the conductor as well. Anyone who wants to understand the difficulties of singing in an opera chorus has only to do it, as I have on numerous occasions. It's one thing to stand in an oratorio chorus and boom away—and quite another to find yourself standing five feet away from the nearest other singer, 50 yards away from the conductor, and 25 feet from a tiny TV

monitor. It's truly a daunting prospect, under those conditions, to try to make a focused sound that blends with everyone else's."

In the case of new productions, one of the variables of the greatest importance to a chorister—the set—is one of the last to be encountered. "Much of the total effect depends on the acoustical environment in which the chorus sings," Knell explains, "for example, how much of the stage is used and whether there is a reflecting backdrop of any kind. Some sets are extremely gratifying to sing in, and others are not. If the back of the stage is hung in black velour, it absorbs a great deal of sound. These singers have to project into a very large room, and even their costumes can make a difference. In the auto-da-fé scene of *Don Carlos*, for example, the male choristers are under monk's cowls, singing into burlap on all sides, and, with the hoods drooping forward, they have difficulties seeing as well as hearing each other. The scene calls for maximum brilliance and drive, and the first time they sang it in costume, it sounded like six mice. It was one of the choristers who suggested an interesting solution: a baseball cap under the hood. It doesn't show but opens up visibility and audibility considerably.

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The San Francisco Opera Chorus in the opening scene of Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*. San Francisco Opera, 1983.

an opera chorus. The mere fact that the singers can't always stand in carefully placed groups means that they cannot sing to maximum advantage all the time. One tries to minimize the disadvantages, in consultation with directors. What has to be borne in mind is that it is to no one's advantage for the chorus to come off at less than its best."

Working roughly on a nine-month schedule, the chorus begins musical rehearsals in mid-April, learning their parts in the 13 to 15 operas to be presented in the Company's two seasons. Generally speaking, the last operas to be performed in each of the seasons, summer and fall, are staged in rough form first. Operas opening earlier in the season have rough, then final, stagings closer together, so that they are freshest in the choristers' memories. Staging rehearsals can be particularly trying, since the work is, at one and the same time, very fast, requiring both spontaneity and quick memorization, and often fairly tedious.

"A director who choreographs crowds well—and few do—works with each chorister individually," Dean explains. "What that means is that while he is working with one of us, the other 60 are basically just standing around, which can be exhausting in itself. We can spend hours staging a few measures of music. But if the direction is particularly good, when it all comes together, it can be

dynamite." Meyer acknowledges that staging rehearsals can be drudgery, "particularly if a director doesn't know what he is doing, or is making it up as he goes along. But when you have a director like Mr. Ponnelle, who has worked the whole thing out in infinite detail, it can be tremendously exciting, and demanding. Basically, I look forward to staging rehearsals, because by then much of the woodshedding is done, and it's time to bring the whole thing to life."

"It takes a lot of skill to know how to move on stage," adds Dean. "Most directors give us basic blocking, but it's up to us to work out the intricacies of our characterizations. That's part of the fun, but it also involves walking a fine line. You want to develop a character sufficiently, and be exciting, but you can't detract from the big picture. So you have to have good judgment as well as good timing. It helps a lot that many of us have been working together for years. We can play off each other fairly spontaneously."

The choristers credit all three of their directors, Bradshaw, Knell, and Christopher Larkin, for having arrived at a good mix of people and kept them working cohesively. All agree that the point at which competition among choristers becomes keenest is in auditioning for solo parts and small roles. But even then, by all accounts, the competition is notably civil. "Basically, everyone seems to understand

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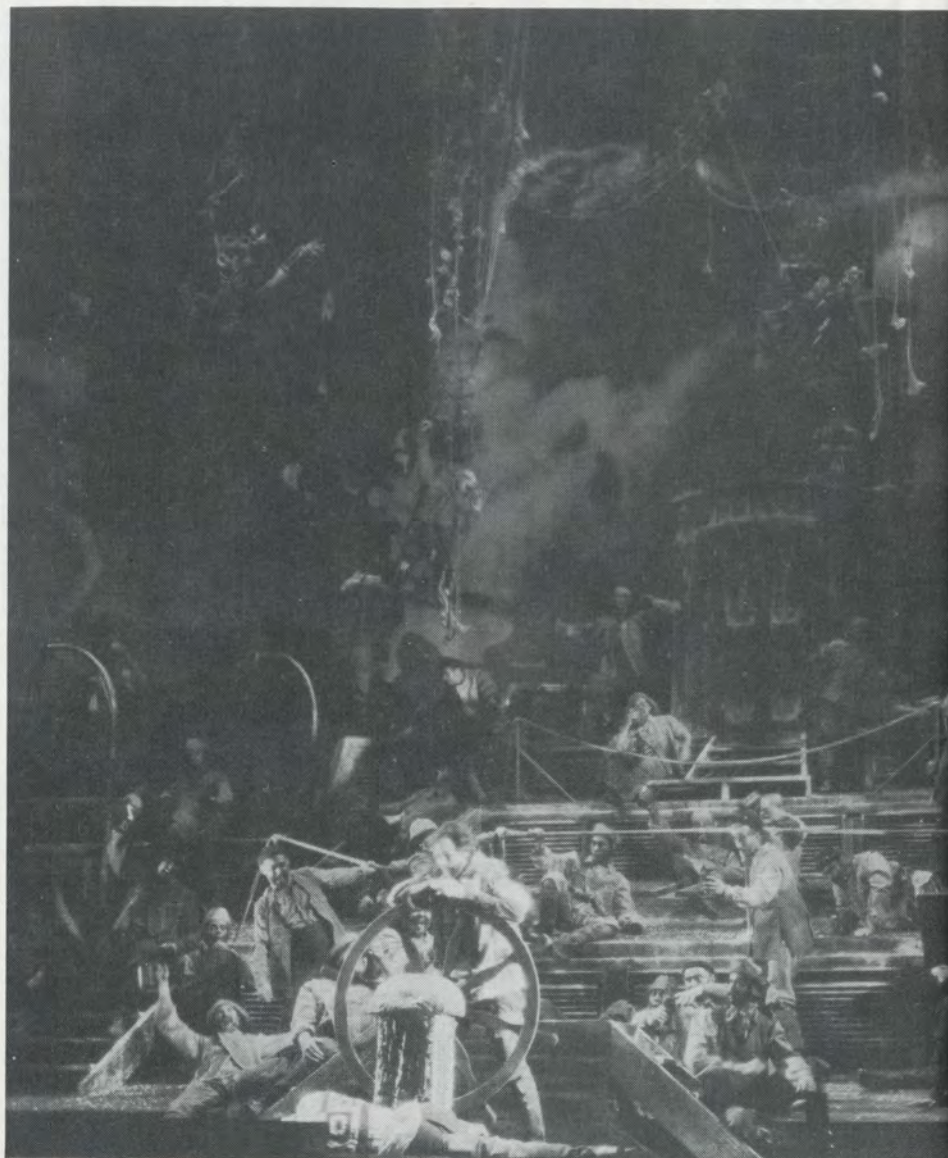
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Men of the San Francisco Opera Chorus impersonate Norwegian sailors in the 1979 Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of Wagner's Der Fliegende Holländer.

