

Il Barbiere di Siviglia
(The Barber of Seville)

1987

Friday, September 11, 1987 7:00 PM
Wednesday, September 16, 1987 7:30 PM
Sunday, September 20, 1987 2:00 PM
Thursday, September 24, 1987 8:00 PM
Saturday, September 26, 1987 8:00 PM
Tuesday, September 29, 1987 8:00 PM
Friday, October 2, 1987 8:00 PM

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1987 SEASON



The Barber of Seville

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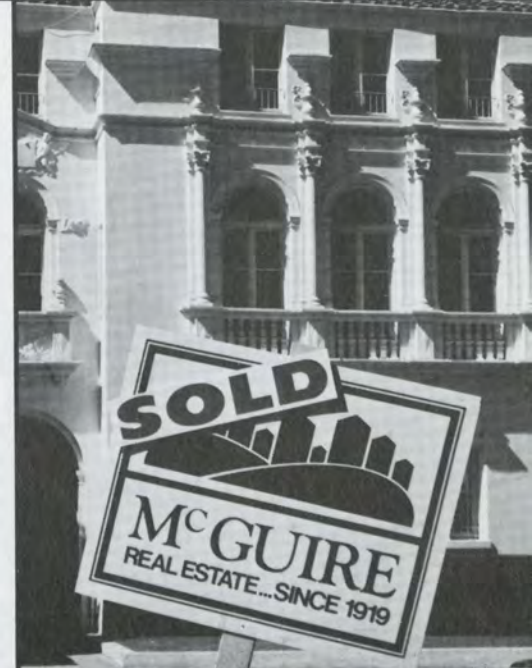
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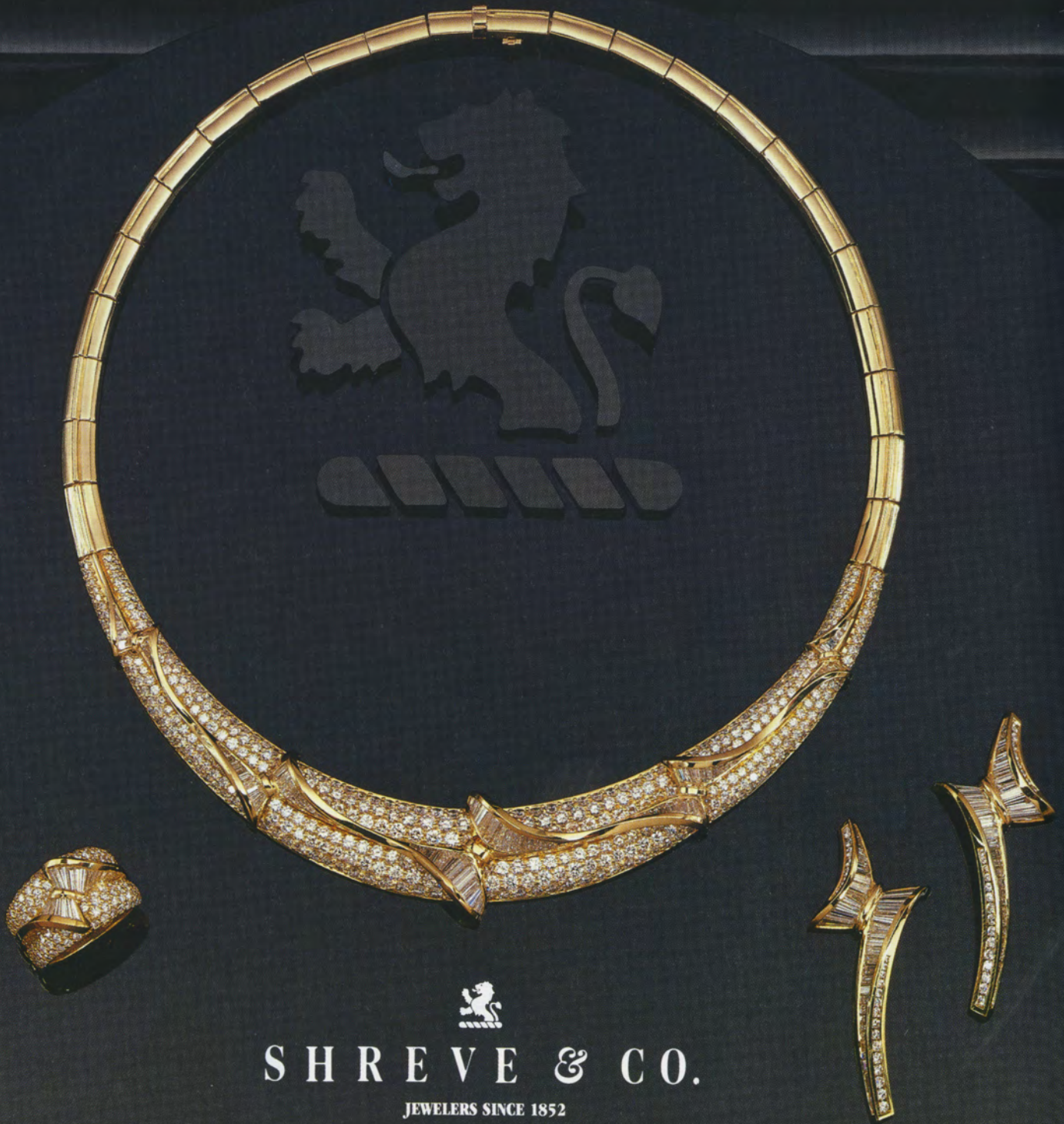
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San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

Il Barbiere di Siviglia

1987 SEASON

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COVER:

Michel-Ange Houasse, *La Boutique du Barbier (La Barbería)*

French, 1675 (?)–1730
Oil on canvas, 52x63 cm
Palacio Real, Madrid

Reproduction provided and authorized by El Patrimonio Nacional

Editor: Koraljka Lockhart
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Editorial assistant: Robert M. Robb
ISSN 0892-7189

Editorial offices: San Francisco Opera,
War Memorial Opera House,
San Francisco, CA 94102
Telephone: (415) 861-4008

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. Advertising Sales Representation Helen Parnisi. National Sales Representation Performing Arts Network, Irwin Fries, National Sales Director.

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POWERS

Tully M. Friedman and Reid W. Dennis

From the Chairman of the Board and the President

We are pleased to welcome you to the 65th annual season of the San Francisco Opera and this year's selection of 10 masterworks from the international operatic repertoire. This fall, the curtain will rise on six productions totally new to our audiences, which will provide us with opportunities to experience familiar works through a new perspective.

The generosity of many donors has brought the 1987 operas to our stage, and members of the San Francisco Opera Board of Directors have contributed in a major way: *The Magic Flute* will be presented thanks to a gift from Bernard and Barbro Osher; *Fidelio*, through a much-appreciated grant from the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation as well as Mr. and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis; *La Traviata*, thanks to a generous gift from Louise M. Davies.

Several of the year's revivals are likewise brought to us by an illustrious group of sponsors: *Salome*, through a generous gift from Mrs. George Quist; *Nabucco* was made possible in part by a grant from the Koret Foundation; *The Queen of Spades* is being presented, in part, through a sponsorship from the people at

Chevron. Our opening night opera, *The Barber of Seville*, is given in honor of Mary Rosenblatt Powell.

Special recognition is also due the Pacific Telesis Foundation for underwriting our Royal Family of Opera series, as well as Mr. and Mrs. William Rollnick for contributing the cost of Supertitles for six of our productions.

We are deeply grateful to all our donors, since their generosity furthers and enriches everyone's operatic experience.

It is always a special pleasure to recognize our governmental funding sources, and this year we again salute the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council for their unwavering support. We would also like to extend our long-standing appreciation to the Hotel Tax Fund, Mayor Dianne Feinstein and Chief Administrative Officer Rudy Nothenberg, whose support and encouragement have once again been demonstrated to an important extent.

As in previous years, we extend our deepest gratitude to the San Francisco Opera Guild, the Merola Opera Program, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees

for their ongoing support.

The Board of Directors of the San Francisco Opera Association is happy to announce the addition of nine new members to its roster: Mr. J. Dennis Bonney, Mr. David M. Chamberlain, Mr. James F. Crafts, Jr., Mrs. Mark Hornberger, Miss Sylvia R. Lindsey, Mr. John C. McGuire, Mr. Alfred S. Wilsey, Mrs. Alfred S. Wilsey, and Mr. Osamu Yamada. Our ranks have also been honored by the designation of two new Directors Emeriti: Mr. Cyril Magnin and Mrs. Nion R. Tucker.

This year's increased subscriber response is indeed a reason for rejoicing. However, as we always hasten to point out, ticket sales cover only slightly over half of our expenses. We appreciate the support all of you have given us in the past, and we encourage you to continue supporting us and increase your contributions whenever possible, thus enabling us to continue in bringing you this fascinating, enlightening, uplifting—but highly costly—art form that is opera.

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

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General Director's Message

At the beginning of the 65th annual season of the San Francisco Opera, I am pleased to note that so many of you have responded in such a positive way to our season announcement: by subscribing. In fact, the audience response has been far stronger than in many previous years. In welcoming new and renewing subscribers, I find it gratifying to know that our patrons have found the 1987 selection of operas, as well as the roster of artists, to their liking.

This year's repertoire includes six productions which will be seen for the first time on our stage. Of these, three are brand new additions to our production inventory: *The Magic Flute*, *Fidelio*, and *La Traviata*. These new productions represent further accomplishments in the quest I embarked on in 1982, that of rebuilding our operas from the standard repertoire. Three more operas will be seen in productions that are new to us: *Tosca*, from the Lyric Opera of Chicago; *The Tales of Hoffmann*, from the Greater Miami

Opera; and *Romeo and Juliet*, from the Metropolitan Opera. A group of some of today's most outstanding designers have created these productions, among them David Hockney, who will add his own special magic to that of Mozart's *Magic Flute*; John Conklin (1985 *Ring*) with a beautiful new *Traviata*; and John Gunter, one of Britain's most brilliant designers, with a dramatic new *Fidelio*. Two major figures from the international world of opera will be introduced to our audiences: Michael Hampe, of Salzburg Festival and Cologne Opera fame, who directs *Fidelio*; and Rossini authority Alberto Zedda, who conducts his own acclaimed critical edition of *The Barber of Seville*. I would also like to note in passing that two operas are returning to our fall schedule after a prolonged absence: *Romeo and Juliet* after 36 years, and *The Tales of Hoffmann* after 38.

During our 65th season, we will continue to present to our audiences new artists in exciting debuts, and will also bring back some of the most beloved

personalities from seasons past. Our own young singers from the San Francisco Opera Center will again be significantly represented, several of them in key roles.

Our Company championed Supertitles ever since they were first conceived, so we are extremely pleased to note that they won such an overwhelming vote of confidence from our patrons, and are glad to be able to bring them back in all ten operas of the season.

Our "live" opera performances on the Opera House stage will be complemented this year by the Company's return to the airwaves, with a selection of 10 exciting broadcasts from recent years.

Welcome to our 1987 season!

San Francisco Opera

Terence A. McEwen, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

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San Francisco Opera

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Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

1987 Season

Opening Night

Friday, September 11, 7:00

The Barber of Seville Rossini
Mentzer*, Neves; Power*, Capecchi,
Ghiaurov, Nucci, Anderson, Gudas,
Delavan
Zedda*/de Tomasi/Siercke/Arhelger
*This revival of The Barber of Seville is
given in honor of Mary Rosenblatt Powell.*

Saturday, September 12, 8:00

Salome Strauss
Jones, Dernesch, Manhart*; King,
Devlin, Bender*, Skinner, Potter,
Pittsinger*, Volpe*, Pederson, Dennis
Petersen, Harper, Duykers, De Haan,
Coles
Pritchard/Lehnhoff/Munn/Hoheisel/
Munn
*The 1987 revival of Salome is sponsored
by a generous gift from Mrs. George
Quist.*

Tuesday, September 15, 8:00

Salome Strauss

Wednesday, September 16, 7:30

The Barber of Seville Rossini

Friday, September 18, 8:00

Salome Strauss

Saturday, September 19, 8:00

New Production

The Magic Flute Mozart
Csavlek**, Serra, Parrish, Voigt,
Cowdrick, Christin; Araiza, Malis,
Langan, Kelley, King (September 19,
22, 25), Harper (September 30;
October 6, 8, 11), Pittsinger, Stewart,
Wunsch*
Layer/Cox/Hockney/Munn
*San Francisco Opera gratefully
acknowledges the generous gift from
Bernard and Barbro Osher to underwrite
this new production.*

Sunday, September 20, 2:00

The Barber of Seville Rossini

Tuesday, September 22, 8:00

The Magic Flute Mozart

Wednesday, September 23, 7:30

Salome Strauss

Thursday, September 24, 8:00

The Barber of Seville Rossini

Friday, September 25, 8:00

The Magic Flute Mozart

Saturday, September 26, 8:00

The Barber of Seville Rossini

Sunday, September 27, 2:00

Salome Strauss

Tuesday, September 29, 8:00

The Barber of Seville Rossini

Wednesday, September 30, 7:30

The Magic Flute Mozart

Friday, October 2, 8:00

The Barber of Seville Rossini

Saturday, October 3, 8:00

Salome Strauss

Sunday, October 4, 2:00

Tosca Puccini

Stapp; Mauro, Fondary** (October 4, 7,
10, 16, 22), Pons (October 25), Garrett,
Pederson, Dennis Petersen, Delavan,
Volpe
Bradshaw/Farruggio/Pizzi/Arhelger
*This production is owned by the Lyric
Opera of Chicago.*

Tuesday, October 6, 8:00

The Magic Flute Mozart

Wednesday, October 7, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

Thursday, October 8, 8:00

The Magic Flute Mozart

Saturday, October 10, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

Sunday, October 11, 2:00

The Magic Flute Mozart

Tuesday, October 13, 8:00

New Production

Fidelio Beethoven

Connell*, Parrish; McCracken, Bender,
Welker*, Plishka, Stewart, Davis*,
Pederson
Pritchard/Hampe*/Gunter*/Arhelger
*San Francisco Opera gratefully
acknowledges the generous grants from the
L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs
Foundation and Mr. and Mrs. Reid W.
Dennis to underwrite this new production.*

Friday, October 16, 8:00

Tosca Puccini

Saturday, October 17, 8:00

New Production

La Traviata Verdi

Miricioiu, Begg*, Donna Petersen;
Araiza, Pons, Skinner, Garrett,

Pittsinger, Davis

Meltzer/Copley/Conklin/Walker*/
Munn/Clara*

*This new production of La Traviata is a
gift from Louise M. Davies.*

Sunday, October 18, 2:00

Fidelio Beethoven

Tuesday, October 20, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Wednesday, October 21, 8:00

