

Macbeth

1986

Wednesday, November 19, 1986 8:00 PM

Saturday, November 22, 1986 8:00 PM

Tuesday, November 25, 1986 8:00 PM

Saturday, November 29, 1986 8:00 PM

Tuesday, December 2, 1986 8:00 PM

Thursday, December 4, 1986 7:30 PM

Sunday, December 7, 1986 2:00 PM

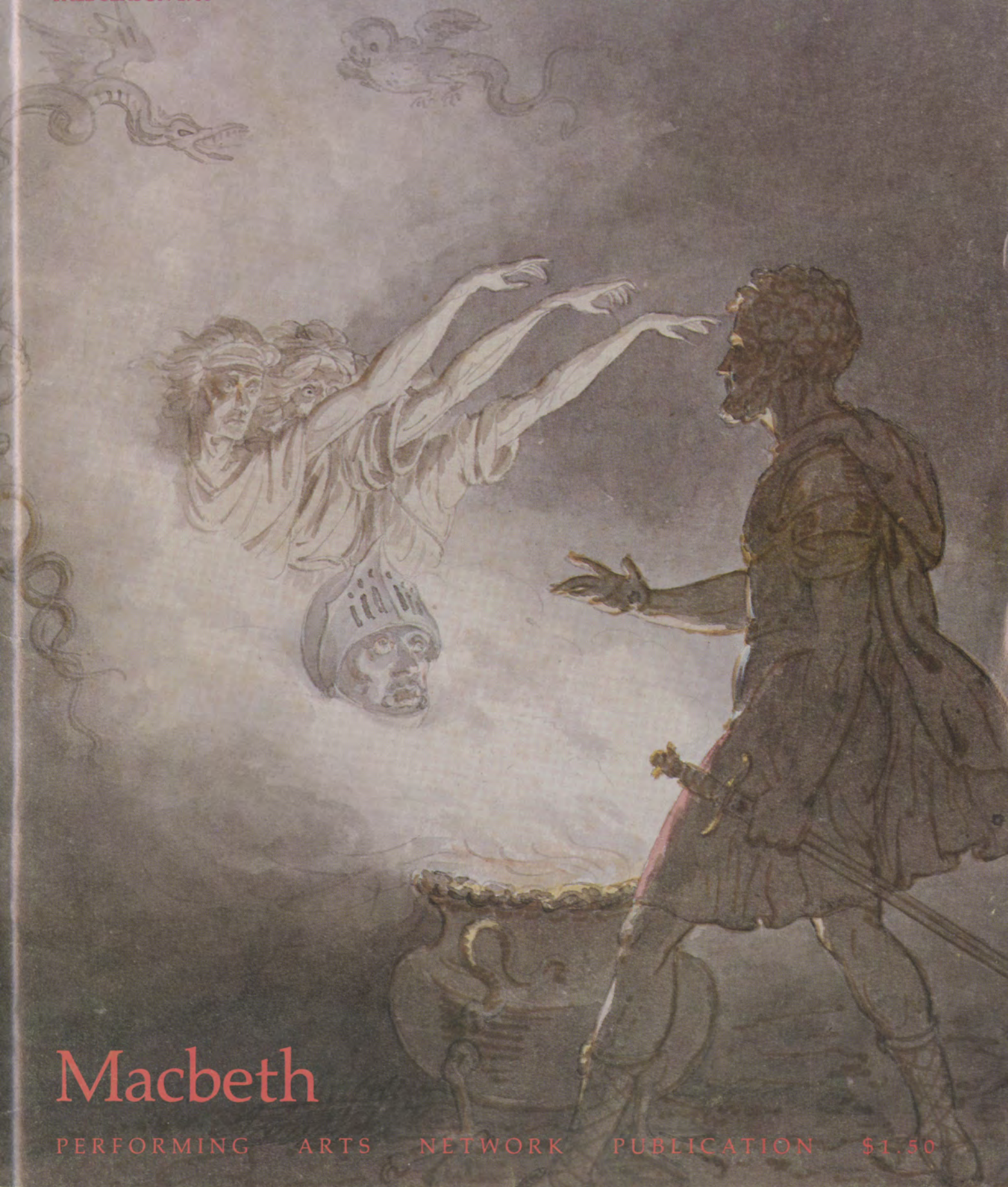
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San Francisco Opera Archives

# San Francisco Opera

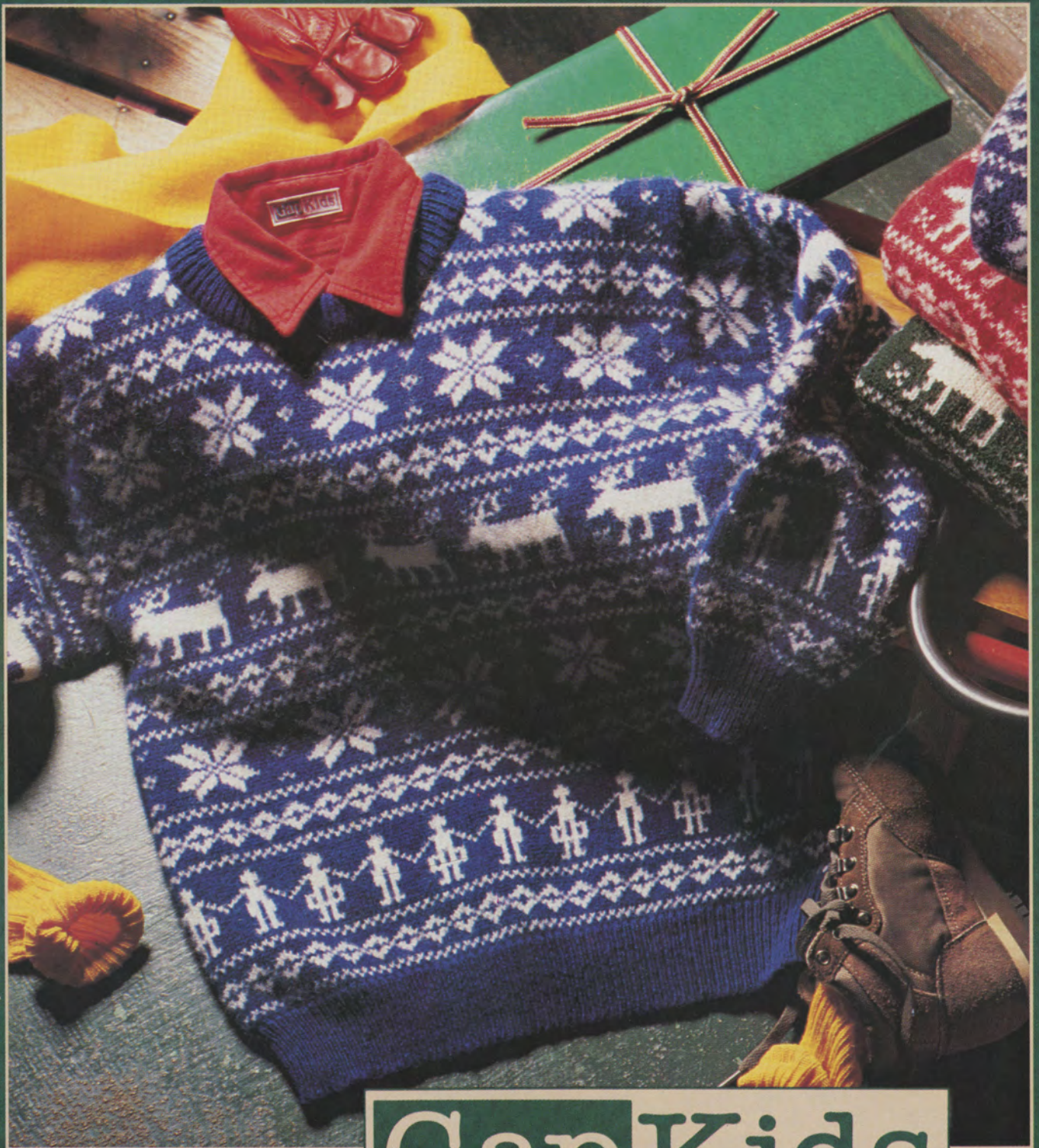
FALL SEASON 1986



## Macbeth

PERFORMING ARTS NETWORK PUBLICATION \$1.50





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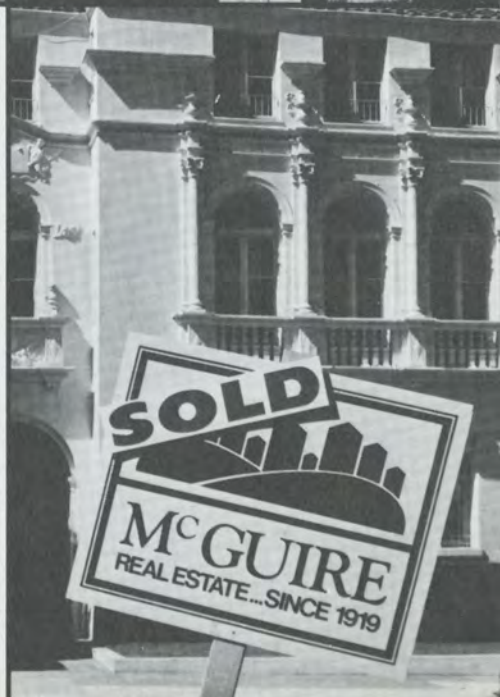
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# San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

## Macbeth

FALL SEASON 1986

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Noted Verdi scholar returns to the pages of the San Francisco Opera magazine with another of his illuminating articles.
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### COVER:

William Marshall Craig (fl. 1788-1828)  
*Macbeth and the Apparition of the Armed Head*,  
c. 1820  
Pen and brown and grey wash, and watercolor  
on 'wove' paper,  
11 1/16 x 8 15/16 in.  
Yale Center for British Art  
Paul Mellon Fund

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE is a Performing Arts Network Publication, Gilman Kraft, President. Publishing and Sales Representation Theater Publications Inc., Michel Pisani, President, Florence Quartararo, Vice-President. Account Executives Lizanne Leyburn and Helen Parnisi. National Sales Representation Performing Arts Network, Irwin Fries, National Sales Director.

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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.

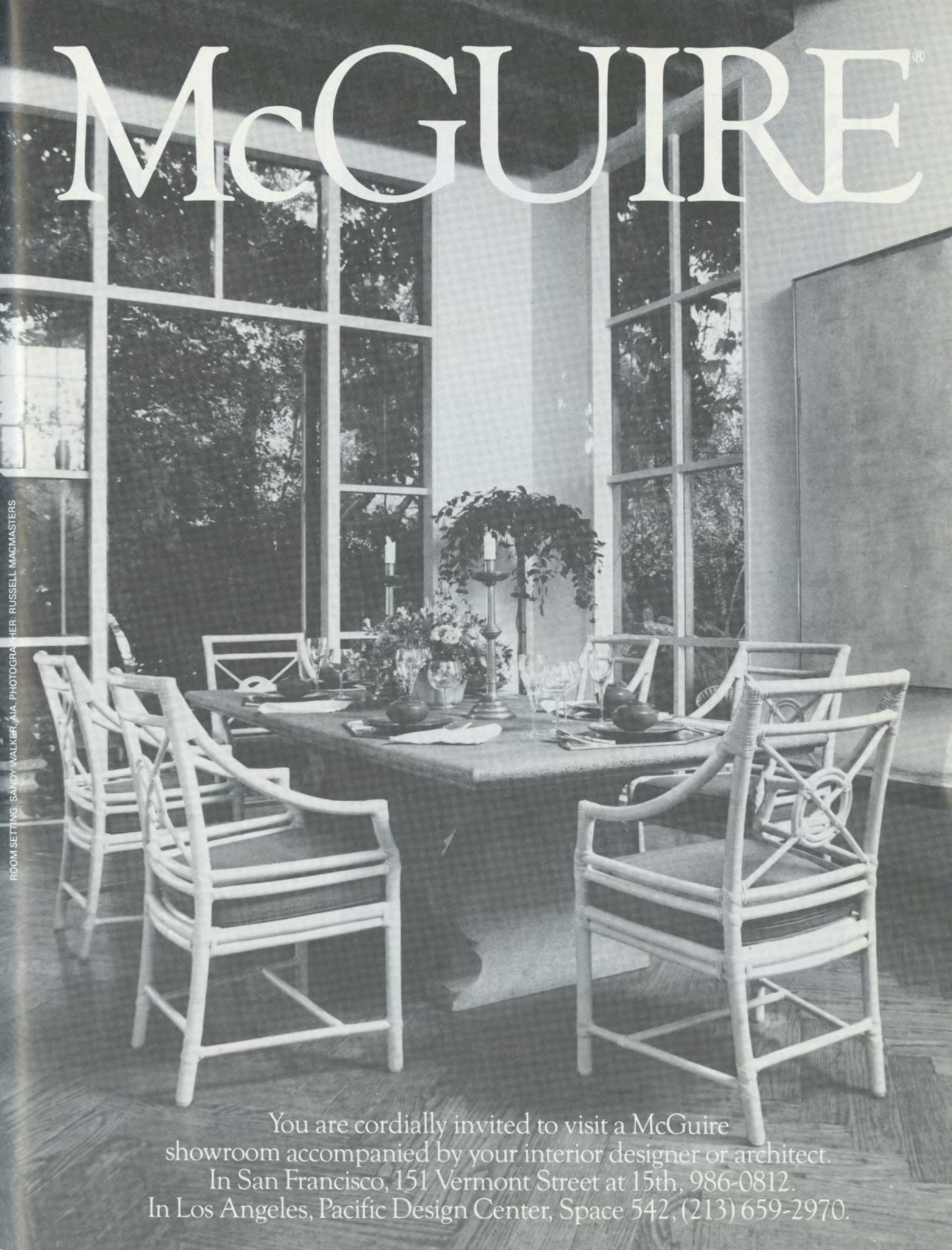
A very special opera season is about to begin. It continues a tradition of prominence that is sometimes taken for granted. Maintenance of this tradition, such an important part of what makes life in the Bay Area so special, requires dedication. We encourage and urge you to give us your continuing or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

