Roméo et Juliette
(Romeo and Juliet)

1987

Saturday, November 14, 1987 8:00 PM
Tuesday, November 17, 1987 8:00 PM
Friday, November 20, 1987 8:00 PM
Tuesday, November 24, 1987 8:00 PM
Sunday, November 29, 1987 2:00 PM
Wednesday, December 2, 1987 7:30 PM
Friday, December 4, 1987 8:00 PM

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Publication Collection

San Francisco Opera Archives

San Francisco Opera

1987 SEASON

Roméo et Juliette

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Terence A. McEwen, *General Director* — Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

Roméo et Juliette

1987 SEASON

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

COVER:

Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973
The Lovers, 1923
Oil on canvas, 51¼ x 38¼ in.

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Chester Dale Collection

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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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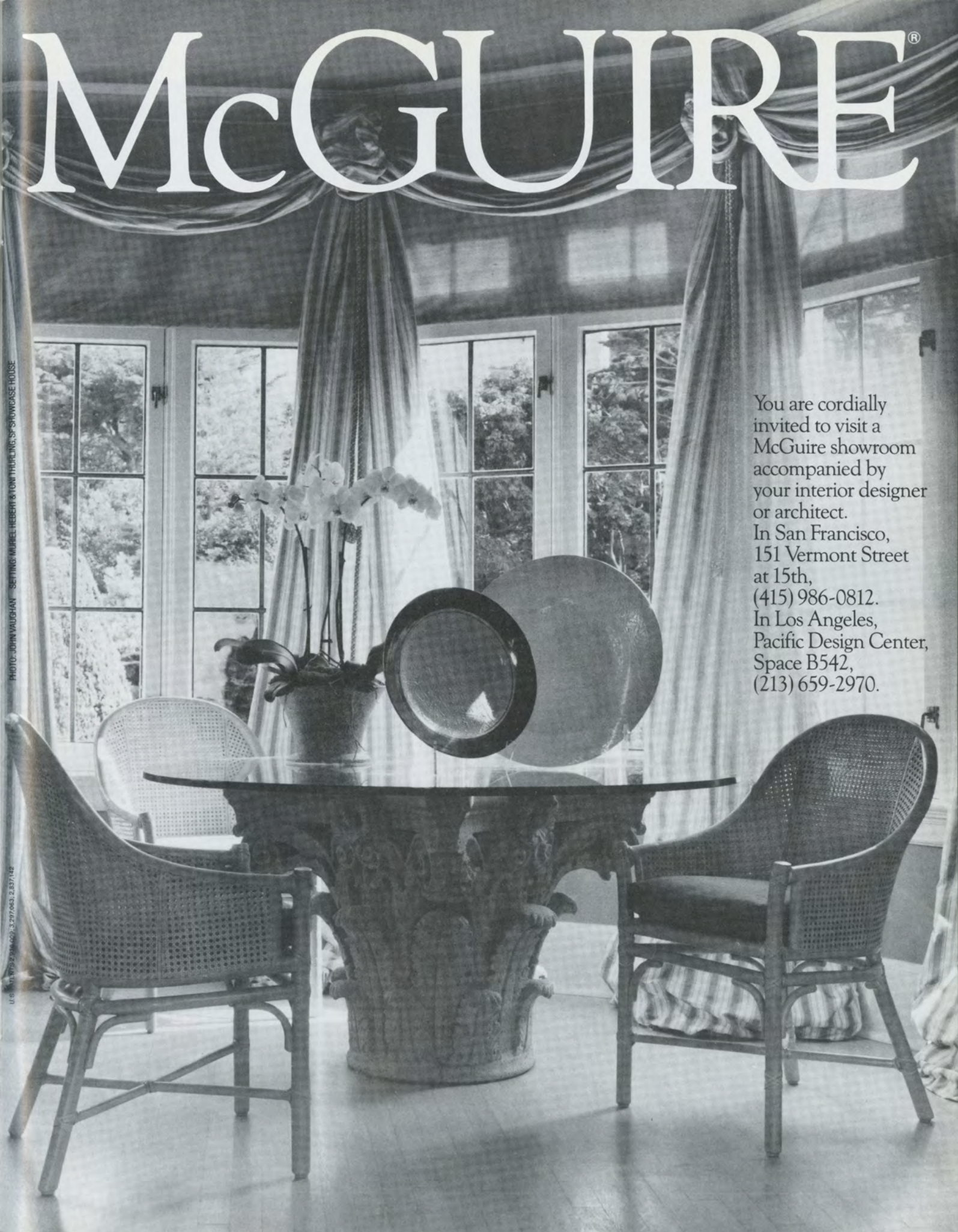

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CAHEN

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.

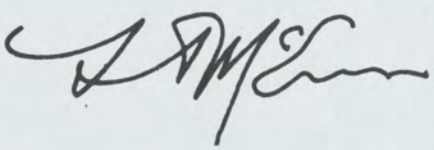
This year's repertoire includes six productions which will be seen for the first time on our stage. Of these, three are brand new additions to our production inventory: *The Magic Flute, Fidelio,* and *La Traviata*. These new productions represent further accomplishments in the quest I embarked on in 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!



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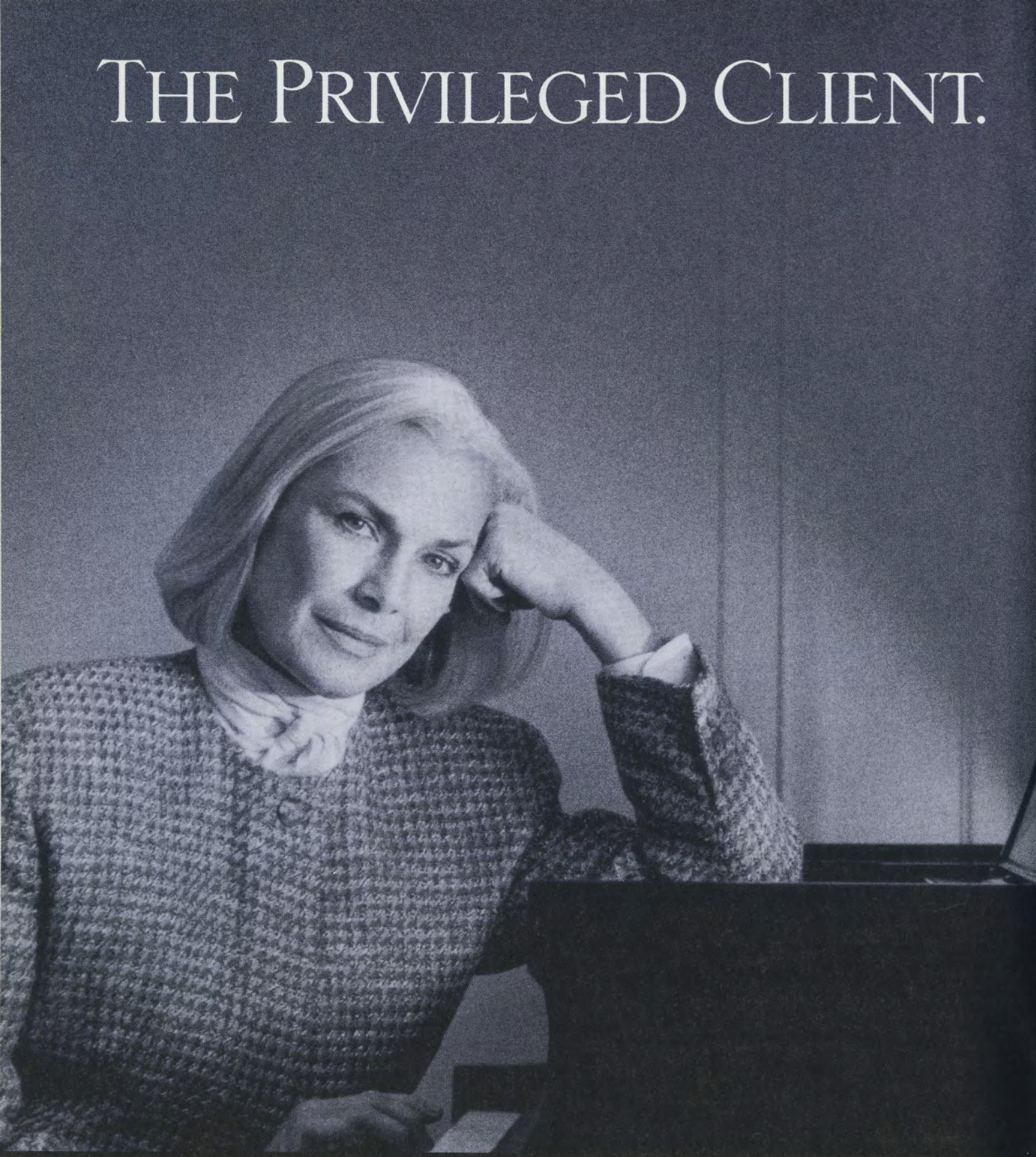

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(Staff listing continues on page 67)

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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, Anderson, 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/Schlumpf/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, Nentwig, 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
Zampieri**, 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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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), TBA (December 8, 11), Morris (November 11, 15, 18, 21, 25, 28), Krause (December 8, 11), Howell, Egerton, Harper, Skinner, Pittsinger, Delavan, Davis
Plasson/Mansouri/Schneider-Siemssen/Munn

This production is owned by Greater Miami Opera Association.

Friday, November 13, 8:00
Nabucco Verdi
Bumbry, Richards, Voigt; Cappuccilli, Plishka, Winter, Volpe, Harper
Arena/Freedman/Munn/Montresor/Munn

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

This production is owned by the Metropolitan Opera.

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-Arhelger/Sulich

The 1987 presentation of The Queen of Spades *is sponsored, in part, by a grant from the people at Chevron.*

Tuesday, November 24, 8:00
Roméo et Juliette Gounod
Swenson, Renée, Donna Petersen; Shicoff, Dickson, Howell, Rouleau, Dennis Petersen, Munday, Anderson, Ledbetter, Volpe
Plasson/Uzan/Deiber/Gérard/Munn

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**The5Queen 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, Potter, Ledbetter, Munday*, Pittsinger, Davis
Fiore/Copley/Conklin/Walker/Munn/Clara

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

Saturday, December 12, 2:00
Family Performance
La Traviata Verdi

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

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*San Francisco Opera debut

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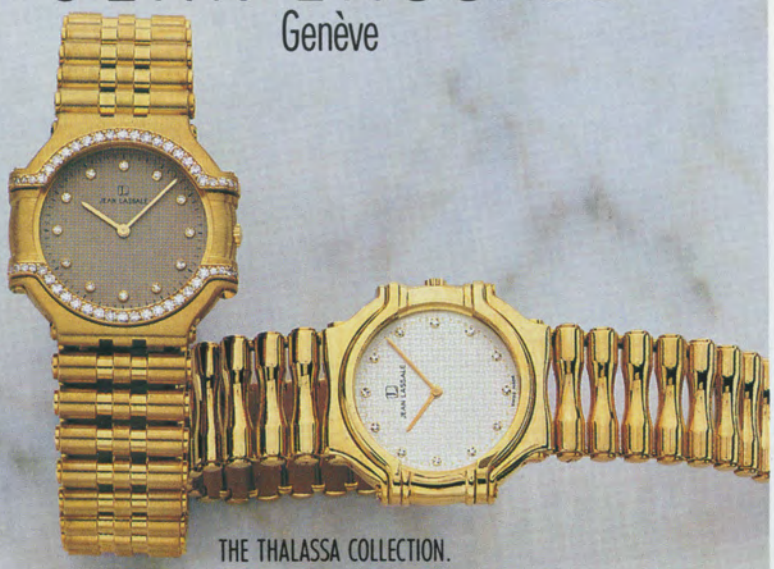

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Sep. 19 OTELLO (1983)
M. Price; Domingo, Carroli; Janowski

Sep. 26 KHOVANSHCHINA (1984)
Dernesch; Noble, Bailey, Lewis, Howell, Salminen; Albrecht

Oct. 3 MANON LESCAUT (1983)
Freni; Mauro, Sardinero, Capecchi, MacNeil; Arena

Oct. 10 JENŮFA (1986)
Beňačková, 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; Bonisolli, Manuguerra, Kavrakos; Meltzer

Nov. 21 FALSTAFF (1985)
Lorengar, Quittmeyer, Horne, Swenson; Wixell, Titus, MacNeil; Arena

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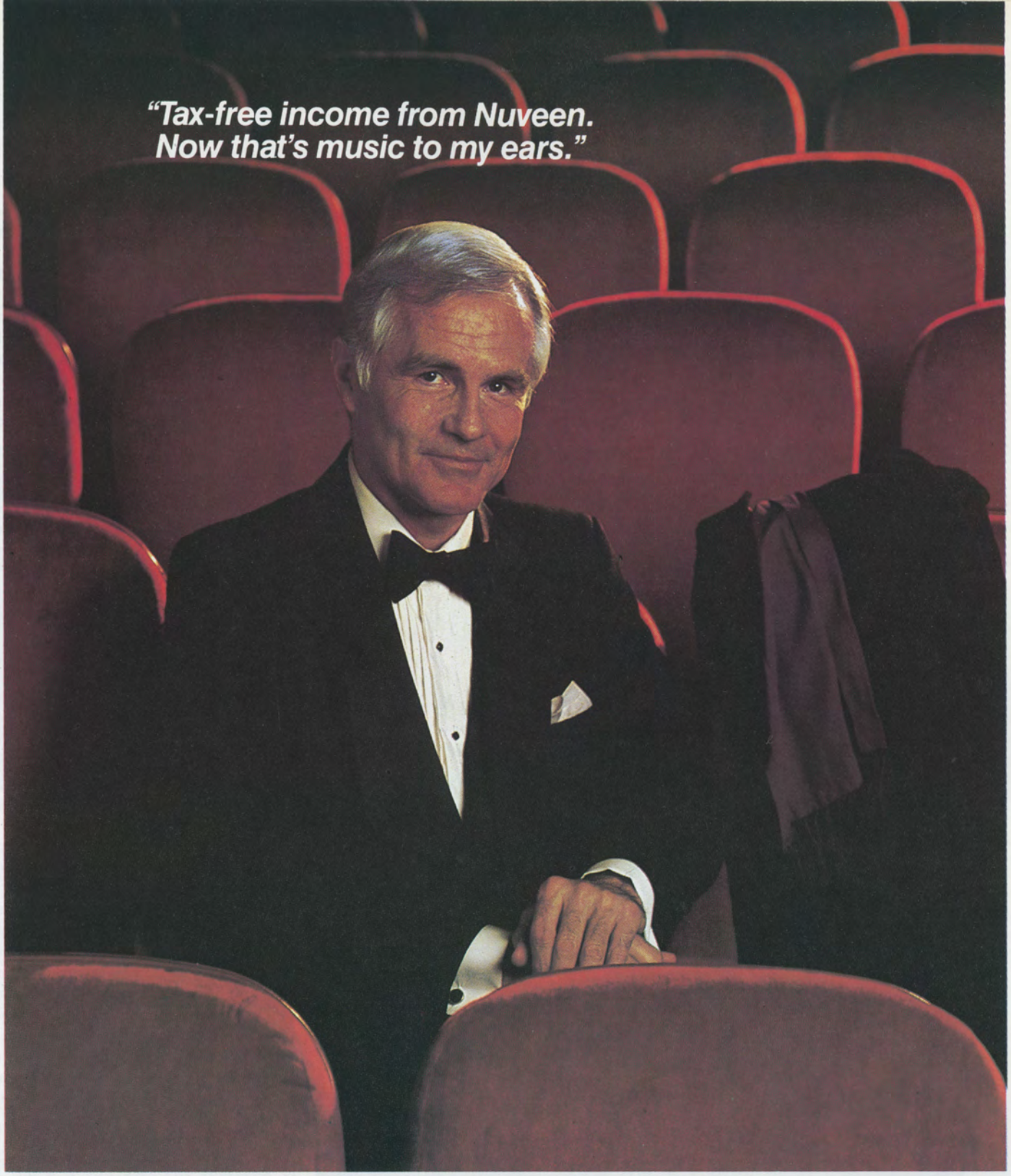

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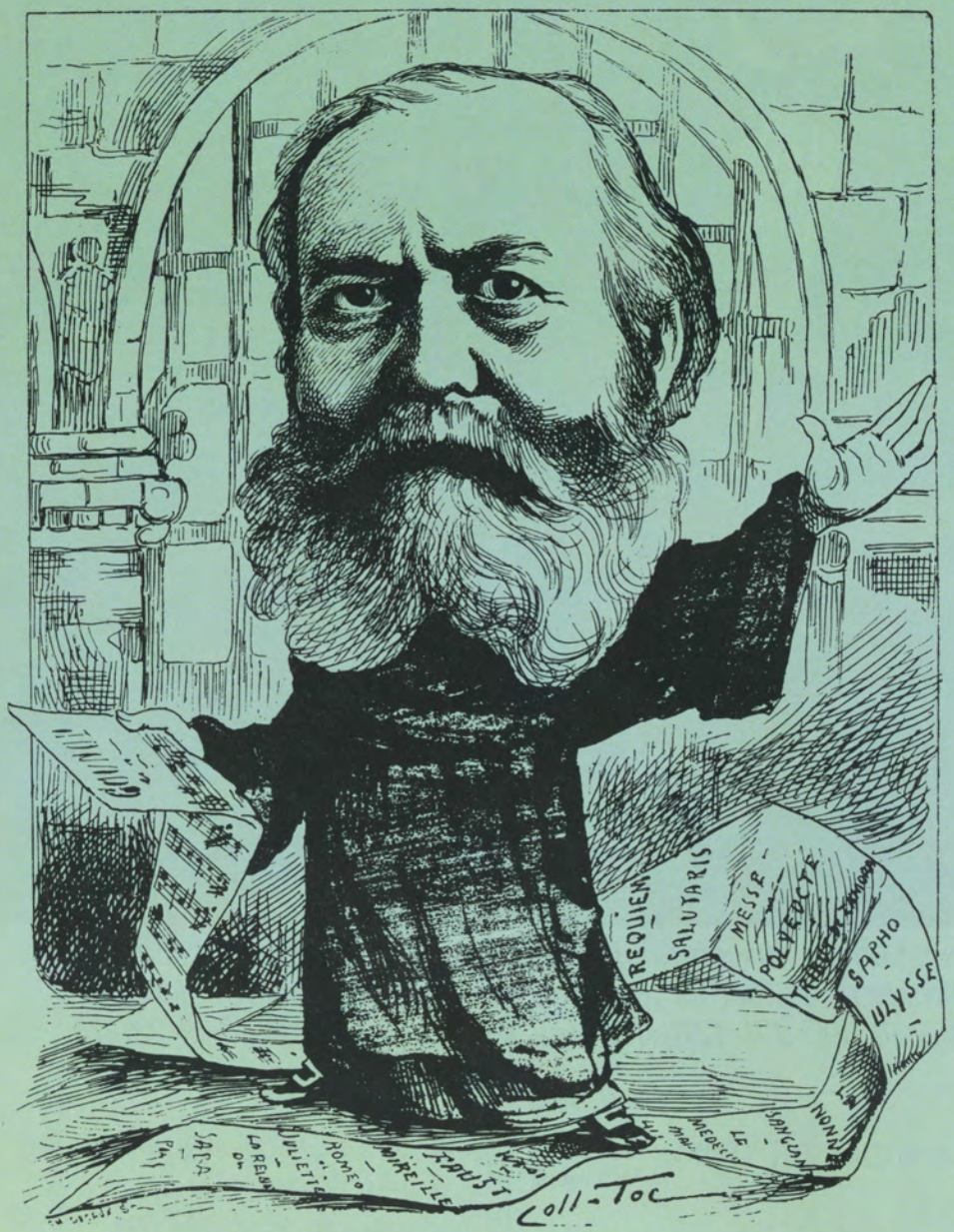
Roméo et Juliette



Charles Gounod is the subject of a caricature published in "Les hommes d'aujourd'hui" in the last decade of the composer's life.