Fidelio Beethoven

Thursday, October 22, 7:30

Tosca Puccini

Friday, October 23, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Saturday, October 24, 8:00

Fidelio Beethoven

Sunday, October 25, 2:00

Tosca Puccini

Tuesday, October 27, 8:00

Fidelio Beethoven

Wednesday, October 28, 7:30

La Traviata Verdi

Friday, October 30, 8:00

Fidelio Beethoven

Saturday, October 31, 8:00

Nabucco Verdi

Dimitrova, Richards, Voigt; Cappuccilli,
Plishka, Winter, Volpe, Harper
Arena/Freedman/Munn/Montresor/
Munn

*The 1987 presentation of Nabucco is
sponsored, in part, by a grant from the
Koret Foundation.*

Sunday, November 1, 2:00

La Traviata Verdi

Tuesday, November 3, 8:00

Nabucco Verdi

Wednesday, November 4, 8:00

La Traviata Verdi

Thursday, November 5, 7:30

Fidelio Beethoven

Saturday, November 7, 1:00

La Traviata Verdi

Saturday, November 7, 8:00

Nabucco Verdi

Tuesday, November 10, 8:00

Nabucco Verdi

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A: _____

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Wednesday, November 11, 8:00
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach
 Dahl*, Gustafson, Johnson,
 Quittmeyer (November 11, 15, 18, 21,
 25, 28), Bruno (December 8, 11),
 Young; Domingo (November 11, 15,
 18, 21, 25, 28), Lima (December 8, 11),
 Morris (November 11, 15, 18, 21, 25,
 28), Krause (December 8, 11), Howell,
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 Miami Opera Association.*

Friday, November 13, 8:00
Nabucco Verdi

Saturday, November 14, 8:00
Roméo et Juliette Gounod
 Swenson, Renée*, Donna Petersen;
 Lima, Dickson, Howell, Rouleau,
 Dennis Petersen, Potter, Anderson,
 Ledbetter*, Volpe
 Plasson/Uzan/Deiber/Gérard*/Munn

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Sunday, November 15, 2:00
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach

Tuesday, November 17, 8:00
Roméo et Juliette Gounod

Wednesday, November 18, 8:00
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach

Thursday, November 19, 7:30
Nabucco Verdi

Friday, November 20, 8:00
Roméo et Juliette Gounod

Saturday, November 21, 8:00
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach

Sunday, November 22, 2:00
Nabucco Verdi

Monday, November 23, 8:00
The Queen of Spades Tchaikovsky
 Crespin, Evstatieva, Cowdrick, Donna
 Petersen, Patterson, Ganz; Ochman,
 Noble, Raftery, Dennis Petersen,
 Skinner, De Haan, Pederson, Wunsch,
 Delavan
 Tchakarov*/Coleman/O'Hearn/Munn-
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*The 1987 presentation of The Queen of
 Spades is sponsored, in part, by a grant
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Tuesday, November 24, 8:00
Roméo et Juliette Gounod

Wednesday, November 25, 7:30
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach

Friday, November 27, 8:00
The Queen of Spades Tchaikovsky

Saturday, November 28, 8:00
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach

Sunday, November 29, 2:00
Roméo et Juliette Gounod

Tuesday, December 1, 8:00
The Queen of Spades Tchaikovsky

Wednesday, December 2, 7:30
Roméo et Juliette Gounod

Friday, December 4, 8:00
Roméo et Juliette Gounod

Saturday, December 5, 8:00
The Queen of Spades Tchaikovsky

Tuesday, December 8, 8:00
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach

Wednesday, December 9, 7:30
The Queen of Spades Tchaikovsky

Thursday, December 10, 8:00
Family Performance
La Traviata Verdi
 Renée, Cowdrick, Ganz; Wunsch,
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 Fiore/Copley/Conklin/Walker/Munn/
 Clara

Friday, December 11, 8:00
The Tales of Hoffmann Offenbach

Saturday, December 12, 2:00
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Sunday, December 13, 2:00
The Queen of Spades Tchaikovsky

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The Archives for the Performing Arts invites you to view its exhibition documenting the distinguished career of Bay Area tenor Jess Thomas—currently on display in the War Memorial Opera House Museum. Among the first winners of the San Francisco Opera Debut Auditions, Jess Thomas soon became one of the world's top-ranking singers—hailed as the outstanding Wagnerian tenor of his day. This exhibition, presented in celebration of Mr. Thomas's sixtieth birthday, traces the singer's career, from his early training here in the Bay Area, to his triumphs in the great opera houses and festivals around the world.

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San Francisco Opera Broadcasts

After a hiatus of four years, San Francisco Opera will be back on the air with 10 operas selected from the more than 50 productions mounted since 1982. The broadcasts will be heard nationwide over the WFMT Fine Arts Network beginning Saturday, September 19, at 11:00 a.m. (Pacific Time). In San Francisco, the broadcasts will be carried by KKHI (1550 AM/95.7 FM). For times and stations outside the Bay Area, consult your local listings.

- Sep. 19 OTELLO (1983)
M. Price; Domingo, Caroli; Janowski
- Sep. 26 KHOVANSCHINA (1984)
Dernesch; Noble, Bailey, Lewis, Howell, Salminen; Albrecht
- Oct. 3 MANON LESCAUT (1983)
Freni; Mauro, Sardinero, Capecci, MacNeil; Arena
- Oct. 10 JENŮFA (1986)
Beňáčková, Rysanek; Ochman, Rosenshein; Mackerras
- Oct. 17 DON CARLOS (1986)
Lorengar, Toczyska; Shicoff, Titus, Lloyd, Rouleau; Pritchard
- Oct. 24 LE NOZZE DI FIGARO (1986)
Te Kanawa, Rolandi, Quittmeyer; Ramey, Devlin; Tate
- Oct. 31 EUGENE ONEGIN (1986)
Freni, Walker; Allen, Gulyás, Ghiaurov; Bradshaw
- Nov. 7 MACBETH (1986)
Verrett; Noble, Tomlinson, Popov; Kord
- Nov. 14 LA GIOCONDA (1983)
Slatinaru, Paunova, Nadler; Bonisolti, Manuguerra, Kavrakos; Meltzer
- Nov. 21 FALSTAFF (1985)
Lorengar, Quittmeyer, Horne, Swenson; Wixell, Titus, MacNeil; Arena

The operas are produced by Marilyn Mercur; executive producer, Robert Walker. Clifford Cranna is the announcer for the series, and Chris Wood is the audio engineer, with technical supervision by Roger Gans.

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(L. to r.) Nina Hinson, Frederica von Stade, Giorgio Tozzi, Renato Capecchi, John Brecknock and Timothy Nolen in San Francisco Opera's 1976 staging of *The Barber of Seville*.



THE BARBER OF PESARO

By JOHN ARDOIN

Give me a laundry list and I will set it to music," Gioacchino Rossini once boasted, only partly in jest. He was paying himself a left-handed compliment, the self-acknowledgement of a prodigiously facile gift to pour out music with effortless speed. Remember, it was Rossini who—when told Donizetti had finished a new opera in three weeks—remarked, "Well, he always was a lazy fellow." After all, it had taken Rossini only 13 days to produce his comic masterpiece, *The Barber of Seville*.

Rossini, born in the Adriatic town of Pesaro in 1792, had learned to write in haste in his youth because of financial responsibilities towards family members who were dependent on his ability to make money quickly. In the beginning of his career he seemed, in his own mind at least, to be more of an artisan than an artist. He apparently lacked any loftier ideas about the writing of music; it was a matter of doing what he knew best and did best.

As a carpenter fashions an exquisite piece of cabinetry, so Rossini fashioned an attractive piece of music. That a Chippendale emerged from a mass of woodworkers and a Rossini loomed over such now forgotten composers as Simone Mayr, Niccolò Zingarelli and Saverio Mercadante was of little concern to either man at the time. It was a question they left to posterity, and they probably never thought about it at all.

Of all the characters he fashioned,

John Ardoin is Music Critic of The Dallas Morning News and author of Callas at Juilliard: The Master Classes, which will be published this fall by Alfred Knopf.

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Rossini was closer in attitude and temperament to his ebullient Figaro than to any other. It is hardly a coincidence that Figaro's bravura aria "Largo al factotum" was one of Rossini's favorite party turns; he loved to sing it to his own accompaniment at a glittering gathering. He could well have been describing himself: "Make way for the factotum of the city. Rushing to his shop, for dawn is here ... what pleasure ... you are indeed the most fortunate of men. Ready for everything by night or by day, always bustling, always in motion. I go like lightning ... Good fortune always smiles."

Evviva Rossini, the Barber of Pesaro.

It is better to think of him as a resourceful wheeler-dealer than as the Father Goose of his time, as many have seen him. But to truly appreciate him we have to remember that along with surface



Gioacchino Rossini in an engraving made around 1820.

wit and brilliance he was a bridge from the culture of one century to that of another. Rossini was born into a musical world in transition from classicism to romanticism. We most often think of him today as an

incomparable composer of comic operas, all of which owe a deeply and frequently acknowledged debt to Mozart, a god-like figure to Rossini. "The angel of music," he called him.

It goes without saying that Rossini, in turn, would have been enormously pleased could he have lived to hear himself described as "the Italian Mozart." There is ample reason for so extravagant a claim, for like Mozart, Rossini was a melodist of the highest order and had an unerring feeling for the voice and its possibilities. In their comedies, there is laughter of a tickling, sly, mocking sort rather than the belly-shaking type.

There are marvelous human insights in his works as well, though in Rossini's operas these never penetrate as deeply and revealingly as in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, for example. Rossini was



MORTON

San Francisco Opera's first presentation of The Barber of Seville took place in 1925, and it featured a formidable Count Almaviva: Tito Schipa. Signor Schipa returned to the role in the next three stagings at the Opera House, in 1926, 1929 and 1935. The photo, taken in 1935, shows the tenor in the center, flanked by the Figaro of Richard Bonelli, and surrounded by the "players" of the San Francisco Opera Chorus.



Salvatore Baccaloni as Doctor Bartolo listens to Ezio Pinza's Don Basilio, who is about to launch into "La Calunnia." Baccaloni portrayed Bartolo in eight of our seasons (1938 to 1958), Pinza in five (1935 to 1945), appearing together in three of them. The above photo was taken in 1941.

too often caught on the treadmill of contemporary operatic conventions, becoming prey to the need to borrow from himself and developing stylistic tricks that enabled him to grind out lengths of music to meet a deadline. He paid a price for his facility, but still he soared above the crowd. And again, as in Mozart, there is in Rossini's music at its best a craft, an elegance and a well-formed sense of character delineation.

But I said earlier he was a bridge, and there is another, crucial side to the man, for Rossini not only looked backward to classic values, but also forward, to romantic concepts. The Rossini of such giant-stepping operas as *Semiramide*, *Otello* and *William Tell* helped to shape the heroics of his age through his vocal writing and in the way in which he gave the opera orchestra a bigger and more complex role than ever before. If we over-emphasized his classic side and talent for comedy, his more serious nature suffers. The true wonder of Rossini is that he stood astride two cultures and was a master of both.

In all, he wrote 39 operas, two large-scale choral works and dozens of songs,

piano pieces and ensemble works. Those compositions on which his fame rests were written between the ages of 16 and 37, although he lived to be 76. That fact is an important part of his story as well. Rossini spent more than half of his life in a self-imposed exile from the arena that had brought him greater rewards and acclaim during his lifetime than to virtually any other composer of the day, apart from Beethoven.

Many reasons have been advanced for Rossini's abdication of his throne as king of opera after producing so important a score as *William Tell*. During Richard Wagner's first visit to Paris, where Rossini lived the second half of his life, he had complained of a decline in singing. Certainly what he saw as a slackening in the art he so passionately loved was part of the reason he stopped writing for the stage so abruptly. But there were other pressing reasons as well.

He had labored long and hard ever since his teens, and by the time of *William Tell* he was tired, having packed a lifetime's work into the space of 20-odd years. Also, during the writing of *Tell*, he

had developed a nervous condition which gradually became chronic and could well have been venereal. It drained his energy, and he found that writing had become increasingly difficult, especially as he had gradually begun to demand more of himself.

Even after his health improved, the joy in working was gone, along with the need to work. By 1855, when Rossini settled for good in Paris, he was a wealthy and respected figure who could afford the luxury of writing music for himself alone. Only one full-scale work came from this later period—the *Petite Messe Solennelle*—his sole masterpiece written during the years away from the stage. Apart from this amazing and impassioned score, there were only whimsical salon pieces he called *Sins of My Old Age*, created to amuse and divert his friends and guests.

To the outside world, however, his fame rested on one composition: *The Barber of Seville*. It was an opera drawn from the same source as Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*—a trilogy of plays by another real-life Figaro character, Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais. The plays dealt with the intrigues and love affairs in the household of a Spanish nobleman, the Count Almaviva. The Beaumarchais *Barber*, however, is permeated by social criticism, with the working classes pitted against the aristocracy, while Rossini's *Barber* is little more than a

STROHMEYER



Lily Pons as Rosina and Enzo Mascherini as Figaro in San Francisco Opera's 1950 presentation of *The Barber of Seville*.

favorite *commedia dell'arte* ploy: a foolish old man attempting to marry his beautiful young ward who is in love with a handsome young man.

The Barber was the first play in the Beaumarchais trilogy and had been previously set to music by Giovanni Paisiello, an accomplished and popular composer of the generation prior to Rossini's. Though immediately attracted to the idea of setting *The Barber* to music, Rossini and his librettist Cesare Sterbini worried that the critics and public would think they were openly challenging the elder Paisiello and be offended by a new *Barber*.

To avoid such a confrontation, Rossini wrote to the then 70-year old Paisiello asking his permission to retrace the same dramatic ground. Much later, Rossini gave his reasons: "I had not wanted to enter into a contest with him, being aware of my inferiority, but had wanted only to treat a subject that delighted me while avoiding as much as possible the exact situations in his libretto."

Supposedly, Paisiello responded by wishing his younger colleague well. Still, Rossini thought it better to give the first performance of his new work at Rome's Teatro Argentina as *Almaviva*, attaching to it the Beaumarchais subtitle "The Useless Precaution." There was even a sort of apologia printed in the libretto that first night of *The Barber*, February 20, 1816. Rossini's fears were justified. When he entered the orchestra pit to take his place at the harpsichord, catcalls and whistles broke out from a group of Paisiello partisans, who were determined to create a debacle. Things went from bad to worse.