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



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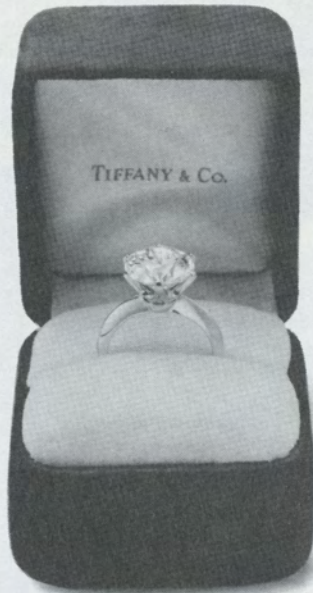




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Yes



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# General Director's Message

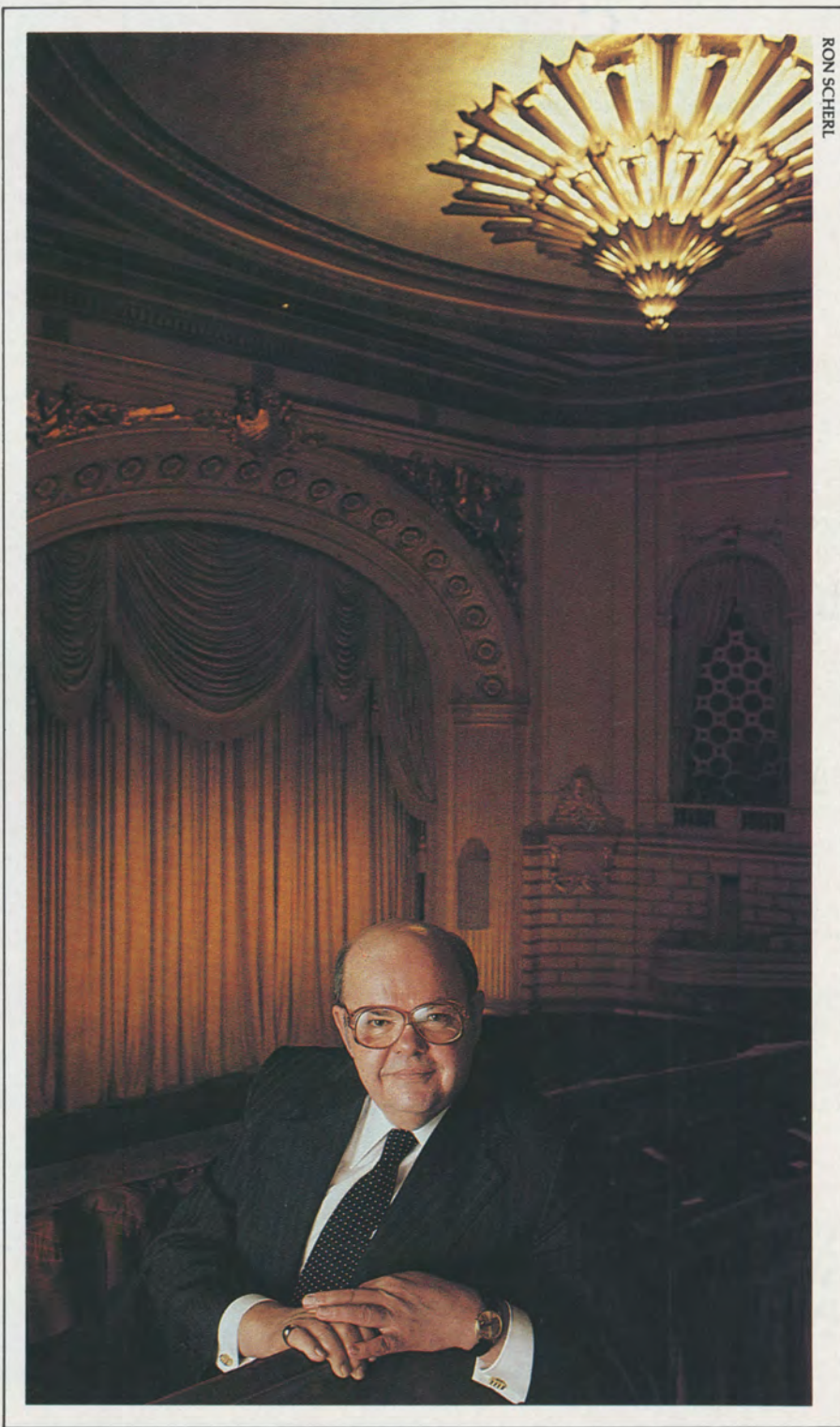
As we begin San Francisco Opera's 64th annual Fall Season, I would like to share with our audiences several thoughts regarding the direction our Company is taking.

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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# San Francisco Opera

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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Wednesday, October 29, 7:00  
**Die Meistersinger** Wagner

Thursday, October 30, 8:00  
**Faust** Gounod

Friday, October 31, 8:00  
**La Bohème** Puccini

Saturday, November 1, 7:00  
**Die Meistersinger** Wagner

Sunday, November 2, 2:00  
**Faust** Gounod

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/  
Sulich

*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  
Greenawald, Chen, S. Patterson, Cowdrick;  
Araiza, G. Quilico\*, Paul\*, Corazza, Malis,  
Pederson, Delavan, Maxham  
Fournet/Mansouri/Mitchell/George/Munn

*This production was originally made possible by  
the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and the  
late James D. Robertson.*

*The revival of this production is made possible by  
a deeply appreciated gift from Mr. and Mrs. J.  
Frederick Kohlenberg.*

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  
**Macbeth** Verdi

Friday, December 5, 8:00  
**Eugene Onegin** Tchaikovsky

Saturday, December 6, 8:00  
**Manon** Massenet

Sunday, December 7, 2:00  
**Macbeth** Verdi

\*\*American opera debut  
\*San Francisco Opera debut

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Repertoire, casts and dates subject to change.

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### FAUST

Gounod/in French with English Supertitles  
Thursday, October 16, 1:00  
Thursday, October 30, 1:00

Matinee for Senior Citizens and Disabled  
Patrons  
Saturday, October 25, 1:00

## Music—Mad San Francisco: The Tivoli Opera House, 1875-1913

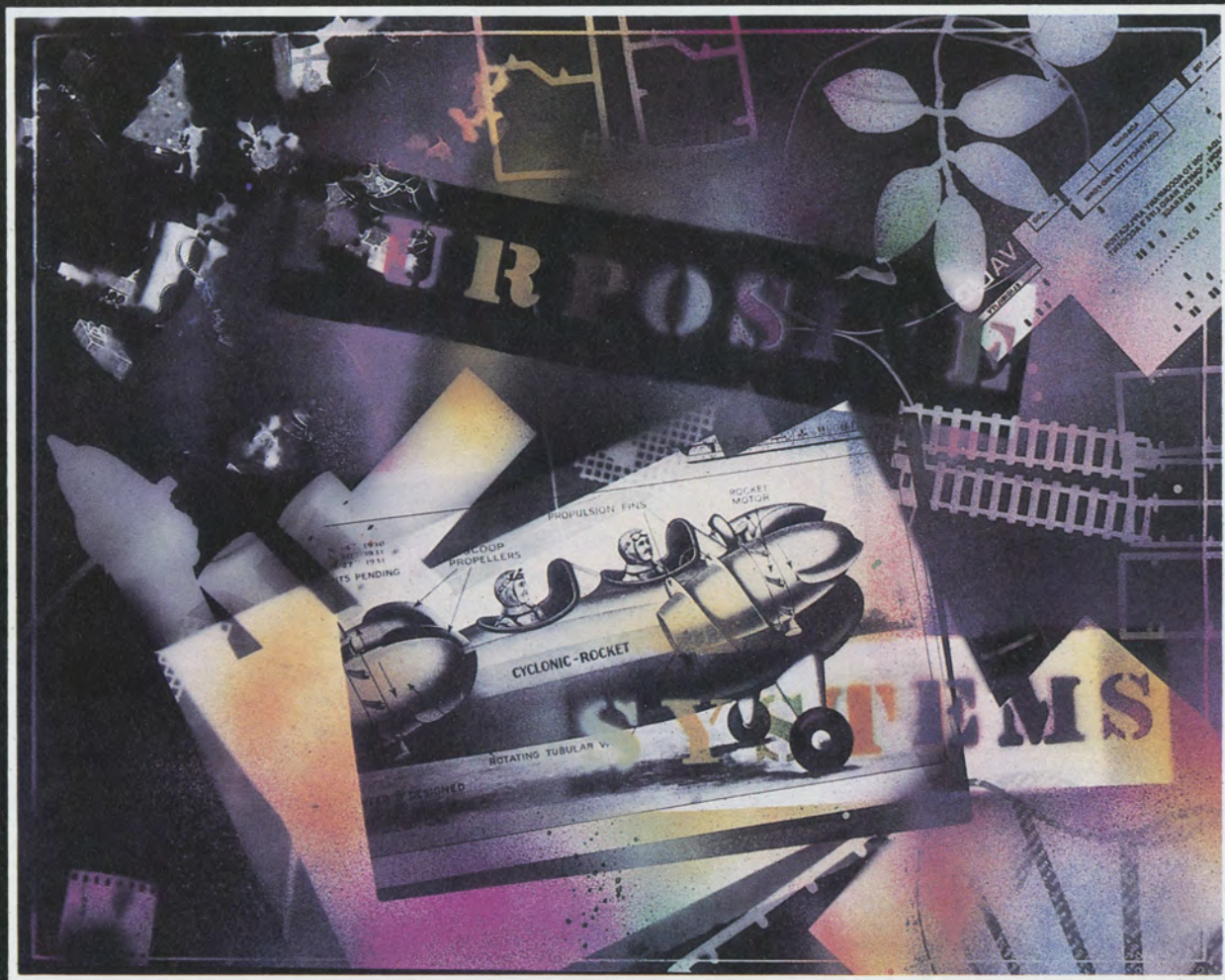
The Archives for the Performing Arts invites you to view its exhibit documenting one of San Francisco's most unique theaters—the Tivoli Opera House—currently on display in the War Memorial Opera House Museum. A small wooden firetrap which became famous all over the world, the Tivoli was the best-loved theater in San Francisco, presenting more than 4,000 performances up until the Great 1906 Earthquake. The millionaire came and sat beside the laborer, the common love of opera drawing both. Perhaps more than any other theater in America, the Tivoli made opera a democratic entertainment.

The War Memorial Opera House Museum is located on the south mezzanine (box) level, adjacent to the Opera Boutique.



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This show is occurring simultaneously with the museum traveling show at the **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art** (November 6 – January 11, 1987) and the **Los Angeles County Museum of Art** (February 26 – May 10, 1987). Certain works in the museum show are available for purchase through our gallery.

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The list of supernumeraries is on page 70.





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Robert Galbraith  
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Lev Rankov

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Linda Deutsch  
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Tien Wen Tu  
Sarah Usher

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Steven D'Amico  
Shinji Eshima  
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James Walker

### PICCOLO

James Walker

### OBOE

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Deborah Henry\*  
Raymond Dusté

### ENGLISH HORN

Raymond Dusté

### CLARINET

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Joanne Burke Eisler  
Gregory Dufford

### BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

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Robin Elliott

### CONTRABASSOON

Robin Elliott

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Timothy Wilson

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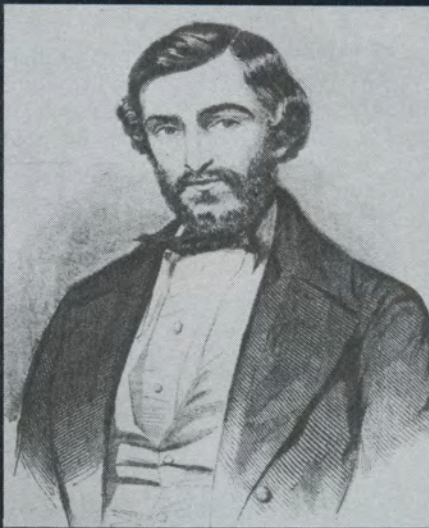




*Pier Luigi Pizzi's staging of Verdi's Macbeth, as seen in 1982 at the Théâtre Musical de Paris.*



# MACBETH



Giuseppe Verdi in 1847, after an engraving by Geoffroy.

By JULIAN BUDDEN

"Not all of it is distinguished, but there are moments of true splendor. Lady Macbeth's cabaletta and drinking song may leave us cold; but once the drama is whetted and the passions flame up, Verdi as always proclaims himself a genius of the first order. No-one can touch him for dramatic impetus. His lion's claw leaves indelible marks everywhere. . . Let us remember that a Verdi opera of the second rank is always worth more than a good opera by anyone else."