By JEREMY COMMONS

Gounod was strongly attracted to great literary subjects. *Faust* is based on Goethe; *Mireille* on Frédéric Mistral's *Miréio*, the most important work resulting from the 19th-century revival of Provençal language and literature; and *Roméo et Juliette* on Shakespeare. The decision to compose *Mireille* came only four years after Mistral had published his poem, but the other two subjects lay turning over in Gounod's mind for many years before he actually wrote the operas. Goethe's *Faust*, we know from his autobiography, became his constant reading when he first discovered it at the age of 20. And though Shakespeare's play may have come to his attention in a rather different way, it, too, occupied his thoughts intermittently over several decades.

There had already, of course, been a number of operas and musical works composed on the subject. Berlioz, in particular, had written his great dramatic symphony, *Roméo et Juliette*, in 1839. And Berlioz, as Gounod himself tells us, was one of the heroes of his student days:

> Berlioz was one of the most profound emotions of my youth. He was

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

15 years older than I: he was 34 at the time when I, a youngster of 19, was studying composition at the Conservatoire, under the guidance of Halévy. I remembered the impression that Berlioz and his music made on me. He would often rehearse his compositions in the concert hall of the Conservatoire. Scarcely would Halévy have finished correcting my lesson than I would hastily quit the class and go and efface myself in a corner of the concert hall. There I would become drunk with that strange, passionate, convulsive music which revealed such new and richly colored horizons to me. On one particular day I was present at a rehearsal of the *Roméo et Juliette* symphony, then unpublished, which Berlioz was going to perform for the first time a few days later. I was so struck by the breadth of the grand finale of the 'reconciliation of the Montagues and the Capulets' that I came away, carrying with me, absolutely complete in my head, the superb passage of Friar Laurence: 'Jurez tous par l'auguste symbole.' Several days afterwards I went to see Berlioz, and, sitting down at the piano, I played him the passage complete. He opened his eyes wide and looked at me fixedly: 'Where the devil did you get that from?' 'From one of your rehearsals,' I replied ...

If the first seeds of tonight's opera were thus sown by Berlioz, the initial fruits began to appear very soon thereafter, long before there was ever any question of writing the opera we know today. For at the age of 21 Gounod won the Prix de Rome, and set off to spend two

The Roméo et Juliette *balcony scene as it appeared on the poster for the opera's 1867 premiere at the Paris Théâtre-Lyrique.*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(eventually two and a half) idyllic years at the Villa Medici, the French Academy in Rome. Every student—every Prix de Rome winner—was expected to send home to the authorities at the Conservatoire regular *envois*, or "dispatches" in the form of compositions, as evidence of his progress. And one of those that Gounod sent in 1842 was a series of fragments from the second act of a *Romeo e Giulietta*, the words, in all probability, taken from the Italian libretto which Felice Romani had written for Nicola Vaccai and later revised for Bellini.

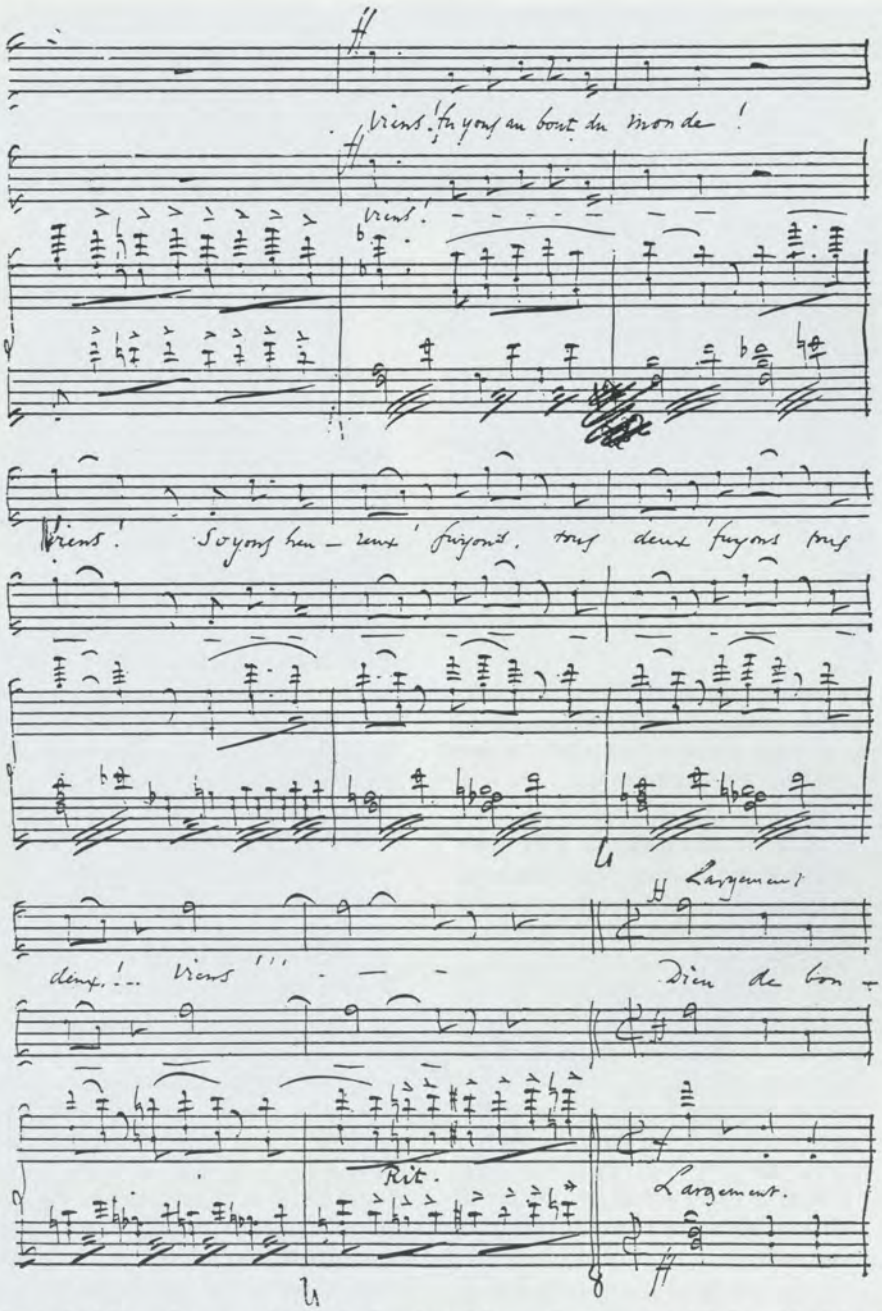
The decision to write a full opera on the subject came many years later, in 1865. By this time Gounod was an established composer, and was regularly engaged at the Théâtre-Lyrique, the third of Paris's opera houses, opened in 1851 as an alternative and a rival to the two houses of the "establishment," the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique. He had already written four operas for this theater: *Le Médecin malgré lui* (1858), *Faust* (1859), *Philémon et Baucis* (1860) and *Mireille* (1864). *Roméo et Juliette*, first performed on April 27th, 1867, was destined to be the last in the line—though not the last opera he wrote. It was also, at its premiere, the most successful of all his operas, indeed the only one which enjoyed an immediate success right from the start.

Mireille, his previous opera, had been composed in Provence, in a sunburnt landscape beside the Mediterranean, rich with scents of lavender and thyme, far from the noise, the interruptions and the grey skies of Paris. So conducive to composition had he found this Provençal landscape that he returned there to write *Roméo et Juliette*, renting a little villa at Saint-Raphaël, walking each day for two or three hours, either beside the sea or into the sun-drenched interior, his album always beneath his arm and steadily filling with musical sketches. Camille Bellaigue, who later saw this album wrote of it:

> Beneath the binding of discolored but still sweet-smelling leather, between the guard-flaps of aged watered silk, upon paper yellowed with time, the finely-drawn little notes have faded. Nearly everything is there, from the madrigal to the scene in the tomb. Here is the page where, for the first time, Roméo's voice joins with that of Juliette, here is the page where the skylark has sung. One can see very well from this how Gounod worked, or rather how he created. The balcony duet, that is to say the second act in its entirety, was written at a single stretch; the vocal line, without interruption or erasure, accompanies the words and sometimes even goes beyond them. The words are sometimes missing from beneath the final notes, as if at these times the music sprang not from the text but from the emotion. Here and there, an indication and, so to speak, a first jotting of harmony or instrumentation, witness of the agreement already established in the imagination of the composer between the several elements of his total work . . .

Ideas came easily; Gounod was happy; the opera grew apace. In one of his letters, he wrote:

> You cannot imagine how the calm of this existence lets one think and helps one to think. This is what I call



COURTESY, JEREMY COMMONS

Facsimile of Gounod's manuscript score for Roméo et Juliette, *showing a part of the lovers' final duet in the Tomb Scene.*

Caroline Miolhan-Carvalho, the soprano who created the role of Juliet in Paris in 1867, is shown in a costume from the same opera.

work—something that is impossible for me in the heart of Paris. Whatever one does there, the detail grates and grinds you to dust: you do not have 'the silence of the spirit.' Here nothing stops me, I go forward, I am always going forward, without anything occurring to break the egg which reflection is ceaselessly incubating, and whose hatching would be incessantly compromised in the midst of the innumerable encounters of city life. Talking of eggs, would you like me to tell you how many I have already? Let us count:

1. The whole of the introduction to the first act;
2. The Scherzo of Queen Mab;
3. The first 'duetto galant' between Roméo and Juliette when they meet at the ball;
4. The off-stage chorus of monks which opens the third act;
5. Friar Laurence's melody that follows, with a reprise of a new song for the monks and Friar Laurence.

... Apart from two themes which I had in Paris (that of the dance and that of the little duet between Roméo and Juliette), all the rest represents the work of four days; five, counting today. But these four or five days are worth forty or fifty in Paris.

Search as one will, one will find no trace in the published score of the fourth and fifth of Gounod's "eggs." We shall have more to say of this in due course, but let us pursue our story chronologically. Gounod was an extremely sensitive, highly-strung artist, as is witnessed by another of his letters written at this time:

> At last, I have it, this bedeviled duet of the fourth act [Our Bedroom Scene]. Ah! how I should like to know if it is truly it! I think it is. I see them clearly, both of them; I hear them. But have I seen them *rightly*, heard them *correctly*, these two lovers? If they could only tell me themselves and signal to me YES! I read over this duet, I re-read it, I listen to it with all my attention. I try to find it bad; I am afraid to find it good and to deceive myself! And yet it has fired me! I still feel consumed by it! It is born of sincerity. All in all, I BELIEVE IN IT. Voices, orchestra, all elements play their part in it. The violins grow passionate; the claspings of Juliette, the anxiety of Roméo, his intoxicated embraces, sudden outbursts of four to eight bars in the midst of all this struggle between love and imprudence—all this, it seems to me, is to be found there. We shall see.

Like so many sensitive artists, Gounod found composition a prostrating experience. At the end of a month, during which the usually brilliant Provençal weather had unexpectedly deteriorated and come to prey upon his spirits, he was in a state of nervous collapse. His wife arrived from Paris and, in concert with his doctor, took him home to their country house at Saint-Cloud. Two weeks were needed for his recovery; then it was back to work once more ...

Eventually finished, the score of *Roméo et Juliette* was delivered to Léon Carvalho, the manager of the Théâtre-Lyrique, in August of 1866. And at that point, as Gounod knew full well from previous experience, he had to begin facing problems of another kind.

Carvalho was a man whose ideas of artistic merit were strictly tied to calculations of theatrical effectiveness and box-office appeal. Moreover, there was a power behind his throne in the form of his wife, Caroline Miolan-Carvalho, the leading French operatic diva of her day, a

The legendary Jean de Reszke (1850-1925), a famed Romeo of his day, sports a rather curious attire for the role.

soprano whose agility and brilliance of technique made her the darling of her public. Gounod would indeed have been ungrateful if he had not welcomed her willingness to create his Juliette—she had already been his first Marguerite, his first Baucis, and his first Mireille—but at the same time he knew that he could not expect her to accept all his ideas unquestioned—without, indeed, offering suggestions, and making demands. A prima donna with a shrewd knowledge of her own strengths and abilities, she required of all the composers who wrote for her that they tailor their music to suit her needs. In *Faust* she had scored a great success with her waltz-song, the "Air des bijoux" and after the first tepid reception of *Mireille* she had demanded that another, "O légère hirondelle," be inserted there. She now made it known that yet another *exemplaire* would be required in *Roméo et Juliette*. Gounod obliged, and wrote her the valse-ariette, "Je veux vivre dans le rêve."

Surprisingly, here as on earlier occasions, Gounod seems to have been uncertain whether he wished to write an *opéra* (that is to say, a work sung throughout—with the various items linked by recitatives) or an *opéra comique* (a work in which passages of spoken dialogue link the

items). *Faust* was first given as an opéra comique, but in the year following the premiere Gounod revised it, bringing it closer to "grand" opera by suppressing the dialogues and composing recitatives in their place. *Mireille* shows the process in reverse. First presented as an opera that was sung throughout, its scant success caused it to be dropped after only ten performances. Carvalho refused to revive it unless it was revised, and one of the changes he insisted on was that it be recast as an opéra comique. It is extraordinary that Gounod's uncertainty should have continued right up until the time of *Roméo et Juliette*. He even toyed with the idea of composing this new opera in both forms. Some theaters, he believed, would prefer it that way, others another. What prevailed upon him to change his mind we do not know, but when eventually it was performed, it was sung throughout. And that would seem to be the only way it has ever been given.

The preparation of the opera was difficult for other reasons, too. Apparently Carvalho went off to Italy, hoping to find a suitable tenor for the part of Roméo, but returned empty-handed. Negotiations to secure Victor Capoul, then at the first height of his popularity at the Opéra-Comique, were thwarted by the unwillingness of the Opéra-Comique management to release him. Eventually Gounod stepped forward and explained—probably with more diplomacy than truth—that he had always really wanted Michot, one of the Théâtre-Lyrique's own tenors and a regular interpreter of *Faust*. Whatever the truth of the matter, it was Michot who created the role.

If ever there was a propitious year in which to launch an opera in Paris, it was 1867. Despite growing tensions with Prussia abroad, this, at home, was the year of the Exposition Universelle. The French capital was in a holiday mood, and the new boulevards of Baron Haussmann were thronged with crowned heads, with dignitaries, with the *crème de la crème* of Europe.

Yet, while Paris gave itself up to pleasure, Carvalho and his company grew tense with apprehension. Originally it had been intended, by way of "curious innovation," to allow the public and the press to attend the dress rehearsal, the former paying 20 francs each for their seats but the press admitted free. Then, when none of the preparations seemed to be going

American soprano Emma Eames made her Paris debut in 1889 as Juliet, having been personally chosen by the composer for the role.

right, it was decided that all rehearsals should be held behind strictly closed doors. Confirmation of this comes from the press of the day, for, as Armand Gouzien wrote in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*, "the rehearsals had been enveloped in such mystery that the journals that lie in wait for backstage indiscretions had scarcely been able even to signal in advance some of the pieces to the curiosity of their readers." At the dress rehearsal, on April 26, the singers were nervous. Some costumes did not look well, and not all fitted. Everyone began to ask whether the first night should not be postponed, especially since—by what seemed a most unfortunate coincidence—the date clashed with a grand ball being given by M. Rouher, a minister of state. Carvalho alone—to whom we owe these details—was for pressing ahead. He waited until Gounod and the singers had gone home, all of them fully convinced that there would be no performance on the morrow, then called together his technical staff and exacted from them a solemn guarantee that all would be ready. Throughout the night the theater workshops hummed. Carvalho himself prepared and sent press releases, and printed and posted theater bills. When Gounod awoke the following morning, it was to find himself committed beyond the point of no return.

The event, when at last the appointed hour came, justified Carvalho's temerity. The whole of the beau-monde and the musical world came to the opera, and when it finished at 11:45 p.m.—Carvalho had bribed his stagehands to get it through by midnight—they all went on to M. Rouher's ball, each to add his voice to the one topic of conversation: the resounding success of *Roméo et Juliette*.

Not, in fact, that it had been a success from start to finish ... At that first performance the first two acts were received "tepidly:" it was only at the finale of the Street Scene—with Stephano's mischievous and much-applauded chanson and the spectacular and realistically produced duel scene—halfway through the opera, that is to say—that a general enthusiasm had taken hold of the audience, increasing still more with the bedroom duet between the two lovers, and thereafter maintaining itself more or less consistently through to the end. This enthusiasm, the *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris* tells us, grew even greater at the second performance, and "nearly gained an act and a half on that of the first."

Russian tenor Dimitri Smirnov cut a dashing figure as Romeo in 1920.

The reasons for the slow start on the first night may be gleaned from the original reviews. Michot, who apparently had neither the figure nor the appearance for an elegant, youthful Roméo, made up for it with a pleasing voice; but he was manifestly tired. He mistook, moreover, the manner in which to interpret his first madrigal-duet with Juliette, not realizing that its delicately mannered formality was the only way in which Roméo's sense of stunned wonderment could shyly express itself, and ruining the effect by declaiming it passionately right from the start. It was a mistake, we are told, that he rectified at the second performance. As for Barré, who sang Mercutio, his "feeble interpretation" of the "Ballade de la Reine Mab," one of the most witty, fleet-footed and finely-scored pages of the whole score, made it all but misfire entirely.