The *Almaviva* was Manuel García, father of the legendary prima donnas Maria Malibran and Pauline Viardot. He chose not to perform the first aria Rossini wrote for him, but substituted instead his own arrangement of a Spanish melody, sung to his own accompaniment. As he was tuning his guitar, a string broke, provoking laughter and more catcalls. When Figaro entered, also carrying a guitar, the laughter doubled and barely a note of "Largo al factotum" was heard.

The comedy soon became a comedy of errors when the Basilio stumbled over a trap door, fell and bruised his face badly. He had to sing "La calunnia" with a handkerchief held to a bleeding nose. Next, a cat wandered onstage during the first act finale. Figaro chased it in one



MORTON

Lawrence Tibbett sang Figaro only once with the San Francisco Opera, in 1941, at which time Rosina was portrayed by Bidú Sayão. Mme Sayão returned to our stage as Rosina only one more time, in 1942.

direction, Bartolo in another. It wound up under Rosina's skirts, producing total confusion onstage. As the curtain fell, Rossini turned to the audience and shrugged his shoulders. The public thought it a contemptuous gesture and began booing. Hardly a note of music was heard during the noise that continued during the second act.

Oddly enough, Rossini seemed not to have been entirely upset by all the furor. When a group of singers went to his house after the performance to console him, they found the composer sound asleep. Still, Rossini thought it was best to stay away from the theater for the second performance, which seems to have gone without mishap. Later that evening, as Rossini later remembered, "I was sleeping peacefully when I was awakened suddenly by a deafening uproar out in the street, accompanied by a brilliant glow of torches.

"As soon as I got up, I saw that they were coming in my direction. Still half asleep, and remembering the scene of the

preceding night, I thought that they were coming to set fire to the building, and I saved myself by going to a stable at the back of the courtyard. But lo, after a few minutes I heard García calling me at the top of his voice. He finally located me. 'Get a move on, you. Come on, now, listen to those shouts of "Bravo, bravissimo Figaro." An unprecedented success. The street is full of people. They want to see you.'

"But still heartbroken . . . I answered, 'Tell them to go to hell, their bravos and all the rest. I'm not coming out of here.' I don't know how poor García phrased my refusal to that turbulent throng. In fact, he was hit in the eye by an orange, which gave him a black eye for several days. Meanwhile, the uproar in the street increased more and more." There were only seven performances during that first run of *The Barber* in February and March of 1816, and it did not return to Rome for five years. But by the time it did, *The Barber* had been joyfully embraced by



Ramon Vinay has appeared in a variety of roles with the San Francisco Opera, ranging from *Tristan to Dr. Schön* in *Lulu*. One of his 1965 assignments was *Dr. Bartolo* in *The Barber of Seville*, during which he was captured in the act of listening to Ugo Trama's *Don Basilio*.

major cities of Europe, and Rossini's had become one of the prominent names in the world of opera.

The success of *The Barber* is doubly remarkable when one remembers that it is in many instances a pastiche. It was not unusual, of course, during the 18th and early 19th centuries for a composer to borrow from himself. Rossini was famous, or infamous if you prefer, in this regard. But in the case of *The Barber*, even he reached new heights in robbing the graves of earlier works that had not achieved notable fame. *The Barber's* overture was originally written in 1813 for

Aureliano in Palmira and reused in 1815 for *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*. *Aureliano* also provided material for Almaviva's first-act aria "Ecco ridente in cielo" and Basilio's "La calunnia," while *Elisabetta* contributed the second half of Rosina's "Una voce poco fa" (an allegro idea, which was likewise derived from *Aureliano*).

Other ideas came from *Sigismondo* of 1814 (the opening chorus "Piano, pianissimo" and another part of "La calunnia"), *La Cambiale di Matrimonio* of 1810 (the Rosina-Figaro duet "Dunque io son"), *Il Signor Bruschino* of 1813 (Bartolo's "A un dottor della mia sorte") and finally the

cantata *Egle ed Irene* of 1814 (the trio "Ah, qual colpo"). Not content with borrowing from himself for *The Barber*, Rossini also made use of ideas from Haydn's oratorio *The Seasons*, Spontini's opera *La Vestale* and even a Russian folk tune. The point, however, is not in what he used, but how he used it, and *The Barber's* irresistible spontaneity and musical sense of rightness reduces all of its background sources to insignificance.

Oddly enough, for so universally popular an opera, a critical edition (a score that reflects as closely as possible a composer's original intent) was not published until recently. It was sorely needed, for *The Barber* had become prey to many traditional performance practices which distorted many of Rossini's wishes, in particular his original orchestration. In 1969, an authentic score was prepared by Italian conductor and musicologist Alberto Zedda, who conducts these performances of *The Barber*, and it is this score that is being used in the current San Francisco revival.

In the case of *The Barber*, Zedda's job was made easier by the fact that only one autograph version of the score has survived; it rests in the City Music Library of Bologna. The problems involved were mainly those of deciphering Rossini's expressive and dynamic markings correctly, and the creation of appendices to contain variants and alternate arias (such as those for Rosina in the Lesson Scene) that had been approved by Rossini or created by him for other productions and singers. These appendices offer a conductor the flexibility to choose a version of *The Barber* that is not only musically correct but suitable for the cast at his disposal.

One final thought before leaving Rossini. He died in 1868 and was given a grand funeral in Paris befitting his enormous fame and the void created by his death. He was laid to rest in the cemetery of Père Lachaise, where Bellini and Chopin had been buried before him. Like Bellini, Rossini's remains were eventually returned to Italy. In the case of Rossini, however, his body was taken to the church of Santa Croce in Florence, where Italy's greatest men are interred. The fact that Rossini today rests alongside Galileo and Michelangelo gives a more accurate idea of how his countrymen and the world came to regard him than words ever could. ■

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ARTIST PROFILES



SUSANNE MENTZER

Young American mezzo-soprano **Susanne Mentzer** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Rosina, a role with which she has already become closely identified. She has sung it with great success with the New York City Opera, San Diego Opera and Opera Company of Philadelphia, and during the 1984-85 season it served as the vehicle of her debuts at Covent Garden, the Paris Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Miss Mentzer studied at the Juilliard School in New York and first attracted national attention with her participation in the Luciano Pavarotti master classes televised nationally on PBS. After two seasons with the Texas Opera Theater and Houston Opera Studio, she scored a personal triumph in Berlioz's *Beatrice and Benedict* at the Opera Theatre of St. Louis in 1983, the year of her European debut as Cherubino in Cologne Opera's famous Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Her other American credits include performances with the Washington Opera, the Dallas Opera, the Tulsa Opera and the Florentine Opera of Milwaukee. Last season she bowed at the Salzburg Festival as a soloist in Mozart's Mass in C Minor, and made her Vienna Staatsoper debut as Cherubino, and this past summer she enjoyed great success as the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* conducted by James Levine at the Ravinia Festival. The 1987-88 season will see her in several major debuts, including her first appearance at Milan's La Scala, where she will appear as Zerlina in the opening night production of *Don Giovanni*. She will also sing the role of Adalgisa for the first time, appearing opposite the Norma of Shirley Verrett in Monte Carlo, and will return to the Washington Opera to portray Prince Charming in Massenet's *Cendrillon*, hav-



SUSAN NEVES

ing previously sung the title role in Cologne. Next spring she returns to Covent Garden as Jane Seymour opposite Joan Sutherland in the title role of Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*. Miss Mentzer sang the role with Dame Joan in Houston last year and on the soon-to-be-released recording. A busy concert artist, she has appeared with the Boston, Houston and Montreal symphonies, the Tanglewood Festival, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Toronto's Mostly Mozart Festival. Future engagements include her Metropolitan Opera debut as Cherubino during the fall of 1988, her first Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* during the 1989-90 season (first in Paris and then in Houston) and the role of Dorabella in a new Covent Garden production of *Così fan tutte* in the spring of 1989.

New York-born soprano **Susan Neves** returns to San Francisco Opera as Berta in *The Barber of Seville*, having made her Company debut during the 1985 Ring Festival as Gerhilde in *Die Walküre*, the role of her 1984 Baltimore Opera debut. She received her master's degree in music from the Manhattan School of Music and was a member of the Santa Fe Opera apprentice program in 1981 and '82 before participating in the 1984 Merola Opera Program and winning the Kent Family Award at that year's San Francisco Opera Auditions Grand Finals. She sang the role of Donna Anna in Western Opera Theater's 1985 touring production of *Don Giovanni* shortly after making her Sarasota Opera debut in the title role of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Last January Miss Neves bowed with the Opera Company of Philadelphia as Donna

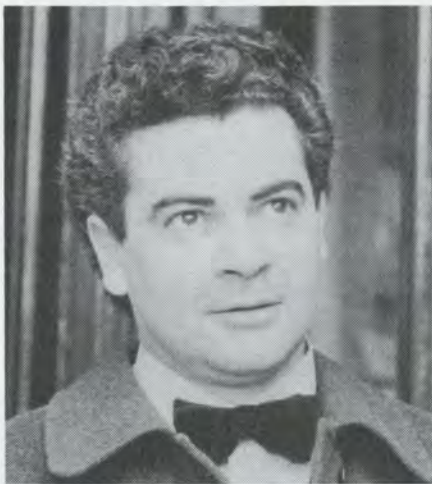
IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA



LEO NUCCI

Elvira in *Don Giovanni*. She was a winner of the 1983 Washington International Competition and the 1984 Liederkrantz Foundation Competition as well as the Second International Luciano Pavarotti/Opera Company of Philadelphia Voice Competition. Next year she will make her Carnegie Hall debut as soprano soloist with the New York Choral Society in Rossini's *Stabat Mater*.

Baritone **Leo Nucci** returns to San Francisco Opera as Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*, a role that has earned him accolades in all of the world's major opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden, and the companies of Hamburg, Bologna and Barcelona. He made his acclaimed Company debut as the Elder Germont in the 1983 Fall Season production of *La Traviata* and returned in 1985 as Michonnet in *Adriana Lecouvreur*. Born in Bologna, Nucci gave his first operatic performance in the title role of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Spoleto in 1967 after winning the A. Belli Competition. He was soon singing in the major opera houses of Europe and made his Metropolitan Opera debut during the 1979-80 season in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. The following season he appeared in *Ballo* with the Paris Opera, Washington Opera and in his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut. In 1982 he was seen in *Ballo* at the Met as well as in Naples; in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Traviata* in Vienna; in *Traviata* in Geneva; and in *Falstaff* at Covent Garden, a production which was broadcast on television. Highlights of the 1985 season included his return to the Met for *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Eugene Onegin*, including broadcasts of both works; a return to La Scala as



PATRICK POWER

Rossini's Figaro; *Rigoletto* in Barcelona; plus numerous appearances in Vienna, Geneva, Hamburg and Berlin. Last year, Nucci was seen at Teatro Argentina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, at Covent Garden in *Il Trovatore*, at the Met in *Don Carlos* and in *Traviata* in Barcelona. His extensive discography includes complete recordings of *La Rondine*, *Andrea Chénier*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (with Marilyn Horne), *Aida*, *Tosca*, *Falstaff*, and three new recordings: the French *Don Carlos* with Katia Ricciarelli and Plácido Domingo; *L'Elisir d'Amore*; and Verdi's *Macbeth* with Shirley Verrett, who also appeared opposite Nucci in a new film version of that work. Yet to be released are his new recordings of *Aida* with Luciano Pavarotti, *Ernani* with Pavarotti and Joan Sutherland, and a disc of solo arias from the bel canto repertoire.

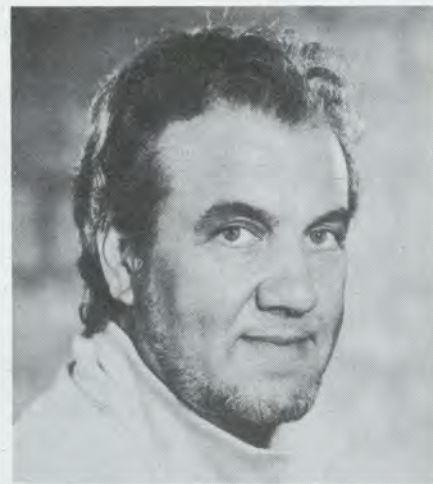
Lyric tenor **Patrick Power** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, a role he has sung in Oslo, for his 1978 German debut in Bonn, for Wellington City Opera in New Zealand and for Scottish Opera. Born in New Zealand and currently holding joint Irish/New Zealand citizenship, he earned a degree in music in Dunedin and then completed training in Auckland. After winning numerous competitions in New Zealand and Australia, he studied language at the University of Perugia in Italy before joining the Norwegian Opera in Oslo. Power made his British debut as Telemaco in the 1979 Glyndebourne production of Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse* (which was subsequently recorded). From 1979 to 1981 he was principal lyric tenor at Munich's Gärtnerplatz Theater, and since 1982 has been a guest artist in major opera houses around the world. He bowed with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden as the Simpleton



RENATO CAPECCHI

in a 1983 production of *Boris Godunov*. That same season saw him as Fenton in *Falstaff* at Copenhagen, as Tamino in *The Magic Flute* in Oslo, and as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* in Cologne. The 1984 Wexford Festival saw him as Jean in Massenet's *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame*, while his 1985 assignments included appearances with the English National Opera (Vanya in *Katya Kabanova*), the Paris Opera (Evandre in *Alceste*) and the Drottningholm Festival (Belmonte in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*). Power's numerous engagements last year include the role of Flute in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Glyndebourne Opera on that company's tour to Hong Kong and China; appearances as Alfredo in *La Traviata* in Toronto and Tamino in Montreal; the role of Hüon in Weber's *Oberon* in Lyons; and a return to New Zealand to sing his first Duke in *Rigoletto*. His assignments this year have included Almaviva for Scottish Opera and Alfredo for English Opera North, and he recently recorded Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Roger Norrington. Among his future engagements are a production of *Le Comte Ory* in Lyons, the role of Tamino in Cologne, and a recording of *Oberon* with John Eliot Gardiner.