A Verdi opera of the second rank! Quite a few hackles would rise today at that description of *Macbeth*. But when those words were spoken, in an interview with a Roman journalist in 1932, the opera was certainly not the repertory work that it has since become. In his life and works of the composer, published the year before, Francis Toye could dismiss it as "an uncommonly interesting failure." The musician quoted above was in no sense a Verdi specialist. His name was Richard Strauss.

Opinion regarding Verdi's first Shakespeare opera have varied widely over the ages. That it would mark a new stage in his artistic development was clear to the composer himself from the start. By 1846, he already had nine operas to his credit. The last of them, *Attila*, had cost him such nervous fatigue that by the time of its premiere his health was in ruins; his doctors prescribed a complete rest and the cancellation of all immediate commitments. Part of the summer of that year he spent with the poet Andrea Maffei convalescing at the spa of Recoaro. Maffei had

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*Julian Budden, internationally renowned musicologist, is the author of a landmark three-volume series, The Operas of Verdi.*





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Marianna Barbieri-Nini, Verdi's first Lady Macbeth, in an engraving by M. Menghini.



Felice Varesi, the baritone who created the role of Macbeth, in a sketch by Kriehuber.

been a close friend and admirer for some time; it was he who had proposed the subject of *Attila*; and he would in due course provide the libretto for *I Masnadieri*. A noted translator of Shakespeare and Schiller, he may well have steered the composer's thought in the direction of "the Scottish play" (as superstitious actors still call it, convinced that to mention Shakespeare's original title brings bad luck). But his own translation of *Macbeth* lay a long way in the future, and the scheme that Verdi drew up that autumn was all his own work.

Years later, when a French critic of the opera accused Verdi of not knowing his Shakespeare, the composer was up in arms at once. "It may be that I have not done justice to Macbeth," he wrote to his Parisian publisher; "but that I don't know or understand or feel Shakespeare—no, by God, no! He is one of my favorite poets. I have had him in my hands since my earliest youth and I read him over and over again." Verdi knew no English. He became familiar with *Macbeth* in the version of Carlo Rusconi that had appeared in 1838—a clumsy, prose affair which stifles much of the original poetry. What gripped Verdi, however, was the drama and that wealth of psychological insight that never fails "the master of the human heart" (Verdi's words). "This tragedy is one of the greatest creations of man," he wrote to the librettist, Piave. "If we can't make something great out of it, let us at least try and do something out of the ordinary."

Francesco Maria Piave had risen to fame on Verdi's shoulders with the

immensely successful *Ernani* of 1844; he had come to the composer's rescue during the preparation for *Attila* when Solera, the original librettist, had failed to supply extra verses that were needed for the final act; and he had nursed Verdi "with truly fraternal devotion" during his illness. But their collaboration on *Macbeth* soon ran into difficulties. In Verdi's view, Piave never gave himself enough trouble to find precisely the right type of poetry that certain moments required ("the fact is that you've taken on too much work and I'm the one to suffer for it"). In the end, Maffei's help was enlisted; while Piave,

who, as librettist, would have been expected to act as stage director, was dropped from the production and his name omitted from the title page of the published vocal score. He was paid in full, however; and the last laugh was on Verdi, since, as he ruefully admitted later, the lines that excited most ridicule at the premiere were those of Maffei. But he never again turned to Piave for a Shakespearean project.

It is nowadays difficult to imagine the impact of *Macbeth* on the audience who first heard it at the Teatro della Pergola, Florence, on March 14th, 1847, especially since we normally hear the opera in its later version of 1865, in which Verdi rethought roughly a third of the music in the light of his own maturing style and of contemporary taste. Paradoxically, the passages that he deleted serve by their greater proximity to the current style of the 1840s only to emphasize the gap that separates Verdi's music from what was being written at the time. First, there is the abundance of minor tonality, unparalleled by anything in Donizetti or Mercadante. Then there is the scoring. In all his operas written for Italy, Verdi keeps to the standard orchestral forces available to the major theaters of the Peninsula; but even in his early works there is usually one number that will be scored for a handful of solo instruments of mutually con-



Verdi's *Macbeth* at the Paris Théâtre-Lyrique in 1865.





Inge Borkh as Lady Macbeth during the Sleepwalking Scene. San Francisco Opera, 1955.

trasted timbre—a Verdian specialty, this, for which the present writer can find precedents only in Mayr's *Alfredo il Grande* (1819) and Meyerbeer's *Il Crociato in Egitto* (1824). In each case, the effect is essentially decorative, like a jewel on a plain garment. In *Macbeth*, this principle is extended to serve a strictly dramatic purpose. The selective scoring to be found in the "dagger soliloquy," the grand duet following Duncan's murder, the "shew of kings" and the Sleepwalking Scene all serve to conjure up the eerie nocturnal ambience of the action. Verdi's *Macbeth*, like Shakespeare's, is a night piece.

Many of the innovations writers have traditionally ascribed to *Rigoletto* are to be found four years earlier in *Macbeth*. It was here that Verdi first began to explore the dimensions of recitative in the

interests of a continuously developing action. The separation of lyrical and declamatory elements prevailed longer in Italy than elsewhere; her composers were for the most part content to carry forward the action in conversational recitative and suspend it during the arias and ensembles, where the singers would mostly just come to the front of the stage and sing. From the start, Verdi aimed at a greater dramatic momentum through the comparative brevity and succinctness of his set pieces and the dynamic charge of his melodies. But the action still moved forward in jerks. In *Ernani*, for instance, the recitatives are reduced to a minimum; the opera achieves its pace through the succession of contrasted movements, each of them formal and finite in structure, with each singer expressing a single

state of mind. It is a method well enough suited to characters who never pause to reflect but merely vent their emotions, and Verdi will return to it in *Il Trovatore*. But it will not do for someone who allows his imagination to take full possession of him as does Macbeth. In the "dagger soliloquy" Verdi for the first time raises a recitative to the importance of an aria, as he will do later with *Rigoletto*'s "Pari siamo." Certain of its cadences will be echoed later still in *Otello*'s great solo "Dio, mi potevi scagliar." No less of an innovation is the "aria del sonnambulismo." Here, most composers would have written a kind of mad scene, like Amina's in Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, full of thematic reminiscences and culminating in a formal aria. Verdi floats it all on a single movement, the singer's line oscillating between the lyrical and the declamatory, while the accompaniment, no longer a mere pedestal for the vocal melody, evokes the restless unease of Lady Macbeth and her obsessive hand-washing gestures. The scenes of Banquo's ghost, of the apparitions and the "shew of kings" have a freedom of construction not to be found in Italian opera of the time, with few concessions to conventional ideas of melody. The same could be said of the duet "Fatal mia donna... un murmure," which follows the cut and thrust of Shakespeare's dialogue without ever broadening out into the usual static lyrical paragraphs. As the writer Massimo Mila justly observes, *Macbeth* marks the beginning of Verdi's emancipation from the tyranny of the tune.

Finally, there was the extraordinary care and attention that Verdi brought to every aspect of the production—singing, acting, scenery and staging. He insisted on period authenticity for the costumes. For the "shew of kings" he demanded the use of a magic lantern; and the necessary apparatus was hired at vast expense from Bologna and transported with some difficulty across the Apennines. The ghost of Banquo had to be seen rising into Macbeth's seat by means of a trapdoor; he should wear an ash-colored veil and the wounds should be visible upon his neck. Nor would Verdi hear of the ghost being played by an extra; it must be the singer of Banquo himself. But his prime concern was with the two principal singers, Felice Varesi (Macbeth) and Marianna Barbieri-Nini (his Lady). He sent Varesi his music piece-meal with detailed instructions as to



how it should be performed; and he kept both him and the prima donna working to within minutes of the public dress rehearsal. As late as in 1875 he told a Viennese journalist that it was in *Macbeth* that he, like Wagner, had first attempted to integrate music and drama in a new way.

"The opera was not a fiasco," Verdi reported after the first night. That was, if anything, an understatement; but the work had caused a certain amount of head-shaking amongst the intelligentsia of the Tuscan capital who found the subject lacking in appeal and the score too full of northern mists—a kind of *Freischütz manqué*. But the public soon took *Macbeth* to their hearts. A sure sign of its popularity was the fact that the great actress Adelaide Ristori soon afterwards took Shakespeare's Sleepwalking Scene—and, more rarely, the whole play—into her repertoire.

The opera traveled abroad as well. At Barcelona, we are told, it became a regular favorite during the 1850s, so that a baritone who had decided to skip the aria "Pieta, rispetto, amore" was not allowed by the audience to proceed until he had made good the omission. Plans were made at various times for a production in London; but they never came to fruition—which was probably fortunate since the leading critics, never very friendly towards Verdi, would doubtless have howled it down as the desecration of a national masterpiece. The nearest *Macbeth* came to Shakespeare's own country during the composer's lifetime was Dublin, where it was given in 1859. The contralto, Pauline Viardot García, sang the role of "Lady" (as Italians still call her) with transpositions of key that would have horrified Verdi. The conductor, Luigi Arditi, recalls that, when at the start of the Sleepwalking Scene the doctor appeared in conversation with the gentlewoman, a voice from the gallery called out, "Hello there, doctor; is it a boy or a girl?" Evidently an Irish audience was not overawed by the conjunction of Verdi and the Bard!

The idea of revising *Macbeth* for Paris, as he had revised *I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata* into *Jérusalem*, occurred to Verdi as early as 1852. The invitation to do so came this time not from the *Opéra* but from Léon Carvalho, director of the Théâtre-Lyrique, which had by then risen to become one of the leading Paris opera houses. Among the fruits of his enterpris-



LACKENBACH

Robert Weede and Inge Borkh, San Francisco Opera's first Macbeth couple. Before this season's staging, Verdi's first Shakespearean opera was performed thrice: in 1955, 1957 and 1967.

ing management had been Gounod's *Faust* (1859), Berlioz's *Les Troyens à Carthage* (1863) and a French *Traviata* (1864); and he counted on a French *Macbeth* as the chief attraction of 1865. Verdi was agreeable provided that he did not have to go to Paris for the production. The revision turned out to be more extensive than he had at first imagined ("to put it briefly, there are various pieces in it which are weak or without character, which is worse"). The first act was left untouched, apart from a few alterations to the grand duet. In Act II, he replaced a showy cabaletta for Lady Macbeth by the magnificent "La luce langue," and rendered Macbeth's hallucinations more powerful. He brought similar improvements to the scene of the apparitions in Act III, to which

he added a separate ballet greeting the arrival of Hecate; and he concluded the act with a duettino for the two principals ("Ora di morte") in place of the original cabaletta for Macbeth himself. The most radical changes were reserved for Act IV. It now opened with a new chorus of exiles to the same words as the old ("Patria oppressa"), a darkly impressive piece that foreshadows moments in the Requiem. The ending was also entirely new—a battle fugue followed by a victory chorus in place of a death speech for *Macbeth*. In the present version, therefore, Macbeth dies offstage, as in Shakespeare; but the solo of the 1847 score ("Mal per me, che m'affidai") is sometimes spliced in between the fugue and the chorus.

Despite a flood of reassuring tele-



grams from his French publisher, it soon became clear to Verdi that the new *Macbeth*, given on April 21, 1865, was not a success. "I thought I had done something passable," he wrote back, "but it seems I was mistaken." The fault was partly Carvalho's. Determined to enter into competition with the Opéra, where Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* was about to open, he attempted to give Verdi's work the appearance of a grand opera. He divided the four acts into five, and he hoped to elevate Macduff's role to the status of a principal by giving him part of Lady Macbeth's drinking song. This was quite contrary to Verdi's expressed wishes. ("Whatever you do to the part of Macduff you'll never make it very interesting. . . He has enough music for him to distinguish himself if he has a good voice; but he mustn't be given a note more.") No wonder that those who looked for grandeur and a sumptuous spectacle preferred the rival show at the Rue Le Peletier.



Leonie Rysanek was Lady Macbeth in San Francisco Opera's second, 1957, staging of the Verdi opus.

JONES

Even in its revised form, however, *Macbeth* hardly satisfied the Parisian appetite for novelty. For if the grand duet in Act I and the Sleepwalking Scene may have sounded as fresh and modern as when they were written, certain other numbers—Lady Macbeth's cavatina ("Vieni! T'affretta") and the murderers' chorus—would inevitably have shown their age, especially in the context of the new music that Verdi had written for the occasion. Much fun was poked at the naive march for stage band that announces the arrival of King Duncan and his suite. In a word, the *Macbeth* of 1865 was regarded as an unsatisfactory hybrid.

The reception that awaited it in Italy was not much better. "*Il Macbeth nuovo*" was first performed at La Scala, Milan, in 1874. The critical notices were little more than respectful and the opera's run was predictably short. Indeed, certain lesser theaters continued to revive the version of 1847. In the main, however, for a public familiar with the Verdi of *Aida* and *Don Carlos*, the works of his youth (*Ernani* excepted) held little interest. Even the composer himself, who had once declared *Macbeth* his own favorite amongst his operas, became indifferent to it once he had set out on the road to *Otello* and *Falstaff*. Bernard Shaw, a keen admirer of Verdi in defiance of his own Wagnerian principles, clearly knew not a note of the master's first Shakespearean essay.