that when someone does good, it reflects well on all of us," Dean says. "We're all delighted when people like Monte Pederson and Mark Coles leave the chorus to go on to solo careers, both in the company and elsewhere. And when, for example, Paul Gudas, who is still in the chorus, gets a part like Red Whiskers in *Billy Budd*, it shows the world what kind of talent there is in this chorus."

Gudas, who also sings Alcindoro in *La Bohème* this season, explains that he prefers to continue his work in the chorus because of the security. "It's a good, steady position that gives me the money to live on. I enjoy being able to go off and sing with Chicago Opera, or with the St. Louis

Symphony, but I also appreciate being able to sing in the chorus, where what I do isn't always so completely exposed. And this is a great group to be a part of. There's an incredible amount of talent in this group, and the level of stage competence in this chorus is very, very high." "People like Gudas help to dispell the idea that singing in the chorus is a dead-end job," Bradshaw says. "And more and more people in the artistic administration here come to us asking if we know of choristers who could take a small part, or cover a role. So more and more we're looking for that. The fact that the people coming in are better and better means that they'll be staying less long, but, overall, I think



SCHERL

that's good. It adds to the vitality of the chorus's overall sound."

Dean describes the quality of collegiality among the choristers as "rather like a family. We see each other under a lot of different circumstances—when we've just been made up and are beautiful as well as when we've taken the makeup off, and are sweaty and scratchy and tired. But out of all that comes a genuine closeness. We're together all the time, so there are inevitable squabbles, but underneath that is a lot of caring."

All of which matters this season, from the choral standpoint the heaviest season in anyone's memory. "It's not as though it's *Lohengrin* and *Sonnambula*

every night," says one chorus stalwart. "But the choral parts are extensive and important. It's horrendous—and wonderful." Gudas calls the choral assignments this season "colossal. We sometimes sing five different operas in a week, and, for example, with so much Verdi, the chorus cues often sound quite similar. Thank God for the prompter."

The chorus also sings in five different languages this season: in addition to the usual Italian, French, and German, there is also Russian and Czech. Thank God for the language coaches—and for their praise. It was particularly gratifying for the chorus, only a portion of whose members had sung *Jenůfa* in 1980, to have received high marks from language coach Yveta Synek Graff. "The chorus would sing a phrase for her," Knell recalls, "and she'd giggle and say, 'Fine.' That was it."

"One of the great things about this chorus is its enthusiasm," he concludes, "its willingness to try anything. Sure, it's a volatile group, but that's basically a positive thing. If they were dull and docile, there wouldn't be any excitement when they perform. I'd rather have the volatility. These people really *like* to sing, the only problem with which is that, early in the season, we sometimes have to remind them that it's a long way until December. To have such problems!"

For its part, the chorus has problems that it, too, will never be able to solve: seeing, and being seen. "After all the work we do to learn the music and the stagings," Dean explains, "it can be frustrating to find yourself far upstage in a busy crowd scene. That makes it hard to feel like an intrinsic part of the action."

The other visibility problem is even less easy to solve. One obvious reason for joining an opera chorus is a love of opera. But singing in the chorus necessarily means not being able to see performances, at least from the vantage point from which they are staged. But it's a dilemma that seems to have more than adequate compensations. "Of course there are times when I'd give anything to be out there watching," Dean sighs, "but having had to choose, I know I'd rather be backstage, where you see *that* drama as well as the one on stage. I like getting the complete picture. And having this beautiful music running through your body all the time is an incredibly rich experience. We're right in the center of the cyclone, and that's an exciting place to be." ■

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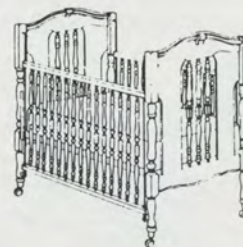
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Company Profiles: Olivia Burton

This on-going series of interviews introduces our readers to a cross-section of San Francisco Opera Company members who never get to take a curtain call, but whose activities are very important in the process of making opera happen.

San Francisco Opera's relationship to melody goes back to the cradle. The telephone cradle, that is. From nine to six on weekdays, 861-4008 yields one of the most inviting melodies to be heard this side of the War Memorial footlights. In switchboard operator Olivia Burton's dulcet tones, the words "San Francisco Opera" are the most reassuring introduction imaginable to the mad, mad world of opera.

From all accounts, Burton herself plays a major role in keeping things from becoming as mad as they otherwise might. Twenty years with the Company

have made her more than just an expert on its day-to-day operations. She also has become a cherished friend and trusted ally of old-timers and newcomers alike—"the mother of us all," in the words of one Company member.

Mere minutes of observing her at work make it clear the kind of mother she is. At the farthest extreme from the kind of meddlesome, long-nosed mother one knows to evade, Burton is plainly the kind of person people seek out, for that touching of bases, however fleeting, that promises that things are under control. Without her even having to ask, passersby

volunteer where they've been, what they're up to, where they're going, and how long they'll be there—as a courtesy less to her than to themselves and each other. Never mind that little appendage she wears about the ears in the line of duty; Burton listens, and remembers.