Italian bass-baritone **Renato Capecchi** returns to San Francisco Opera as Dr. Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville*, the same role in which he made his Company debut in 1968. He last appeared in San Francisco in 1985 in three productions: *Werther*, *Tosca* and *Der Rosenkavalier*, and has sung in a total of 13 productions with the Company. He made his professional debut with the Italian Radio in 1948, followed by his stage debut as Amonasro in *Aida* with the Teatro Comunale of Reggio Emilia in 1949. A familiar figure on



NICOLAI GHIAUROV

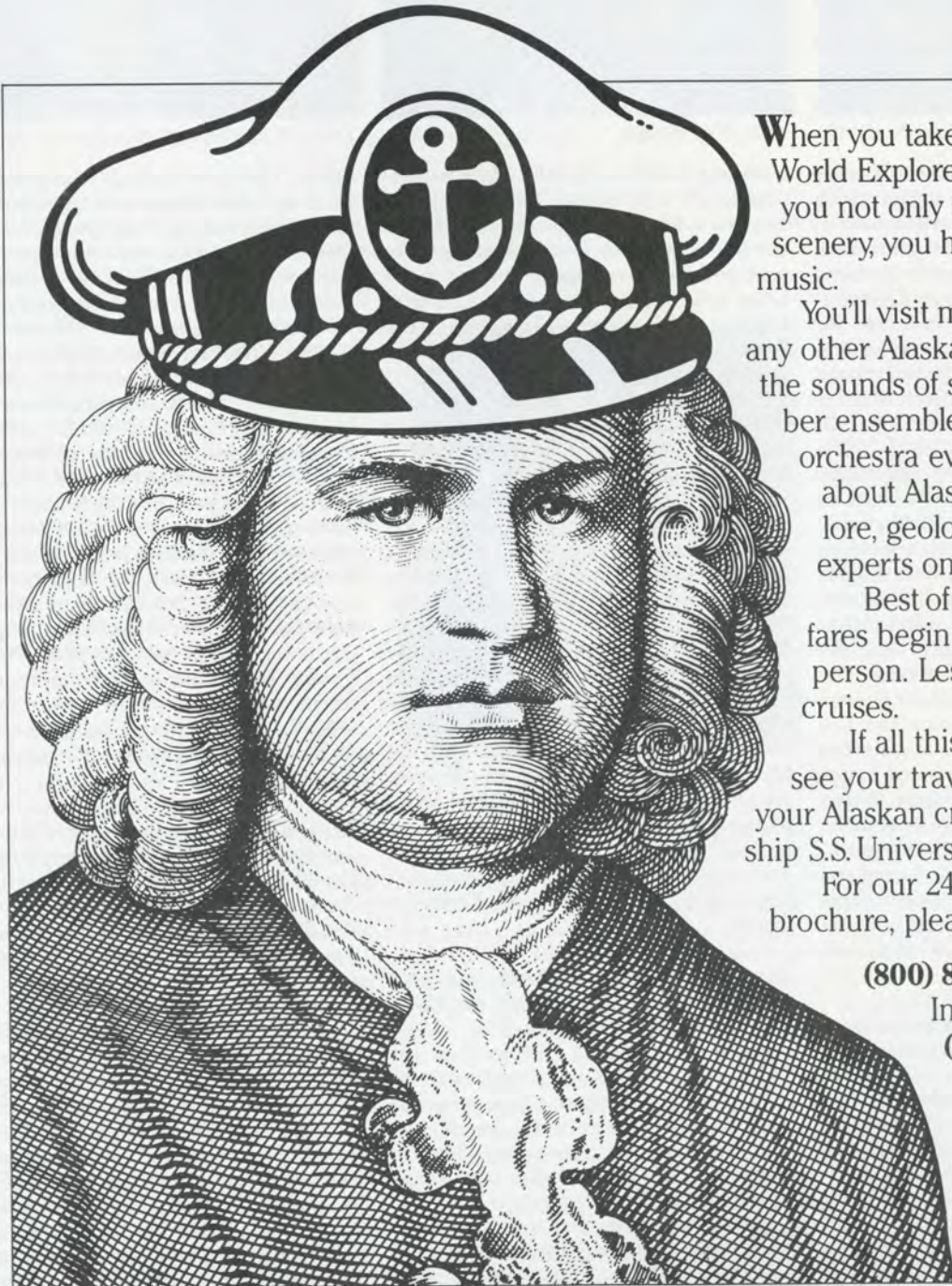
the world's foremost operatic stages, Capecchi has a repertoire of over 300 roles and has recorded more than 30 complete operas, as well as several special programs of Italian music. For the 1976 Merola Opera Program, he directed the American stage premiere of Donizetti's *L'Ajo nell'Imbarazzo* and Gazzaniga's *Il Convitato di Pietra* at the Paul Masson Winery and instructed the young singers in classic commedia dell'arte traditions. Other directorial credits include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with the Chautauqua and New Orleans Opera, *Il Matrimonio Segreto* in Santa Fe, *Così fan tutte* in Connecticut and *La Fille du Régiment* at New York City Opera. Among his many engagements last season were *La Bohème* in Chicago and *Madama Butterfly* in Philadelphia, in addition to directorial assignments at the University of Colorado in Boulder (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) and Milwaukee (*Don Giovanni*), as well as his New York recital debut in Carnegie Hall. Most recently, Capecchi has sung in *La Bohème* at the Metropolitan Opera and in *I Puritani* and *Tosca* in Montreal. Especially interested in working with young singers, Capecchi has held teaching positions with the American Opera Company at Juilliard, the University of Colorado at Boulder and at the Music School in Detmold, West Germany. He recently held master classes at the Australian Opera Company Studio, the Montreal Atelier de l'Opera, and in Vittorio Veneto. His future plans include *Tosca*, *La Bohème* and *Werther* at the Metropolitan Opera, and *Così fan tutte* in Houston and Philadelphia.

One of the outstanding singers of our time, Bulgarian basso **Nicolai Ghiaurov** returns to San Francisco Opera as Don Basilio, the role of his 1956 operatic debut

continued on p.48



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Western Opera Theater in China

Photos by Lisa Kohler



(right) Sign welcoming Western Opera Theater to Shanghai at the "official welcome banquet" in March of 1987.

(below) Baritone Stephen Eisenhard models a San Francisco Opera costume for Shanghai Drama Institute faculty.

(below) Soprano Ann Panagulias and Chinese counterpart during a rehearsal for the joint Shanghai concert.



Shanghai dignitaries and Western Opera Theater performers gather on stage following a performance of *La Bohème* at the Shanghai City Hall Auditorium.

Kunqu Opera at San Francisco

Photos by Alice Cunningham

EAST MEETS WEST



(left) On July 4, 1987, Shanghai's Kunqu Opera gave a lecture-demonstration (in their terminology, a "friendly exchange") at the San Francisco Opera Ballet Studio. Liu Yi Long started the proceedings by demonstrating the various meanings of gestures with a fan.

(below) Gin Wei, head of the Kunqu Opera Costume Department, discusses embroidery on Chinese Opera costumes with Jenny Green and other members of the San Francisco Opera Costume Shop.



Liu Yi Long answers questions from a group of interested Merola Opera Program participants.



Liu Yi Long presents a miniature Chinese Opera headdress to Christine Bullin, Manager of the San Francisco Opera Center, at the end of the lecture-demonstration.

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This revival of *The Barber of Seville* is given in honor of Mary Rosenblatt Powell.

Opera in two acts by GIOACCHINO ROSSINI
Text by CESARE STERBINI

After the play by PIERRE AUGUSTIN CARON DE BEAUMARCHAIS

(Critical edition by Alberto Zedda/Fondazione Rossini, used by arrangement with Associated Music Publishers, Inc., sole U.S. agents for G. Ricordi & Co., Milan)

Il Barbiere di Siviglia

(in Italian)

Conductor
Alberto Zedda*

Stage Director
Giuseppe de Tomasi

Designer
Alfred Siercke

Lighting Designer
Joan Arhelger

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson*

Musical Preparation
Robert Morrison
Susanna Lemberskaya
Ernest Fredric Knell
Joseph De Rugeriis

Prompter
Joseph De Rugeriis

Recitative Accompaniment
Robert Morrison

Assistant Stage Director
Fred Frumberg

Stage Manager
Jerry Sherk

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Rome, February 20, 1816

First San Francisco Opera performance:
September 24, 1925

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 AT 7:30
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 AT 2:00
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 AT 8:00
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 AT 8:00
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 AT 8:00
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2 AT 8:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>Fiorello</i>	Mark Delavan
<i>Count Almaviva</i>	Patrick Power**
<i>Figaro</i>	Leo Nucci
<i>Rosina</i>	Susanne Mentzer*
<i>Doctor Bartolo</i>	Renato Capecchi
<i>Don Basilio</i>	Nicolai Ghiaurov
<i>Berta</i>	Susan Neves
<i>Ambrogio</i>	Paul Gudas
<i>Officer</i>	Kevin Anderson
<i>Notary</i>	Kenneth Malucelli

Musicians, soldiers, townspeople

**American opera debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 1840; Doctor Bartolo's house in Seville

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION

Supertitles for *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* provided by a generous and most appreciated gift from William and Eloise Rollnick.

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera.

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

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

The performance will last approximately three hours.

Opening night flowers by Events Management Inc.,
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Il Barbiere di Siviglia/Synopsis

ACT I

With his band of hired musicians, Count Almaviva comes at dawn to serenade Rosina outside the house of her guardian, Dr. Bartolo, who keeps her a virtual prisoner in the hope of marrying her himself. When Rosina does not appear, Almaviva dismisses the musicians but lingers near the house. The barber Figaro arrives and describes his busy life. The Count asks him to arrange a meeting with Rosina, adding that his identity must not be known, for he does not wish her to be influenced by his rank. Suddenly Rosina appears on her balcony, joined by Dr. Bartolo. The Count and Figaro hide, but Rosina manages to drop a note to the Count. After Bartolo leaves, Almaviva sings a second serenade telling Rosina that he is Lindoro, a poor student who can offer her nothing but love. The Count and Figaro continue their planning. Troops are coming to the city, and it is decided that Almaviva, disguised as a drunken officer, must arrange to be billeted with Bartolo.

Rosina, alone in the house, expresses her spirited nature. Bartolo returns and is soon visited by Don Basilio, the music teacher, who informs him that Count Almaviva has arrived in town and both suspect that he is the mysterious stranger who is trying to arouse Rosina's interest. Basilio suggests that they start a campaign of slander which will make Rosina reject the Count. Figaro overhears their plan and returns to warn Rosina of the doctor's intention to marry her, and leaves with a note from her to "Lindoro." Dr. Bartolo suspects that Figaro may be carrying messages between his ward and her admirer, but is frustrated by Rosina in his attempts to learn the truth. Later the Count enters in disguise. The doctor suspiciously resists the order for the quartering of the soldier. During the

confusion which the Count creates in the Bartolo household, he manages to slip a note to Rosina which Bartolo intercepts, but which Rosina cleverly switches with the week's laundry list. Soon soldiers arrive to arrest the offender but immediately release him when the Count reveals his identity to an officer.

ACT II

The doctor, wondering if the drunken soldier may not be an emissary of Count Almaviva, is interrupted by a stranger, none other than the Count himself disguised as a music teacher named Don Alonso. He explains that Basilio is ill and he has come instead to give Rosina her music lesson. Figaro arrives, and to assure the young couple a moment together, insists on shaving the doctor. Suddenly Basilio appears—in perfect health. He is soon convinced that he is really not well and is rushed out of the house. Figaro proceeds with the shaving of the doctor while the two lovers plan their escape. Bartolo overhears and, more suspicious than ever, chases both the Count and Figaro out.

As night falls, the Count (Lindoro), accompanied by Figaro, places a ladder against Rosina's balcony. Rosina, believing the slanderous tales about her suitor that Bartolo has told her, refuses to go with them. The Count reveals his identity and they prepare to leave. Suddenly it is discovered that the ladder is gone. At the same moment, Don Basilio and the notary arrive, prepared to marry Don Bartolo to his ward. Instead, Figaro and the Count persuade the notary to marry the Count and Rosina. Arriving too late to stop the wedding, Dr. Bartolo accepts his misfortune gracefully and all offer their congratulations to the Count and his new Countess.