Not until the Verdi renaissance that began in Germany during the 1920s did *Macbeth* find its way back into the repertory, to form one of the four pillars of the pre-*Rigoletto* canon along with *Nabucco*, *Ernani* and *Luisa Miller*. By now it was possible to perceive the fundamental unity of Verdi's style throughout his life, so that any superficial discrepancy between old and new elements in the score no longer seemed to matter. But it would be many years before anyone would dream of setting *Macbeth* on the same level as *Otello* and *Falstaff*. More recently, the pendulum of taste has swung in favor of the earlier work. The late Gabriele Baldini, in his capacity both as Shakespearean scholar and Verdi enthusiast, has pronounced "this recreation of Shakespeare" to be "far more vigorous and powerful than *Otello*, which is watered down by the preciousness of Boito." We are even asked to admire the march for stage band. "It is one of the opera's gems, but to understand it requires either a purity of heart or an extraordinary,



KRANZLER

Grace Bumbry portrayed Lady Macbeth at the San Francisco Opera in 1967.

almost perverse refinement. It is wasted on listeners accustomed to middle-class cultural values." "There is a touch of Thomas Hardy here in this sublime juxtaposition of rustic simplicity and tragic doom" (Godefroy).

All this is surely exaggerated. Just as one should never mistake mere musical elaboration for true genius, so it is pointless to read into simple music what is not there. Certainly Boito's verse is not to be compared with Shakespeare's; but in both *Otello* and *Falstaff* it allowed the composer to spread his wings in flights of lyrical poetry that lay beyond his reach in 1847 or even 1865. Nonetheless, the directness and concentration of *Macbeth* will always guarantee it a place in the affections of the Verdi-lover. "Let us at least do something out of the ordinary," the composer had written to Piave. And this they certainly did. ■



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## ARTIST PROFILES



SHIRLEY VERRETT

An American artist of international stature, **Shirley Verrett** portrays Lady Macbeth, one of her celebrated roles and one that she sang when the La Scala company made its historic visit to the Kennedy Center in 1976. She had previously triumphed in the same opera with that company when it opened its 1975-76 season in Milan. Her performance in this role has been televised from La Scala to Europe and America, and was also recorded. In addition, she recently committed to disc a new interpretation of the part for a film version of *Macbeth*, which will be the official opera entry in next year's Cannes Film Festival. One of the few singers whose range simultaneously spans the contralto/mezzo-soprano and soprano repertoires, she made her Company debut during the 1972 season, creating a sensation as Selika in Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* and Amneris in *Aida*. In 1975 she appeared as Azucena in two performances of *Il Trovatore* and returned in 1978 in the title role of *Norma*. She opened San Francisco Opera's 1980 Fall Season as Dalila opposite Plácido Domingo in a production of *Samson et Dalila* that was televised nationally. She most recently appeared on the stage of the War Memorial last summer, in a critically acclaimed concert with soprano Grace Bumbry. A native of New Orleans, Miss Verrett made her operatic debut at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, as Carmen, a role that was to serve as the vehicle of her subsequent debuts at the Bolshoi ('63), New York City Opera ('64) and the Metropolitan Opera ('68). In 1966 she bowed at Covent Garden as Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and her numerous appearances there have showcased her in most of the many roles in her repertoire, including Dalila in another televised production of *Samson et Dalila* that was

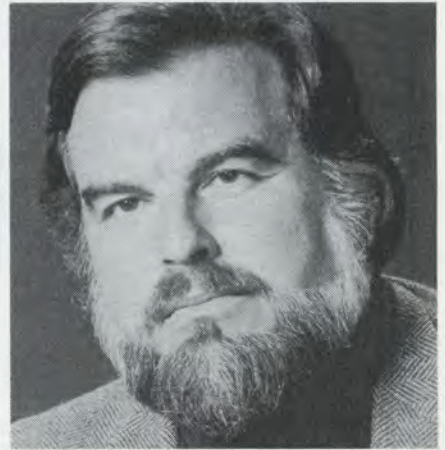


DEBORAH VOIGT

also released on videocassette. Dalila was the role of her Scala debut in 1970, the same year as her Vienna Staatsoper debut as Eboli in *Don Carlo*. She made her Paris Opera debut as Azucena in 1973, and that same year made international headlines after singing the two leading roles of Cassandre and Didon in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*. In 1975 she appeared at the Met as Norma, making her one of only four singers in history to sing that role as well as that of Adalgisa in the same opera. Her first Tosca was sung at the Metropolitan in 1978 and was televised nationally. She most recently added the title role of Cherubini's *Medée* to her repertoire, singing the role in the original French to great acclaim in Paris and Florence, and which she will repeat in Boston next spring. Miss Verrett appears regularly in all of the world's major houses, and is renowned as a recitalist and concert artist as well. In addition to her many opera and concert recordings, she is the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the prestigious Commander of Arts and Letters from France in 1984.

Making her San Francisco Opera debut as the Celestial Voice in *Don Carlos*, soprano **Deborah Voigt** also appears this season as the old shepherdess in *Jenufa* and a Lady-in-Waiting in *Macbeth*. A 1985 participant in the Merola Opera Program, she won the First Prize Schwabacher Memorial Award in the Opera Center's 1985 Grand Finals and began her professional operatic career in the fall of 1985 as Donna Anna in Western Opera Theater's national touring production of *Don Giovanni*. She is currently an Adler Fellow with the Opera Center and was seen as Leonora in the Showcase presentation of the American professional premiere of Hindemith's *The*

## MACBETH



TIMOTHY NOBLE

*Long Christmas Dinner*. A native of Southern California and an alumna of California State University at Fullerton, Miss Voigt has won numerous vocal competitions, including the Metropolitan Opera Auditions and the National Association of Teachers of Singing competition. She is a frequent concert soloist, having performed in Bach's *St. John Passion*, the Glorias of Vivaldi and Poulenc, Handel's *Messiah* and the Requiems of Mozart, Brahms and Verdi. She made her Bay Area concert debut in Shostakovich's Fourteenth Symphony with the Chamber Symphony of San Francisco. Upcoming engagements include the title role of *Aida* with the Stockton Symphony and Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* with the Riverside Opera.

Baritone **Timothy Noble** returns to San Francisco Opera to sing the title role of *Macbeth* for the first time in his career. He was most recently seen here last fall as the Duke of Albany in *Lear*, a role he performed for his 1981 Company debut. Earlier that year, he made his Spring Opera Theater debut as Agamemnon in John Eaton's *The Cry of Clytaemnestra*, the role he created for the work's world premiere at Indiana University and repeated in the New York premiere with the Brooklyn Philharmonia. He returned to San Francisco Opera for the 1983 Summer Season, in which he sang Schaubard in *La Bohème* and Moralès in *Carmen*. In 1984, he appeared as Shalokvity in the acclaimed Fall Season production of *Khovanshchina*. He recently won praise for creating the role of Prospero in the world premiere of Eaton's *The Tempest* at Santa Fe. Other engagements have included the title role of *Falstaff* with the opera companies of Memphis, Syracuse, and India-





JOHN TOMLINSON

napolis, the title role of *Rigoletto* at the Colorado Springs Opera Festival, and the role of Tonio in *Pagliacci* at the Lake George Opera Festival. In 1982, he made his Houston Grand Opera debut as Ping in *Turandot*, and has since returned as Germont in *La Traviata*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, and the title role of *The Barber of Seville*. He sang the role of Miller in *Luisa Miller* at the Grand Théâtre de Nancy in France for his European debut in the spring of 1982, and returned to Europe the following year for appearances with the Frankfurt Opera, the Vienna Festival and the Opéra-Comique in Paris. Recent engagements include the title role of *Falstaff* for Netherlands Opera, and the title role of *Simon Boccanegra* for the Glyndebourne Festival. Next year, Noble is scheduled to return to Houston for *Falstaff* and *Turandot*, in addition to a concert version of *Simon Boccanegra* in London's Albert Hall, and performances of Orff's *Carmina Burana* with Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony. He will make his Metropolitan Opera debut during the 1987-88 season as Shaklovity in *Khovanshchina*.

**John Tomlinson** returns to San Francisco Opera as Banquo in *Macbeth*. The English bass made his highly acclaimed Company debut in 1983 as Pimen in *Boris Godunov*, returned the following year to sing Ramfis in *Aida* and again in 1985 for the roles of Hunding and Hagen in *The Ring of the Nibelung*. Since his 1974 English National Opera debut he has been heard with that company in a wide variety of roles, including Ramfis, Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the title role of *Boris Godunov* and Colline in *La Bohème*, as well as Hunding and Hagen. In 1978 he made his debut at Covent Garden, where



VLADIMIR POPOV

in 1981 he sang Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* with Joan Sutherland. Other Covent Garden productions in which he has appeared include *Semele*, *The Rake's Progress*, *La Bohème*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and Peter Maxwell Davies's *Taverner*. He made his American opera debut in 1983 as King Henry in *Lohengrin* in San Diego, where he also performed in *L'Enfance du Christ* in 1984. That year also saw his Paris Opera debut as Banquo and performances in Haydn's *Creation* at Aix-en-Provence and in the Verdi Requiem for the BBC. Last season Tomlinson returned to Covent Garden for performances of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and later appeared in *Faust* as Méphistophélès and as Moses in Rossini's *Mosè in Egitto* with the English National Opera. Earlier this year, he made his Pittsburgh Opera debut as Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, followed by appearances with Opera North in *Faust*. Tomlinson's future engagements include Pimen in *Boris Godunov* at the Paris Opera, *Der Rosenkavalier* in the Netherlands, *Billy Budd* with the Scottish Opera and *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* with the Deutsche Oper Berlin on that Company's tour of Japan. His recent recordings include Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*, and Handel's *Hercules* and *Alcina*.

Russian-born tenor **Vladimir Popov** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Macduff in *Macbeth*. Acclaimed as an exponent of the dramatic tenor repertoire, he made his highly successful American debut in the 1982-83 season as Dick Johnson in Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* in Portland and Seattle, followed by performances of *The Queen of Spades* in Philadelphia which were telecast nationally. In 1984 Popov made his Metropolitan Opera debut as Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* and later that season appeared as Cavaradossi in

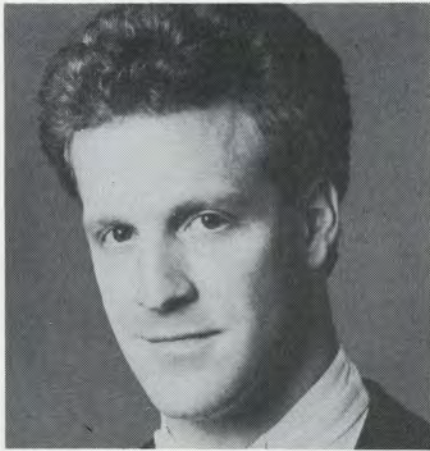


DANIEL HARPER

*Tosca* and as Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra*. In 1985, after performances of *Eugene Onegin* and *Ernani* at the Met, he made his European debut in *Tosca* with the Netherlands Opera followed by a return to the Met as Don José in *Carmen*, Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and as Prince Khovansky in Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*. This season's engagements include *La Fanciulla del West* at the Verona Arena, *Tosca* in Seattle and San Diego, *Cavalleria Rusticana* in Cleveland with the Met touring company, and *Boris Godunov* in New York with the Met.

Tenor **Daniel Harper** sings four roles this fall: Don Curzio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Ulrich Eisslinger in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Parpignol in *La Bohème*, and Malcolm in *Macbeth*. He made his Company debut in *Aida* during the 1984 Summer Season and returned that fall as Don Riccardo in *Ernani* and Borsa in *Rigoletto*. His 1985 Company credits included Altoum in *Turandot*, Dr. Caius in the family performances of *Falstaff*, Maintop in *Billy Budd* and the Innkeeper in *Der Rosenkavalier*. This past summer he appeared as Normanno in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. A member of the 1983 Merola Opera Program, he sang the title role in the Stern Grove performance of *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly*, a role he also performed on Western Opera Theater's 1983 nationwide tour. As an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center for two years, Harper sang the role of Grimoaldo in Handel's *Rodelinda* for the 1985 Showcase series, and that same year made an unscheduled debut with the San Francisco Symphony when he was called upon to replace an ailing colleague as tenor soloist in the Verdi Requiem conducted by Edo de Waart. A graduate of North Park College in Illinois, he has extensive concert credits

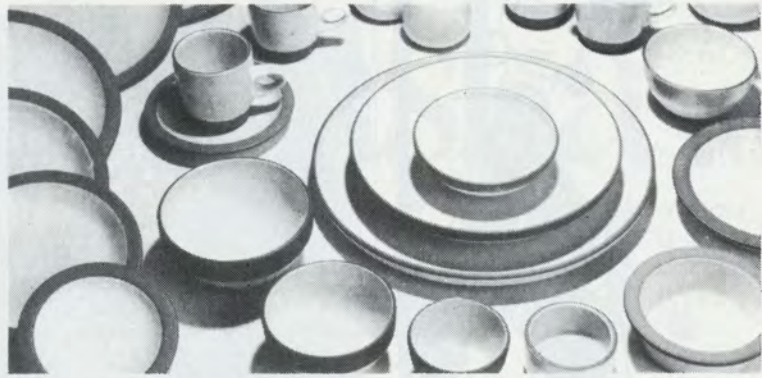




PHILIP SKINNER

in the Chicago area, including performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Handel's *Messiah*, the Mozart Requiem, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, and a recording of Schönberg's *Moses und Aron* with the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti. He recently sang his first Don José in *Carmen* with the Stockton Symphony.