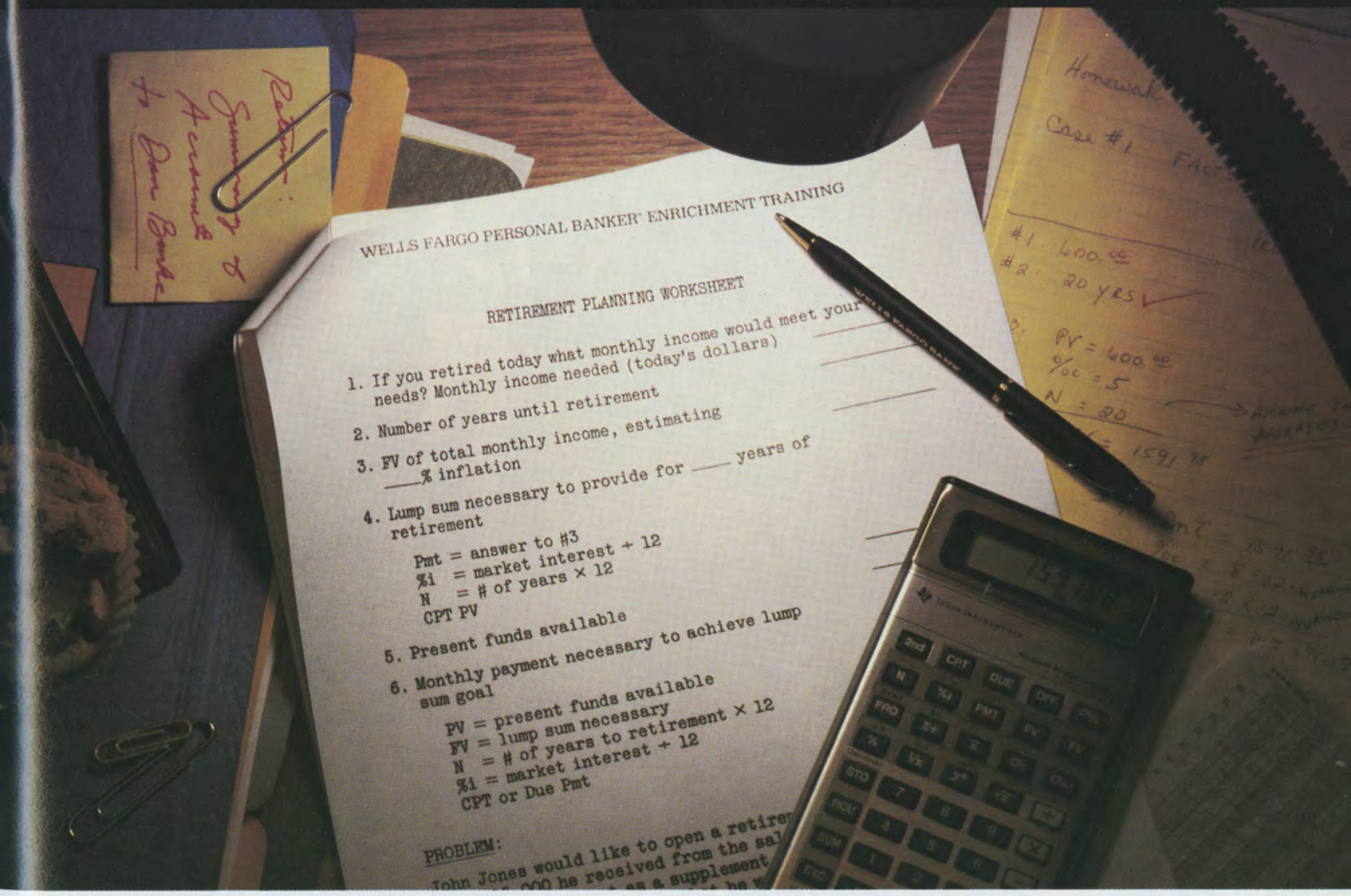
There were, however, compensations even in these early stages of the performance. The austere Prologue, in which all the characters of the opera appear, grouped motionless, to tell us of "Two households, both alike in dignity," already impressed for its lyrical declamation and for what were then its unusual harmonies. Capulet's air, "Allons, jeunes gens," which today seems the most conventional and least inspired page in the opera, was so well performed by Troy that it was encored. And Madame Miolan-Carvalho sang her valse-ariette with "a rare perfection" which assured it "the success of virtuosity which it deserved"—even if it was pointed out that it was modeled very closely on Arditi's salon song, "Il Bacio," which was then all the rage.

If the Garden Scene failed to make its full effect at that first hearing, it was again because Michot was too exhausted to do justice to his cavatine, "Ah! lève-toi, soleil," and presumably also to the duet which followed. And the reason the Wedding Scene displeased was again because of a mistake of interpretation: Cazaux, who took the part of Frère Laurent, "over-zealous in telling the two lovers to kneel, adopted the manners and gestures of a Torquemada, inviting, with all the gentleness of a sworn torturer, two subjects at the mercy of the boot or the funnel to make their revelations." In the opinion of Armand Gouzien, whom we are again quoting, "greater calm and unction would give this scene its true character." Any singer worth his salt, one might add, would realize that ardor here belongs to Roméo, and, after the pronunciation of the marriage vows, to Juliette; Frère Laurent should take his cue from the fugue, gravely serene and restrained, which opens the scene.

With great clear-sightedness those first critics, right from that very first performance, realized that the essential strength of the opera lies in its duets—in its progression of duets—for the two protagonists. They are four in number. The first, in the Ballroom Scene, is, as already mentioned, patterned and formal, a "duetto galant" as Gounod called it, though it becomes rather more impassioned as it proceeds. The second, in the Garden Scene, is a very close and sensitive setting of the words, which in turn are a remarkably faithful rendering of Shakespeare. To achieve this fidelity, and at the same time to suggest that this love is very

continued on p.52

Midnight Oil.



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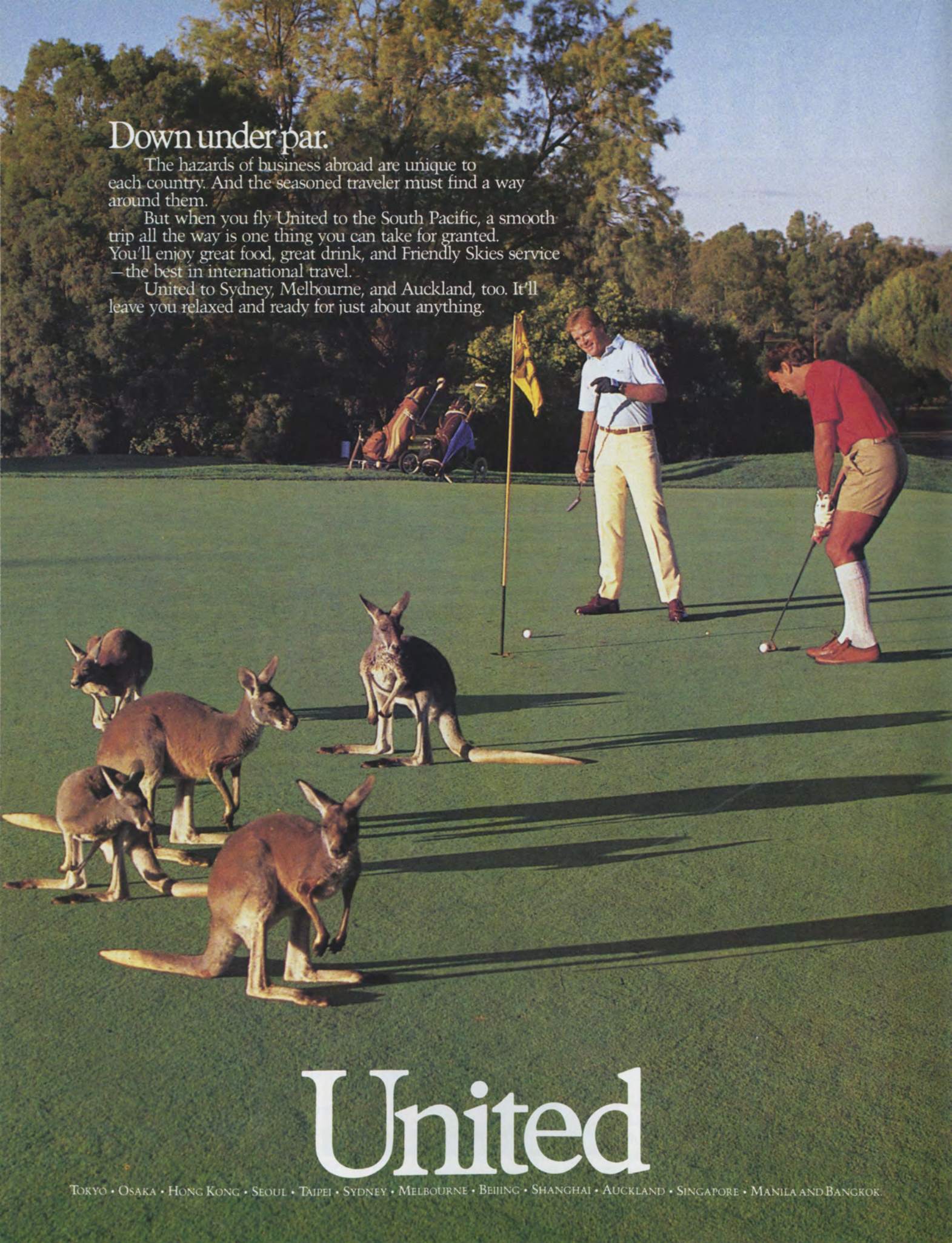
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RUTH ANN SWENSON

Soprano **Ruth Ann Swenson** sings the title role of Juliette in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, a part she recently sang for the first time at the Portland Opera. The young singer made her Company debut as Despina in the 1983 Summer Season *Così fan tutte*, a role which she has also sung to great acclaim with the Geneva Opera in 1985. A 1983 and '84 Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, she appeared in Showcase productions of Harbison's *Full Moon in March* (1982), *L'Ormindo* and *The Rape of Lucretia* (1983) and has sung the role of Belisa in Susa's *The Love of Don Perlimplín* (1985), the part she created at the work's world premiere at the 1984 PepsiCo Summerfare in New York. During the 1985 San Francisco Opera Summer Season she sang Ännchen in concert performances of *Der Freischütz* and returned that fall to sing Dorinda in *Orlando* and Nannetta in *Falstaff*. In 1985 she made her Seattle Opera debut as Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and during that year also replaced an ailing colleague in the title role of *Martha* for Portland Opera, winning critical acclaim after learning the role in a matter of days. Highlights of her 1986-87 season included the role of Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* for Portland Opera, debuts with Netherlands Opera as Nannetta in *Falstaff*, with Canadian Opera as Ilia in *Idomeneo*, with Long Beach Opera in the title role of *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, and a Salzburg Festival debut in a production of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* directed by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. Miss Swenson's orchestral engagements include appearances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony and a future engagement of a Viennese evening with the Minnesota Orchestra and Edo De Waart. Other assignments for the 1987-88 season include a debut as Euridice opposite Marilyn Horne in Gluck's *Orfeo* in Paris, a return to the Geneva Opera as Norina in *Don Pasquale*, and a debut with the Metropolitan Opera in the Park as Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

MADELYN RENÉE

American soprano **Madelyn Renée** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Violetta in the family performances of *La Traviata* and as Stephano in *Roméo et Juliette*. A native of Boston and a student of the Juilliard School, she has made a number of important debuts in the past few seasons including her Metropolitan Opera debut as the Priestess in *Aida*; the Vienna State Opera as Musetta in *La Bohème* and as Siebel in Ken Russell's new production of *Faust*; the Paris Opera in *La Bohème*; Opéra-Comique in *La Belle Hélène*; the Berlin Opera in *Don Giovanni*, and Teatro La Fenice in Venice in the title role of Mozart's *Zaide*. She also bowed at the Budapest Opera as Musetta and at the Bilbao Opera as Micaëla in *Carmen*. Earlier this season Miss Renée added several new roles to her repertoire including the title role of *The Merry Widow*, which she performed in Palermo; Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Budapest, and Violetta in Bulgaria. Her recent British concert debut was with the Halle Orchestra singing "Les Chants d'Auvergne." She has appeared at the Salzburg Festival for the past three seasons and has recently undertaken her first recording assignments, performing *Aida* conducted by Lorin Maazel and *Lohengrin* conducted by Sir Georg Solti. She made her unexpected Bay Area debut last September when she stepped in for the ailing Joan Sutherland as part of a concert tour with Luciano Pavarotti, in a program which was later televised live from Madison Square Garden.

Mezzo-soprano **Kathryn Cowdrick** returns to San Francisco Opera as the Second Lady in *The Magic Flute*, as Paulina in *The Queen of Spades*, as Flora in the family performances of *La Traviata*, and as Stephano in *Roméo et Juliette*. She made her 1985 Company debut as Mlle. Dangeville in *Adriana Lecouvreur* and has since been seen here as an Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Meg Page in the family performances of *Falstaff*, Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana*,

KATHRYN COWDRICK

Mrs. Nolan in *The Medium*, Siebel in *Faust*, Karolka in *Jenůfa* and Rosette in *Manon*. As a participant in the 1984 Merola Opera Program, Miss Cowdrick received the Gropper Memorial Award at the program's Grand Finals and appeared as Meg Page at Stern Grove and as Tisbe in *La Cenerentola* at Villa Montalvo. She went on to perform the title role in Western Opera Theater's national touring production of *La Cenerentola*, and was named an Adler Fellow with the Opera Center for 1985-1986. Other Opera Center credits include Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* on tour with the San Francisco Opera Center Singers, and two roles in the Center's 1986 Showcase: Zaida in Rossini's *The Turk in Italy* and Genevieve in *The Long Christmas Dinner*. A professional speech therapist, Cowdrick received much of her musical training at Juilliard's American Opera Center. In 1983 she appeared in Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston (a production that was recorded and received the 1985 Grammy Award), and in *Madama Butterfly* at the Spoleto Festivals in Charleston and Italy. Other engagements include Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro* with the Carmel Bach Festival and the Vancouver Opera, as well as a recent appearance as Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* for the Netherlands Opera. Future engagements include her Carnegie Hall debut with the Opera Orchestra of New York in a concert presentation of *Jenůfa*.

In her 21st season with San Francisco Opera, mezzo-soprano **Donna Petersen** sings three roles this fall: Annina in *La Traviata*, Gertrude in *Roméo et Juliette*, and the Governess in *The Queen of Spades*. She most recently appeared here as Filipyevna in *Eugene Onegin* last fall, a role she previously sang with the Company in 1971. Among her more than 30 roles with the Company are the Innkeeper in *Boris Godunov*, Sister Mathilde in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Mother Goose in *The Rake's*

DONNA PETERSEN

ALFREDO KRAUS

NEIL SHICOFF

Progress, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mrs. Ill in *The Visit of the Old Lady*, Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes*, Grimgerde in *Die Walküre* (a role she has performed in seven different San Francisco Opera stagings), Mary in *Der Fliegende Holländer* and Ada Hawkes in the 1976 world premiere of Andrew Imbrie's *Angle of Repose*. Miss Petersen has toured extensively with Western Opera Theater, has sung numerous seasons with Spring Opera Theater and appeared with the San Diego Opera and the Guild Opera of Los Angeles. In 1974 she made her highly successful debut as Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, a role she repeated there in 1977. She also appeared in Chicago as Mrs. Benson in *Lakmé* in 1983. Concert engagements include performances with the San Francisco Symphony, Oakland Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Honolulu Symphony and the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico City, as well as 25 concerts in Australia, and additional concerts in England, Vienna, Venice, Winterthur and Ljubljana. Miss Petersen is a Knight of the Royal Order of Dannebrog, presented to her by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark in 1976.

Spanish tenor **Alfredo Kraus** returns to San Francisco Opera this season to sing Roméo in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. He was heard here last year in the title role of *Faust* and in 1985 in the title role of *Werther*. Born in Las Palmas, Kraus made his 1956 professional debut in Cairo as the Duke in *Rigoletto*. In the following three years he scored major successes in Venice, Turin, Barcelona and Lisbon (where he appeared in *La Traviata* opposite Maria Callas). He bowed at Covent Garden as Edgardo opposite Joan Sutherland's Lucia in 1959, and made a triumphant debut at La Scala as Elvino in *La Sonnambula* the following year. He made his American debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1962, singing Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and was first heard at the Metropolitan Opera as the Duke in *Rigoletto* during 1966. The 1966-67 season saw his San Francisco Opera debut as Arturo in *I Puritani* (again with Miss Sutherland); subsequent Company credits have included Verdi's Duke, the title role of *Faust* and Nemorino. Renowned as a master of the bel canto style, Kraus has won accolades in *Don Pasquale, L'Elisir d'Amore, Lucrezia Borgia, La Favorita, La Fille du Régiment, Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *I Puritani*. In the French romantic repertoire he is identified with such roles as Faust, Gounod's Roméo, Hoffmann, Werther, Des Grieux in *Manon*, Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, and Gerald in *Lakmé*. In 1983 he appeared at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in Massenet's *Manon* with Renata Scotto and was seen on nationwide telecasts of the Met's centennial celebrations and in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Miss Sutherland, who also appeared with him in critically acclaimed performances of *La Fille du Régiment*. His recent assignments have included *La Traviata, Les Contes d'Hoffmann, Werther* and *Rigoletto* in Barcelona, *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Vienna and Parma, where he also recently sang *Faust; La Fille du Régiment* in Paris and *Roméo et Juliette* and *Manon* at the Met. Kraus has made numerous complete opera recordings including *Werther, Roméo et Juliette*, and *Manon* (all three with Maestro Plasson), *Lucia di Lammermoor, Les Pêcheurs de Perles, La Bohème, Rigoletto* and *Così fan tutte*. Earlier this year, Kraus was awarded the title of Kammersänger at the Vienna State Opera.

New York-born tenor **Neil Shicoff**, who opened San Francisco Opera's 1986 season in the title role of Verdi's *Don Carlos*, returns to the Company as Roméo in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. The artist made his first appearance here in 1981 as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. His professional operatic debut took place in 1975 as Narraboth in *Salome* at Washington's Kennedy Center. Shicoff first bowed at the Metropolitan Opera in 1976 as Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* and has since performed there as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, the Duke in *Rigoletto*, the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* and in the title role of *Werther*. His recent European engagements have included *Eugene Onegin* and *Roméo et Juliette*, both in Paris; *L'Elisir d'Amore, La Bohème, Faust* and *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Hamburg; and *Manon* and *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Munich. The tenor's itinerary for last season included appearances as Lenski in *Eugene Onegin* at La Scala; Roméo at the Met; the title role of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Munich and at Covent Garden; Faust in Tulsa and Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Chicago. His appearances this season include *La Bohème* and *Hoffmann* at the Met; *Carmen* in Seattle and *Faust* in Chicago. Shicoff scored a great personal triumph at the 1978 Aix-en-Provence Festival when his portrayal of the title role of *Werther* was telecast throughout Europe. His rendition of the "Kleinzach" scene of *The Tales of Hoffmann* was seen on the internationally televised Metropolitan Opera's 100th Anniversary Concert. His portrayal of Rodolfo at Covent Garden was also televised and has been recorded on video. Shicoff's recordings include the complete *Macbeth, Rigoletto* and, most recently, *The Tales of Hoffmann*. A frequent concert artist, his orchestral engagements include *Elijah* with Seiji Ozawa and the Boston Symphony in Boston and at Tanglewood, as well as the Dvořák and the Verdi Requiem.

Baritone **Stephen Dickson** returns to San Francisco Opera as Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette*. He made his 1982 Company debut as Prince Yeletsky in *The Queen of Spades*, and returned in 1985 as Albert in *Werther*. His professional debut took place in a 1976 production of *Albert Herring* with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, where he has returned for numerous assignments since. He bowed at Santa Fe Opera in 1977 as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, a role he has since repeated at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. During the 1979-80 season he made his European debut as Papageno in *The Magic Flute* at the Grand Théâtre de Nancy. He has also appeared in Monte Carlo, Nice, Lyon, and Paris. He made his Glyndebourne debut in 1980 as Papageno,

STEPHEN DICKSON

the vehicle of his 1981 Metropolitan Opera debut. In 1980, he appeared as Ford in New York City Opera's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The next year, he bowed with the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* and with the Pittsburgh Opera as Silvio in *Pagliacci*. That same year he was seen on a live telecast from the White House hosted by Beverly Sills. Dickson has also performed with the opera companies of Houston, Fort Worth, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Omaha, Philadelphia and Wolf Trap. In 1983 he appeared in a Jean-Pierre Ponnelle production of *Così fan tutte* with L'Orchestre de Paris conducted by Daniel Barenboim, repeating the assignment in 1986. He appeared at the 1983 and '85 Aix-en-Provence Festivals, singing Papageno in *The Magic Flute* as well as Arlecchino in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. The 1987 season has included a debut with Munich Opera as Silvio in *Pagliacci*, appearances with the Metropolitan Opera as Arlecchino and with New York City Opera as Valentin and Papageno, the latter being a role he also performed with New York City Opera on a "Live From Lincoln Center" telecast this past October.