Seasoned veterans, like production supervisor Matthew Farruggio, need hardly speak at all. "Matt, Zellerbach B?," she asks knowingly, as Farruggio hurries past her desk, beaming a smile her way. A nod, and another smile in each direction, cinch an immaculately concise interaction.

continued on p.65

Caught between calls: San Francisco Opera's receptionist Olivia Burton.





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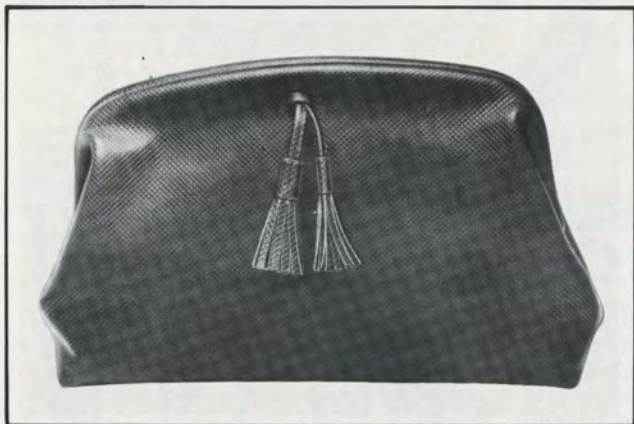
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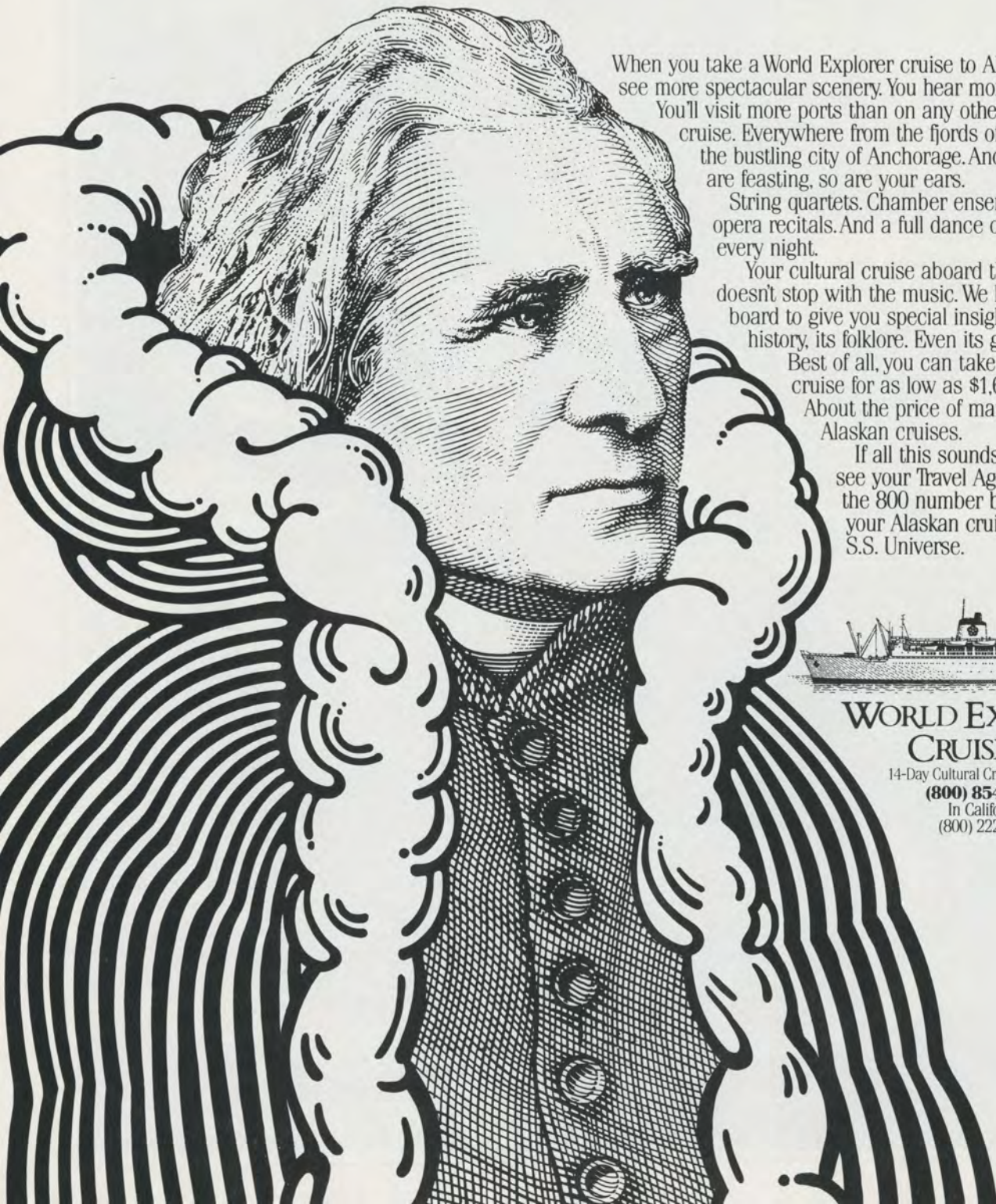


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Olivia Burton
continued from p.60

MESSICK



Olivia Burton transferring a call.

Indeed, the only complaint one is likely to hear has to do with the four weeks of vacation each year which Burton has earned for her service. It's not that anyone begrudges her the time away. It's that, in the words of another company stalwart, "The place falls apart when she's gone." More than one person recalls executive secretary Marian Lever's excited description of one of Burton's fabled returns: "Mother Courage is back!"

Not everyone would envy Burton's (literal) position—just off the fourth-floor elevator, exactly between the top executive offices (including the general director's inner sanctum) and the heavily trafficked company library. In peak season, the spot is as hectic and frenzied as a Tokyo subway at rush hour. The better to keep her there, all agree, to dispense her natural calm.

Burton's disposition is one of the very few things that hasn't changed in her tenure with the company. "When I started here," she volunteers, "we had a small, antique switchboard, which served both the Symphony and the Opera, like the building did. But we grew out of it very fast. The one I work now is my fourth. It's so lovely just pushing these little buttons, instead of wrestling with all the cords.