Bass-baritone **Philip Skinner** undertakes five roles this season: a Monk in *Don Carlos*, Alcalde in *La Forza del Destino*, Méphistophélès in the student matinee performances of *Faust*, Zaretsky in *Eugene Onegin*, and a Doctor in *Macbeth*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut as Quinault in the 1985 Fall Season production of *Adriana Lecouvreur*, and appeared as Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* during the 1986 Summer Season. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he appeared in the 1986 Showcase performances of Hindemith's *There and Back* and *The Long Christmas Dinner*. As a participant in the 1985 Merola Opera Program, he portrayed Méphistophélès in *Faust* and the title role of *Don Giovanni*, going on to tour with Western Opera Theater in the latter role. He has sung with Kentucky Opera, the Columbus Symphony, the Savannah Symphony, and at the San Antonio Festival in such roles as Timur and the Mandarin in *Turandot*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Don Fernando in *Fidelio*, and the King of Egypt in *Aida*. A graduate of Northwestern University, Skinner received his master's degree from Indiana University, where he performed in several productions. His concert credits include Haydn's *The Seasons*, *The Creation* and *Lord Nelson Mass*, the last named being at the Spoleto Festival. This past summer he performed in the Mozart Requiem with the Columbus Symphony, Christian Badea conducting.



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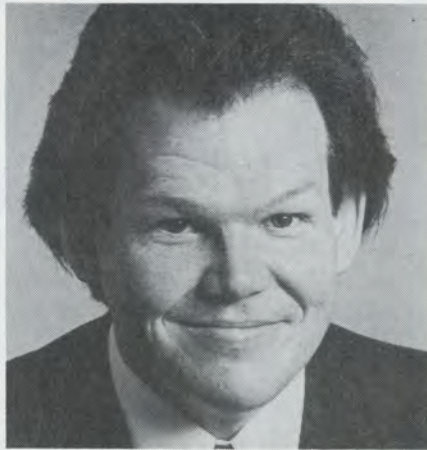


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THOMAS POTTER

Baritone **Thomas Potter** made his San Francisco Opera debut last fall as Leopold in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and returns to the Company as Konrad Nachtigall in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and as the Servant in *Macbeth*. A participant in the Merola Opera Program for the past two seasons, he portrayed Valentin in the 1985 Stern Grove production of *Faust* and Masetto in *Don Giovanni* at Villa Montalvo, appearing this past summer as Marcello in *La Bohème* at Montalvo. He sang Germont in *La Traviata* with the San Francisco Opera Center Singers in Palm Springs and in a concert version conducted by Kurt Herbert Adler at Stern Grove. During Western Opera Theater's 1985-86 national tour, Potter performed Masetto and will soon join this year's WOT tour as Marcello in *La Bohème*. He recently portrayed Silvano in the Lyric Opera of Philadelphia's production of *Un Ballo in Maschera* featuring Luciano Pavarotti. His professional experience includes performances with the Indiana Opera Theater, Indianapolis Opera, Michiana Opera, Central City Opera, Texas Opera Theater and the Inspiration Point Fine Arts Colony. A recipient of a master's degree in voice from Indiana University, Potter was a winner of the 1985 Pavarotti Vocal Competition held in Philadelphia, and was the recipient of the 1986 Kent Family Award given at the Merola Opera Program's Grand Finals.



MARK COLES

Bass-baritone **Mark Coles** makes his San Francisco Opera debut this season, during which he appears in five roles: the Foreman in *Jenufa*, a Surgeon in *La Forza del Destino*, Hans Foltz in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, the Guard in *La Bohème* and the Herald in *Macbeth*. A national finalist in the 1985 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, he joined the 1985 Merola Opera Program after two seasons with the San Francisco Opera Chorus and appeared as Leporello in Western Opera Theater's 1985-86 national touring production of *Don Giovanni*. During the San Francisco Opera Center's 1986 Showcase series, Coles portrayed the Doctor in Hindemith's *There and Back*. He has also appeared as soloist with the Midsummer Mozart Festival Orchestra and in Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ* with the Master Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra. A graduate of Kent State University, Coles received first-place awards from the Ohio chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and the Tuesday Music Club of Akron. He also appeared as soloist with the Kent State Chorale at the 1981 Spoleto Festival.

continued on p.48



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# Macbeth

New Production

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

Opera in three acts by GIUSEPPE VERDI

Text by FRANCESCO MARIA PIAVE

After the play by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

# Macbeth

(in Italian)

*Conductor*  
Kazimierz Kord

*Production*  
Pier Luigi Pizzi

*Designer*  
Pier Luigi Pizzi

*Assistant to Mr. Pizzi  
and Movement Coordinator*  
Richard Caceres\*

*Lighting Designer*  
Thomas J. Munn

*Sound Designer*  
Roger Gans

*Chorus Director*  
Richard Bradshaw

*Chorus Preparation*  
Christopher Larkin

*Musical Preparation*  
Robert Morrison  
Susanna Lemberskaya  
Christopher Larkin  
Joseph De Rugeriis

*Prompter*  
Joseph De Rugeriis

*Assistant Stage Director*  
Paula Williams

*Stage Manager*  
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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22 AT 8:00  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25 AT 8:00  
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29 AT 8:00  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 8:00  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4 AT 7:30  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 AT 2:00

## CAST (in order of appearance)

<i>Lady Macbeth</i>	Shirley Verrett
<i>Generals of Duncan's army</i> {	<i>Macbeth</i> Timothy Noble
	<i>Banquo</i> John Tomlinson
<i>Malcolm, son of Duncan</i>	Daniel Harper
<i>Macduff, a Scottish nobleman</i>	Vladimir Popov*
<i>Duncan, King of Scotland</i>	Dean Johnson
<i>Fleance, son of Banquo</i>	Steven Harper
<i>Lady-in-waiting</i>	Deborah Voigt
<i>A servant</i>	Thomas Potter
<i>An assassin</i>	Gregory de Silva
<i>First apparition</i>	Valery Portnov
<i>Second apparition</i>	Hillary Keegin*
<i>Third apparition</i>	Conal Byrne*
<i>A herald</i>	Mark Coles
<i>A doctor</i>	Philip Skinner

*Witches, messengers, Scottish refugees, assassins, Macbeth's soldiers,  
English soldiers, apparitions*

\* San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 11th-century Scotland

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Supertitles by Joseph De Rugeriis, San Francisco Opera.

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

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



# Macbeth/Synopsis

## ACT I

**Scene 1**—Returning from war after a victorious campaign, Macbeth and Banquo are greeted by a group of witches who prophetically hail Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland, and acclaim Banquo as father of kings to come. Messengers from Duncan soon arrive with the news of Macbeth's appointment as Thane of Cawdor.

**Scene 2**—Lady Macbeth, reading a letter from her husband, learns of his victory and promotion, and of the witches' predictions. Upon his return, she incites his ambition and persuades him to murder the king, who had recently arrived at their castle. That night, Macbeth kills the king while he sleeps. Discovering the murder, Macduff and Banquo arouse the castle in alarm. Lady Macbeth is triumphant: the first step to the power she seeks is accomplished.

## ACT II

**Scene 1**—Lady Macbeth pleads with her husband to forget the past. With Banquo now suspicious and a threat to Macbeth's throne, she is convinced that he, too, must be murdered.

**Scene 2**—Ambushed by Macbeth's paid assassins, Banquo is killed, but his son manages to escape.

**Scene 3**—Macbeth, now exercising the rights of the murdered king, hosts a banquet at which the ghost of Banquo appears. The specter, invisible to all the guests, accuses Macbeth of Duncan's murder and so unnerves him that he resolves to visit the witches once again.

**Scene 4**—Macbeth, at the witches' cave in the midst of their revels, demands an explanation of their prophecy. In answer, he is shown a series of visions. The first apparition, a helmeted head, warns Macbeth about

Macduff. The second, a bloody child, is accompanied by the words: "Behold, for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth." The third apparition is a child with a crown who holds a tree. It promises that Macbeth will never be vanquished until "Great Birnam Wood" comes to "high Dunsinane hill." The last vision is of eight kings, of whom Banquo, holding a mirror in his hand, is the last. The arrival of Lady Macbeth provides him with courage. They ruthlessly vow to destroy anyone who is a threat to them.

## ACT III

**Scene 1**—Near Birnam Wood, Scottish exiles lament the tyranny that has seized their country since Macbeth became king. Macduff mourns the death of his wife and child, who have been murdered by order of Macbeth. The exiles join the English forces and prepare to march against Macbeth under the leadership of Duncan's son, Malcolm.

**Scene 2**—At night in the castle, Lady Macbeth is possessed by guilt and terror at her part in the murderous schemes she has carried out. As her attendant and doctor look on in horror, she succumbs to madness.

**Scene 3**—Macbeth learns of the death of his wife, and is told of the approach of the enemy: each soldier holding a branch gives the impression of a moving Birnam forest. He prepares to meet them.

**Scene 4**—The opposing armies meet in battle. During the ensuing fight, Macbeth comes face to face with Macduff, who "was from his mother's womb untimely ripped," and is slain by him. Amid the rejoicing of the liberated Scots, Malcolm is proclaimed King of Scotland.

## *Macbeth—Mimes*

### *Three Witches*

Lester Horton, John McKenzie, Michael Ryan

### *Witches, Kings, English and Scottish Soldiers*

Alf Adams, John Bachelder, J.R. Beardsley, Bryan Chalfant, Brian Crawley, Greg Dychitan, Ken Korpi, Howard Kremen, Richard Lane, Richard Light, Raub McKim, Loren Nordlund, David Sandler, Norm Skaggs, Christopher Soderlund, Tony St. Martin, Robert Wendell



# Macbeth

Photos taken in rehearsal by Marty Sohl







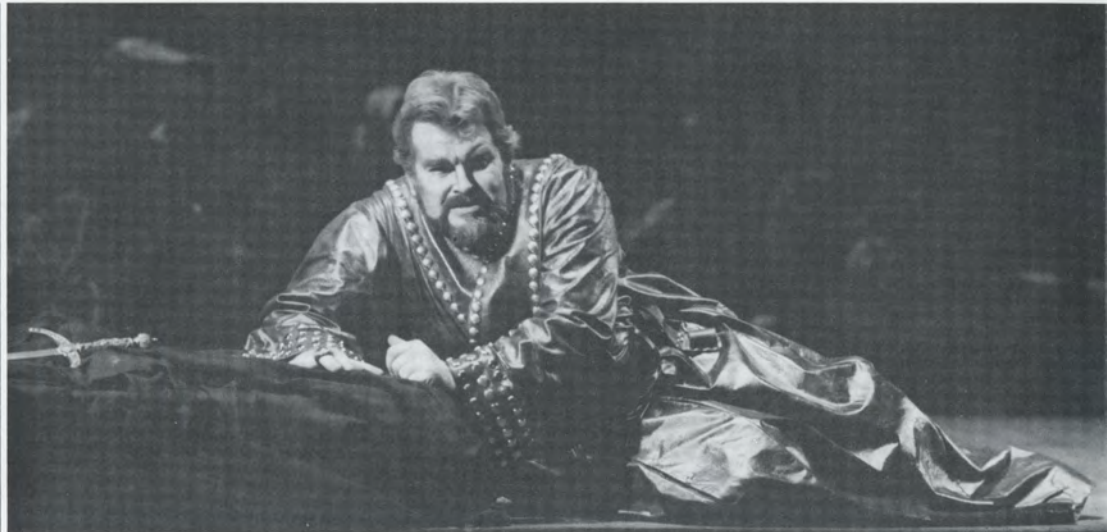
*Timothy Noble, Shirley Verrett*



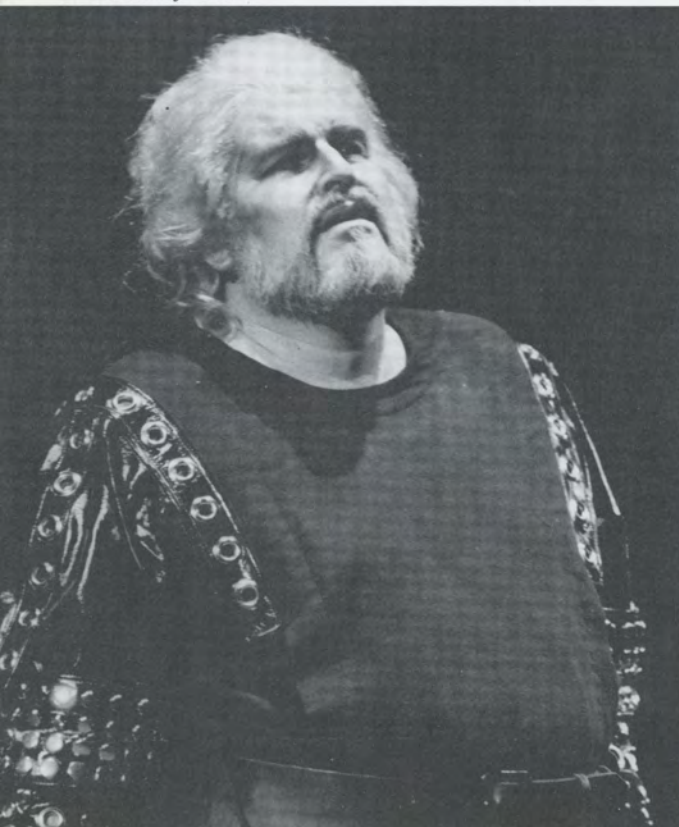
*Timothy Noble*



*Timothy Noble*



*Timothy Noble*



*Daniel Harper, Vladimir Popov*

*Timothy Noble*





*Shirley Verrett*



*Shirley Verrett*



*John Tomlinson*



*Shirley Verrett*







*Act I Finale*



*Opening Chorus of Act III*

*(below) Final Scene*





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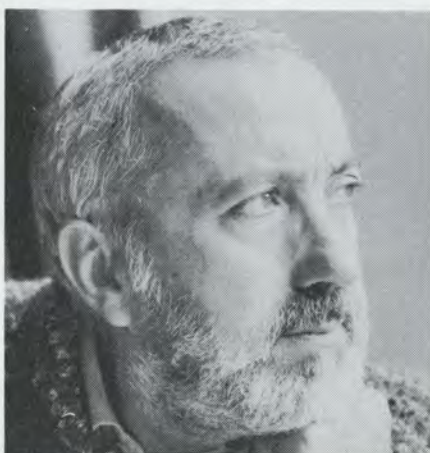
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KAZIMIERZ KORD