British bass **Gwynne Howell** sings Crespel in *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Friar Laurence in *Roméo et Juliette*. He made his Company debut in 1978 as King Henry in *Lohengrin* and the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* and returned in 1984 as Dosifei in *Khovanshcina*. Born in Wales, he made his professional operatic debut as Monterone in *Rigoletto* with the Sadler's Wells (now English National Opera) in 1968. He made his Covent Garden debut during the 1970-71 season, appearing in *Salome* under Sir Georg Solti and made his first appearance at Milan's La Scala during a visit by London's Royal Opera, with whom he performed in *Peter Grimes*. A regular member of the Royal Opera, Howell has appeared at Covent Garden in such productions as *Luisa Miller, Rigoletto, Don Carlos, Un Ballo in Maschera, La Bohème, Die Meistersinger, Aida, Samson et Dalila, Tannhäuser* and *Don Giovanni,*

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GWYNNE HOWELL

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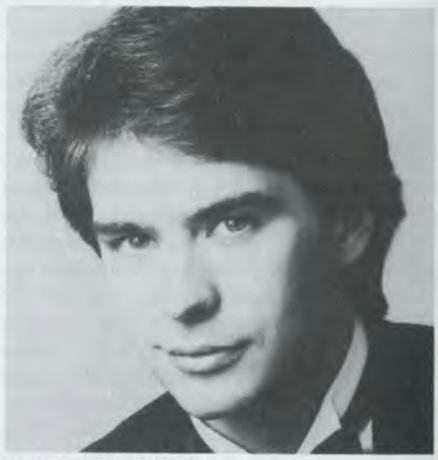
among others. His first American engagement was the part of Jesus in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in 1974 with the Chicago Symphony under Solti. In 1977 Howell made his American opera debut with the Chicago Lyric Opera as Pogner in *Die Meistersinger*, a role he repeated along with that of Lodovico in *Otello* for his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1985. Other engagements that season included *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Donna del Lago* at Covent Garden, *Samson et Dalila* in Chicago and concerts in Munich and London. Last season included *Parsifal* and Howell's first Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger* with the English National Opera, a return to Covent Garden for *Parsifal, Eugene Onegin, Fidelio* and *Salome;* and *Boris Godunov* in Toronto. Most recently, he has appeared in *Simon Boccanegra* in Marseilles and with the English National Opera.

Joseph Rouleau returns to San Francisco Opera as Capulet in *Roméo et Juliette*. The Canadian bass made his Company debut last season as the Grand Inquisitor in Verdi's *Don Carlos*. He made his Canadian opera debut with the Montreal Opera Guild in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in 1951 and returned in 1956 to sing Philippe II in *Don Carlos*. His United States debut was with New Orleans Opera in 1955 as Colline in *La Bohème*, followed by the King in *Aida* and the Comte des Grieux in *Manon*. Rouleau's international career was launched with his debut at Covent Garden in the 1957 productions of *La Bohème* and *The Magic Flute*. Since then, he has bowed at all the leading opera houses of Europe including those of Paris, Hamburg, Munich, Rome, Geneva, Strasbourg and many others. His travels have also taken him to South Africa, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Chile and numerous festivals including those at Edinburgh, Aldeburgh, Wexford and Glyndebourne. Rouleau has made several tours to Israel and the Soviet Union to perform in *Boris Godunov, Faust, Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Don Carlos*. 1984 marked his Metropolitan Opera debut as the Grand Inquisitor and he repeated the role there last year as well as that of Ramfis in *Aida*. Other recent engagements have included *La Forza del Destino* in Calgary and Vancouver, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia, La Bohème* and Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* in New Orleans, and *Rigoletto* and *Otello* in Montreal. Upcoming performances include Mephisto in *The Damnation of Faust* in Quebec and the title role of *Boris Godunov* in Montreal. His repertoire includes leading bass roles in *Lucia di Lammermoor, Turandot, La Sonnambula, Simon Boccanegra, Don Giovanni, Billy Budd* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Among Rouleau's many recordings are *Semiramide* with Joan Sutherland, *Roméo et Juliette, L'Enfance du Christ, Hamlet,* Stravinsky's *Renard*, a recital of French opera arias and *Les Abîmes du Rêve*, a song cycle written for Rouleau by J. Hétu. His television films include a CBC-TV documentary on his career and a video recording of *Don Carlos*. In 1977 he was honored with the Order of Canada award. In addition to his performing career, Rouleau is active as a professor of voice and has been director of the opera studio at the University of Quebec in Montreal since 1980.

Dennis Petersen is the First Jew in *Salome*, Spoletta in *Tosca*, Tybalt in *Roméo et Juliette* and Chekalinsky in *The Queen of Spades*. The Iowa-born tenor made his Company debut during the 1985 Season, appearing in five productions—*Adriana Lecouvreur, Werther, Falstaff, Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Der Rosenkavalier*—and returned in the summer of 1986 for *Il Trovatore*. Last fall Petersen appeared as Don Basilio in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Kunz Vogelgesang in *Die Meistersinger*. In January, Petersen made his debut with the Vancouver Opera in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and in March sang the title role in Offenbach's *Christopher Columbus* in the work's New York premiere with the Opera Ensemble of New York. This past spring saw several debuts including Petersen's first Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* with the Cedar Rapids Symphony in April; Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Fort Wayne Symphony and the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra; and Jacquino in *Fidelio* with the New Jersey Symphony and the Baltimore Symphony. This past summer, Petersen was an artist-in-residence at the University of Iowa, where he performed Alfredo in *La Traviata*. Later this year he will sing the Fox in *The Cunning Little Vixen* with Vancouver Opera.



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

continued on p.48

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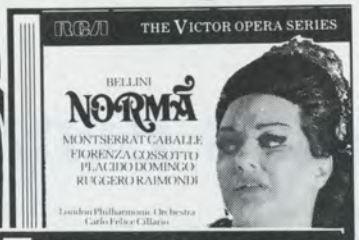

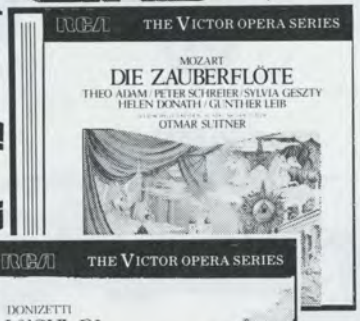

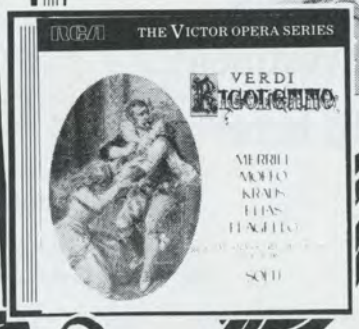

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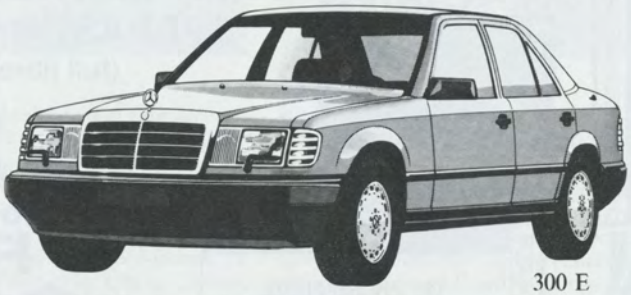

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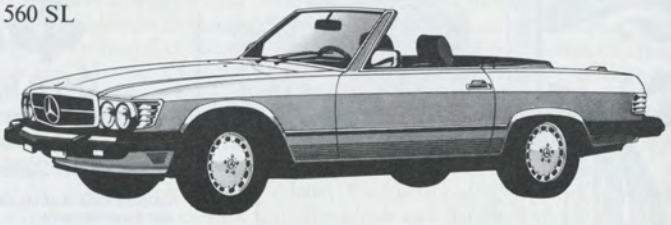

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Text by JULES BARBIER and MICHEL CARRÉ
After the drama by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Roméo et Juliette

(in French)

Conductor
Michel Plasson

Stage Director
Bernard Uzan

Designer
Rolf Gérard*

Lighting Designer
Thomas J. Munn

Sound Designer
Roger Gans

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson

Choreographer
Marika Sakellariou

Musical Preparation
Jeffrey Goldberg
Christopher Larkin
Kathryn Cathcart
Craig Rutenberg
Joseph De Rugeriis

Prompter
Joseph De Rugeriis

Assistant Stage Director
Paula Williams

Stage Manager
Jamie Call

Fight Sequences
J.R. Beardsley

This production is owned by the Metropolitan Opera

Miss Swenson's costumes executed by Dale Wibben

First performance:
Paris, April 27, 1867

First San Francisco Opera performance:
October 4, 1923

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 AT 8:00
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17 AT 8:00
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20 AT 8:00
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24 AT 8:00
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29 AT 2:00
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT **7:30**
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4 AT 8:00

CAST

Tybalt, Capulet's nephew	Dennis Petersen
Paris, Juliette's suitor	Victor Ledbetter
Capulet, a Veronese nobleman	Joseph Rouleau
Lady Capulet	Susan Weiss
Juliette, Capulet's daughter	Ruth Ann Swenson
Montague, a Veronese nobleman	Paul Newman
Roméo, Montague's son	Alfredo Kraus (Nov. 14, 17, 20) Neil Shicoff (Nov. 24, 29; Dec. 2, 4)
Mercutio, *Benvolio* — *Roméo's friends*	Stephen Dickson Kevin Anderson
Gertrude, Juliette's nurse	Donna Petersen
Gregorio, a Capulet servant	Lendon T. Munday
Friar Laurence	Gwynne Howell
Stephano, Roméo's page	Madelyn Renée* (Nov. 14, 17, 20, 24, 29) Kathryn Cowdrick (Dec. 2, 4)
The Duke of Verona	Peter Volpe

Ladies and nobles of Verona, street performers, soldiers, servants

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: 14th century; Verona, Italy

PROLOGUE		The tomb of the Capulets
ACT I	*Scene 1:*	A ballroom in the Capulet house
	Scene 2:	Juliette's garden

INTERMISSION

ACT II	*Scene 1:*	Friar Laurence's cell
	Scene 2:	A street

INTERMISSION

ACT III	*Scene 1:*	Juliette's chamber
	Scene 2:	The tomb

Supertitles for *Roméo et Juliette* provided by a generous and most appreciated gift from William and Eloise Rollnick.

Supertitles by Jerry Sherk, 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 and one-half hours.

Roméo et Juliette/*Synopsis*

PROLOGUE

The chorus tells of the tragic feud that divides the houses of Montague and Capulet in 14th-century Verona and of the star-crossed lovers, Roméo and Juliette, offspring of these warring families.

ACT I

Scene 1—At a masked ball in the house of the Capulets, where guests have gathered to celebrate Juliette's birthday, the host, presenting his daughter, urges his friends to enjoy the festivities. A young Montague nobleman, Roméo, accompanied by his light-hearted friend Mercutio, comes to the party of his hereditary enemy in disguise. Roméo senses impending misfortune. On hearing this, Mercutio flippantly warns him that it is probably a premonition sent by Queen Mab, the queen of lies, who disturbs dreams. All Roméo's misgivings are dispelled, however, when he sees the beautiful Juliette. Gertrude, the girl's nurse, compliments her on her engagement to Paris, a young man of Verona, but Juliette's mind is only on the gaiety of the party. When the guests go off to dance, Roméo detains Juliette, who sweetly accepts his courting. Their flirtation is interrupted by Tybalt, Juliette's hot-tempered cousin, who recognizes his enemy's voice. As Roméo and Mercutio try to leave, Tybalt challenges them. Capulet, however, orders the young men to continue with the evening's festivities. As the masked intruders depart, the guests resume their dancing.

Scéne 2—In the shadows of Juliette's garden, Roméo hides under her moonlit balcony, comparing the girl's beauty to the light of the sunrise. Longing for Roméo, Juliette steps onto the balcony. Roméo makes his presence known and the two lovers swear eternal devotion. They are briefly interrupted by a group of Capulets, searching for a Montague page seen on the grounds, and then by the nurse, who tells Juliette to go to bed. Juliette returns, and the lovers tenderly bid farewell until the next day.

ACT II

Scene 1—In Friar Laurence's cell, Roméo confesses that he loves Juliette, the daughter of his enemy. Though the friar is alarmed at his news, he blesses their union when Juliette arrives with her nurse.

Scene 2—Stephano, Roméo's page, searches for his master. Outside the Capulet mansion he sings a taunting serenade to rouse the house. A group of Capulets, headed by Gregorio, burst upon the scene. Mercutio and his friend Benvolio arrive just then, followed by Roméo. The peace-seeking Roméo declines Tybalt's challenge to a duel, at which Mercutio declares that he himself will defend the honor of the Montagues. A fight breaks out and Mercutio is mortally wounded; with his dying breath, he curses both the Montagues and the Capulets. In a fury of revenge, Roméo slays Tybalt. The Duke of Verona comes upon the bloody scene and Roméo is banished from the city. Though lamenting his violent act, he vows that he will defy all danger to see his Juliette again.

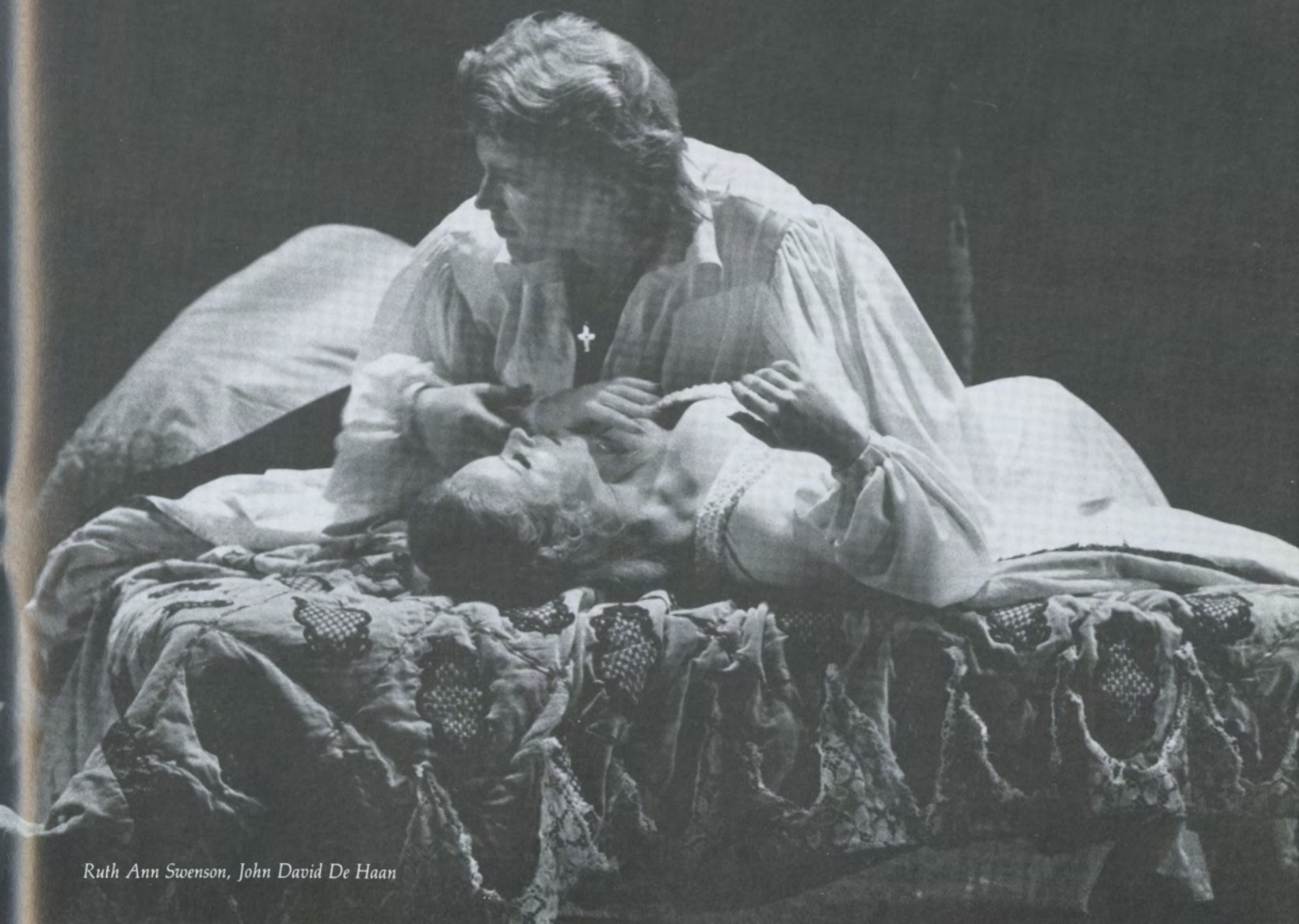
ACT III

Scene 1—That night in Juliette's bedroom, the two lovers express their undying love. They finally accept the coming of dawn, and Roméo reluctantly leaves. Gertrude, Capulet and Friar Laurence arrive to inform the girl that in respect of Tybalt's wishes, she is to be married at once to Paris. As Capulet leaves to greet the wedding guests, the friar gives the desperate bride a sleeping potion which will make her appear dead until she can be rescued from her grave by Roméo. He leaves and she bravely summons the strength to drink the potion.

Scene 2—The grief-stricken Roméo, believing his bride to be dead, visits the tomb where she lies in her family's burial vault. In despair, he takes a vial of poison and drinks it. Juliette stirs from her sleep and the lovers express joy in their reunion. But Juliette's joy turns to horror when she learns that Roméo is dying. Finding a dagger, Juliette stabs herself, and with a prayer that heaven will forgive them, the lovers expire in a final embrace.

Roméo et Juliette

Photos taken in rehearsal,
except as noted, by Marty Sohl.
The role of Roméo was taken by
that part's cover, John David De Haan.