This new device is very modern. It does everything but sweep the floor."

Her celebrated phone manner—as natural, it seems, as it is practiced—has been appreciated, and commented upon, by thousands. "I have found myself in a few sticky situations," she says in a major understatement. "But I've learned that if you talk softly to people, it often calms them down. It may take a little more time, but you can usually get your point across. It's hard to fight with a person who talks softly. I've noticed that when I'm out shopping. Even if I'm tired and irritable, if the salesperson talks nicely to me, I end up speaking nicely in return. Sometimes I'm almost apologetic!

"I did get mad once," she allows, with faintly disguised pleasure. "We had given a performance with an all-black cast, and a man called the following day to complain about it. I asked him, 'What has color to do with talent?,' trying to smooth him. Then he used a word that I don't care to repeat—and I said, 'Sir, you are a redneck,' and hung up on him. As it turns out, there was somebody standing here then, who looked at me and said, 'Good for you.'"

Wise to the ways of the opera world, Burton has come to recognize trouble when she hears it. She's the first to admit

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Company receptionist Olivia Burton addresses an unseen staff member during a lull between phone calls.

that she speaks no other languages, but she has an ear for artistic ire whatever the tongue, and a sixth sense about the sound of a major cancellation. "Those are hot potatoes," she says with a knowing grin, "and I hand 'em right over. The girls in the front office are really good about it."

Fortunately, it's as regular a part of Burton's job that she hears from some of the world's most beautiful voices, over the desk as well as over the phone. Not one to presume on an artist's time, she's been reluctant to bother celebrities for autographs and the like. But neither has she been one to decline friendly gestures from the famous when the situation has seemed just right. She has particularly fond memories of three great sopranos, Mary Costa, Leontyne Price, and Beverly Sills. "They've been my favorites," she says. "But you know?," she adds, characteristically, "The young kids who train here are wonderful too."

The years have made Burton the

recipient of phone calls that would make her the envy of opera groupies everywhere. Yet asked which callers have thrilled her most, she answers without pause or so much as the blink of an eye: "Bing Crosby, and Jack Benny."

Her reply is one of the only clues to one of the more astonishing things about Burton: her age, a sprightly 71. "I'm glad that age doesn't seem to matter here," she says, "since I'm well past retirement age. But I don't feel it. I'm convinced that age is a state of mind. If you keep active and like to be around people, it keeps you alert. I still like to ski, and swim, and ride horses. I skied Mt. Baker just a few years ago. My problem is that I'm a square peg in a round hole. I can't find anyone to go with me!" A confirmed, if discreet smoker, she claims, "At my age, if it hasn't got me yet, it's not going to get me. Besides, I can't afford to get fat. I wouldn't fit in my chair here."

In earlier days, and particularly during an opera season, Burton, like the rest



MESSICK

of the opera staff, was accustomed to working long hours. "After the switchboard shut down, I used to go to work in the box office. But it got to be iffy to work until ten and then take the bus home—I don't drive, and I live in the Sunset. Now I stop work at six; that's long enough, I think." But she still does what she can, at the switchboard, to help the box office out. "They're busy people. I can easily answer the questions about what's playing when, after the brochures come out."

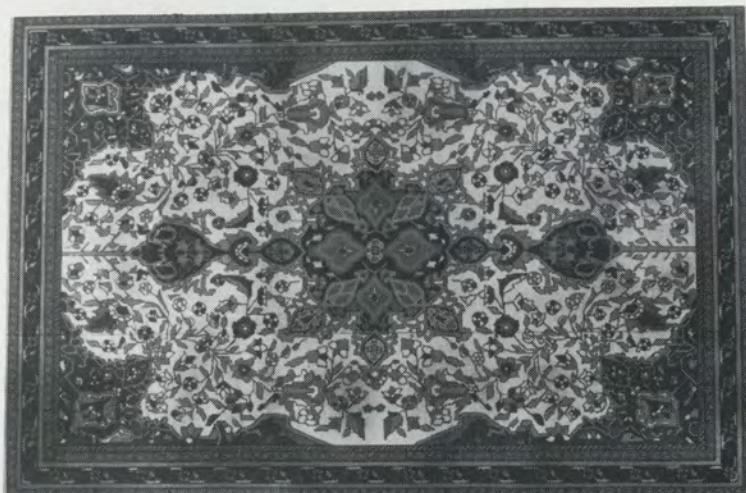
Having had similar jobs elsewhere in the past, most notably at a bank "where it was all so cold," Burton insists, "This is the best job I've ever had in my life, and the easiest. I've got the best job in the place."

It's a job, by the way, that is "defined" by its occupant—and therefore includes a service of inestimable value to her overextended colleagues. "By the way," she says, midway through a transaction, "I also sell stamps." ■

—Timothy Pfaff

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1986 Fall Opera Previews

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

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD INSIGHTS

Opera Insights held in the Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., in San Francisco. All informal discussions begin at 6 p.m.; doors open at 5:30 p.m. Individual tickets may be purchased at the door for \$5. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432. Programs are subject to change.

Mirella Freni and Thomas Allen 11/14

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

MARIN

Previews held at Park School Auditorium, 360 E. Blithedale, Mill Valley; refreshments served at 7:30 p.m., previews at 8 p.m. Single tickets are \$5 (\$4 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 388-6982.

Faust
Francesca Zambello 10/9
Eugene Onegin
James Keolker 10/30
Manon
Michael Mitchell 11/6
Macbeth
James Keolker 11/13

NORTH PENINSULA

Previews held at St. Andrews Church, S. El Camino Real at 15th Ave., San Mateo, at 7:30 p.m. Single tickets are \$6. For further information, please call (408) 735-3757 or (415) 343-7251.

Die Meistersinger
William Huck 10/16
Eugene Onegin
James Keolker 11/6
Macbeth
James Keolker 11/20

SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant, at 8 p.m. Single tickets are \$5 (students \$3). For further information, please call (415) 941-3890.