After making his San Francisco Opera debut in 1973, leading performances of *Boris Godunov* and *Rigoletto*, **Kazimierz Kord** returns to the Company to conduct *Macbeth*. Now in the leading musical position in his native Poland, the maestro has since 1977 been the music director of the Warsaw Philharmonic. His international career began in 1967, at which time he conducted the symphony orchestras of Leningrad and Moscow. He has since been engaged as guest conductor in the major music centers throughout the world, with repeated appearances in Paris, London, Rome, Berlin, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Munich, Düsseldorf, Copenhagen, and Moscow. In 1972, he made his American debut at the Metropolitan Opera, conducting Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*, and has since returned to the Met for productions of *Così fan tutte*, *Aida*, and *Boris Godunov*. He made his Canadian debut with the Toronto Symphony in 1974 and led the orchestra on a highly successful European tour. Kord is also the music director of the Southwest German Radio Orchestra in Baden-Baden, conducting numerous concerts for radio and television. In addition to extensive travels with the Warsaw Philharmonic, including a tour of the United States in 1982, he has also conducted performances with Tokyo's Nippon Symphony. He was principal guest conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony from 1980 to 1982, earning praise for his interpretations of music by Karol Szymanowski. During the 1985-86 season, he has conducted the symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Milwaukee, Atlanta, Detroit, Indianapolis, and New Orleans. Kord studied piano and conducting in Poland and Russia, receiving his first appointment in 1962, as artistic and music director of the Krakow Opera. His career also included a five-year music directorship of the Polish National Radio and Television Orchestra. Today, Kord is



PIER LUIGI PIZZI

also a sought-after recording artist, with about 20 major albums recorded in Poland (*Orfeo ed Euridice*, *The Damnation of Faust*, *Israel in Egypt*, *Messiah*, the Verdi and Mozart Requiems, etc.), as well as the Tchaikovsky *Pathétique* Symphony with the Royal Philharmonic and the First Piano Concerto with Ilana Vered and the London Symphony, and Massenet's *Don Quichotte* with the Suisse Romande Orchestra. The conductor's numerous prizes and awards include the Golden Orpheus (Warsaw Autumn Festival), Stern des Jahres (Munich press award), and the Berlin Biennale Prize.

Internationally renowned director and designer **Pier Luigi Pizzi** returns to San Francisco Opera with a new production of *Macbeth*, originally conceived at the Théâtre Musical de Paris-Châtelet and renewed for the War Memorial stage. His first directing assignment for San Francisco Opera was recreating his production of *Semiramide*, originally seen at the 1980 Aix-en-Provence Festival, for the 1981 Fall Season. His San Francisco Opera design debut was the 1971 production of *Maria Stuarda*, and his 1974 staging of *Simon Boccanegra* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago was seen here in 1975 and 1980. His designs for sets and costumes have been seen for more than 20 years in many of the world's major operatic capitals, and in 1977 he directed his first production, *Don Giovanni*, in Turin. His 1978 staging of Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso* in Verona was subsequently seen in Dallas in 1980 and Paris in 1981. Among the many productions he has both designed and directed are Verdi's *I Masnadieri* and *I Due Foscari* and Handel's *Ariodante* for La Scala; *Khovanshchina* in Geneva and at the Théâtre Musical de Paris-Châtelet; Gluck's *Alceste* in Geneva and at the Paris Opera; Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* for the

Paris Opéra-Comique and Aix-en-Provence Festival; *Les Indes Galantes* at Venice and Paris; Handel's *Rinaldo* at Reggio Emilia and Paris; Rossini's *L'Assedio di Corinto* and Verdi's *Don Carlos* in Florence; *Parsifal* (recently seen at the Chicago Lyric Opera), Bach's St. John Passion, *La Clemenza di Tito* and Verdi's *Stiffelio* and *Aroldo* at Venice; *Salome*, *Dido and Aeneas* with the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* in Reggio Emilia; and *La Battaglia di Legnano* and *The Devils of Loudon* for the Rome Opera. For the last four years he has participated in the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro with productions of *Mosè in Egitto*, *Tancredi*, *Maometto II*, *Bianca e Faliero* and *Le Conte Ory*. His projects for next season include La Scala productions of *Alceste* and *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi* (seen at Covent Garden in 1984), Nino Rota's *The Italian Straw Hat* at Reggio Emilia, and Rossini's *Armida* in Bonn. In the fall of 1987 he will inaugurate Houston Grand Opera's new Brown Theater with a new production of *Aida*.





RICHARD CACERES

**Richard Caceres** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Assistant Director and Movement Coordinator of *Macbeth*. The native of New York City received extensive training at the Juilliard School and at the School of American Ballet, and has performed as a dancer in Britten's *Death in Venice* at the Metropolitan Opera, and appeared in the film version of *Hair*. He has also danced in works choreographed by Anna Sokolow, Alvin Ailey, John Taras, José Limón and Antony Tudor. It was as a dancer in the Broadway revival of *West Side Story* that he became associated with Jerome Robbins, and he directed this production on a tour to Europe during the 1981-82 season. His long collaboration with Pier Luigi Pizzi began in Geneva in 1982, when he was chosen to create the dances for *Khovanshchina*. Since then, he has choreographed, among others, *Parsifal* in Venice and Chicago, *Orfeo* in Florence, *Le Comte Ory* in Pesaro, *I Puritani* in Bari, *Salome* in Reggio Emilia and Bologna, *Alceste* in Paris and Geneva, and *Khovanshchina* in Turin and Paris. In addition to assisting on productions in Rome, Paris, Bologna, Pesaro and at Covent Garden, Caceres has also directed and choreographed his own productions, including Peter Maxwell Davies's children's opera *Cinderella* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris, and *Les Romantiques (The Fantasticks)* at the Palais des Glaces in Paris. Future projects include choreographic assignments for *Man of La Mancha* in Nantes, directed by Jean-Luc Tardieu; Boito's *Mefistofele* in Genova, directed by Ken Russell; and Pier Luigi Pizzi's productions of Rota's *The Italian Straw Hat* at Reggio Emilia and *Aida* for the Houston Grand Opera. In addition to teaching movement, ballet and modern dance in Italy and France, Caceres has choreographed several television commercials for American viewers.



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 *Coppélia* for the Hartford Ballet. Munn is consultant for the Muziektheater in the Netherlands, a new opera house which opened in September.

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# "A Day At Merola"

Photos By Alice Cunningham

By SUE SOMMER LOOS

Eight forty-five a.m. As the July fog lingers above the War Memorial Opera House, two grey-haired ladies settle on the curb outside the stage door entrance, clutching their coat collars close to them, talking eagerly and awaiting the start of a special day. At 9:30 the doors open and they scurry in, along with over a hundred other Merola supporters who by now have gathered, anxious to spend a Day at Merola—"opera boot camp"—with 27 opera hopefuls.

The Merola Opera Program, named to honor the founder of the San Francisco Opera, Gaetano Merola, was created over thirty-two years ago. It is now part of the San Francisco Opera Center, and its purpose is to nurture and support gifted young opera singers and apprentice coaches through its specialized teaching. The marathon "Day At Merola" event has developed over the past twelve years to give Merola supporters of various donation categories an opportunity to observe first-hand the program's daily routine. For all or part of this specific day, visitors can go from class to class as observers, while the "students" progress through a normal day in their intensive ten-week course.

It is now ten o'clock and the guests must decide which of three classes to attend: aerobics and dance movement, coaching techniques, or Italian study. In the first, people are beginning to wake up, including visitors who clutch styrofoam cups of steaming coffee. Up at late rehearsals the night before, several Merola artists in workout clothes loosen shoulder and neck muscles, stretch, and warm up. They take their heart rates, then two instructors lead them in the aerobic routines they have learned as a basic part

*Sue Sommer Loos is a San Francisco freelance writer whose credits include publications for Laurel Burch, Werner Erhard and Associates, and the text for Merola's Traveling Photo Exhibit.*



*"A Day at Merola," vintage 1986: James Schwabacher, President of the Merola Opera Program, introduces this year's Program members to the assembled audience.*



*The aerobics and dance class proceeds under the watchful eye of Marika Sakellariou: Emily Manhart and Kurt Streit are in front, followed by Donna Zapola and Lendon T. Munday.*



of keeping fit during their hectic schedule—and after they graduate. Throughout the long day the singers will be seen using these techniques on their own to relax and shake out tense muscles. Half-way through the hour, now awake and vivacious, the class switches gears and the members rehearse a lilting stage minuet designed to train them for ballroom scenes they will encounter in future opera roles.

Meanwhile, in the third-floor chorus room, visitors are part of a different kind of training. In this class, singers are learning various arias they will add to their repertoires. The coach listens to one singer, then stops him in mid-phrase. How will the coach make the correction? What words will she use to get the message across to this young artist? Did she pause because of a mistake she's correcting or because she wants to explore a different way for his voice to deliver this aria? Surprisingly, there is a noticeable lack of defensiveness on the part of the singer—of all these singers—as input is given. They respect her and they listen. The artists, after all, have been selected from hundreds of applicants and several auditions, and they are eager to absorb the expertise available here, as did their Merola predecessors, many of whom have gone on to great successes—signing contracts with major opera houses, garnering prizes in world-wide competitions, recording albums with the world's top conductors. Their progress is eagerly followed by Merola members.

Soon, one of the apprentice coaches, also hand-selected, takes the helm, teaching, correcting, leading singers as the principal coach looks on. Part of the apprentice's learning process will be in trying to attune herself to each singer's individual needs, as does *her* coach. Throughout the room, there is a general smile of satisfaction as viewers collectively sense the improvement; they appear to agree with the input.

Down the hall, others are schooled in Italian as they rehearse portions of their upcoming roles in *La Bohème*, which they will perform in two weeks' time at Villa Montalvo's lush outdoor amphitheater. Again and again phrases are repeated, improved, imprinted, so that Puccini's language becomes their own.

The scene as the hour ends resembles the confusion of the first day of high school: people unsure of where they're



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Rehearsal of *La Bohème* develops under the guidance of director Bernard Uzan and conductor Evan Whallon. Douglas Wunsch and Ann Panagulis enact the Act I meeting of Rodolfo and Mimi.

going gently collide, check schedules, ask questions. Along the corridors and in the elevators, bits of conversation can be heard:

"I had no idea these kids worked so hard";

"They already sing beautifully, but there are so many other things they have to learn!";

"That coach was rough! It's so personal, the teaching, the criticism. I guess they have to develop a crust; after all, they will face critics all of their lives";

"What a variety of classes. Everything they need is taught here";

"It's fantastic to see someone begin to bloom";

"I'm amazed at the individual attention given to each singer."

At eleven o'clock the masterclass in acting begins, taught by Bernard Uzan, who has won major awards in France for stage direction and acting. Last fall, he directed the San Francisco Opera production of *Werther*, and this year he has come to Merola to direct *La Bohème*. During the next hour, the visitors and the other singers in the class experience a great variety of emotion as Uzan leads a young soprano, line by line, dissecting the text of an aria from *La Traviata*. He instructs her

first to create the frenzied anguish of lost love, then anger at her lover for having left her, and finally the overwhelming sense of loneliness in realizing that her man has gone—three interpretations of the same aria, three different ways, forcing three powerful emotions. At the session's end, the audience explodes into passionate applause.

In another room is the stage deportment class. Matthew Farruggio, director of *Così fan tutte*—which has been performed at Stern Grove only last weekend by the Merola singers—recreates the boudoir scene as a recap for the performers and a demonstration for the audience, showing them what each movement on stage must say, why it must be done as it is done, how important it is to time the movements with what is being sung, showing how the final production evolved into what the Stern Grove audience saw.

This same hour, other spectators watch the apprentice coaches as they work with the singers, under the tutelage of Evan Whallon, who will conduct *La Bohème*. Visitors learn that Merola is the only program in the United States offering a complete course for apprentice coaches who will guide the opera stars of





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the future. The young coaches are intense. As they accompany on the piano, they quietly sing along with each role, prompting when necessary, changing tempo when appropriate, supporting the singers.

It's twelve o'clock now, noon, and everyone attends one large gathering

called "Meet the Merolini" (the affectionate name given to the participants in the Merola program). Held in the spacious ballet studio, this meeting offers visitors the opportunity to hear from this year's participants and to ask questions about them or about the program. They want to know about their backgrounds, why and

how they developed a taste for opera, whether their families were encouraging, what their future plans are. It is a casual meeting, and the singers and apprentice coaches are responsive and eager to tell their stories. Some guests have picked up box lunches sold by the Merola Wizards, a group of volunteers attached to the Board of Directors which supports and finances the Merola Opera Program. Others wait until after the discussion, then have lunch with the singers on the grassy lawn: the fog has evaporated by now, and the sun streams down. The two early-bird curbsitters have shed their coats and are engrossed in conversation with a young tenor.