Ruth Ann Swenson, John David De Haan

Ruth Ann Swenson

Dennis Petersen, Victor Ledbetter

Madelyn Renée, Stephen Dickson

Ruth Ann Swenson

(below) Alfredo Kraus

TONY ROMANO, COURTESY, LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO

Gwynne Howell

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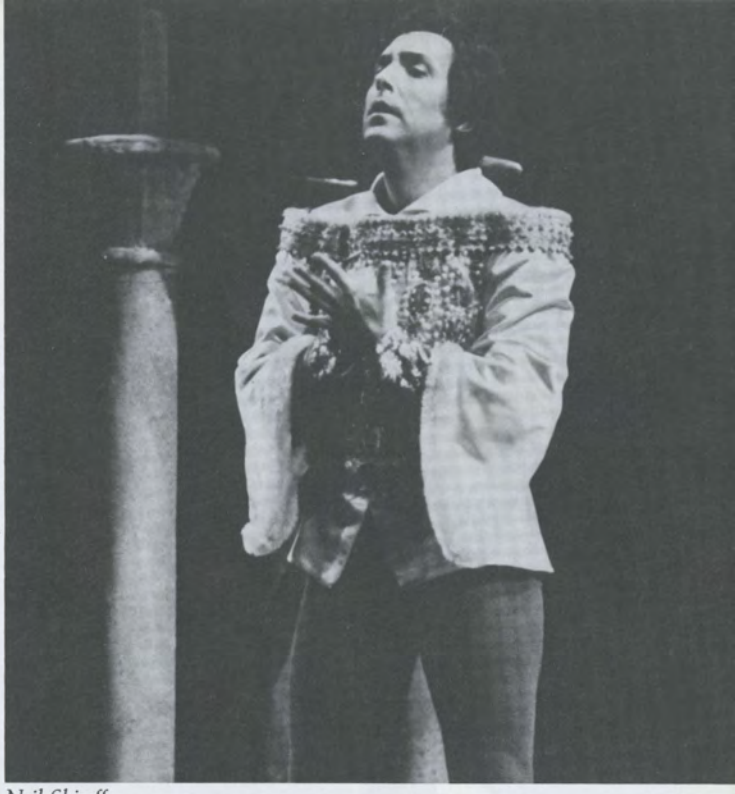


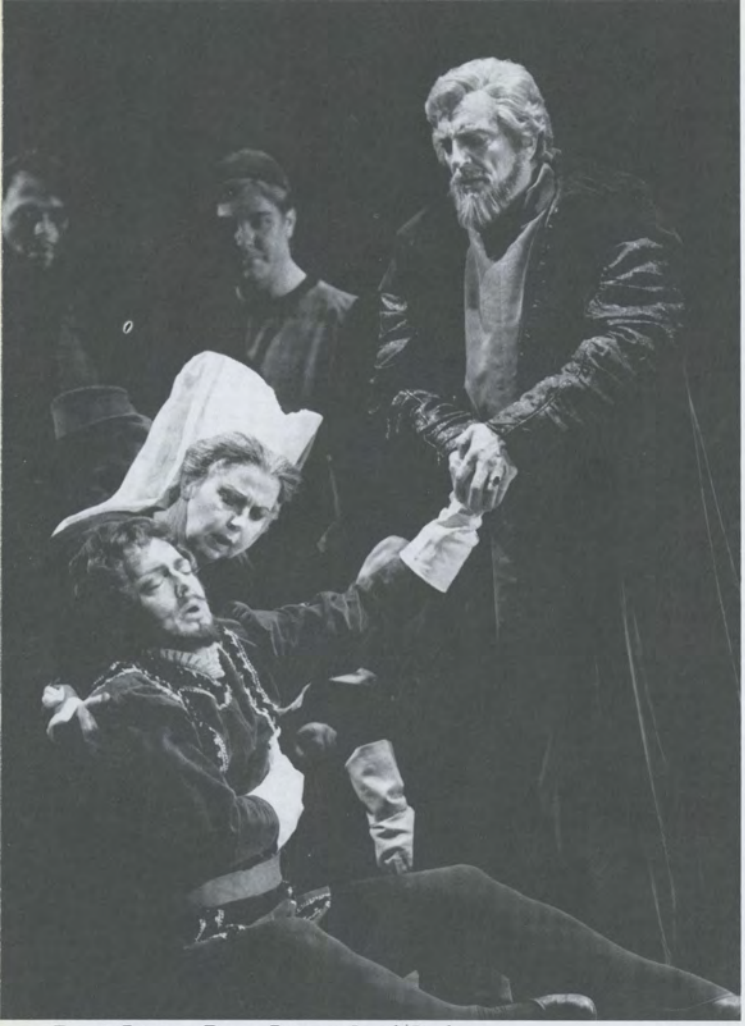
Neil Shicoff

Donna Petersen

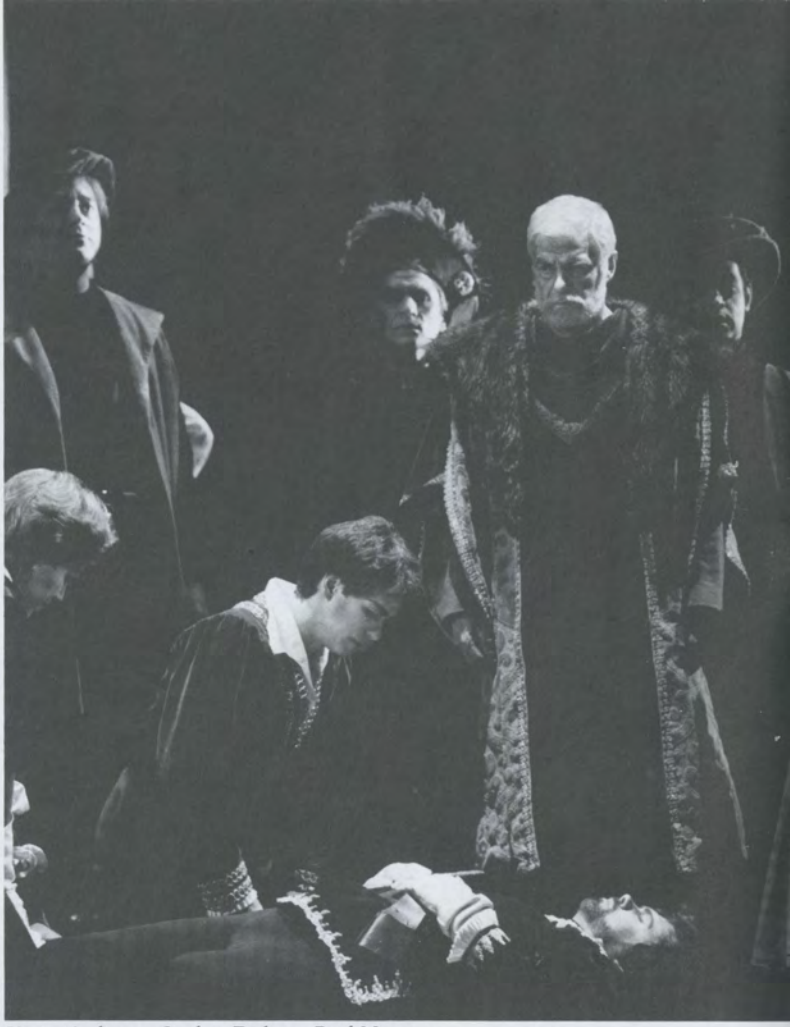
Joseph Rouleau

(below) Ruth Ann Swenson, John David De Haan

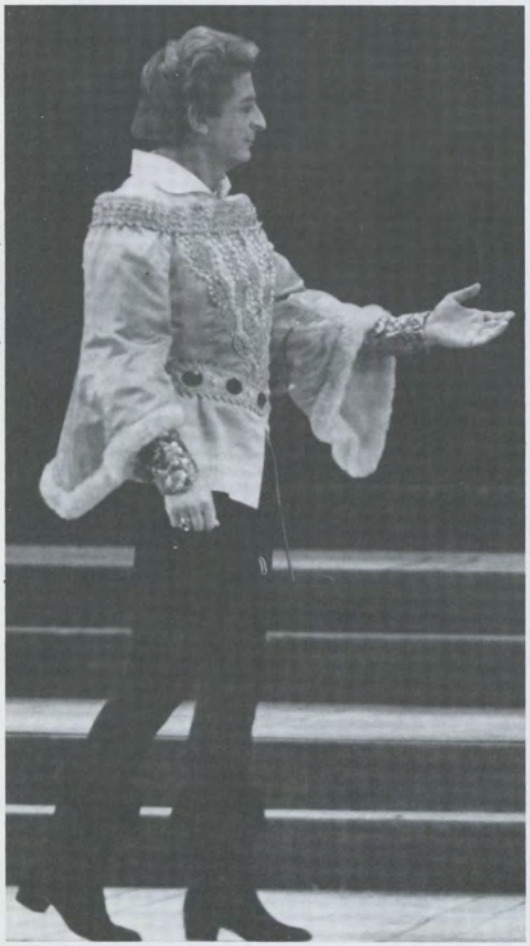
(below) Ruth Ann Swenson, John David De Haan



Dennis Petersen, Donna Petersen, Joseph Rouleau



Kevin Anderson, Stephen Dickson, Paul Newman



Alfredo Kraus

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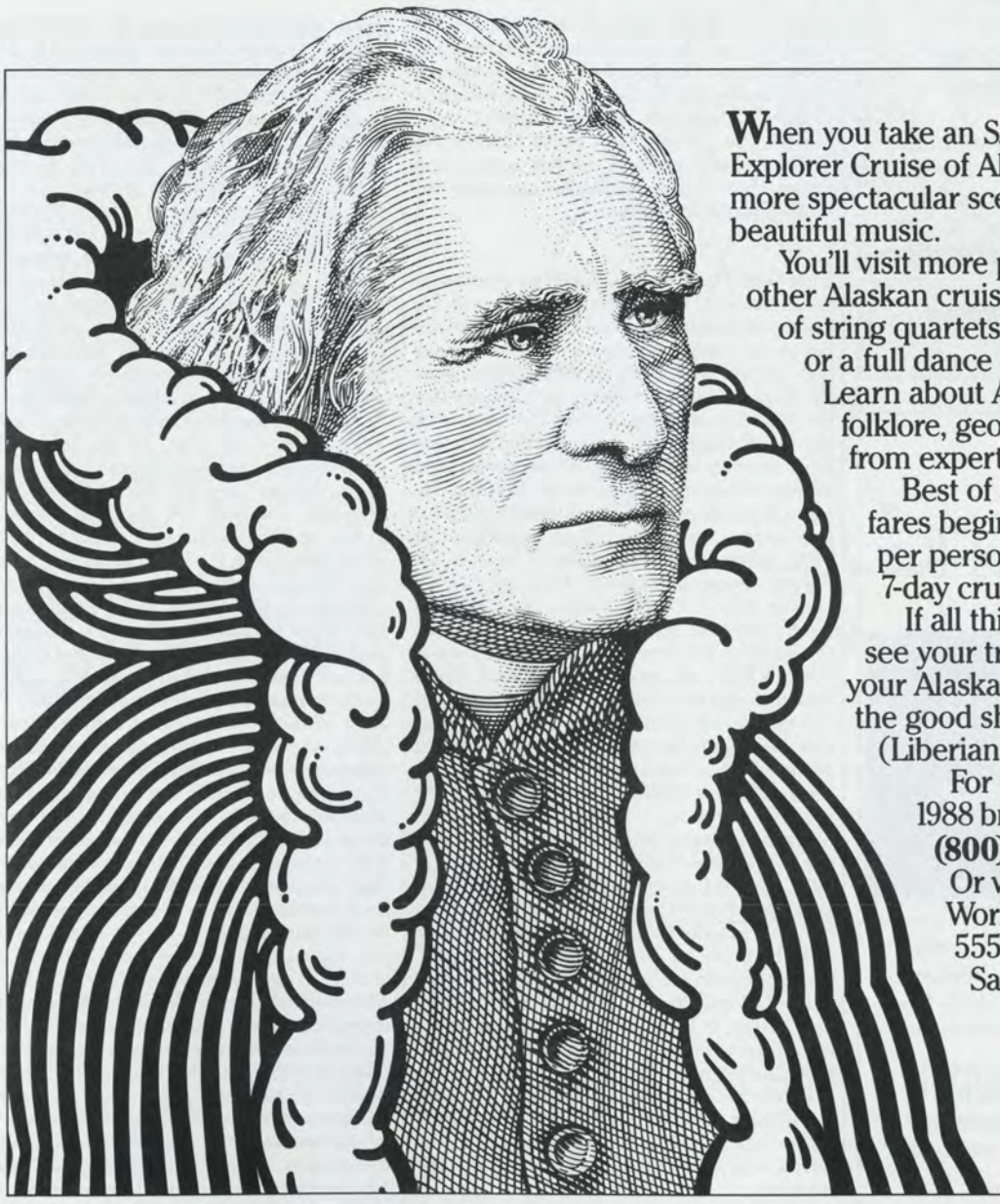

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VICTOR LEDBETTER

continued from p.38

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.

In his first season with San Francisco Opera, baritone **Victor Ledbetter** is Baron Douphol in the family performances of *La Traviata* and Paris in *Roméo et Juliette*. A native of Georgia, he was a member of the 1986 Merola Opera Program and portrayed Marcello in *La Bohème* in the Program's production at Villa Montalvo. During the 1986-87 season he sang Marcello with Western Opera Theater, including appearances on tour to China. Ledbetter is a graduate of Mercer University and has studied for two years at Indiana University with Nicola Rossi-Lemeni, teaching there as an Associate Instructor of Voice. His university credits include Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Don Quixote in *Man of La Mancha*, Tonio in *Pagliacci* and the title role of *Don Giovanni*. He has appeared in several productions with the Phoenix Opera of Atlanta, including *Le Comte Ory* and *The Yeomen of the Guard*. Ledbetter has acted extensively in the theater as well, portraying Judge Brack in *Hedda Gabler*, Tartuffe in *Tartuffe*, Mr. Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera* and Polonius in *Hamlet*. A choir director for several years, he is also a frequent oratorio soloist, and is a recent prize-winner in the Baltimore Opera Competition.

PETER VOLPE

Bass **Peter Volpe** marks his first season with San Francisco Opera by appearing in four roles: the Second Soldier in *Salome*, the High Priest in *Nabucco*, the Duke of Verona in *Roméo et Juliette*, and the Jailer in *Tosca*. He received his operatic training under Nicola Rossi-Lemeni at Indiana University. A participant in the 1986 Merola Opera Program, he went on to perform three roles in Western Opera Theater's 1986-87 touring production of *La Bohème* throughout the United States and in China: Colline, Alcindoro and Benoit. During the 1985-86 season he appeared as Melchior in a touring production of Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and made his debut with the New Jersey State Opera as Pimen in *Boris Godunov*. Other roles in his repertoire include Thomas Beckett in *Murder in the Cathedral*, Fasolt in *Das Rheingold*, Simone in *Gianni Schicchi*, Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville*. His concert credits include Handel's *Messiah*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the Verdi Requiem. He was a recent winner of the Puccini Foundation Award from the West Palm Beach Opera Association.

LENDON T. MUNDAY

A member of the 1986 Merola Opera Program, baritone **Lendon T. Munday** portrays Marquis D'Obigny in the family performances of *La Traviata* and Gregorio in *Roméo et Juliette*. He made his operatic

MICHEL PLASSON

debut as Valentin in *Faust* at the Brevard Music Center in 1984, where he returned in 1985 to sing the title role in *The Barber of Seville* and Escamillo in *Carmen*. In 1986, his roles included Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with the Merola Opera Program, and Marcello in *La Bohème* with the South Carolina Opera and the Charlottetown Players. He recently returned from Western Opera Theater's tour of the United States and the People's Republic of China, where he sang Marcello and Schaunard in *La Bohème*, and appeared in a joint concert with singers from Shanghai. A native of North Carolina, Munday received a bachelor of music degree from Winthrop College in South Carolina, and continued his training at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia. He has been a regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions in 1982, 1984 and 1985.

Conductor **Michel Plasson** returns to San Francisco Opera to lead *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Roméo et Juliette*. He was last here to conduct the 1985 production of *Werther*, a work he has also recorded. Born in Paris, he was a piano pupil of Lazare Lévy, and studied percussion and conducting at the National Conservatory of Music in Paris. In 1962 he won first prize at the Besançon International Conducting Competition. On the advice of Charles Munch, he came to the United States and worked with Erich Leinsdorf, Pierre Monteux and Leopold Stokowski. Upon his return to France, he became music director for the city of Metz and in 1968 assumed directorship of the orchestra and opera house of Toulouse. Plasson was instrumental in the 1974 conversion of the old wheat market building into the 3,000-seat concert hall that is today the home of L'Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse. In 1977 he led performances of *Fidelio* that inaugurated the building, where he has also conducted *Salome, Aida, Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, Faust, Carmen*, and the 1985 world premiere of Marcel Landowski's *Montségur*. In 1983, Plasson relinquished his duties with the Toulouse Opera to concentrate on concert

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BERNARD UZAN

activity with the Toulouse Orchestra, whose programs were expanding under Plasson's leadership. A champion of French music, he has led the commissioning of numerous works which he has led in their premiere performances both in France and abroad. He has also made significant contributions to the preservation of French musical heritage through his numerous recordings of works both famous and less well known, for which he has received various awards. In addition to his busy schedule in Toulouse, Plasson appears as a guest conductor for such ensembles as the Berlin Philharmonic, the London Philharmonic, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig. His operatic activities have taken him to the podiums of opera companies in Paris, Geneva, Vienna, Munich, Hamburg and Zurich, in addition to Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Recordings of his that are available in the United States include complete versions of Offenbach's *La Périchole* and *Orphée aux Enfers*, Massenet's *Manon* with Alfredo Kraus, the complete Saint-Saëns piano concertos with Philippe Entremont, the second and third piano concertos of Rachmaninoff with Jean-Philippe Collard, and Chausson's Symphony in B flat.

French-born director **Bernard Uzan** returns to San Francisco Opera to direct *Roméo et Juliette*. He made his directing debut here in 1985 with *Werther*, a work he has also staged for the Opera Company of Philadelphia. Uzan began his career as both actor and stage director in France, where he worked closely with noted French director Jean-Louis Barrault for several seasons. His acting and directing credits include engagements in the major theaters of France and on tour throughout Europe, and he starred in a French television series dramatizing the lives of the great composers, including Beethoven, Berlioz and Mendelssohn. He graduated from the University of Paris with Ph.D. degrees in theatrical studies and literature and philosophy. He has been honored by twice receiving the French awards for best director and best actor. In 1982 he made his American operatic debut directing *Pagliacci* for the Lake George Opera Festival, and he opened the Opera Company of Philadelphia's 1982 season with *La Rondine*. Uzan has directed over 60 productions in the United States, Canada and Italy, including *Madama Butterfly, La Bohème, La Traviata, The Pearl Fishers* and *Manon Lescaut* for the companies of New Orleans, Philadelphia, Tulsa and Fort Worth. His production of *The Damnation of Faust* for the Opera Company of Philadelphia was telecast nationally on PBS. In 1985 he made his Italian debut with a new production of *La Traviata* in Palermo. That year he also made hs South African debut directing *Faust*. This season, Uzan has staged *Roméo et Juliette* in Montreal, *Madama Butterfly* in New Orleans, *La Traviata* for his Miami Opera debut and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for the Kentucky Opera. Other productions for this season included *La Bohème* in Fort Worth; *La Traviata* with the New Jersey State Opera; *Tosca* in Detroit, Milwaukee and San Antonio; and *Roméo et Juliette* in Philadelphia with Alfredo Kraus. Upcoming assignments include *Don Giovanni* in Miami, *Samson et Dalila* in New Orleans, a new production of *La Cenerentola* in Montreal, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Tulsa, *Roméo et Juliette* in Portland, *La Traviata* in Columbus, and Boito's *Mefistofele* for a production by the Opera Company of Philadelphia which is to be telecast by PBS. Uzan was recently appointed General Director of Tulsa Opera.