Il Barbiere di Siviglia

Photos taken in rehearsal by David Powers

Leo Nucci, Renato Capecchi



Susanne Mentzer, Renato Capecchi



Leo Nucci



Patrick Power



Susan Neves



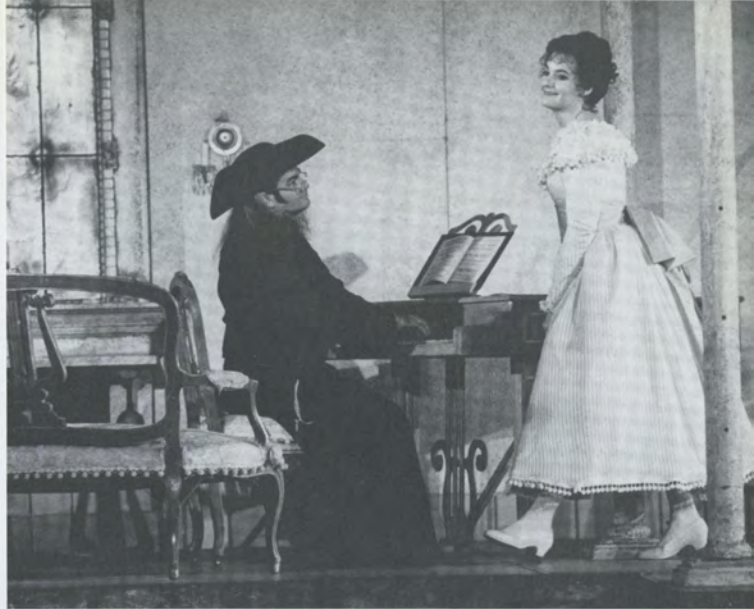
Mark Delavan



Paul Gudas



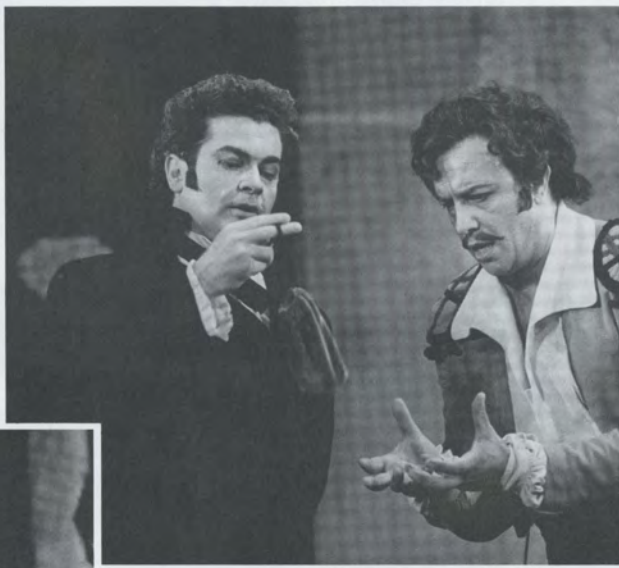
Patrick Power, Susanne Mentzer



Patrick Power, Susanne Mentzer



Renato Capecchi, Nicolai Ghiaurov

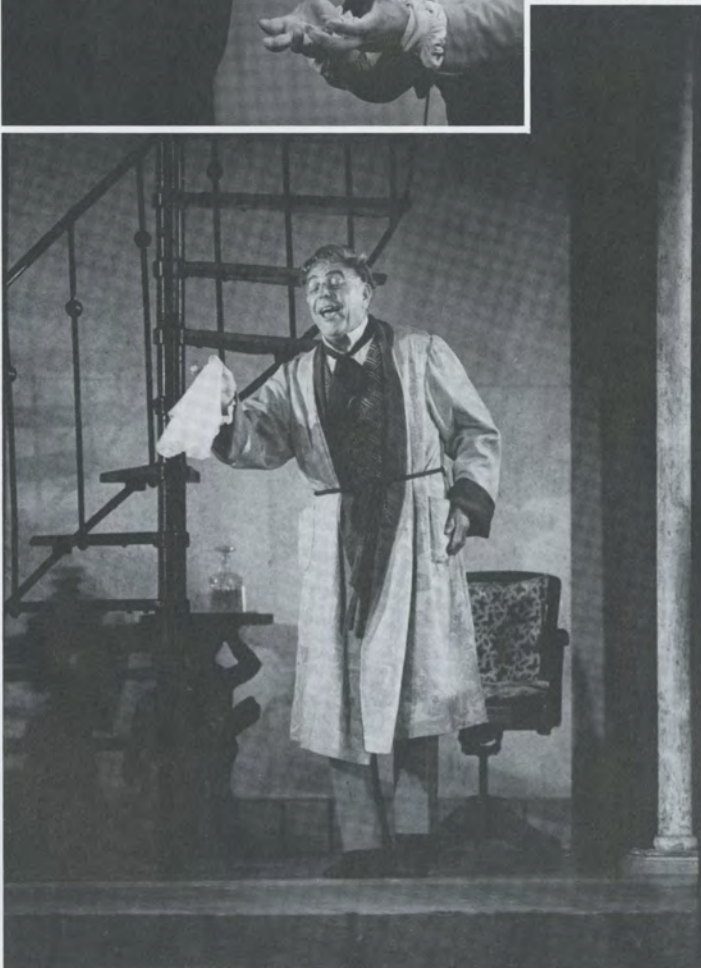


Patrick Power, Leo Nucci

(bellow) Renato Capecchi



Nicolai Ghiaurov



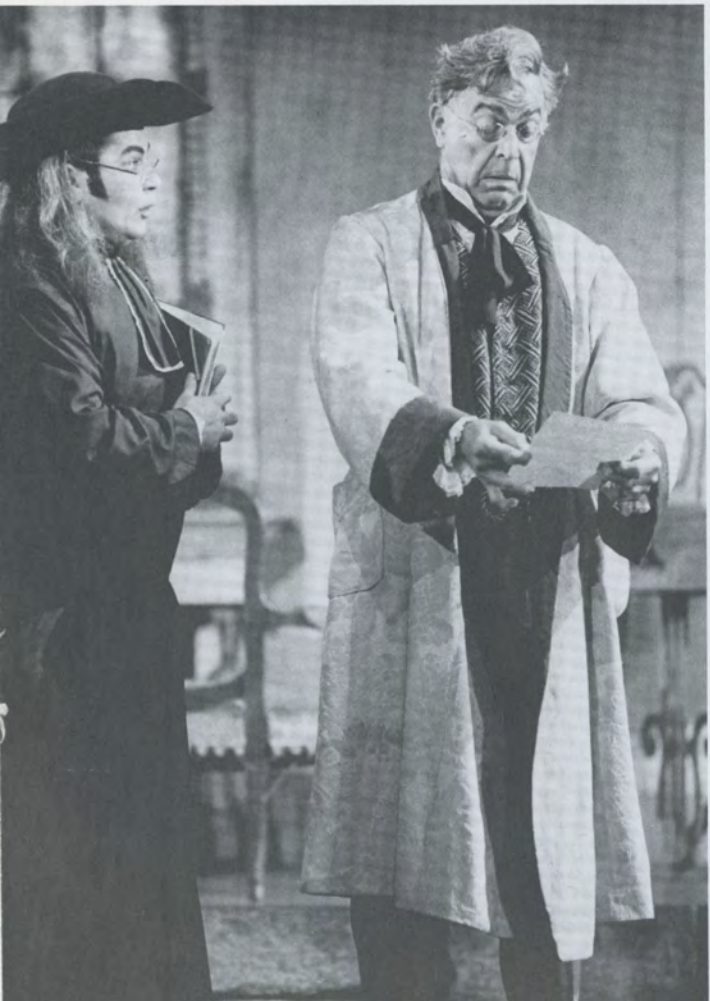


(above) Susanne Mentzer

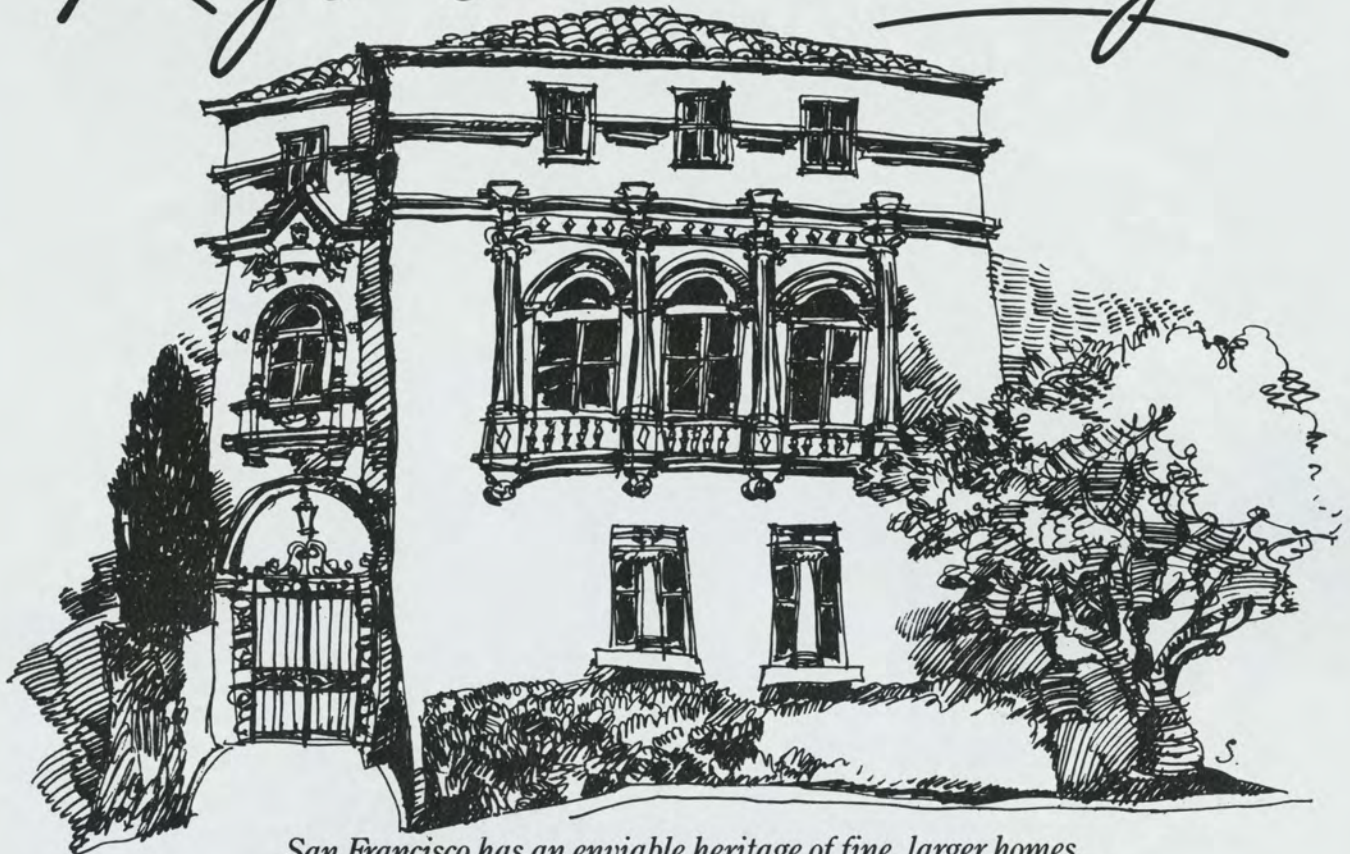


(above) Renato Capecchi, Nicolai Ghiaurov

(below) Patrick Power, Renato Capecchi



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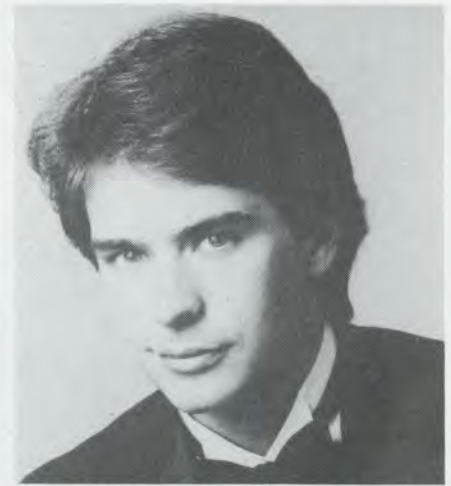
continued from p.36

in Sofia. Last seen here as Prince Gremin in the 1986 *Eugene Onegin*, he made his Company debut in 1967 as Méphistophélès in Gounod's *Faust* and returned in 1983 to recreate one of his most celebrated portrayals, the title role of *Boris Godunov*. He began his career in 1955 by winning first prize in the International Singing Competition in Paris and by 1958 was performing with the Bolshoi Opera, bowing as Méphistophélès and appearing in subsequent performances of *The Barber of Seville* and as Pimen in *Boris Godunov*. The following year he made his La Scala debut as Varlaam in *Boris Godunov*, and by now holds the distinction of performing with that company for 28 consecutive years. His success there led to appearances in the major opera houses of the world. He made his highly acclaimed 1963 American opera debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, appearing as Méphistophélès, which was also the vehicle of his 1965 Metropolitan Opera debut. He has been lauded for his many and varied portrayals, including King Philip in *Don Carlo*, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra* and in the title roles of *Don Quichotte*, *Don Giovanni* and Boito's *Mefistofele*. Ghiaurov has an extensive discography encompassing complete recordings of operas by Bellini, Donizetti, Gounod, Massenet, Mozart, Mussorgsky, Puccini, Rossini, Tchaikovsky and Verdi, including new recordings of *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*. Recent engagements have included the title role of *Boris Godunov* for Houston Grand Opera, and performances of *Don Carlo* in Paris, *Turandot* in Munich, and *Eugene Onegin* and *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Milan's La Scala.



MARK DELAVAN

Baritone **Mark Delavan** portrays Fiorello in *The Barber of Seville*, Sciarrone in *Tosca*, Hermann in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Plutus in *The Queen of Spades*. He made his Company debut last season in *Don Carlo* and also appeared in *Faust*, *Eugene Onegin*, and *Manon* and as Valentin in student performances of *Faust*. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, Delavan was a participant in the 1985 Merola Opera Program and performed the title role of *Don Giovanni* on Western Opera Theater's 1985-86 national tour. In the Center's 1986 Showcase series, he appeared as Roderick/Sam in the American professional premiere of Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner* and as the Poet in Rossini's *The Turk in Italy*. In this year's Showcase series he sang the Baron in Sauguet's *Le Plumet du Colonel*. He received his training at Grand Canyon College and Oral Roberts University, and performed in *The Mikado* and *The Daughter of the Regiment* for the Charlotte Opera Association. For the North Carolina Opera Company, his credits include Papageno, Méphistophélès and Don Magnifico. Recent engagements include the Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* for the 1986 Carmel Bach Festival, Escamillo and Amonasro in concert performances of *Carmen* and *Aida* with the Stockton Symphony, Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* for Marin Opera, and the elder Germont in *La Traviata* for Sacramento Opera. This summer he was a guest artist with the Merola Opera Program in the title role of *Gianni Schicchi* at Stern Grove. Delavan is the 1986 winner of the Pacific Region of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions and the winner of the Institute for International Education's travel grant.



KEVIN ANDERSON

Tenor **Kevin Anderson** appears this season as an Officer in *The Barber of Seville*, The Third Jew in *Salome*, Gastone in *La Traviata* and Benvolio in *Roméo et Juliette*. The Illinois native made his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1985 Fall Season, appearing in *Lear* and *Turandot*, and returned in the summer of 1986 for *Il Trovatore*. A graduate of the University of Wyoming, he participated in the Merola Opera Programs of 1983 and '84, during which he appeared in productions of *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Falstaff*. He toured for two seasons with Western Opera Theater, portraying Goro in *Madame Butterfly* and Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*. He has also toured with the San Francisco Opera Center Singers as Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love*. Anderson was a member of the Santa Fe Opera Company Apprentice Program in 1982, and in 1984 he made his Michigan Opera Theater debut with the company's 1984 residency tour, during which he portrayed Martin in Copland's *The Tender Land*. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in a concert performance of the Strauss *Capriccio*, and his European debut at the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza in Vivaldi's *Il Giustino*. He has recently performed twice with Marin Opera, as Roméo in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* and as Will Parker in *Oklahoma!*, also with the Philadelphia Opera as Tamino in *The Magic Flute*. His Pocket Opera credits include leading roles in *Count Ory*, *Maria Stuarda* and *Orpheus in the Underworld*. In July of this year, Anderson appeared as the Lieutenant in the San Francisco Opera Showcase production of Henri Sauguet's *Le Plumet du Colonel*. In December he will appear as soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the Honolulu Symphony.



PAUL GUDAS

Tenor **Paul Gudas** is Ambrogio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Last fall, he portrayed Alcindoro in *La Bohème* and Augustin Moser in *Die Meistersinger*. Born and raised in Chicago, he attended the Lyric Opera School of Chicago and made his 1971 debut with that company in *Werther*, with subsequent appearances in *Wozzeck*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Peter Grimes*, *La Bohème*, *Don Quichotte* and *Manon*. Other Chicago area credits include *La Périchole*, *The Bartered Bride* and *Susannah* with the Chicago Opera Theatre. He was also heard in Chicago Symphony performances of *La Traviata*, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* and in excerpts from *Die Meistersinger*. In 1975, Gudas made his debut with the Zurich Opera in *My Fair Lady*, singing there for three years in a variety of roles. A member of the San Francisco Opera Chorus since 1983, he made his Company debut in that year's Family Performances of *La Traviata*. Subsequent performances here have included roles in *Manon Lescaut*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Billy Budd*, and *Der Rosenkavalier*. He recently made debuts with the Las Vegas Opera as the First Jew in *Salome*, Sinfonia-San Francisco in *The Seven Deadly Sins*, and with the Cedar Rapids Symphony as Monostatos in *The Magic Flute*. Future engagements include a return to Chicago Opera Theatre for performances of Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*.