By two o'clock, lunch is over and classes resume. There is additional individual coaching and more repertory rehearsal to observe. Singers are becoming comfortable with their audiences; they are working on projection and nuances that will make a noticeable difference in their performances. Voices are warmed up now, and richer and warmer than they were earlier in the day. The classes are animated and educational. Visitors, apprentice coaches, and singers learn theory and the background of the arias being studied, giving a basis for the particular emotions being called for, and creating a bond between the performers and the audience as they learn together.

Also available to survey is a class in stage and audition techniques, taught for many years by the diminutive and knowledgeable Ethel Evans. She shows the singers by example that each movement is valuable and should not be done without a purpose; that acting should enhance their singing, not detract from it. One singer finishes an aria as the piano holds the chord of his last note. "Don't let that happen," she gently scolds him. "You sing that last note until *you're* finished with it, then the orchestra can conclude. Make them follow you. This is *YOUR* solo." Then she coaches a budding Musetta, the coquette of *La Bohème*. She instructs the singer to imagine Mae West—not vulgar or sleazy, but coy—and still sexy, and very attractive. The audience approves as the Merola coquette, picturing what her mentor has suggested, swings into action!

In the late afternoon, there are several more classes. At the masterclass in prompting, anecdotes of situations in which prompters saved the day or created fiascos are told, and a demonstration of




Elena Servi Burgess (left), Italian diction coach, works with member of the Merola Opera Program Diane Alexander, with Shirley Weston at the piano.



San Francisco Opera's Production Supervisor Matthew Farruggio (standing in the rear) oversees the handling of a "dying" singer.



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the intricate art of prompting is given. Meanwhile in the make-up room, surrounded by wigs, hair spray, sponges, brushes, and mirrors, other Merolini learn the art of applying stage make-up for various roles they will play. On the third floor, James Schwabacher teaches a masterclass in French repertory to the singers. Each year throughout the summer session, masterclasses are taught by distinguished, world-renowned visiting "coaches"; Régine Crespin, Leontyne Price, and Kurt Herbert Adler briefly joined the Merola program as this year's master teachers.

There is a dinner break at 5:30. The visitor roster for Day at Merola has changed since the morning. Several people stopped by on their lunch hour to catch a few moments with the singers, then returned to work. Some who started early have left for the day; others have come directly from work to spend the evening. Our two early-morning friends are dining on deli fare at Max's, others head for Harry's, Kimball's or McDonald's; some go home for a nap or a shower, to return for the ensemble rehearsal in the evening. It is a long day for the visitors, a grueling one for the Merola troupe, and a busy and rewarding one for the small Merola staff, directed by Alice Cunningham, most of whom have watched this educational event grow in popularity for more than a decade.

Seven p.m. The north side of the ballet studio has been transformed into a tawdry, chilly tenement room in Paris; it is the setting of the fourth act of *La Bohème*. Visitors are settling into their seats. Director Uzan twists around to face the audience: "This is not a performance, it is a rehearsal," he warns. "We must have absolutely no talking." A few minutes into the rehearsal, after some of the comedy lines fall to apprehensive silence, he turns around once again. "It's o.k. to laugh, though!" Everyone does, and the rehearsal continues, lighter, yet intense. People are attentive; some follow along with scores. The studio gets very warm, as San Francisco's fog has not returned on this unusual summer evening. The singers wear street clothes; brightly colored shirts, running shoes, long skirts, jeans; all wear nametags, which are somewhat mangled by this time of day. Some sit cross-legged on the floor at the edge of the room.

Maestro Whallon conducts the sin-



gers and the pianist; director Uzan watches and constantly makes notes. This is a rehearsal for the upcoming performance at Villa Montalvo, where casts will be different on two subsequent performance days, and he switches roles and work assignments. Two of the principal singers are ill, so those singing Mimì and Rodolfo must do double duty. Visitors notice that the things they watched the young artists learning earlier today fall into place: all the voice coaching and the stage deportment, the Italian diction, the acting techniques. Here, in this hot, crowded ballet studio, with mirrors completely covering one wall and with glaring MEN and WOMEN restroom signs behind the singers, everyone in the room is in wintertime Paris; all are captivated. A woman tiptoes in through the rear door with her young son, who looks blasé and a little embarrassed. They sit in the back of the room. The rehearsal continues.

It is late now; at the last break, some people left, yet many remain. The scene moves on. Corrections are made. The intricate stage maneuvering of the comedic part of the fourth act—the bread-tossing, the business of who will hold the fish, the kerchief-made-of-a-napkin, the bawdy dance routine done by the four bohemian buddies—all is painstakingly worked out. The audience laughs, and even claps tentatively from time to time. Some of the singers who are not in this act watch. They, too, are learning, but they are also intrigued with the action. In the back of the room, the small boy looks at the walls and studies his cuffs, looking at the production only once in a while.

The zany cavorting onstage goes on for a moment longer, then suddenly the distraught Musetta rushes through the door: Mimì is dying. Rodolfo's worried gasp shakes the audience with its intensity. The sight of Mimì, tiny and ill, and the love Rodolfo and his friends show for her works on the audience, and throats catch. The boy in the back is rapt. The singers go through the end of the act singing softly now, saving their voices, having worked all day. At one point the apprentice coach sings the part of Schau-nard (the performer who plays this role had been excused for the night) while playing the piano. Colline weeps to his beloved coat, and the audience believes him; he *will* miss that old woolen friend. During the death scene, the room is as silent as a dense early morning. Everyone



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Douglas Wunsch and Victor Ledbetter impersonate La Bohème's Rodolfo and Marcello during a "Day at Merola" rehearsal.

is caught up in the drama. People are crying, members of the cast and the other Merola singers are in tears, and the young boy in the back of the room is wiping his eyes. Mimì sings her part an octave down to protect her voice: she has sung this segment three times today.

Finally it is over, and there is general hope that Uzan will not call for another run-through because everyone is emotionally exhausted. But it is the end of the rehearsal, as it is the end of Day at Merola.

People exit, sighing at the memory of the day. The two old friends walk out through the door they entered twelve hours earlier and, though tired, are extremely satisfied. One of them asks, "Well, what did you think of it this year? Wasn't it just wonderful? Again?"

"You know," said her friend, "if people knew what a privilege it is to get to know these kids, they'd be pounding at the Merola office doors to be part of the program!" ■

## Opera Center Abroad

### WOT Goes West to the Far East

In March 1987 San Francisco Opera's affiliate company Western Opera Theater becomes the first American opera company to perform in the People's Republic of China.

At Shanghai's 1300-seat Majestic Theater, Western Opera Theater will present three performances of Puccini's *La Bohème* in its original Italian, accompanied by the Shanghai Symphony. During their ten-day stay in Shanghai, Western Opera Theater's young American singers will also be heard in concert with the Shanghai Symphony and young Chinese singers from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein nominated Western Opera Theater for this tour to Shanghai, which is one of San Francisco's sister cities. The com-

pany's appearances there will be a feature of the Royal Pacific Cultural Exchange, sponsored by United Airlines in connection with the opening of its routes to Asia and the Pacific.

Western Opera Theater's pioneering appearances in China will culminate its 20th anniversary tour, following its 50 performances of *La Bohème* in English this fall and winter in cities and towns throughout the United States.

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*continued on p.68*



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# 1986 San Francisco Opera Company (Continued)

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

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Ken Patsel, one of San Francisco Opera's follow-spot operators, pauses backstage before climbing up to his aerie above the stage.

"Sometimes I wonder if people want me to follow them anymore. All the people I follow tonight die."

These are not the words of a serial killer but, rather, of San Francisco Opera electrician Ken Patsel, describing his work as a follow-spot operator for this season's production of *La Forza del Destino*. The deaths are Verdi's, not Patsel's doing. In training a spotlight on five principal singers and performers, Patsel is only doing his job—a particularly significant one in a dark show like *Forza* (again, Verdi's idea, and Thomas Munn's lighting scheme). Although it's important that Patsel's work itself not be noticed, were he not doing it, the stars' far more important work might not be noticed either.

Without venturing farther into the macabre, it must be noted that Patsel's job has given him a new perspective—literally—on death, at least on death, opera-style. When working as a follow-spot operator, he is perched on the first bridge, some 50 feet directly over the main stage (higher than the supertitles and, from the audience's vantage point, behind them). Almost the only time the artists sing directly to him is when they lie dying—among the most beautiful musical moments, as every opera lover knows.

When he works as one of the Company's six follow-spot operators, Patsel spends his evening high above the stage but under a headset, listening for his cues from the evening's stage manager. By way of being told which character to "pick up," he is told the character's name, the

## Company Profiles: Ken Patsel

*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.*

position from which the character enters the stage, and, should there be a possibility of confusion, what the character is wearing or how he or she looks. In *Forza*, for example, "the man in the top hat wearing a cape" is sure to be a more important identification than the name Trabuco—especially for a follow-spot operator new to opera, as Patsel is. From the moment his "pick-up" arrives on stage, it is Patsel's job to follow the character's every move with his securely mounted, fully rotating, 1000-watt canister of rays.

As with much else in opera, it sounds a good deal easier than it is. Patsel spends the whole of each act (the Company's version of *Forza*, for example, has a 90-minute first act) in a small, vinyl-covered seat facing the left side of the stage. When his pick-up enters from the left, Patsel has to search out the character from a position that would make an orthopedic surgeon's mouth water. The entire time his pick-up is on stage, Patsel has to keep his spot in tight focus on that character—and off the scenery, which tends to reflect light. And if at all possible, Patsel is to do a fade-in

when he picks up the performer and a fade-out on the performer's exit, the better to make his lighting as inconspicuous as possible. "It takes a lot of concentration," Patsel says, the more of it the busier the stage is. "One of my pick-ups in *Forza*, the surgeon, is particularly tough, because the scene is dark and I have to pick him out from among seven or eight people coming onto the stage."

He does, however, have considerable support and back-up. The stage manager cues his every pick-up and even every change of color gel on his instrument—and can tell Patsel to make adjustments in the beam if necessary. "If she tells me to 'iris-in on him,'" Patsel explains, "I know I have to tighten my focus." He also knows that, should anything unpredictably go wrong, his spot can be overridden by the electricians in the light booth just behind the Dress Circle.

When Patsel is not operating a follow spot, he has other tasks as an opera electrician. When "working the deck," he helps set up and tear down the lighting apparatus before and after the scene changes other stagehands make. Outside



The work space of a follow-spot operator is not for the acrophobic: Ken Patsel hooks himself up to the stage manager by means of a head-set, and is ready to start working the performance.



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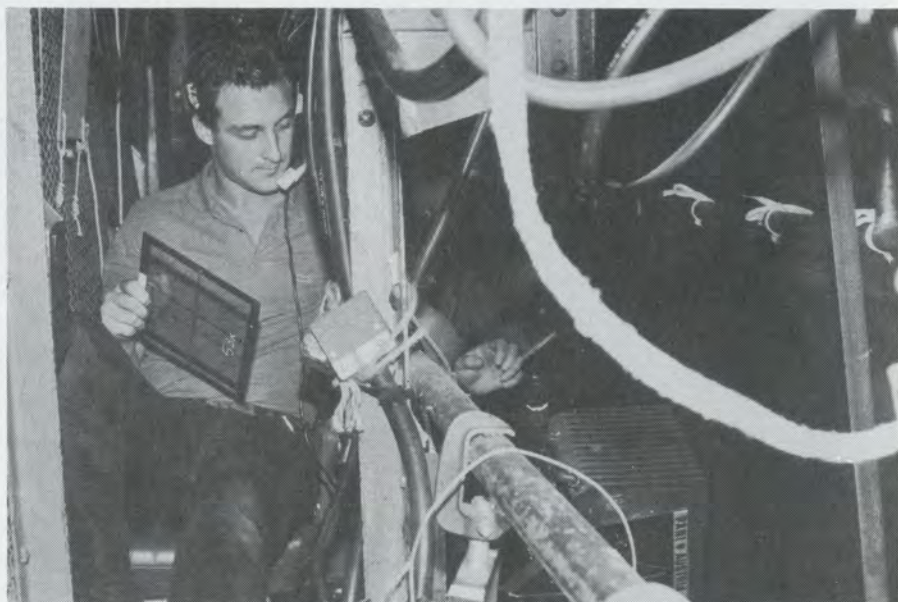
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Ken Patsel prepares to change a gel in his spotlight.

performance times, he helps set colors and refocus lights on the seven other light bridges and rearrange the ever-changing orchestra pit—an electrician's job, because of the lights on the music stands.

Patsel clearly loves his unique perspective on opera performances, which affords him at one and the same time a bird's-eye view of the goings-on and the security of being above the fray. He claims he's not uncomfortable draping his lanky, six-foot, one-inch frame in a spider-like tangle over the jungle of metal beams and wires. And he takes a kind of school-boy pleasure in remembering, before going out to the bridge, to empty his pockets of anything that might, by falling out, become an unwanted prop. In fact, he has only one complaint, perhaps the most familiar one in opera: "The hours. It's not uncommon to work a 12- or 13-hour day. The work itself isn't bad, but it's hard to keep up any kind of social life." Single, but by his own description "always looking," he adds, "Fortunately, the people I work with are friendly, and all of us on the crew get along really well."