ROLF GÉRARD

Designer **Rolf Gérard** created this year's production of *Roméo et Juliette* for the Metropolitan Opera. Born in Germany, he has designed sets and costumes for opera, theater, film and television, in addition to working as a lighting designer, painter, sculptor and illustrator. He made his operatic debut in 1940 with the Sadler's Wells (now English National) Opera and designed for many major houses and festivals in Europe and the United States, including the Vienna Staatsoper, the Glyndebourne Festival, the Edinburgh Festival and the Metropolitan Opera. His operatic design credits include *La Sonnambula, Carmen, Faust, Pagliacci, Cavalleria Rusticana*, Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice, La Bohème, Così fan tutte, Le Nozze di Figaro, Aida, Tannhäuser* and many others. His designs for *La Bohème* and *Die Fledermaus* have been seen on television and videos, and several of his stage designs, as well as his paintings and sculptures, have been exhibited in New York, Paris and London.

MARIKA SAKELLARIOU

Marika Sakellariou is choreographer for *Roméo et Juliette*. As ballet mistress since 1981, she has been involved in over 15 San Francisco Opera productions. In 1981 she made her Company debut with *Don Giovanni, Die Meistersinger* and *Rigoletto*, in addition to choreographing *Romeo and Juliet, The Marriage of Figaro* and *Dance of the Heartless Ladies* for Spring Opera Theater that same year. For the San Francisco Opera Center Showcase, she was responsible for the dances in *The Triumph of Honor, The Women in the Garden, Emperor Norton* and *Full Moon in March*. In 1982 she created the choreography for *Manon* and *Salome* and appeared as a solo dancer in *The Queen of Spades*. In 1983 she devised the movement of the Rhinemaidens in *Das Rheingold* and choreographed *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*. Her work was also seen here in the 1984 production of *L'Elisir d'Amore* and in the 1985 production of *Turandot*. Miss Sakellariou studied at Connecticut College and the Juilliard School and continued her training with Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham. She has also performed with the José Limon Dance Company of New York, the Xoregos performing company of San Francisco, the San Francisco Opera Ballet and her own company, the Marika Sakellariou Dance Company. The 1987 Fol-de-Rol will mark the seventh time she has choreographed the popular San Francisco Opera Guild event. Miss Sakellariou is the creator of her own exercise class called Enduradance and is the choreographer for the Marin Opera performances of *Carousel*.

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THOMAS J. MUNN

Thomas J. Munn is lighting designer for *Salome, Die Zauberflöte, La Traviata, Nabucco, Les Contes d'Hoffmann, Roméo et Juliette* and *The Queen of Spades*. He also designed sets for *Nabucco* and co-designed those for *Salome*, both seen for the first time in 1982. In his 12th year with the Company, he has been responsible for lighting over 100 productions for San Francisco Opera, including the lighting and special effects for all four operas of the 1985 *Ring* Festival. He has also designed the scenery as well as the lighting for *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in 1981, *Roberto Devereux* and *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1979, and *Billy Budd* in 1978. In addition to his numerous design credits for the War Memorial stage, Munn has designed scenery and lighting for Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theater, ballet and film. His television credits include San Francisco Opera productions of *La Gioconda* (for which he received a 1979 Emmy Award), *Samson et Dalila* in 1980, *Aida* in 1981 and the Pavarotti concert of 1983. Recent projects include lighting and projection designs for *Madama Butterfly* for the Netherlands Opera; scenery and lighting for Hartford Ballet's productions of *Coppélia* and *The Nutcracker*; and lighting designs for Connecticut Opera's *Hansel and Gretel*. He also served as lighting director for last May's "Aid and Comfort" benefit and telecast. In 1986 Munn formed "Munn/Janus Associates," through which he handles his architectural lighting and consulting projects. He is currently on the board of directors for the Waterfront Theatre Project in San Francisco, and a consultant for the new Muziektheater opera house in the Netherlands.

San Francisco Opera's 1937 Juliet was Belgian soprano Vina Bovy, shown by herself (left) and in the Balcony Scene with tenor René Maison. Monsieur Maison appeared with the Company that same season as Florestan in Fidelio, *Gerald in* Lakmé, *and Des Grieux in* Manon. MORTON

Roméo et Juliette
continued from p.32

young, still finding its way, Gounod sets the words sometimes as recitative, sometimes as arioso: melodic, but hesitating to burgeon into full-blown duet. It is only in the last section, after the final interruption of the nurse, that the voices take off together in "Ah! ne fuis pas encore."

The third of these duets, in the Bedroom Scene, is, appropriately, the most rhapsodic of all, and is fully developed in form right from within a couple of pages of the start, at "Nuit d'hyménée." Armand Gouzien rightly described this as the "morceau capital"—the principal item—of the score, and, already singling out the passage "Non, ce n'est pas le jour," he recorded that it evoked such a tempest of applause that the opening of the following allegro agitato, which was eventually greeted with still more bravos, was obliterated and rendered quite inaudible.

We may also note that Gounod gives each of these second and third duets a degree of cohesion and formal unity by opening each with an appropriate orchestral introduction—a different passage for each duet, but similar in that they are both gentle and caressing—and then ending each duet with the same passage. That in the garden is berceuse-like, ending the scene on a note of hushed ecstasy; that in the bedroom, already heard at the beginning of the opera at the end of the overture, is lyrical, but with an element of chromaticism that gives it a feeling of greater yearning, or perhaps a hint of anguish to come.

In the last of these duets, that in the death scene of the last act, Gounod follows a procedure he had already developed in *Faust:* he makes it a mosaic of melodies that have been heard earlier in the opera. As an entr'acte, even before it begins, he writes "Le Sommeil de Juliette," a page of orchestral program-music that draws its material from Frère Laurent's earlier description of the effects Juliette would experience as she drank the sleeping potion. The duet itself contains only one new motif, the moving "Console-toi, pauvre âme." Otherwise, it is entirely made up of material we have already heard. It draws principally on the bedroom duet—on the passage just mentioned, used at the beginning and end (we may, if we wish, refer to it as the "Anges du ciel" passage, for those are the words which Juliette sang to it); on the section

that described the singing of the lark; and on the phrase, "Non, ce n'est pas le jour." But it also makes use of a passage from the trio sung in Frère Laurent's cell. If the effect is less rounded, less fully-structured than in the earlier duets, it nevertheless has the effect of drawing the whole opera together by reminding us of what has gone before—of underlining for us that there ...

... never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

Gounod was not a composer who could ever let well enough alone. The textual history of so many of his operas is complicated, for he was forever canceling something here, adding something there, ever anxious to improve their effect. *Roméo et Juliette* is no exception. Within days of the first performance he suppressed the off-stage chorus and melody for Frère Laurent that originally began the Wedding Scene. (Was he, one wonders, disgruntled by Cazaux's over-emphatic performance?) Still more surprisingly, he expunged a "Scène et Air" in the Bedroom Scene, in which Juliette first armed herself with a dagger, in case the sleeping potion failed to take effect, and then drank the potion dry. [This seldom-performed segment *will* be included in these performances of *Roméo et Juliette*.] On the other hand, just as he added a full-scale ballet to *Faust* when it was performed at the Opéra in 1869, he did the same for *Roméo et Juliette* when it was given there in 1888, five years before his death. This ballet is generally omitted in performance.

But with or without these changes, the opera was set firmly on the road to lasting success. Crowds flocked to see it during that year of the Exposition Universelle—the Queen of Belgium, the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (himself a keen composer), their Imperial Highnesses of the Ottoman Empire—the social columns of the day record their names. The hero and heroine of the production were Gounod and Madame Miolan-Carvalho: the latter because she had "shown herself an admirable singer and a great actress" whose Juliette would henceforth rank beside her Marguerite; and the former because he had written another opera worthy to rank beside *Faust*.

Ernest Reyer, writing in the *Journal des Débats*, predicted that *Roméo et Juliette* "will impassion the public, and will be for musicians a subject of studies and meditation," words echoed by Armand Gouzien when he declared that "*Faust* must henceforth [allow] *Roméo* to share the admiration of those who will study the great musical development of this century." These predictions have not quite come true. Gounod's reputation has long been in eclipse, and for many years *Roméo et Juliette*, like *Faust*, has been something of a rarity upon the stages of the world. Just recently, however, both operas have been enjoying a comeback, so that once again we have the opportunity of responding to their warmth and lyricism, and to their melodic, harmonic and orchestral inventiveness. French opera as a whole deserves a considerably larger place in the repertoire than it occupies at present, so let us hope that these operas will continue to be heard and, with renewed familiarity, will be just as much loved in the future as they once were in the past. ■

STROHMEYER

In 1946 and 1947, San Franciso Opera's Juliet was interpreted by the delectable Bidú Sayão, shown here in the Ballroom Scene.

STROHMEYER

A 1947 informal backstage Roméo et Juliette *chorus group reveals in the background the figure of the then chorus director, Kurt Herbert Adler, who was later (and through 1981) Company general director.*

Other Romeos, Juliets

What must be the most celebrated balcony in the world, Juliet's, overlooks a small Verona courtyard in the Via Cappello.

By JOHN SCHAUER

If there were a ratings system for great love affairs in history, chances are the highest rank would be given to Romeo and Juliet. There are other notable contenders, to be sure—Tristan and Isolde, Paolo and Francesca, Antony and Cleopatra—but when it comes to capturing the public's fancy, whether in masterpieces of music or even in popular songs and jokes, Romeo and Juliet are way out in front. Even the most illiterate teenybopper of 1964 knew what The Reflections were referring to when they sang, "Our love's gonna be written down in history, just like Romeo and Juliet!" and rare is the individual who has managed to avoid such humor as:

" 'Twas in a restaurant they met,
Romeo and Juliet.
He had no cash to pay the debt,
So Rome-owed what Juli-et."

Fortunately for all of us, the same duo also inspired serious works of art—among which Shakespeare's celebrated play is only one example, the story having already received numerous tellings before him. Shakespeare's play, written somewhere between 1591 and 1596, drew upon at least two earlier English sources, Arthur Brooke's poem *The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet* (1562); and William Painter's *Rhomeo and Julietta* (1567). Both

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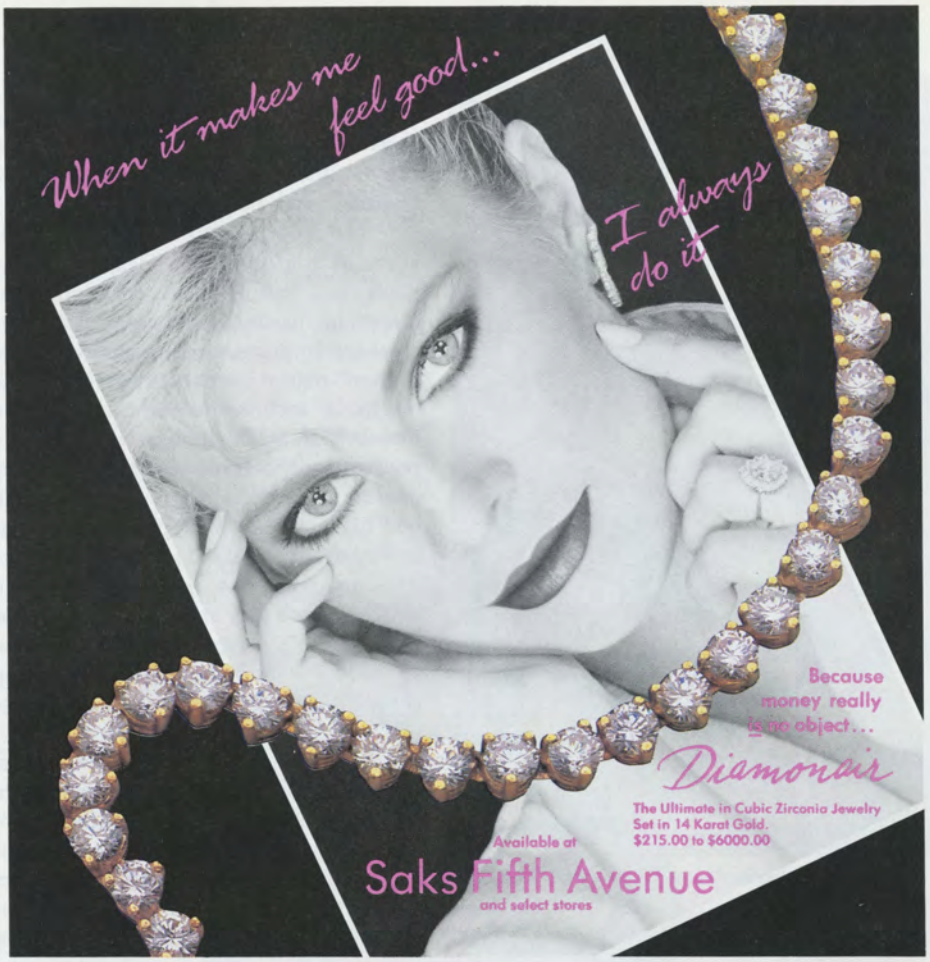
John Schauer is Staff Writer for San Francisco Opera.

of these, in turn, made use of a French version by Boaisteau (1559), who himself took his cue from Matteo Bandello's *Romeo e Giulietta* (1554) and Bandello's own source of inspiration, Luigi da Porto's *Giulietta e Romeo* (ca. 1530), the first version to set the story in Verona and to give the protagonists the names by which they have become known.

But ever since William Shakespeare retold the tale of the two "star-crossed lovers" (assuming he is the one who retold it; I leave it to others to debate Shakespeare's authorship of most plays attributed to him), it is the English bard's version most people associate with the story, and against which all others are measured—and usually found wanting.

Although far from a standard item of repertoire anymore, Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* is probably the best-known operatic treatment of the story. Previous settings include those by Benda (1776), Schwanenberger (1776), Marescalchi (1789), Rumling (1790), Dalayrac (1792), Steibelt (1793), Zingarelli (1796), Porta (1809), Guglielmi (1810), Vaccai (1825), Torriani (1828), Bellini (1830), Storch (1863), Morales (1863) and Marchetti (1865). Out of that imposing list, the only one a modern listener is apt to be familiar with is Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, a rarity that claims our attention partly because of Bellini's relatively small output of operas. Where Rossini had produced nearly 40 operas in his two decades of opera composition, and Donizetti more than 70 in 28 years, Bellini composed at the rate of approximately one opera a year. As Philip Gossett has pointed out, however, we must not misinterpret that statistic: it did not take Bellini a year to produce an opera, and in the year following the premiere of *I Capuleti*, he



COURTESY, T.A. McEWEN

Maria Malibran (1808-1836) in an engraving by Roberto Focosi.

produced *La Sonnambula* in a little over two months, and his greatest masterpiece, *Norma*, in a little over three.

I Capuleti itself was rapidly composed in about six weeks between the end of January and March 3, when the work went into rehearsal at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice. It would sound wonderfully romantic to say that the opera was born of Bellini's deep and long-held devotion to Shakespeare, except for two small dissenting details. First, Bellini did not select the topic; it was predetermined as part of a commission that fell to Bellini only after Giovanni Pacini failed to meet the deadline due to another, conflicting commission. Second, a brief glance over the synopsis of Bellini's opera makes it clear that Shakespeare's version is not the one drawn upon by the librettist Felice Romani, who made only minor alterations in his libretto for *Giulietta e Romeo*, written for Nicola Vaccai's setting of 1825.

From the very outset, the story's context is not the one with which we are most familiar. Romeo and Juliet are not merely the adolescent victims of their parents' feuding families; rather, Romeo is the leader of the Montagues, making him much more involved in the families' conflict. Indeed, before the opera's action begins, Romeo has been away from Verona for some time, having earlier killed Capellio's son, Juliet's brother.

Romani's libretto deviates from the story as told by Shakespeare in many ways, but one in particular merits our attention: in the tomb scene, Giulietta awakens from her sleeping potion before Romeo's poison has had its full effect. One might be inclined to view this as the inability of a librettist or composer to resist the opportunity for a wonderfully operatic duet at the story's climactic point, but his device has ample non-operatic precedent: It appeared in Bandello's 1554 version and was incorporated into Shakespeare's play starting with Thomas Otway's 1679 adaptation *Caius Marius*, set in the Roman Republic, and continuing through later stagings by Theophilus Cibber (1744) and David Garrick (1748).

I Capuleti has suffered from several disadvantages in the standard-repertoire sweepstakes. One is a misconception of Bellini's style (which is much more rhythmically vigorous than many interpreters want to acknowledge) and the fact that the pathetic subject matter of the story of Romeo and Juliet tends to heighten the tendency to reduce his music to a type of wimpy, spineless crooning.

A more serious problem for many is the fact that the role of Romeo was composed to be sung by a female mezzo-soprano. Audiences today will accept the convention of grown women portraying Cherubino or Octavian, and their assumption of leading male roles in baroque operas is considered no more unnatural than the use of the castrati for which they were originally composed. But audiences in our century have been reluctant to see history's most famous lovers portrayed by two women, and in 1966 Claudio Abbado, leading a production at La Scala in Milan, began the unfortunate practice of transposing the role of Romeo for a tenor in a heavily revised edition of the score. (We have come a long way in the last two decades, obviously; that same year, 1966, when Beverly Sills's superstardom was launched in the New York City Opera production of Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, conductor Julius Rudel felt it necessary to transpose the title role, originally a male alto, to the baritone range, a practice rarely tolerated in our more musicologically conscious time.)

Yet "trouser roles" for women were commonplace in Bellini's time, both in opera and ballet, and it is ironic to note that credit for rescuing Shakespeare's original text (after nearly two centuries of additions and revisions) is generally given to Charlotte Cushman, an American actress who portrayed Romeo opposite the Juliet of her younger sister Susan in a production of the play that toured England in 1845.

While it took a woman to rescue Shakespeare's original intentions, we must add that it was at the hands of another woman that Bellini's were first seriously corrupted. In Bologna's Teatro Comunale on October 27, 1832, the sensational Maria Malibran sang Bellini's Romeo for the first time, inserting passages by Mercadante, Filippo Celli and others, as well as replacing Bellini's entire final scene with that from Vaccai's *Giulietta e Romeo*, a practice that raised some eyebrows even in those days when interpolations were commonplace. A journalist writing in *La Gazzetta Piemontese* a few years later recalled (as translated by Howard Bushnell): "All this made a stew, a sauce, a fricassee marvelous to hear, and la Malibran, as beautiful as Circe, magician that she is, presented this ragout at the theater ... and the auditors, abandoned by Reason, tasted this stew and were dazzled out of their minds ... like Ulysses' companions."

Malibran's fricassee was to become the standard form in which audiences would hear Bellini's opera for some time to come, and the Ricordi piano score, still available in reprint from Belwin Mills, includes Vaccai's final scene, "to be substituted, if so desired, as is the general practice, for the final portion of Bellini's opera."

Considering the very high esteem in which Malibran held Bellini, one is forced to wonder why she inflicted this change on the master's work. Julian Budden says it may be because the Vaccai setting "throws the mezzo-soprano part far more strongly into relief than do Bellini's simple melodies," giving more prominence to the low notes that showed off Malibran's fabled range. A glance at the score gives two other obvious reasons as well. Romeo's solo in Vaccai is nearly twice as long as in Bellini; and instead of ending with the entrance of Laurence (here a doctor and not a friar) with the Montagues and Capulets, Vaccai has the curtain fall immediately following the

protagonists' deaths, allowing Romeo to sing until the last few measures.