Eugene Onegin
James Keolker 11/4
Manon
Michael Mitchell 11/11
Macbeth
James Keolker 11/18

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

Previews held at the Villa Montalvo Center for the Arts, 15400 Montalvo Rd., in Saratoga, at 10 a.m. Series is open to the public at a cost of \$4 per lecture; \$2 for

students and senior citizens (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild members and members of Montalvo). For further information, please call (408) 741-1331.

Die Meistersinger
William Huck 10/10
Eugene Onegin
James Keolker 10/31
Manon
Michael Mitchell 11/7
Macbeth
James Keolker 11/14

SONOMA COUNTY CHAPTER

Previews held at various times and locations (see below). Single tickets are \$5 (students \$3). For further information, reservations and the charge for receptions and luncheons, please call (707) 539-7157.

Die Meistersinger 10/8,
William Huck 5:30 p.m. reception;
7 p.m. preview
1000 Buckeye Rd., Kenwood
Eugene Onegin 10/29,
James Keolker 5:30 p.m. reception;
7 p.m. preview
Wild Oak Saddle Club
550 White Oak, Santa Rosa
Manon 11/6, 10:30 a.m. preview;
Michael Mitchell 12:30 p.m. luncheon
Depot Hotel
241 First Street West, Santa Rosa
Macbeth 11/13, 10:30 a.m. preview;
James Keolker 12:30 p.m. luncheon
St. Francis Vineyards
8450 Sonoma Hwy, Kenwood

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

All Junior League opera previews held in Herbst Theatre in the Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco. Lectures begin at noon and there is no admission charge. For further information, please call (415) 342-2463.

Die Meistersinger
William Huck 10/8
Eugene Onegin
James Keolker 10/29
Manon
Michael Mitchell 11/5
Macbeth
James Keolker 11/12

NAPA OPERA LECTURE SERIES

"Adventures in Opera", now in its 14th year, is a course which accompanies the Saturday and Sunday series at the San Francisco Opera. The lectures will be held

at 7:30 p.m. in the Napa First Methodist Church, Centennial Hall, 4th and Randolph, in Napa. Ernest Fly will again teach the course. Individual lectures are \$3. For further information, please call (707) 224-6162.

Faust 10/16
Eugene Onegin 10/23
La Bohème 10/30
Manon 11/6
Macbeth 11/13

OPERA EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of the operas of the 1986 Fall Season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International. Lectures are given in the auditorium of the Dr. William Cobb School, 2725 California St., between Scott and Divisadero, at 7:30 p.m. Admission at the door is \$6. For further information, please call (415) 526-5244.

Macbeth 11/13

SAN FRANCISCO COMMUNITY COLLEGE LECTURE SERIES

Under the sponsorship of the S.F. Community College District, Robert Finch will give eight free lectures. They will be held at 10 a.m. in the Downtown Community College Center, 800 Mission (at Fourth), Room 325. For further information, please call (415) 431-3437.

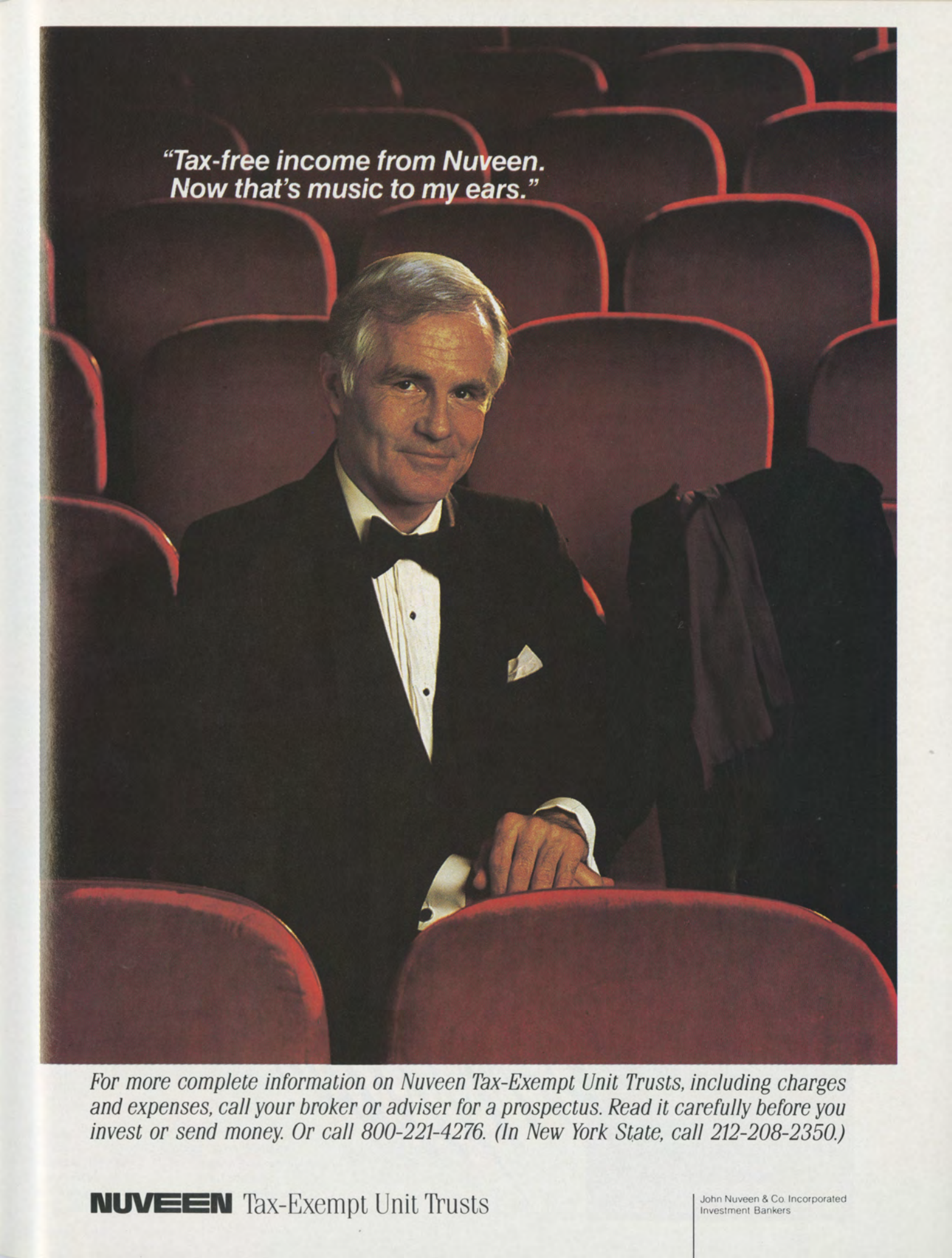
Eugene Onegin 10/10
Manon 10/17
Macbeth 10/24