At 25, he is not the Company's youngest electrician but he is, he readily admits, "the rookie on the crew," having worked with S.F. Opera only since last August. Like many an entree into this irrational business, his was notably accidental. "I placed my usual call to the union one morning and got a four-hour call to the Opera," he reports bemusedly. "I've been here ever since. But I love it here. It's the

best, most professional place I can think of to learn the business. And, in the union, it is as steady as work gets."

Patsel supported himself as a waiter during two years in Europe after high school, and subsequently worked as a travel agent as well. His predilection for work at high altitudes is borne out in his experience as a chimneysweep—work he still does off-season and which was responsible, however indirectly, for his becoming a stage electrician. It was while working as a chimneysweep in Sebastopol that he got an invitation to help with stage lighting at the Bohemian Grove. For the past six summers, he has helped run lights at all four of the Grove's outdoor amphitheaters.

Perhaps most surprising of all to Patsel is to have found himself bitten by the opera bug. "I've begun to think this was someone's way of getting some culture into me," he says. "Even though this is my first season, I already think I know a good tenor when I hear one. That guy who sang Don Carlos was just amazing!" He adds that he also has begun to buy opera records.

Asked if opera music has in other ways taken hold, he breaks into a wide smile. "Of course," he replies, sounding the notes from the fate-motif of *Forza*. "That comes in and out of my head all day long. And I'll tell you something else. It even came up in a dream the other night."

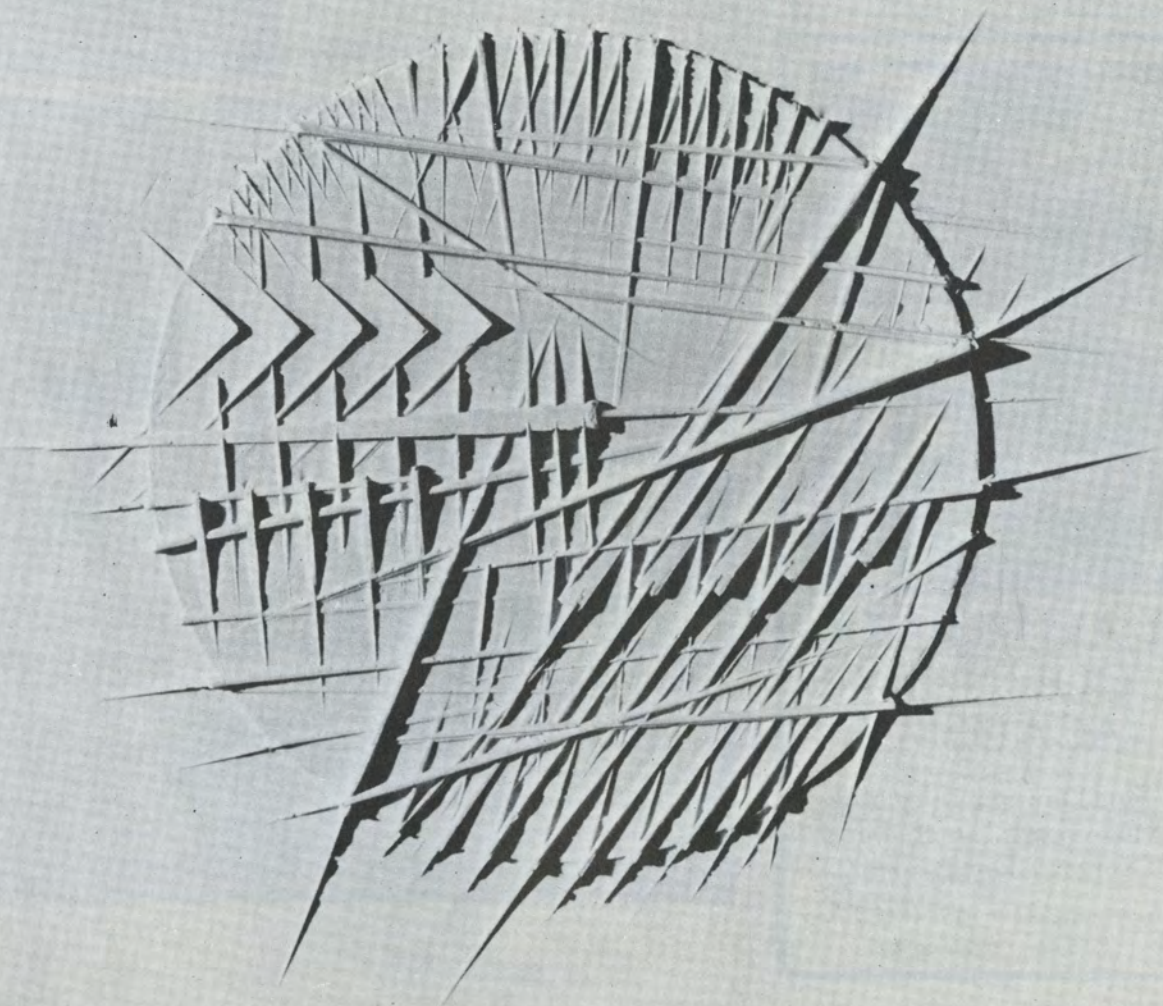
The power of fate indeed. ■

—Timothy Pfaff



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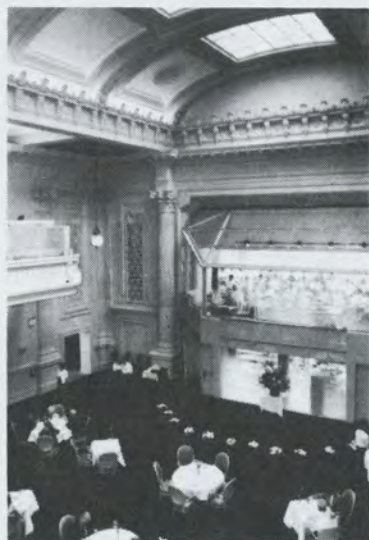




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Opera Center Abroad  
continued from p.58



Act II of *La Bohème* in Western Opera Theater's 1986 staging, ready to travel to China.

Western states all across the land, including the New York metropolitan area. Thus far, well over two million people have experienced live opera, many of them for the first time, through these touring productions. In all, Western Opera Theater has presented over 1,600 performances of 35 operas in some 450 communities.

Western Opera Theater is now the touring and educational branch of the San Francisco Opera Center, created in 1982 by Terence A. McEwen to strengthen and coordinate the Opera's affiliate programs which provide training and unparalleled performing experience for young opera artists. Among them are the Merola Opera Program, Brown Bag Opera, the Adler Fellowships, the Opera Center Showcase productions, and the Schwabacher Debut recitals.

Sixteen gifted young singers—three casts of *La Bohème*—will take part in Western Opera Theater's China tour, along with an eight-person technical staff

and two members of the musical staff.

The conductor is Evan Whallon, who was music director and conductor of the Columbus Symphony for 25 years and has appeared with many of the foremost American and European orchestras. In 1986-87 Whallon is making his fifth consecutive tour as Music Director of Western Opera Theater.

While in Shanghai, members of the Western Opera Theater company will also hold master classes and workshops for the Shanghai Conservatory and the Shanghai Drama Institute in technical and musical aspects of opera production.

This touring production of *La Bohème* was staged by Bernard Uzan. The sets were designed by Jay Kotcher, San Francisco Opera's chief scenic artist, and built by the Opera Scenic Construction Shop. Costumes are by Walter Mahoney of the Opera Costume Shop. The entire production has been designed to fit into ten-foot pallets for air cargo transport to China by United Airlines.

To The Orient With The Opera

San Francisco Opera has just announced an exciting once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to cruise to the fabled cities of China and the Orient while enjoying favorite operas and concerts performed by the Company's brightest young stars.

Departing from Tokyo on April 22, 1987, on one of Royal Viking Line's gleaming-white luxury ships, a special group of opera-loving passengers will have as its host Terry McEwen, *bon vivant* and master raconteur and the





Nikki Li Hartliep as Cio-Cio-San, the heroine of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. The opera will be performed on board the Royal Viking special cruise, while "Un bel di" will be a poignant part of the visit to Nagasaki.

general director of San Francisco Opera, which is sponsoring the cruise.

After a daylight passage through Japan's island-studded Inland Sea, the ship will dock at Nagasaki. A visit to the hillside house where legend says that Madame Butterfly lived will be followed by a performance on board of Puccini's lovely opera.

The brilliant young artists who will perform *Madame Butterfly* and, later in the cruise, Verdi's *La Traviata*, as well as a delightful "Night in Old Vienna" concert, are Susan Patterson and Nikki Li Hartliep, sopranos; Kathryn Cowdrick, mezzo-soprano; John David De Haan, tenor; James Busterud, baritone, and Jacob Will, bass-baritone. All are outstanding graduates of the Merola Opera Program who were selected for prestigious Adler Fellowships and who are taking increasingly important roles in the fall and summer seasons of San Francisco Opera.

First port of call in China on this 14-day "In Depth" cruise of Royal Viking, the world's consummate cruise line, will be Dalian. Formerly a Russian city, Dalian offers fascinating shops and a chance to see giant pandas at the zoo.

To enhance the China/Orient experience, background briefings will be held throughout the cruise by Jay and Linda Matthews, authors of *One Billion: A China Chronicle*.

At Qinhuangdao the ship will make its maiden call for a two-night stay while passengers explore the wonders and art treasures of Beijing and journey to the Great Wall.

Cruising down the Yellow Sea, the ship next arrives at the historic port of Shanghai where it is expected that an unusual musical event will be arranged for the special Opera group of passengers, in addition to their visit to the "Children's Palace" where exceptional youngsters are trained in dance and music, an elegant banquet, and escorted tours to the exquisite garden cities of Wuxi or Suzhou.

On May 6th the ship docks in the magnificent port of Hong Kong, the world's greatest shopping center. As a bonus, Royal Viking Line offers passengers a free stay in Hong Kong, including hotel accommodations for three nights and sightseeing, at either the end or the beginning of their cruise.

San Francisco Opera is sponsoring this fabulous cruise in collaboration with Golden Bear Travel of San Rafael which has also helped to underwrite the Western Opera Theater tour to China.

For further information and reservations, call Golden Bear Travel at (415) 258-9800.

"I know I'm going to have a marvelous time," Terry McEwen says, "and I look forward to sharing it with you." ■



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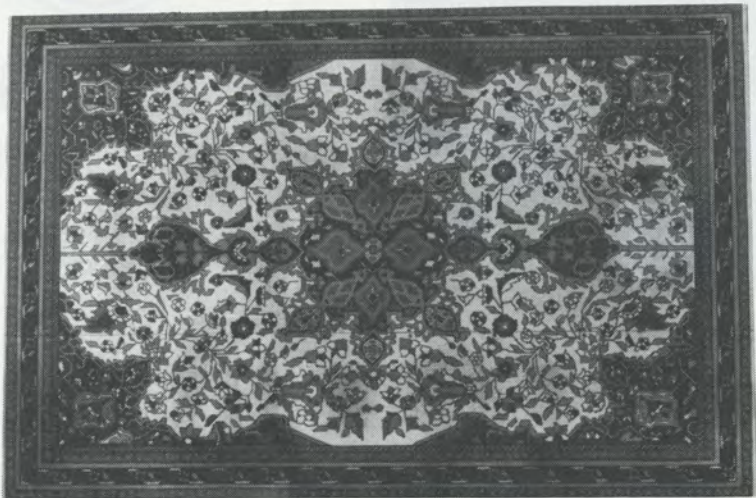
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## Sennheiser Listening Devices

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.

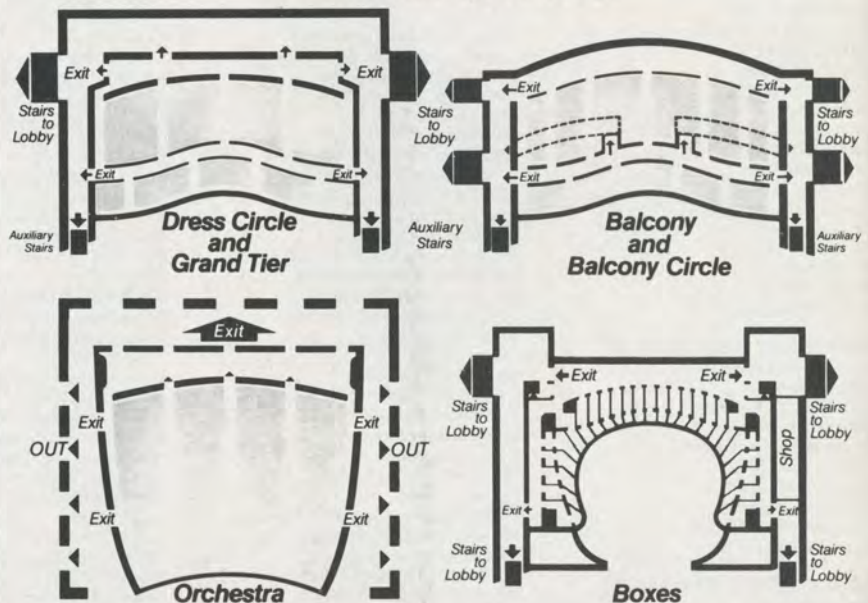
Management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

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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