Italian maestro **Alberto Zedda** makes his San Francisco Opera debut conducting his own critical edition of Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, a work he has conducted recently at London's Royal Opera, Covent Garden, and the Vienna Staatsoper. It was also the work with which he made his 1956 operatic debut at Milan's Associazione Lirico-Concertistica. In 1960 he taught conducting at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where he

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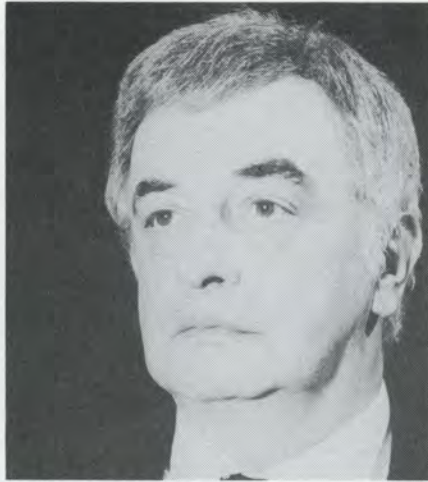
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ALBERTO ZEDDA

was permanent conductor of their orchestra, and from 1967 to 1969 regularly conducted the Italian repertoire at New York City Opera. His symphonic credits include concerts with all of the major Italian orchestras, including the Santa Cecilia and La Scala, and the orchestras of Milan, Florence, Rome, Turin and Naples. He has conducted repeatedly in the great Italian opera houses, as well as for the companies of London, Barcelona, Prague, Berlin, Lisbon, Hamburg Tel Aviv (Israel Philharmonic Orchestra) and Munich. An active musicologist, Zedda has supervised critical editions of various operas, oratorios and cantatas and is a member of the editorial committee of the Rossini Foundation at Pesaro. He is music director of the Festival Belcantistico in Martina Franca, and artistic consultant of the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro. Recent engagements include Rossini's *La Cenerentola* in Madrid, Stuttgart, Munich and Lausanne; *Falstaff*, *La Bohème*, *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Traviata* at the Vienna Staatsoper; *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Anna Bolena* in Stuttgart; and *Ermione* in Paris and Madrid. Maestro Zedda's discography includes complete recordings of Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*, Donizetti's *Rita*, Vivaldi's *Juditha Triumphans*, Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Gazza Ladra* and *Adelaide di Borgogna*, in addition to recitals with Marilyn Horne, Agnes Baltsa, Francisco Araiza, Luciana Serra, Lucia Valentini-Terrani and Fiamma Izzo D'Amico.



GIUSEPPE DE TOMASI

Giuseppe de Tomasi returns to San Francisco Opera during the 1987 Season to direct Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. He made his Company debut in 1975, directing his Genoa production of Verdi's *Luisa Miller*. The writer, director and producer was born in Milan and, following studies in piano and voice at the Milan Conservatory, completed further studies at the Accademia d'Arte Drammatica in directing and acting. His first assignment as an operatic director was a production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at Opera Como in 1967. Since then, he has worked in the major opera houses of Italy, including those of Turin, Genoa, Trieste, Parma, Palermo, Catania, Naples (San Carlo), Venice (La Fenice), Verona Arena, Bologna Comunale, and Spoleto's Festival of Two Worlds. Internationally, his productions have also been seen in Athens, Essen, Strasbourg, Madrid, Barcelona, Brussels, Tokyo, Seoul, Salzburg, Buenos Aires, Bregenz and Philadelphia. De Tomasi has directed over 100 operas, with a special emphasis on the Italian repertoire. Recent directorial projects include Vivaldi's *Farnace* in San Remo; *La Traviata* in Genoa; Rossini's *Aureliano in Palmira* in Genoa; two Cimarosa rarities—*Gli Orazi e i Curiazi* in Savona, and *Le Astuzie Femminili* at the Valle d'Itria Festival in Martina Franca; *La Fille du Régiment*, *Roméo et Juliette* and *Faust* in Parma; *Anna Bolena* in Treviso; and *Simon Boccanegra* in Ravenna. In addition to staging the world premiere of Mannino's opera *Notti Della Paura*, he has also produced and directed a film for Italian television, *The Life of Giacomo Puccini*.



ALFRED SIERCKE

Alfred Siercke's celebrated three-tiered set for *The Barber of Seville* marked his Company debut in 1963, and has since delighted audiences during the Fall Seasons of 1965, '68 and '76 and the 1982 Summer Season. His other San Francisco Opera project, *Elektra*, has been seen during the Fall Seasons of 1966, '73, '79 and '84. In a career spanning over four decades, he has created scenic and costume designs for more than 1,000 theatrical and operatic productions in Europe and the Americas. Born in Hannover, Siercke received his early schooling in Hamburg and studied at Frankfurt, majoring in history and art history. After graduation, he was appointed assistant to the designer Gowa, and in 1930 designed his first opera, *Die Walküre*. His association with stage director Günther Rennert began in 1946 at the Hamburg State Opera and continued throughout his residency. The designer's works have been seen in Milan (at La Scala), Düsseldorf, Stuttgart, Florence and Berlin, among other cities. In addition to his work on operas from the standard repertoire, Siercke participated in the world premieres of operas by Henze, Dallapiccola and Orff.



JOAN ARHELGER

San Francisco Opera Associate Lighting Designer **Joan Arhelger** is lighting director for *The Barber of Seville*, lighting supervisor for *The Queen of Spades*, and lighting designer for *Tosca* and *Fidelio*. Since 1983, when she joined the Company, she has been responsible for the lighting of *Manon Lescaut*, *La Traviata*, *La Sonnambula*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Anna Bolena*, *Werther*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *The Medium* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*, in addition to serving as lighting supervisor for the entire 1986 Summer Season. Her opera credits in lighting design include productions for Wolf Trap Company, and the opera companies of Louisville, Fort Worth, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Omaha, Seattle, Anchorage, and repertory seasons with the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Central City Opera. Her work has been seen locally in Bill Irwin's *In Regard of Flight* (featured on the PBS *Great Performances* series), and with numerous dance companies, including the Bay Area Dance Coalition's "Dancemakers '82" Festival in Herbst Theatre. A student of Gilbert Hemsley, Miss Arhelger served as assistant lighting designer for American presentations by the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, the Stuttgart Ballet, the Bolshoi Opera and the Berlin Opera. For five seasons, she was the resident lighting assistant for Washington Opera at the Kennedy Center.

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The Shanghai Connection

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Terence A. McEwen with Adler Fellows John David De Haan, Nikki Li Hartliep and Susan Patterson, pausing in Hong Kong harbor at the end of the 1987 China/Orient cruise.

By NINA BECKWITH

"May the second, 1987, was one of the most important days in my life. I'm 58 years old and I've probably had ten really important days so far. That one was so moving and so special—it was an experience I can never forget."

May 2, 1987, was the day Terence A. McEwen, San Francisco Opera's general director, bon vivant, connoisseur of European travel and masterful raconteur, landed in Shanghai. Today the impressions are still so deep that his customary fluency chokes up as he relives the emotions and events of that encounter.

"It was the people of Shanghai, their warmth and openness that were overwhelming," he says, "as well as hearing their extraordinary young singers and musicians. The city reminded me very much of Paris. I first went to Paris in 1950 and felt at home within the first half-hour, the same with Athens in 1966, and it happened to me in Shanghai in 1987. I'm very sorry I wasn't able to go on our first trip."

That pioneering trip was made by San

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

Additional photos on pages 38 and 39.

Francisco Opera's Western Opera Theater (WOT) in March of 1987, sponsored by Sister Cities International and by United Airlines. WOT was the first American professional opera company ever to perform in the Peoples Republic.

WOT is the touring and educational branch of the San Francisco Opera Center which includes the Merola Opera Program, Brown Bag Opera, the Adler

Fellowships, and other programs dedicated to the training and professional development of gifted young opera artists. Founded in 1967, WOT tours each year to more than 50 communities all across America; its productions of opera in English have now played to well over two million people.

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Patrick Summers in rehearsal for *La Bohème* with the Shanghai Opera House Orchestra. Following their March 1987 performances, the orchestra invited the Maestro to return and work with them some more, and it is expected they will perform together again in future Shanghai concerts.

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Nikki Li Hartliep performing "Un bel di" from *Madama Butterfly* at the *Madame Butterfly Monument* in Nagasaki.

of *La Bohème* in its original Italian at Shanghai's 1700-seat City Hall Theater, WOT's conductors and coaches held master classes for the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, while other San Francisco Opera experts took part in technical theater exchanges at the Shanghai Drama Institute. That intensive week of work also included preparing a full-length concert of selections from operas and Broadway musicals performed by young Chinese singers from the Conservatory, together with WOT's young American singers—the first time such joint international music-making took place on a stage in China.

Along with extensive newspaper coverage, both the concert and the WOT *Bohème* were televised live and aired several times later, creating a resounding impact among Shanghai's 12 million people. The WOT tour with its workshops and exchanges had also created a bridge of one-to-one friendships, collaboration and common joy in music, surmounting language and cultural differences, as McEwen found when he stepped ashore from Royal Viking Line's gleaming-white cruise ship on that day in May.

For him Shanghai was the highlight of a 15-day Orient cruise, during which he was host to a special group of San Francisco Opera friends and supporters and gave talks for all the passengers interested in opera. It was the fourth Royal Viking cruise to various parts of

the world whose passengers were entertained by a group of brilliant young San Francisco Opera Center singers. On this Far East cruise they were Susan Patterson and Nikki Li Hartliep, sopranos; Kathryn Cowdrick, mezzo-soprano; John David De Haan, tenor; Thomas Potter, baritone, and Jacob Will, bass-baritone. All are outstanding graduates of the Merola Opera Program who were selected for Adler Fellowships and are taking increasingly important roles in San Francisco Opera seasons.

"They had terrific success on the ship," McEwen says, "Of course that was very gratifying for me. And there was an extremely touching moment while we were in Nagasaki. At the monument to *Madame Butterfly*, looking out over the very sea she scans for sight of Pinkerton's ship, Nikki Li Hartliep sang 'Un bel di' a cappella. Nikki was born in Okinawa; her father was a soldier who deserted her Japanese mother. She was adopted by an American and taken to Alaska where she grew up and where she heard her first opera, one of WOT's touring productions. That beautiful aria of hers was televised all over Japan on the evening news and she ended it by asking that if her real mother recognized her, would she get in touch."

Returning to Shanghai with McEwen on the cruise were Thomas Potter, who had sung in the WOT *Bohème*; Patrick Summers, Opera Center coach and WOT

assistant conductor, and Christine Bullin, Manager of the Opera Center, who had led the WOT tour, devised the joint concert, and represented the company at all the numerous official and ceremonial receptions offered by their Chinese hosts.

She had arranged a visit to the Shanghai Conservatory for McEwen and the San Francisco Opera group of cruise passengers and singers. They were to arrive at 9:30 AM, hear a few of the young Chinese singers, and then depart. McEwen and the others expected the customary courteous Chinese welcome, but "when we got there all the kids were hanging out the windows and yelling and throwing kisses," he recalls. "Then they ran down the steps and there was lots of laughter and hugging, enormous greetings for Christine and Patrick and Tom. You didn't need language to understand the feelings. I was introduced to Madame Zhou Xiao-Yen of the Conservatory, who is utterly charming and chic, and it took one second for true love to happen. Though she speaks very good English, she studied and sang in France. My first words to her were in French and that formed an immediate bond. I was later to hear that her pupils sang perfect French."

The visitors were led through bare concrete corridors to the largest classroom, much smaller than its American



Nine-year old Chinese violinist, member of the Shanghai Conservatory Preparatory Division, whose playing got Mr. McEwen's undivided attention while he was touring the school grounds.

equivalent, where a raised platform at one end served as a stage for the first two scenes of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, performed in Chinese by Conservatory students with minimal costumes and props.

"That was a wonderful idea and I'm sure it was Mme. Zhou's," McEwen says, "because it gave us a good chance to hear three of their leading female singers and three leading male singers, to be able to measure their vocal and performing standards. The Fiordiligi and the Dorabella were beautiful and talented, the baritone and bass good, the tenor spectacular.

After the performance, the group of Opera supporters from the ship left to go sightseeing, while the Opera Center people stayed on with McEwen who had looked around that room crowded with students on a Saturday, many of them standing, and told Mme. Zhou that after lunch he wanted to hear everyone in the place who would sing for him.

In the interval McEwen was taken around the conservatory, with an interpreter, and saw pianos, still unrepaired, that had been chopped up with axes during the Cultural Revolution, and new string instruments being made, violins, cellos, as well as wondrous dragons being carved for the crowns of harps. On the grounds was a row of eight or ten practice stalls, like small stables, and in each one a violinist was sawing away.

Somewhere in there McEwen "heard a silver sound. It reminded me of the first violinist I loved as a child, Nathan Milstein in his greatest days. I walked quickly down the line of stalls until I got to that sound. There was a little round boy, chubbier than I was at his age, and he was playing a Bach concerto. I could have died. I've never heard a Bach piece played more beautifully and I've heard some pretty sensational violinists in my time, and I happen to be a Bach freak.

"So I listened for a few minutes and when the boy realized someone was listening to him he began to 'perform' and the ham came out in him, which is great. I'm sure he's going to have a career and he's already a ham; he's nine years old. A man was standing there taking notes and through my interpreter I asked if the man was his teacher. It turned out that the man was his father and had been a violinist until his instrument was taken



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Christine Bullin and Mme. Zhou Xiao-Yen during a break in the Shanghai Conservatory master classes.

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out of his hands and smashed at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. 'I hope my son will have the career that I couldn't have,' he told me, 'and that's why I come here in my lunch hour and take these notes to help his teacher.' That kind of devotion and determination is extraordinary."

During the afternoon auditions, which went on until seven PM, McEwen asked Mme. Zhou to be his interpreter. Whenever he put his arm around her, asking her to translate his comments, the contrast between them brought smiles to the students because her name means "little swallow" and she is very petite, which he is not.