MERRITT COLLEGE OPERA LECTURE SERIES

Merritt College is offering a course, Introduction to Opera (Music 16), with emphasis on the operas of the Fall Season, on Tuesday evenings at 6:30, beginning September 9. The enrollment fee is \$15. Classes will be held at the College, 12500 Campus Drive, Building R, Room 125, in Oakland. For further information, please call (415) 436-2410.

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A man with white hair, wearing a black tuxedo jacket, a white dress shirt, and a black bow tie, is seated in a theater. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The theater seats are red and arranged in rows. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the man against the dark background of the theater.

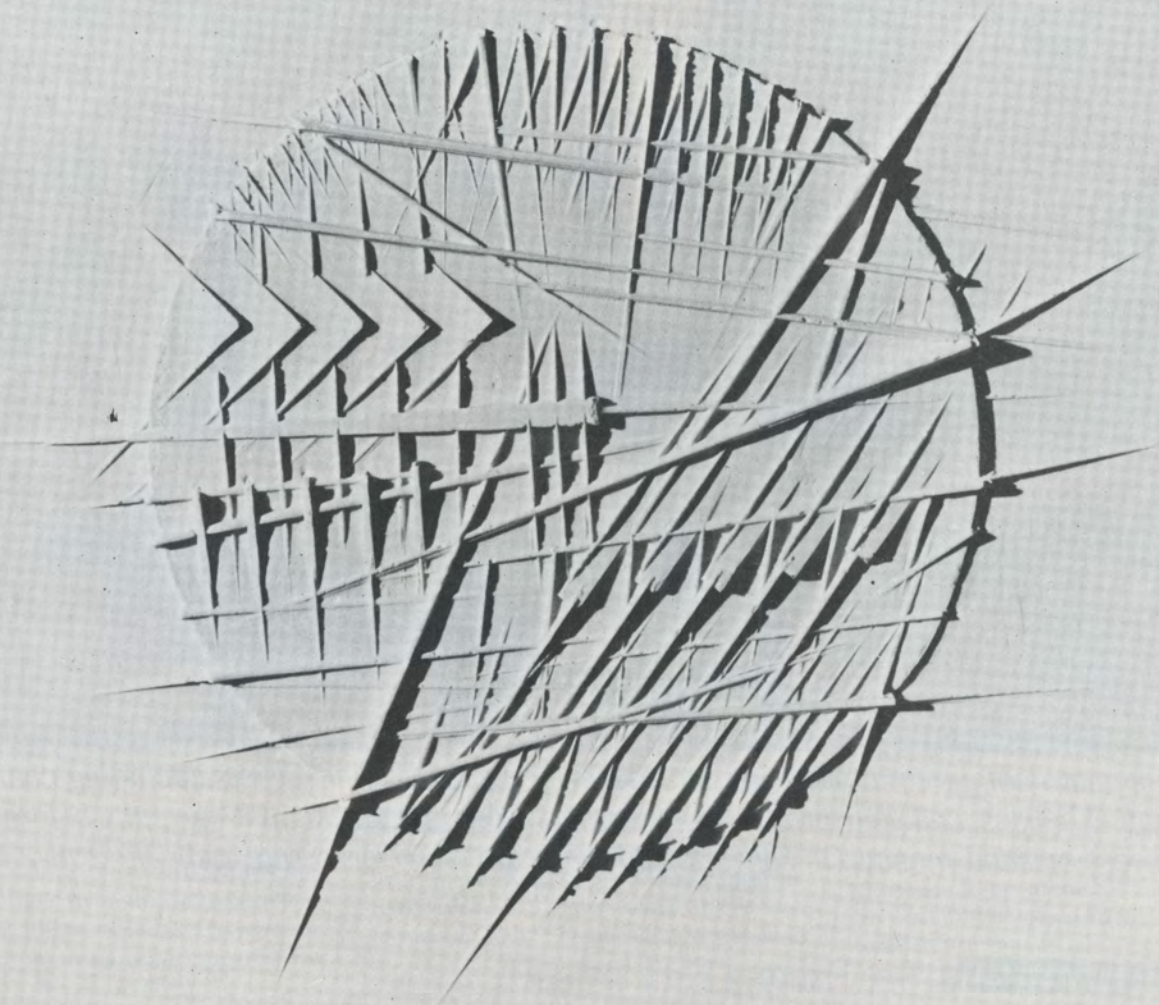
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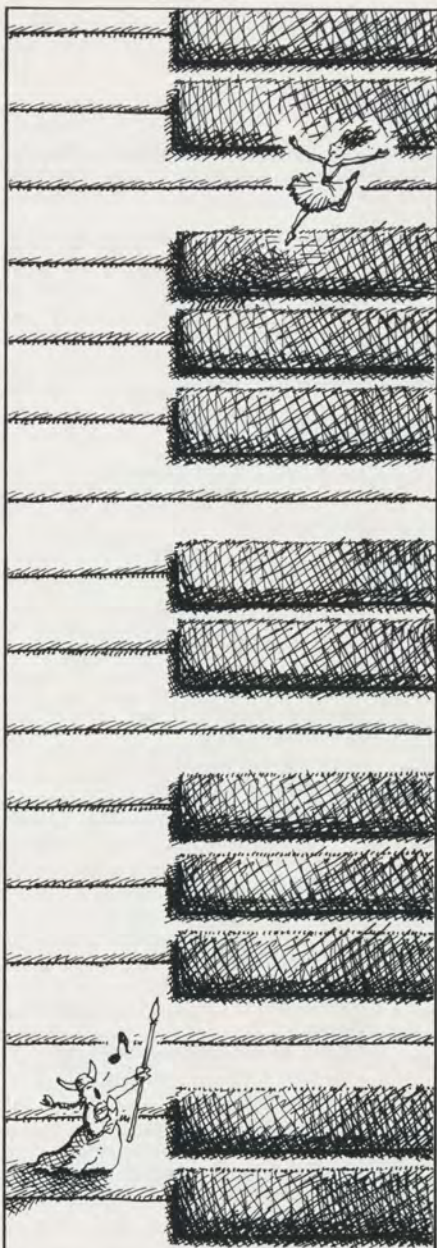
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Sennheiser Listening Devices