At any rate, one of the great disappointments of Malibran's career was that Bellini didn't live to compose an opera expressly for her (although he did make an arrangement of *I Puritani* for her, which she never got to perform, and the aria "Son vergin vezzosa" was written with her in mind), which may have been fate's poetically just punishment for her musical sins.

Whichever version it was performed in, however, Bellini's opera never achieved the world-wide acclaim accorded three later musical versions of the story of Romeo and Juliet, all of which were explicitly derived from Shakespeare without having to compete with him: Berlioz's 1839 "dramatic symphony" *Roméo et Juliette* uses voices only in brief portions before the magnificent vocal finale, and both Tchaikovsky's famous overture and Prokofiev's popular ballet have no text whatsoever. Where operatic composers were forced to use a reworking of Shakespeare's words—a dilemma that has plagued more than one attempt to adapt Shakespeare for the operatic stage—these later versions avoid that impasse altogether and simply evoke the emotional aura of the famous play.

This was a logical approach for Berlioz, for although he was familiar with the play through translation, his first exposure to a staged performance was in a language he did not yet understand. In his *Memoirs*, as translated by David Cairns, Berlioz records the event: " ... to steep myself in the fiery sun and balmy nights of Italy, to witness the drama of that immense love, swift as thought, burning as lava, radiantly pure as an angel's glance, imperious, irresistible, the raging hatreds, the wild, ecstatic kisses, the desperate strife of love and death contending for mastery—it was too much. By the third act, hardly able to breathe—as though an iron hand gripped me by the heart—I knew that I was lost. I may add that at that time I did not know a word of English ... the splendor of the poetry which gives a whole new glowing dimension to his glorious works was lost on me....But the power of the acting, especially that of Juliet herself, the rapid flow of the scenes, the play of expression and voice and gesture, told me more and gave me a far richer awareness of the ideas and passions of the original than the words of my pale

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Hector Berlioz in an 1845 lithograph by Prinzhofer.

and garbled translation could do."

Always a creature of magnificent excess, Berlioz was true to form in his response to both Shakespeare and the actress who portrayed Juliet, Harriet Smithson. It was in 1827 that Berlioz first saw her perform with an English company appearing in Paris, and his obsessive and somewhat adolescent love for her was to result not only in his *Roméo et Juliette* symphony, but also his even more famous *Symphonie Fantastique* (1830) and , in 1833, his marriage to Miss Smithson, a union destined to become disastrously unhappy. Like Shakespeare's teenagers, Berlioz devoted himself entirely to a pursuit of love with no thought of future consequences.

The intensity of his passion is clearly reflected in his dramatic symphony, whose composition was made possible in 1838 by a generous gift of 20,000 francs from one of his admirers, Niccolò Paganini. Using a text by Émile Deschamps, Berlioz created an extended reminiscence of the drama that had had so shattering an impact upon him more than a decade earlier. Voices, both solo and choral, are used to summarize the action in a prologue, a tenor solo recreates Mercutio's speech about Queen Mab, choral passages depict the Capulets' departure from a party, and later Juliet's funeral cortege, but no singer ever portrays either of the two lovers. They were to be depicted by Berlioz in orchestral passages of aching emotional intensity (more than one commentator has pointed out the similarity between the theme of longing in Berlioz's love scene and the famous opening of the prelude to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*), but he saves his overwhelming choral finale, inspired by Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, for the final scene where Friar Laurence mediates between the two warring families. He thus makes his greatest emotional impact not with the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, but with the reconciliation of the Montagues and Capulets, a bit of plot only touched upon by Shakespeare, and ignored completely in the operatic versions of Bellini (and Vaccai) and Gounod.

A musical revolutionary such as Berlioz lived most of his life fighting the establishment, and toward the end of his life he was becoming increasingly disillusioned and bitter. "Absurdity now seems to me man's natural element, and death the noble goal of his mission," he said, yet in 1867 the Grand Duchess Helen of Russia convinced him to embark upon a concert tour to Russia, which included two performances of *Roméo et Juliette* in Moscow with 500 performers before audiences totaling 12,400. In the audience we may assume was a young Russian composer, Tchaikovsky, who had moved to Moscow in 1866, the year after he graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, to take up a position as teacher of harmony at what was to become the Moscow Conservatory. We know that he met Berlioz that year, the same year he made the acquaintance of Mily Balakirev, leader of the group of Russian nationalist composers known as "The Five": Balakirev, Cui, Borodin, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov.

Tchaikovsky was eventually to be considered outside the influence of "The Five," personifying that school of Russian composition that followed the Western European tradition. But at this early stage in his career, he was interested in the nationalist movement. He dedicated his symphonic poem *Fatum* to Balakirev, who conducted the first St. Petersburg performance and also criticized it harshly, but it prompted him to suggest another topic for Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet.

Once again Balakirev seemed hard to please, and Tchaikovsky was to rewrite the piece several times, following suggestions made by his mentor. Considering that the piece is now among the most popular compositions of all time, and that the famous love theme may be one of the most recognizable tunes in the entire orchestral repertoire—a universal evocation of amorous passion— it is amusing to hear Balakirev (as translated by Rosa Newmarch) criticize the tone poem in its early stages: "... As your overture is all but finished, and will soon be played, I will tell you what I think of it quite frankly...The first subject does not please me at all. Perhaps it improves in the working out—I cannot say—but in the crude state in which it lies before me it has neither strength nor beauty, and does not sufficiently suggest the character of Father Laurence...The first theme in D flat is very pretty, although rather colorless. The second, in the same key, is simply fascinating. I often play it, and would like to hug you for it. It has the sweetness of love, its tenderness, its longing ... I have only one thing to say against this theme: it does not sufficiently express a mystic, inward, spiritual love, but rather a fantastic passionate glow which has hardly any nuance of Italian sentiment. Romeo and Juliet were not Persian lovers, but Europeans ..." Always susceptible to criticism, Tchaikovsky went back to work, but after two more revisions, Balakirev still had reservations: "It is a pity that you, or rather Rubinstein, should have hurried the publication of the overture. Although the new introduction is a decided improvement, yet I had still a great desire to see some other alterations made in the work, and hoped it might remain longer in your hands for the sake of your future compositions. However, I hope Jurgenson (Tchaikovsky's publisher) will not refuse to print a revised and improved version of the overture at some future time."

As it turned out, the work's premiere in 1870 was not a triumph for Tchaikovsky, who was to revise the score repeatedly for a decade before leaving it in the form we know. His ultimate vindication, so long postponed, must have been all the sweeter to the composer. Yet while the overture may be the most successful of the versions we are consider-

MARKOWSKI

Evelyn Cisneros and Jim Sohm in the Ballroom Scene of San Francisco Ballet's staging of Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet.

ing, it is in part because Tchaikovsky was attempting less, distilling the story's essence into a fantasia of kaleidoscopic emotions. Admittedly, that is no small feat, but there is no attempt at a linear narration as there had been in previous settings as well as later incarnations of the story.

It was another Russian composer, Sergei Prokofiev, who was to compose the next enduring musical work based on the Romeo and Juliet theme, this time as a ballet. Although the score has always found acceptance and won over audiences around the world, the staged ballet experienced more difficulties. Originally suggested by the Kirov Ballet, that company eventually canceled its commission, which was then taken up by the Bolshoi. The dancers pronounced the music to be "undanceable"—a condemnation once heaped upon Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*—and the premiere was again postponed. Prokofiev meanwhile made two orchestral suites out of his score (a third would come later), which he first presented in 1936 and 1937. The music, written in a style calculated to be easily digested by Soviet authorities, won popular approval on its own, a factor that may have contributed to the difficulty of any actual staging to realize the same success. To cite but one example, could any choreography possibly match the awesome grandeur and menace of the "Dance of the Knights" at the Capulets' ball?

The work was first actually danced in a 1938 production at the Brno Opera in Czechoslovakia, and in 1940 it was restaged, finally, at the Kirov. But neither this version nor any of the others that followed in Russia, or anywhere else, ever achieved the status of "standard" in the sense that all subsequent versions of *Swan Lake* are indebted to the choreography of Marius Petipa. Pondering this situation in the *New York Times* (March 15, 1981), Jack Anderson observed, "Choreographers from Isadora Duncan to George Balanchine have demonstrated that dancing can be allied with great music. Yet certain compositions—for example, many famous symphonies—can seem so self-sufficient that choreography to them may strike audiences as irrelevant. *Romeo and Juliet*, although composed for dancing, may be such a score."

It is an ironic criticism; Prokofiev may have avoided the operatic problem of having to set a libretto that cannot hope to compare with Shakespeare's original text—a text "so self-sufficient that" music set to it "may strike audiences as irrelevant," only to leave a similar

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dilemma in the lap of the choreographers, whose work is usually criticized as incapable of sustaining an unusually long (by ballet standards) score described by Claude Samuel as "a silent opera."

But the challenge of transforming Romeo and Juliet into a musical format has continued to intrigue composers, and less than two decades after the inauspicious birth of Prokofiev's ballet came yet another mold into which the subject was poured, this time (1957) as an American musical, *West Side Story*. Containing what is most likely Leonard Bernstein's finest score, with lyrics by the then newly emerging genius of the musical stage, Stephen Sondheim, *West Side Story* was an unquestionable landmark in the history of Broadway shows (and later an equally successful film adaptation, winning 10 Academy Awards in 1961).

The dramatic adjustments made this time were among the most radical yet, being set in 1950s Manhattan with the two Veronese families becoming American and Puerto Rican street gangs, but some of the devices have precedent—Tony (Romeo) in this version kills the brother of Maria (Juliet), just as Bellini's Romeo had killed Capellio's son. But this time, only one of the lovers (Tony) dies, and the composer does not even attempt to translate this painful moment into music; Maria struggles to rekindle the musical vision they had shared of a happy future, but she does so in an a cappella vacuum, and *West Side Story* makes its final emotional impact through her concluding speech to the rival gangs, not through song.

Nevertheless, Bernstein's music for *West Side Story* is remarkably "operatic" by Broadway standards, and it is interesting that while the composer insisted that the original Broadway production *not* be performed by "operatic" voices, it has been his own 1985 recording of the piece with bona fide operatic superstars (Kiri Te Kanawa, Tatiana Troyanos, José Carreras) that has won the work its most recent renewed interest.

In a way, the story that Shakespeare immortalized has come full circle: from opera to dramatic symphony to tone poem to ballet to a Broadway musical with heavily operatic leanings, the tale of Romeo and Juliet has been set into every conceivable genre, each offering some new solutions to the challenge of translating one of the world's most familiar and best-loved stories. The fact that no treatment since Shakespeare's has earned the distinctive status of being definitive, must be part of the fascination the subject has held for creative artists, and will no doubt continue to do so. Perhaps the waning years of the 20th century will find the tale decked out as a multi-media piece of "performance art," or an extended music video; perhaps the opera stage and concert hall will pass the baton to the technologies of videotape and synthesizer. For the love Romeo and Juliet felt for each other may have led to their corporeal deaths, but it also conferred upon them immortality; and their lasting monuments are not stone statues and mausoleums, but living works of art. ■

Final scene from the 1961 filmed version of Bernstein's West Side Story, *with Natalie Wood as Maria/Juliet and Richard Beymer as Tony/Romeo.*

Photography: Sadeghi

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Company Profiles: John Galindo

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

In his 23 years at the Opera House, John Galindo has become acquainted with quite a few operas. Minus their first acts, that is. As house manager, the supervisor of the company's ushers and ticket takers, it's ultimately his responsibility to see that patrons are courteously, comfortably—and expeditiously—seated. But even if, in the best-case scenario, every audience member has found the right place by curtain time, Galindo has his own work to do before he can slip into the auditorium.

In addition to collecting reports and head counts from the head ushers at each of the Opera House's main levels (the Orchestra, Boxes, Dress Circle, and Balcony Circle), it's his job to determine that there are no urgent house problems (one recent Sunday matinee it was a broken elevator, a particular problem at the series most patronized by senior citizens and the disabled) and to address whatever problems there are. Most often the problems are routine ones, like dealing with patrons who arrive late but nevertheless want to be seated (the company has a firm policy against late seating, as a courtesy to punctual patrons).

"People come to us with all kinds of excuses, as you can well imagine," he says. "But usually they're reasonable, and appreciate that we're doing everything we can for them. And we are. If there are empty seats in the back row and we can seat them without disturbing other people, we're happy to do it. But there usually aren't.

"Most often, we don't have to do more than to explain our policy, and then they're understanding. At least they can see and hear the performance from the rear of their section until there's a suitable seating break. If they get abusive, it's usually for one of two reasons. Either something just happened to them before they came in and that's what they're really mad about. Or they've been drinking. I'd have to say that 99 percent of our patrons are great to work with. And most of the rest have had one too many."

Galindo's experience, at the Opera House and elsewhere, has made him something of an expert in dealing with the public in whatever condition it presents itself. An insurance business technician by day, Galindo, father of six, turned to ushering and ticket-taking in the '60s, to help make ends meet. His first job came through a friend, who was a ticket-taker at Seals' Stadium at the time. In a fairly typical pattern for such work, Galindo went from there to the Alcazar Theater (to usher for *American Waltz*), and on to the Cow Palace, where the events he attended ranged from hockey, wrestling, and the roller derby to two Republican national conventions.

He worked for the first time at the Opera House in 1964, ushering for the Kirov Ballet, which was touring with Maya Plisetskaya at the time. A major ballet lover to this day, Galindo has sentimental as well as artistic reasons for that "partiality." "My son Ramon, who's a dancer on Broadway now, was just 11 years old then. He was one of the local kids picked to dance with the company." To this day, Galindo's favorite ballets are "Tchaikovsky's Big Three."

Another reason for his continuing love of ballet is the ongoing string of

MESSICK

John Galindo, house manager, in his work "uniform."

celebrities he has been able to meet off stage. Warren Beatty was here during the Plisetskaya tour ("he was dating her at the time"), and that same tour afforded him the opportunity of meeting Natalie Wood ("very petite") and Sol Hurok. Beyond doubt his biggest celebrity thrill took place one time when Mikhail Baryshnikov was dancing here with ABT. Jessica Lange, Baryshnikov's paramour then, was in the house for one performance—and gave Galindo a kiss.

Celebrity guests Galindo has met through the opera over the years include Ginger Rogers, Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Tony Randall ("he comes quite often, a real opera buff"), Carol Burnett, and Mary Martin. But he hastens to add that celebrities can also be trouble—without meaning to be and often without even knowing they are.

Galindo has one memory, humorous only in retrospect, of the occasion on which Lady Bird Johnson, then First Lady, was in the Opera House for opening night. "I had just hired a new doorman for the stage door," he recalls, "and I told him

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As part of his "rounds," John Galindo surveys the Opera House lobby.

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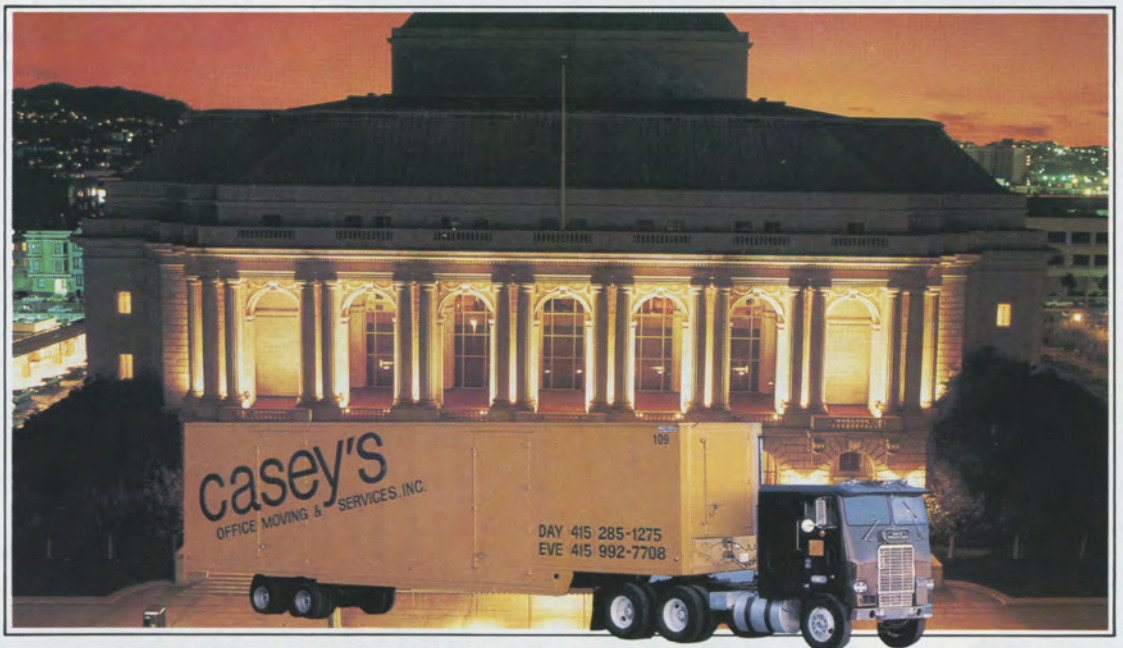

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John Galindo in the act of spotting a friend.

to make sure not to let anyone in. Naturally, the first person who wanted to pass through was Mr. Adler [then Company general director]—and the guard, following my orders, wouldn't let him in. When Mr. Adler insisted, the guard pulled a gun on him. I didn't even know he had one! Needless to say, that one involved considerable straightening out. But even Mr. Adler had a laugh about it later."

As house manager, Galindo coordinates a number of special services, from


MESSICK

John Galindo chats with a member of the audience.

the security personnel to the nurse in the downstairs Emergency Room. His years of experience with those people have left him impressed with their abilities. And, on the rare occasions when he has had to summon medical or other emergency help beyond the house staff, he's been gratified at the expediency of the city's emergency services.

Predictably, Galindo also fields a fair share of patron complaints. The first thing he'd like the public to know is that "we follow up on every complaint we hear or get in the mail. If it involves something that we really can do something about, be assured that we will." The second thing he'd like patrons to know is that there is no air conditioning, only a forced-air system, and that at this point there's nothing to be done about the temperature in the auditorium. "It's the most frequent complaint we receive. The simple fact of the matter is that a bond issue to air condition the Opera House didn't pass in elections."

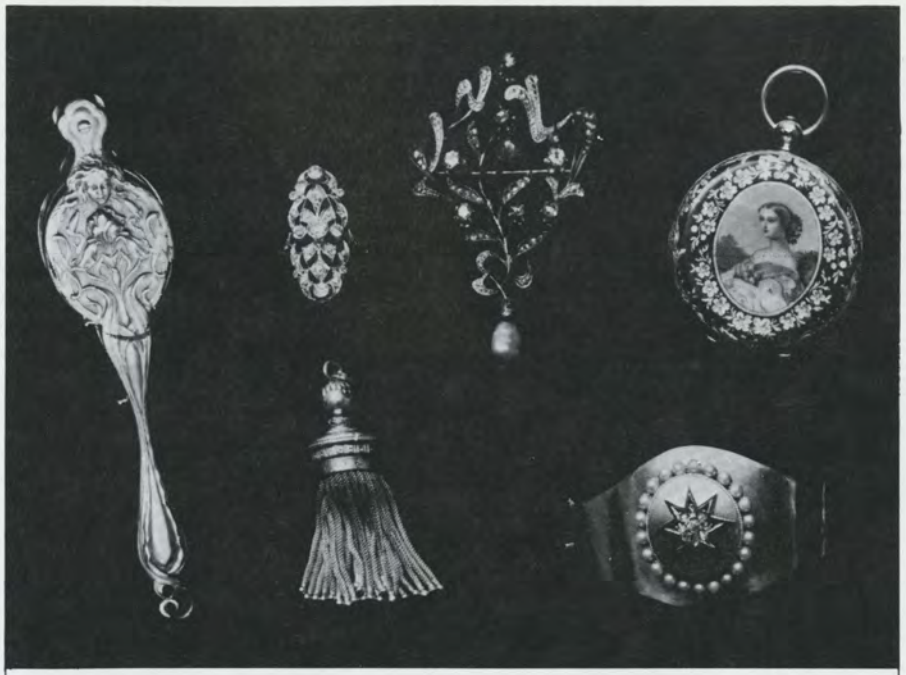
At this point, there are three things he likes most about his job: performances of *Aida* and *Die Meistersinger*, his favorite operas; the chance to stand up and meet people in the evening after working with papers in the office all day; and the performances at which everything runs smoothly, which—gratefully enough—are most of them.