"The first to sing was a bass," he recalls, "with a fine voice, good physique and presence. He sang 'Ella giammai m'amò' from *Don Carlo*, an aria I generally advise singers to avoid because it's too long and one needs to hear something fast as well. He did it musically, expressively, on a level with a first-class Merola audition. His Italian was pretty good so I couldn't understand why he sang the word 'Escorial' with a final V, 'Escoriav.' I asked him why and he handed me his music. Indeed the V was there, handwritten in pencil, not even ballpoint. I asked him if he knew what the Escorial was, the huge

gloomy Spanish royal palace where Philip sings of his loveless life. 'No, I'm sorry, I don't know,' he said. 'Didn't your teacher tell you what the aria was about?' 'My teacher doesn't know the story.' 'Why not?' 'Because we do not have the score so we can't translate it and we do not have a book of opera stories so we cannot find out what is going on.'

"I couldn't believe it but no one else seemed surprised. I remembered again that only a few years ago in China people were harshly punished for having Western music or books. These sheets of hand-copied music are still what is circulating all over China. Patrick Summers sight-read and played for all the singers: if you think that's nothing special for a pianist/coach/conductor as skilled as he, you have to see those smudgy pieces of paper, full of wrong notes and wrong words.

"The Fiordiligi of the morning had sung flat but when she sang 'Come scoglio' for me later in Italian it was absolutely on pitch. Lots of people can't sing well in the morning. I hadn't quite figured out whether the Dorabella was a mezzo or a dramatic soprano. That afternoon she sang an aria from *The Daughter of the Regiment* and it was obvious from the second or third phrase that she was a real

dramatic soprano and what she should have been singing was 'Pace, pace, mio Dio.' But there was no score of *Forza del Destino* and nobody knew any music from that opera. Mme. Zhou said to me, 'I realize that you are not hearing her sing music that is suited for her voice but when I don't have suitable things I make them sing bel canto, Bellini, Rossini, Donizetti, so at least it cannot harm their voices.' I thought that was fantastic. A young Rosa Ponselle singing 'Il faut partir' and she only had it in Italian, not even in French. Afterward Patrick corrected all the mistakes in her music for her from memory. He's a genius and he's only 23. San Francisco Opera is absolutely safe if we have people like that coming up."

Among the singers McEwen heard that day were several tenors of enormous potential, the kind who are a rare commodity in the international opera world, including the *Così Ferrando* and his brother, also a tenor. "Half the theaters in Germany have tenors no better and probably not as good," he says. "China is full of tenors. I confirmed that watching Chinese TV on the ship and hearing lovely tenors who would sing something like the Berceuse from *Jocelyn* in the middle of a variety show."

He remembers, too, a Conservatory soprano who sang the Willow Song from *Otello* with a voice he calls "miraculous. She sounded like Julia Varady who in my opinion is the best soprano in Europe. The girl didn't know how wonderful she was. Those people seem to be without vanity or pretensions. I was just knocked out by what they have done with so very little besides talent and determination and incredible diligence. I was so overcome that often that day I wanted to stop and just go in a corner and have a good cry."

In most cases the Conservatory singers' Italian needed improvement. When urged by Mme. Zhou to point out other problems, McEwen mentioned a lack of legato, and asked John David De Haan to sing a Mozart aria to show them what he thought beautiful legato was. "He sang part of 'Il mio tesoro' and they sat there with their mouths open and drank it in, McEwen says. "Mme. Zhou started to weep and threw her arms around John, saying she had never heard anyone sing such lovely legato. John is a very fine singer and we have several singers in that category. Our people have all the music

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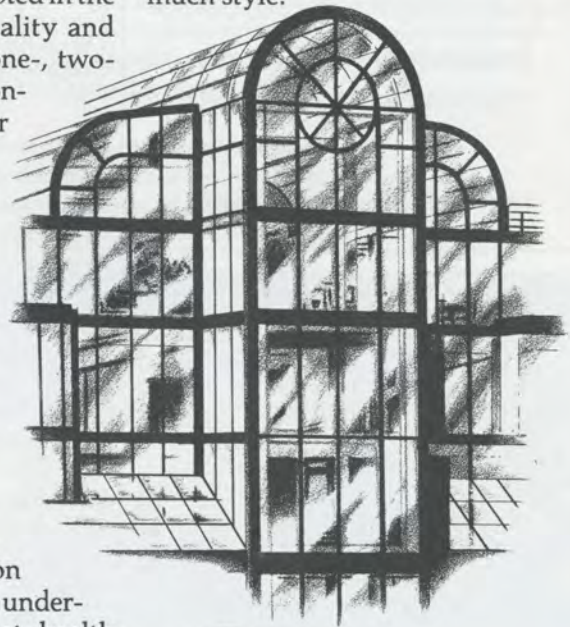
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Three students of the Shanghai Conservatory are joined by John David De Haan, Susan Patterson and Thomas Potter during a break. The girl on the far left is the soprano who sang the aria from *The Daughter of the Regiment*, referred to by Mr. McEwen.

and recordings they need, language and stage training, coaching, master classes with great artists, performing experience. How much we have to give and should give to the talented people in Shanghai who are so open and receptive and have such passion for opera!

"So I said to Mme. Zhou, 'Let's make a deal. You send me tenors and I'll send you music, scenery and costumes.' 'All right,' she said, 'but we have very few recordings, tapes, and I want them too.' She's not short of nerve; otherwise she wouldn't have been able to achieve what she has."

At the end of that memorable afternoon, Susan Patterson, John David De Haan, Tom Potter and Jacob Will went up on that bare little stage to perform for the Chinese, singing the final scene of *La Traviata*.

"I have never heard them perform better," McEwen says. "They are all wonderful artists and fine human beings, and they were as bowled over as I was by the realizations about their own lives they had had while listening to the Chinese singers."

"Susan Patterson as Violetta gave the performance of her life, with three folding chairs as the set. Susan sings that role as well or better than anyone in the world; she's a star, ready for anything. On the ship the next night she sang it again and

she was very good but at the Conservatory she cried—I'm getting shivers up my back just talking about it—and everybody in the room was in tears."

That evening a banquet for McEwen and the San Francisco group was given by the Shanghai Office of Foreign Affairs and its Division Chief, Mrs. Wang, who spoke at length about the friendship between the sister cities and the link between San Francisco Opera and the Shanghai Conservatory formed during the WOT visit.

When it was his turn to speak, McEwen lifted his glass and proposed that "on May 2nd, 1997, we have dinner together in Shanghai to celebrate ten years of San Francisco Opera-Shanghai partnership. I meant it," he says, "and again I was on the verge of tears. Then I said that we were opera people and the way we should express ourselves is not in spoken words but in sung words, so we will toast you appropriately in our western way. I gave Patrick a nod and our singers stood up like the wonderful troupers they are and sang a gorgeous 'Libiamo,' the rollicking toast from *La Traviata*.

"Before I went to Shanghai I knew that Christine Bullin had done a splendid job of what I call high-class diplomacy and when I was there I saw for myself that she has constructed very special relationships with the officials and the

COUGHLIN

artists and the people of Shanghai. It's no wonder that their speeches are sprinkled with her name, pronounced Burrin, and Burrin is someone they cherish.

"I am absolutely determined that our relationship is going to continue and grow," McEwen emphasizes. "I will keep my promise to Mme. Zhou to send music, costumes and scenery. And I have promised that Patrick Summers will go again to work with their singers, which he very much wants to do. Through the generosity of a donor, I have the seed money to start a fund to finance the San Francisco Opera-Shanghai connection. Mme. Zhou and her colleagues will tell us what they need. I think the wrong American aid policy is shoving things on people that they don't want or can't use. We're not going to do it that way; we can't afford it in any case. Piece by piece we will send the music they tell us they need, so they will have scores of *Forza* and *Don Carlo* and books of opera stories and tapes. We must help them build a library.

"I am appealing to the Merola Board and the Opera Association Board and the Opera Guild and all our friends to build the Shanghai fund. We're working on lists of the scenery and costume material we have in storage and no longer use—I fear there isn't a lot because it has been cannibalized. But we'll send the lists and they'll tell us what they want and we'll use that fund for the shipments. I hope when the fund builds sufficiently to have a staff person to handle our relationship with Shanghai and to send them an Italian teacher and to set up exchanges of music people and stage people."

McEwen feels strongly that exchange is the operative word, not pouring help into the Shanghai Conservatory and getting only thanks. He hopes to add at least three outstanding Chinese singers to the Merola Program each year, starting in 1988. "That will enrich our choice of singers," he says, "and should they arrive at Adler Fellowships, like the others they will have to sign an agreement with us for five years of first refusals on their services after graduation. So it's a very good investment for San Francisco Opera from a purely pragmatic point of view. In my mind this is a relationship for life. I believe it will prove to be one of the most worthwhile things we have ever done." ■



Hmmm. Did Mrs. Higgins say Golden Wedding or Baby Birth?

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Pierre Cayard, Head of the San Francisco Opera Scene Shop, points out the shaved styrofoam pieces used in texturing opera sets.

A Place To Be Scene

By MOLLY WASTE

"Folks never leave an opera humming the sets," lamented head San Francisco Opera Scenic Artist Jay Kotcher at the July 29 Scene Shop Tour. But the eighty San Francisco Opera Medallion Society sponsors (donors of \$2500 and above) who attended left singing the praises of the San Francisco Opera Scene Shop.

The only facility of its kind in the country, the shop and warehouse on Indiana Street house a carpentry shop, sewing room, set construction and painting areas. The warehouse area stores a multitude of properties and sets, some dating back as far as 1923, many of which are routinely revived and re-used. These include many of the old sets which remain from the early days when the San Francisco Opera had "generic" scenery literally

named "Tom," "Dick" and "Harry"—one a 19th-century ballroom, one an Italian garden, another a country wood.

The oldest piece is the baptismal font from the first act of *Tosca*. It was used not only in San Francisco's Opera's 1923 production of *Tosca*, but also for the opera's first performance in the War Memorial Opera House when it was opened in 1932. With such a priceless and voluminous collection of sets, the Technical Department must utilize other warehouses in San Francisco as well, and is currently seeking more space. In addition to the 75,000 square feet at the Indiana Street warehouse, the Opera now leases 36,000 square feet of space for scenery and 8,000 square feet for costume storage.

Medallion Society members had been

warned to dress casually and warmly in the cartoon invitation drawn by Bill Kent. The participants, who for the first time included teenage children, arrived by chartered bus from the Opera House and the first warmth was their welcome by hosts Jack Rose and Barbara Ward, members of the Medallion Society Committee, and Medallion Society President Harriet Meyer Quarré.

After an introduction to the set building process—from model to actuality—by Matthew Farruggio, Production Supervisor, the patrons split into three groups for tours led by Pierre Cayard, Shop Foreman; Ivan Van Perre, Master of Properties; and Jay Kotcher, Head Scenic Artist. Several of the guests were returning for a repeat performance—those who attended the Medallion Society Scene Shop Tour



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Scenic Artist Jay Kotcher explains the painting process used in completing the *Fidelio* sets.



Medallion Society members dine on box suppers while Pierre Cayard answers questions.



Master of Properties Ivan Van Perre displays a *Fidelio* set model, just prior to a tour of the real thing.

last year carefully chose a new tour guide this year to gain a different perspective and amusing anecdotes.

Among the high points of the tours were the partially-built sets for the new production of *Fidelio*. Some guests braved the climb to the top of the tower, but no arias were attempted. Shaved styrofoam was being used to texture some of the sets, so many went home with mementos of the *Fidelio* sets stuck to the soles of their shoes. Participants were impressed with the durability and strength of the sets and marveled at the complexity of construction required to facilitate quick scene changes and easy transportation.

Equally interesting were the hand-painted murals for the *Traviata* set. Patrons were impressed with designer John Conklin's interpretation, which included slightly changed colors and a softer focus than originally used in the Boucher paintings.

Stacked against the walls were the recently refurbished *Roméo et Juliette* sets, and the carpentry shop was filled with metal piping welded by San Francisco Opera master carpenters to be used as grillework in *Fidelio*. The piping is constructed of aluminum, which is difficult to work with, but is chosen because it is so lightweight. Again, the audience was impressed by the detail and strength of the pieces. All of the San Francisco Opera set construction is done at the Scene Shop with master craftsmen who work under the auspices of either the International Association of Theatrical and Stage Employees, Local 16, or the Scenic and Title Artists, Local 816. They construct sets for new productions year-round as well as refurbish all the revived or rented productions for the season. Patrons learned that this enterprise pulls its own weight economically. Last season's new *Nutcracker* for the San Francisco Ballet was completely constructed at the San Francisco Opera Scene Shop. During slack periods, the Scene Shop also constructs small theatrical or display work and has also built sets for other opera companies, most notably the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

For what has become an annual event (another will also be held later this fall), the Shop crew built tables so the guests could enjoy a box supper following their tours. During the meal, conversations focused on memories of past San Francisco Opera sets and the group's anticipation of seeing the finished sets on the stage of the War Memorial Opera House



Opera Board Executive Vice President Thomas Tilton, followed by his wife Marion, descends the tower stairs.

this fall. Ivan Van Perre, Cayard and Jay Kotcher regaled the group with Scene Shop lore and reviewed their years with the San Francisco Opera which collectively number an impressive 70 years. The audience had the opportunity to ask questions about all aspects of the building and planning of sets. In response to many of the inquiries about why a set was constructed a particular way, Ivan Van Perre would return with the simple answer—"economics!" When asked, Jay Kotcher explained that his favorite opera set was for *Samson et Dalila*, because as the curtain went up between the dungeon and temple scenes in the last act the

audience burst into applause. In his words, "when the curtain goes *up* they applaud the sets and costumes, when the curtain goes *down* they applaud the music."

San Francisco Opera Association Board Chairman, Reid Dennis, and President, Tully Friedman, ended the evening by thanking the Scene Shop staff for providing such an interesting program. The hope was for planning similar future events with coordination between San Francisco Opera technical, artistic, and administrative staffs in order to provide educational opportunities for opera patrons who would in turn be able to learn more about *their* company. ■



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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, October 11
 Sunday, October 18
 Sunday, November 1
 Thursday, November 19
 Sunday, November 22
 Tuesday, December 1
 Saturday, December 5

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1987 Opera Previews

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

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD INSIGHTS

Held in Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., in San Francisco. All informal discussions begin at 6 p.m.; doors open at 5:30 p.m. Series subscription for Guild members is \$16; non-members \$20. Individual tickets may be purchased at the door for \$8. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432. Programs are subject to change.