In order to increase the enjoyment of opera for hearing-impaired members of the audience, the War Memorial Opera House has recently installed a new Sennheiser Listening System. Wireless headphones and induction devices (adaptable to hearing aids) are available at the north end of the main lobby. A rental fee of \$2.00 is requested, in addition to an ID deposit, such as a drivers license or major credit card. The devices can be used in any seat in the Opera House.



Opera House Tours

Sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild, tours of the War Memorial Opera House will be conducted every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on the following dates:
Sunday, November 9
Wednesday, November 19
Sunday, November 23
Thursday, December 4
Saturday, December 6
The cost is \$2 for Guild members (limit 2 tickets per member); non-members \$5. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432.



If You Drive To The Opera . . .

. . . and park in the Performing Arts Garage, remember that you can avoid some of the traffic congestion by using the Gough Street entrance to the facility (between Fulton and Grove).



Services

Bus Service Many operagoers who live in the northern section of San Francisco are regular patrons of the Municipal Railway special "Opera Bus."

This bus is added to Muni's north-bound 47 line following all evening performances of the Opera, Symphony, Ballet and other major events. The service is also provided for all Saturday and Sunday matinees.

Look for this bus, marked "47 Special," after each performance in the bus zone at Van Ness Avenue and Grove Street—across Van Ness from the Opera House. Its route is: North on Van Ness to Chestnut, then left to Divisadero where it turns left to Union. It continues on Union over Russian Hill to Columbus, then left to Powell—then right to the end of the line at North Point.

Food Service The lower lounge in the Opera House is now open two hours prior to curtain time for hot buffet service. Patrons arriving before the front doors open will be admitted at the Carriage Entrance.

Refreshments are served in the box tier on the mezzanine floor, the grand tier and dress circle levels during all performances.

Emergency Telephone The telephone number 431-4370 may be used by patrons for emergencies only during performances. Before the performance, patrons anticipating possible emergencies should leave their seat number at the Nurse's station in the lower lounge, where the emergency telephone is located.

Watch That Watch Patrons are reminded to please check that their digital watch alarms are switched OFF before the performance begins.

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

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

Unused Tickets Patrons who are unable to attend a performance may make a worthwhile contribution to the San Francisco Opera Association by returning their tickets to the Box Office or telephoning (415) 864-3330. Donors will receive a receipt for the full value, but the amount is not considered a contribution to the fund drive or fulfillment of a fund drive pledge.

Opera glasses are available for rent in the lobby. Please note that no cameras or tape recorders are permitted in the Opera House.

Children of any age attending a performance must have a ticket.

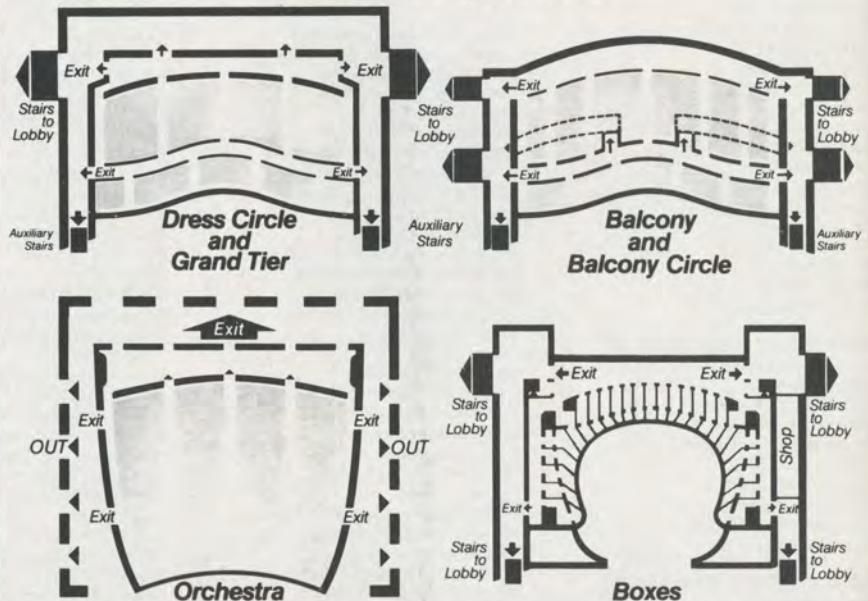
Management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

For lost and found information, inquire at check room No. 3 or call (415) 621-6600, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. For the safety and comfort of our audience all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at the Opera House cloakrooms.

Taxi Service Patrons needing a cab at the end of the performance should reserve one with the doorman at the Taxi Entrance before the end of the final intermission.

Performing Arts Center Tours Tours of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center, which include the War Memorial Opera House, the Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall and the Herbst Theatre take place as follows: Mondays, 10:00-2:30 on the hour and half hour. Davies Hall only: Wednesday 1:30/2:30—Saturday 12:30/1:30. All tours leave from Davies Symphony Hall, Grove Street entrance. General \$3.00—Seniors/Students \$2.00. For further information, please call (415) 552-8338.

San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center War Memorial Opera House



Patrons, Attention Please! Fire Notice: There are sufficient exits in this building to accommodate the entire audience. The exit indicated by the lighted "EXIT" sign nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In case of fire please do not run—walk through that exit. (Refer to diagrams.)

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Tonight's performance of *Faust* will feature Paul Plishka in the role of Méphistophélès replacing Robert Lloyd, who is indisposed.