David Hockney and John Cox	9/16
Sir John Pritchard and Michael Hampe	9/30
James McCracken, Paul Plishka and Thomas Stewart	10/19
Tracy Dahl, Nancy Gustafson, Mary Jane Johnson and Lotfi Mansouri	11/4

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS

MARIN

Previews held at Park School Auditorium, 360 E. Bliethedale, Mill Valley; refreshments served at 7:30 p.m., previews at 8 p.m. Series registration is \$25 for 6 previews (\$20 for students and seniors). Single tickets are \$5 (\$4 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 453-4483 or (415) 388-6789.

<i>The Barber of Seville</i>	9/10
James Keolker	
<i>The Magic Flute</i>	9/17
Dale Harris	
<i>Fidelio</i>	10/8
James Keolker	
<i>Nabucco</i>	10/29
George Martin	
<i>The Tales of Hoffmann</i>	11/5
Michael Mitchell	
<i>Roméo et Juliette</i>	11/12
George Jellinek	

SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant, at 8 p.m. Gala held at the Palo Alto Cultural Center, 1313 Newell Rd. Series registration is \$22 (students \$11); single tickets are \$5 (students \$3). Gala tickets \$12.50. For further information, please call (415) 941-3890.

<i>The Barber of Seville</i> /Gala	9/9
James Keolker	

<i>The Magic Flute</i>	9/15
Dale Harris	
<i>Fidelio</i>	10/6
James Keolker	
<i>Nabucco</i>	10/27
George Martin	
<i>The Tales of Hoffmann</i>	11/3
Michael Mitchell	
<i>Roméo et Juliette</i>	11/10
George Jellinek	

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

Previews held at the Villa Montalvo Center for the Arts, 15400 Montalvo Rd., in Saratoga, at 10 a.m. Series is open to the public at a cost of \$5 per lecture; \$2 for students and senior citizens (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild members and members of Montalvo). For further information, please call (408) 741-1331.

<i>The Barber of Seville</i>	9/11
James Keolker	
<i>The Magic Flute</i>	9/18
Dale Harris	
<i>Fidelio</i>	10/9
James Keolker	
<i>Nabucco</i>	10/30
George Martin	
<i>The Tales of Hoffmann</i>	11/6
Michael Mitchell	
<i>Roméo et Juliette</i>	11/13
George Jellinek	

SONOMA COUNTY CHAPTER

Previews held at various times and locations (see below). Series registration is \$22 for 6 previews (chapter member); \$25 non-member. Single tickets (member) \$5, non-member \$6, students \$3. For further information, reservations and the charge for receptions and luncheons, please call (707) 938-2432 or (707) 539-2730.

<i>The Barber of Seville</i>	9/8, 7:30 p.m.
James Keolker	(Refreshments served following preview)
	2145 Manzanita, Santa Rosa
<i>The Magic Flute</i>	9/17, 10:30 a.m.;
Dale Harris	(Buffet luncheon following preview)
	1229 Los Robles Dr., Sonoma

Fidelio 10/5, 2 p.m.; (Wine and cheese
James Keolker following preview)
Piper Sonoma Winery
11447 Redwood Hwy, Windsor

Nabucco 10/26, 10:30 a.m.; (Luncheon
George Martin following preview)
Sonoma Hotel
W. Spain & 1st St. West, Sonoma

The Tales of Hoffmann 11/2, 7:30 p.m.
Michael Mitchell (Refreshments served
following preview)
1000 Buckeye Rd., Kenwood

Roméo et Juliette 11/9, 10:30 a.m.;
George Jellinek (Buffet luncheon
following preview)
510—2nd St. East, Sonoma

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

All Junior League opera previews held in Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco. Lectures begin at noon and there is no admission charge. For further information, please call (415) 621-1674, or (415) 331-1036.

The Barber of Seville 9/9
James Keolker

The Magic Flute 9/16
Dale Harris

Fidelio 10/7
James Keolker

Nabucco 10/28
George Martin

The Tales of Hoffmann 11/4
Michael Mitchell

Roméo et Juliette 11/11
George Jellinek

The Making of an Opera/*Fidelio* 11/16
John Priest

OPERA EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of the operas of the 1987 Fall Season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International. Lectures will be presented in the auditorium of the Berkeley/Richmond Jewish Community Center, 1414 Walnut St. (at Rose) in Berkeley, at 7:45 p.m. Admission to the series of 7 opera previews is \$36; individual admission at the door is \$6. For further information, please call (415) 526-5244.

Salome 9/7

The Magic Flute 9/14

Fidelio 9/21

Nabucco 9/28

The Tales of Hoffmann 10/5

Roméo et Juliette 10/12

The Queen of Spades 11/16

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A free lecture entitled "The World of Offenbach and the Truth About Hoffmann" will be given by Michael Barclay on November 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington. For further information, please call (415) 524-3043.


MERRITT COLLEGE OPERA LECTURE SERIES

Merritt College is offering an opera preview class, Introduction to Opera (Music 16), with emphasis on the operas of the Fall Season, on Tuesday evenings at 6:30, beginning September 8. The enrollment fee is \$15. Classes will be held at the College, 12500 Campus Drive, Building R, Room 125, in Oakland. For further information, please call (415) 436-2425.

ROBERT GOODHUE'S FALL OPERA COURSE

Ten classes on all of the fall operas are offered, and there is a choice of two series: Mondays from August 24 to November 16 at 6:30 p.m., and Saturdays from August 29 to November 21 at 2:00 p.m. Cost for the series of 10 previews is \$70; individual previews are \$12. Location: 13 Columbus, San Francisco. For further information, please call (415) 956-1271.

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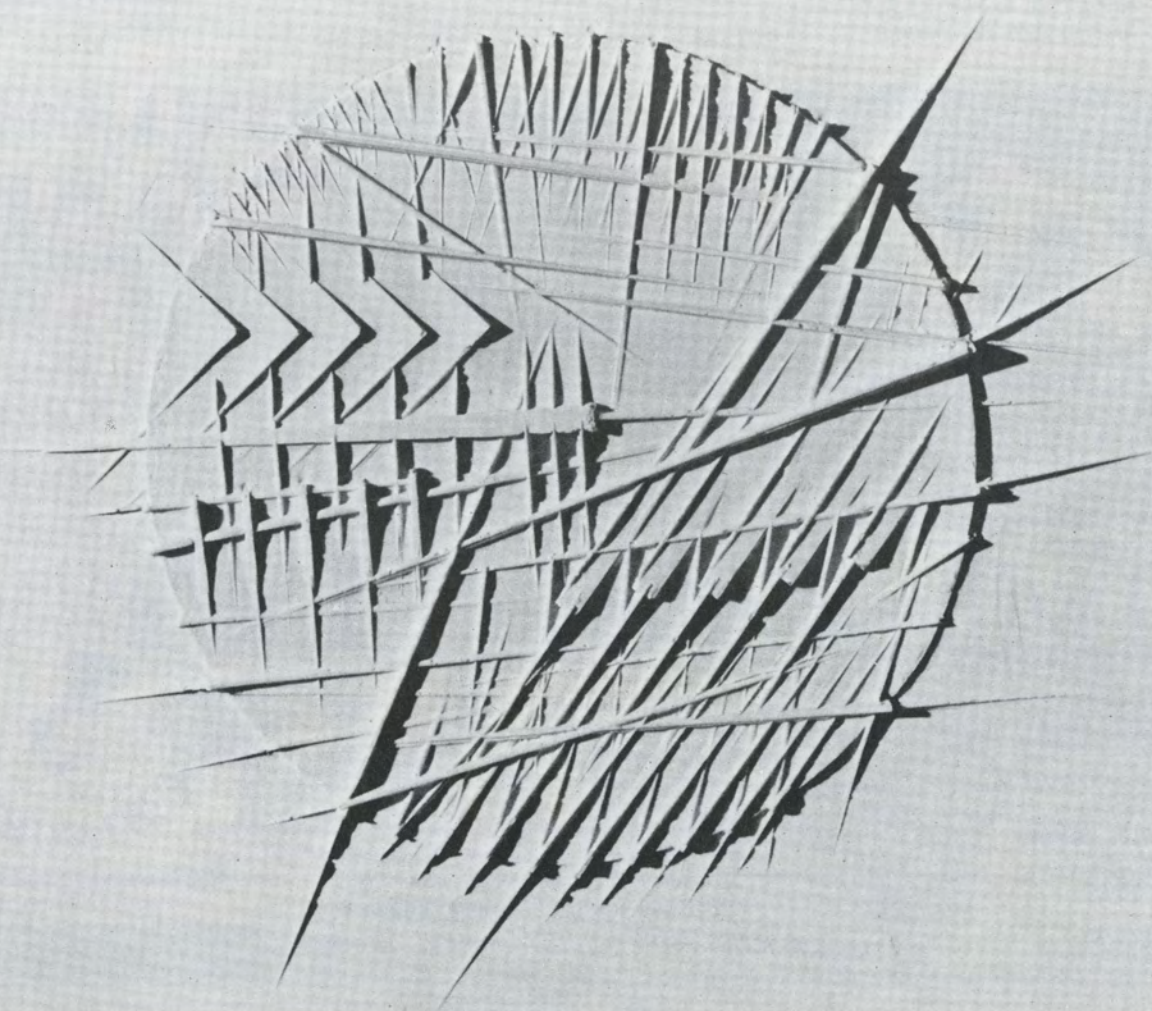
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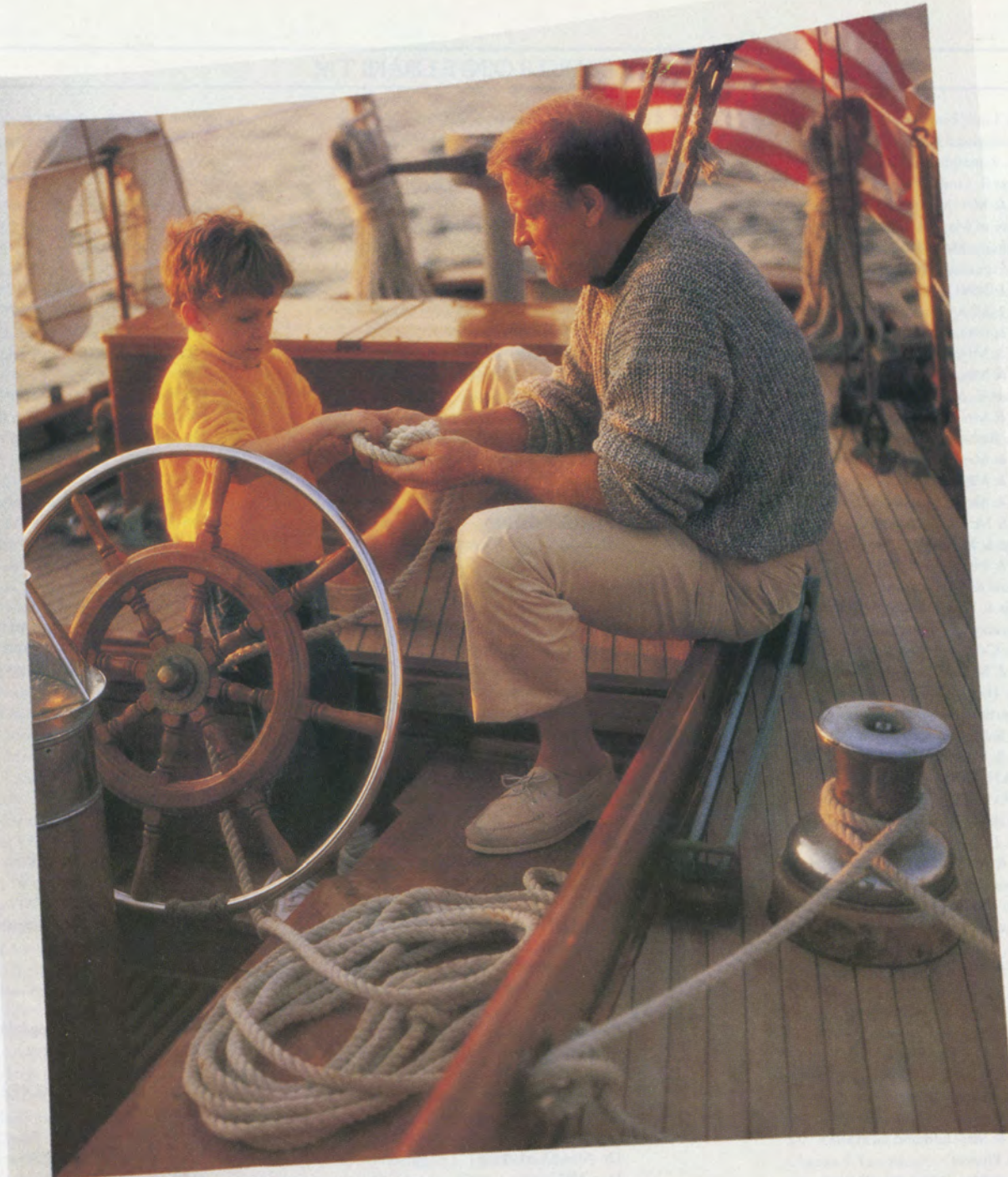
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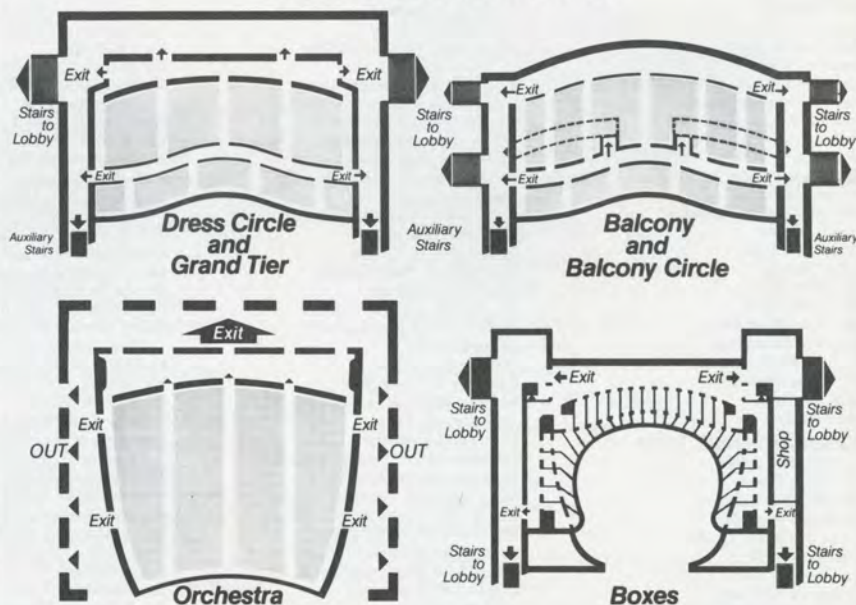
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