Paul Plishka, leading bass of the Metropolitan Opera since 1967, is currently singing Padre Guardiano, the role of his 1976 San Francisco Opera debut, in *La Forza del Destino*. During the 1982 Summer Season, the Pennsylvania native returned here as Zaccaria in *Nabucco* and in 1984 sang Silva in *Ernani*. He began his operatic career by winning first place in the Baltimore Opera Auditions and soon after joined the National Company of the Metropolitan Opera, becoming a member of the parent company with his official debut in *La Gioconda*. Since that time he has performed over 40 leading roles with the Met and has appeared frequently with numerous North American opera companies including those of Philadelphia, Houston, Pittsburgh, San Diego, New Orleans, Chicago, Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver. In Europe he has been applauded at La Scala, Covent Garden, the Hamburg Staatsooper, the Paris Opera and Munich Staatsoper, as well as the companies of Berlin and Zurich and the festivals in Salzburg and Spoleto. His 1985-86 itinerary began with performances at the Lyric Opera of Chicago where he sang *Otello* and Handel's *Samson* and joined Joan Sutherland in Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*. He then appeared at the Metropolitan Opera in *Don Carlo*, *Aida*, *Simon Boccanegra* and *Roméo et Juliette*. Most recently, Plishka participated in performances of Verdi's Requiem and *I Lombardi* with the La Scala company at the EXPO '86 international festival in Vancouver. His future engagements include *Aida*, *Boris Godunov* and *Roméo et Juliette* at the Met and Verdi's Requiem with the Rotterdam Philharmonic in Amsterdam. He has also appeared with the orchestras of New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Toronto and Cleveland. Plishka's impressive discography includes recordings of *Norma*, *Faust*, Massenet's *Le Cid*, *Turandot*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Verdi's Requiem and, soon to be released, *La Forza del Destino*.

Friday, October 10, 1986.

Today's performance of *Faust* will feature Luis Lima in the title role replacing the previously announced Peter Dvorský, who is ill.



Argentina-born **Luis Lima** returns to San Francisco Opera as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, a role in which he won great acclaim at the Metropolitan Opera, in Buenos Aires and Vienna, and here during the 1983 Summer Season. In addition, he assumed on short notice the title role in four performances of *Faust*. The tenor made his highly praised San Francisco Opera debut as Pinkerton in the 1980 Fall Season production of *Madama Butterfly*, and was last seen here during the 1984 Fall Season, when he appeared as Don José in *Carmen* and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. His first operatic engagement was as Pinkerton in Lisbon, followed by appearances there as Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Lima's success in these roles led to engagements in Mainz, Stuttgart, Munich, Paris and Barcelona, where he sang the lead in Donizetti's *Gemma di Vergy*. It was in that role that he made his triumphant American debut at Carnegie Hall in 1976 opposite Montserrat Caballé in a performance that was also recorded. That same season he bowed with New York City Opera in *Madama Butterfly* and *La Traviata*, and it was in the last-mentioned work that he made his Metropolitan Opera debut as Alfredo during the 1978-79 season, when he also appeared as Pinkerton at the Met and in *La Bohème*, *Rigoletto* and *Faust* at the New York City Opera. The next few seasons saw Lima in Montreal, Nancy, Mannheim, Buenos Aires, Monte Carlo, Frankfurt, Las Palmas, Toulouse, Australia, Geneva, Hamburg, Barcelona and at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is now recognized in the world's great opera houses, and his schedule for the 1985-86 season included appearances in *La Traviata* at the Met (including the national broadcast), *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in San Diego, *Faust* at Covent Garden and in Vienna, *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Rome, *Carmen* in Cologne, *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Stuttgart and *Simon Boccanegra* in Vienna and Naples. His discography includes the world premiere recording of Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore* with Joan Sutherland.

October 22, 25, 30; November 2, 1986.

Today's performance of *Faust* will feature Justino Díaz in the role of Méphistophélès replacing Robert Lloyd, who is ill.



Justino Díaz is Méphistophélès in *Faust*, a role he has sung to great acclaim throughout the United States and Europe. After making his San Francisco Opera debut in 1978 in the title role of *Don Giovanni*, he returned to the Company during the 1982 Fall Season as Scarpia in *Tosca*, the role he also sang with San Francisco Opera during the 1979 tour to the Philippines. A frequent guest artist at the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden and the opera houses of Vienna, Munich and Hamburg, the Puerto Rico-born bass made his professional debut at 17 in a San Juan production of Menotti's *The Telephone*. After studying at the New England Conservatory, he won the 1963 Metropolitan Opera Auditions, resulting in a Met contract, and made an auspicious New York debut in a concert performance of *I Puritani* with Joan Sutherland. National recognition came when he was chosen to sing the role of Antony in the world premiere of Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* opposite Leontyne Price in the 1966 opening of the new Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center. He also sang a leading role in the 1971 world premiere of Ginastera's *Beatriz Cenci*, the first opera to be performed at the Kennedy Center. His major roles at the Met have included Procida in *I Vespri Siciliani*, the title roles of *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Méphistophélès, Ramfis in *Aida*, Count Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, and Maometto II in *The Siege of Corinth*, the vehicle of his 1969 La Scala debut. At the New York City Opera, his assignments have included the four villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Scarpia, and the title roles of *Attila*, *Don Giovanni* and *Julius Caesar*. He once performed three different Mephisto works—Gounod's *Faust* in New York, Boito's *Mefistofele* in Barcelona and Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* in Pittsburgh—within a 10-month period. Recent engagements include the title role of *The Marriage of Figaro* with the Berlin Opera on tour to Los Angeles, the title role of *The Barber of Seville* with the Rome Opera, and Escamillo at the Met. Future assignments include *Carmen* in Vienna, Naples and Rome, *Otello* at Covent Garden, *Macbeth* in Pittsburgh and *Faust* in New Orleans. Díaz was seen as Sparafucile in a national "Live from the Met" telecast of *Rigoletto*, and portrayed Escamillo in the film of Karajan's Salzburg production of *Carmen*. He can currently be seen as Iago in Zeffirelli's film version of *Otello*. His recordings include Rossini's *L'Assedio di Corinto*, Massenet's *Thaïs* and Handel's *Solomon*.

October 22, 25, 30; November 2, 1986.