"What I just can't say enough about," Galindo adds, "is the loyalty of our volunteer ushers. We use about 90 per performance and work with a total of about 400, and they're just amazingly committed and reliable.

"We have an arrangement with several of the colleges in the area, and we get many of our new ushers through their programs. Once a new usher decides that it's something he or she wants to continue doing, we try to get them to commit to a particular series or a particular day of the week. It's usually no problem at all.

"We ask the ushers to be here an hour and a half before the performance. Some of these people come from the East Bay and beyond—and they all show up regularly and on time—and have been doing so for years. That's the kind of people we have here, and why this job is such a pleasure."

Anyone interested in ushering is invited to write to John Galindo at the Opera House, 301 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco 94102. ■



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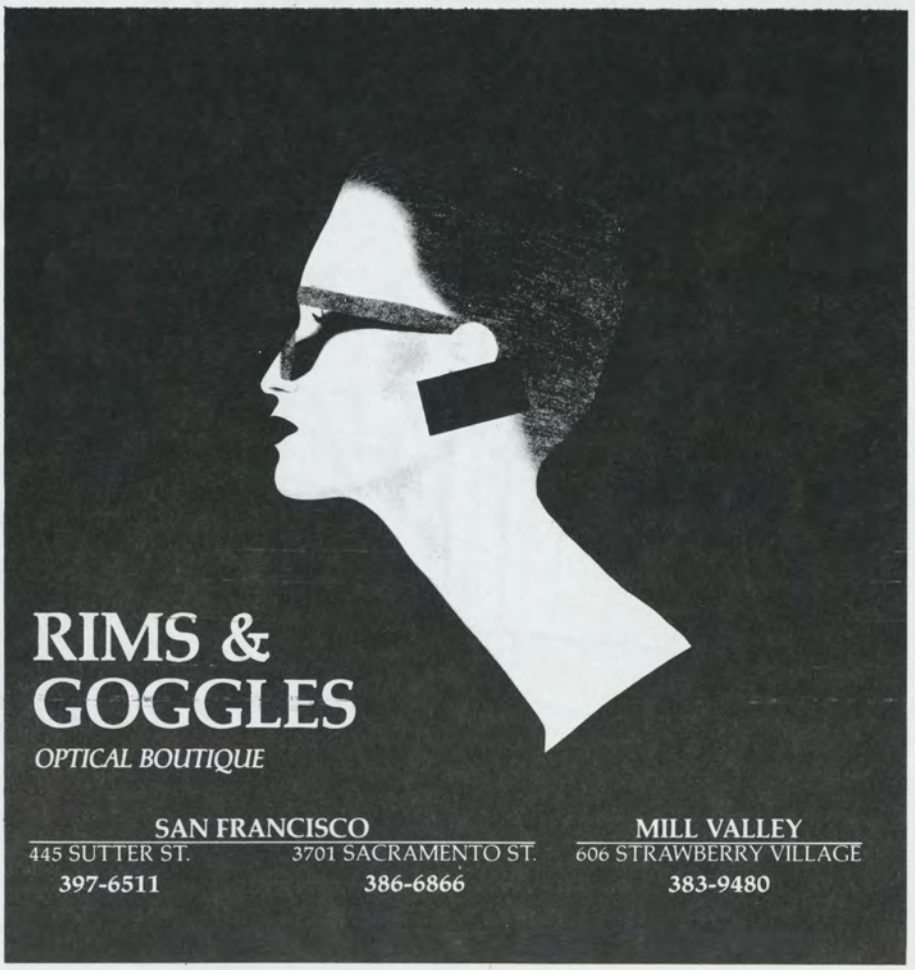

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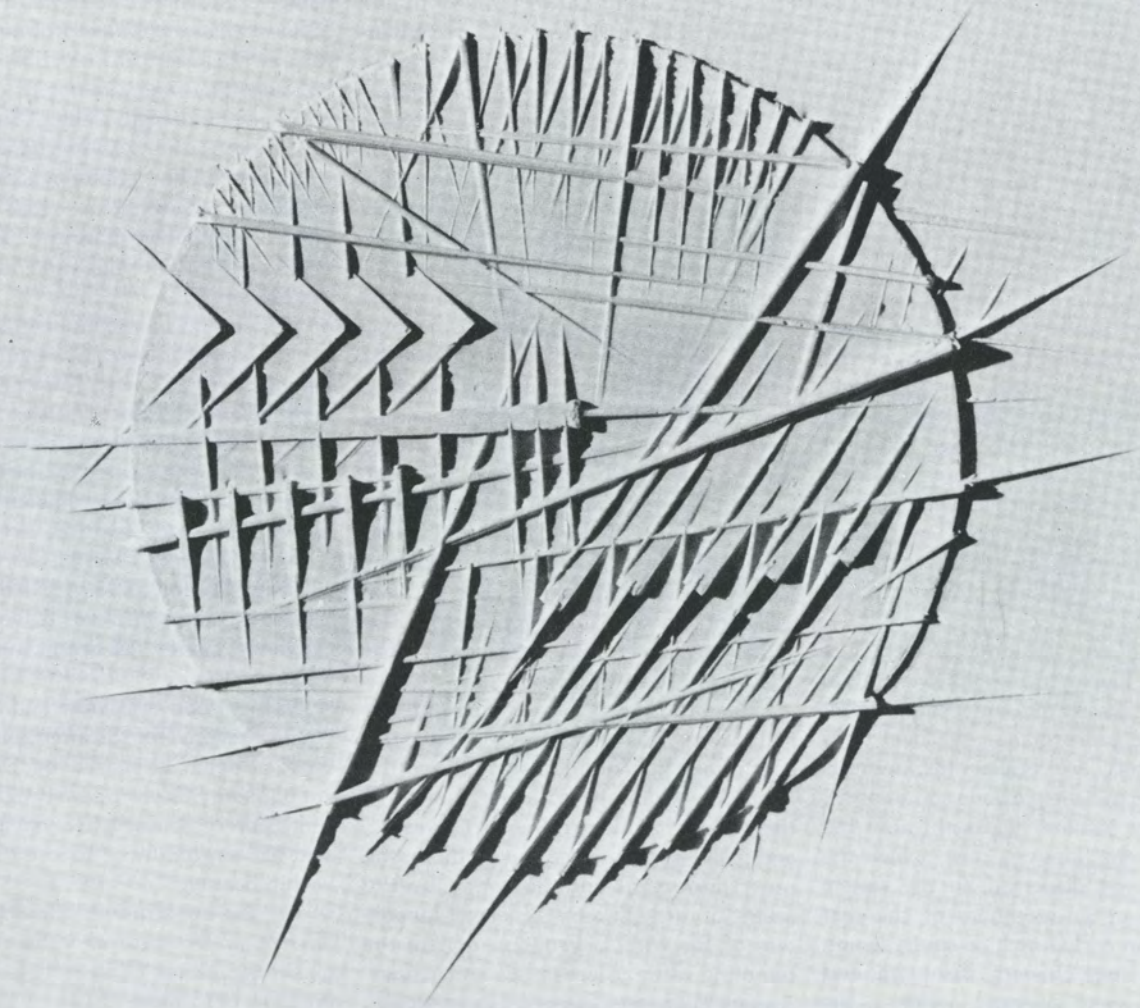

1987 San Francisco Opera
Company (Continued)

Although our program magazines regularly list members of the Administration and Company (please see pages 10 and 17), we know that those lists are by necessity incomplete. In order to give recognition to the many skilled professionals whose work has contributed so greatly to the quality of San Francisco Opera productions, we provide, once a year, a list of everyone involved in our season. In this issue, department heads are listed in front of the magazine, as usual; the many others, upon whom so much depends, are listed below.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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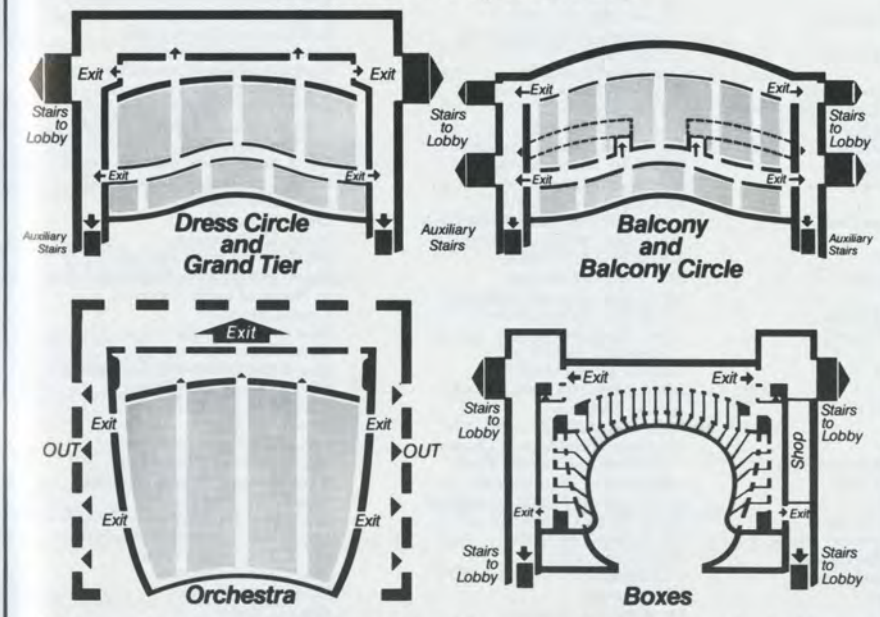
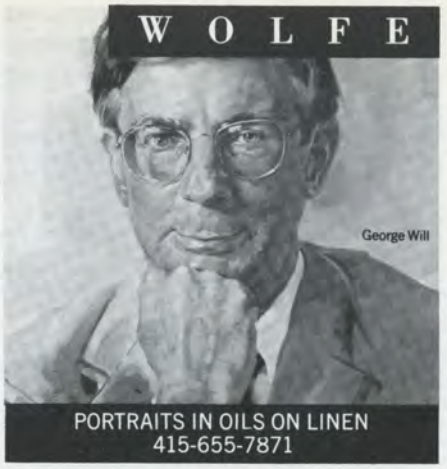


Patrons, Attention Please! Fire Notice: There are sufficient exits in this building to accommodate the entire audience. The exit indicated by the lighted **"EXIT"** sign nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In case of fire please do not run—**walk** through that exit. (Refer to diagrams.)



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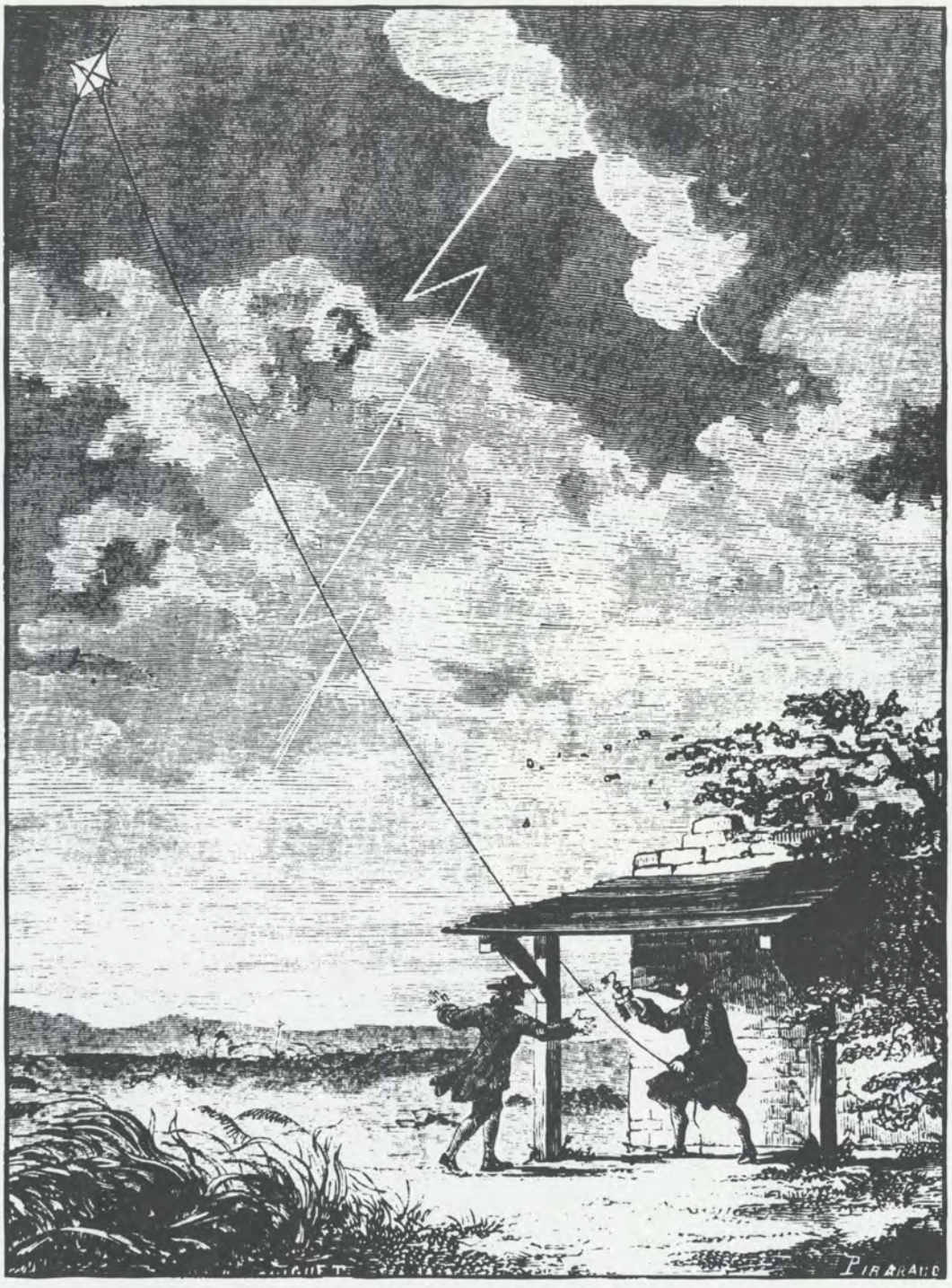

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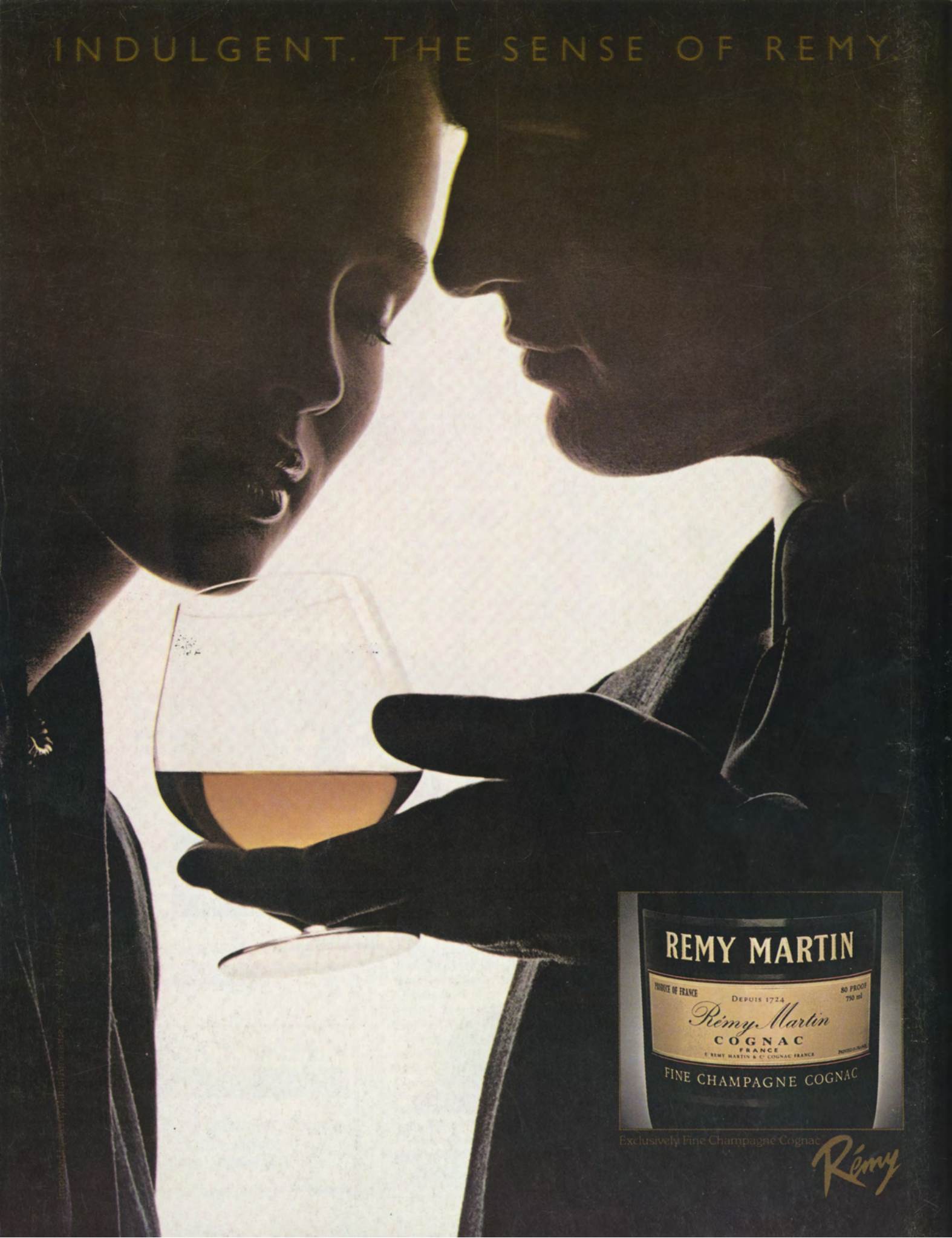

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Rémy

December 2, 1987.

The role of Roméo in tonight's performance of *Roméo et Juliette* will be sung by Fernando De La Mora.

Born in Mexico City in 1958, **Fernando De La Mora** made his professional debut in 1986 and in less than a year proceeded to become the leading tenor of the most important opera company of his native country. He opened Mexico Opera's 1987 season as Cavaradossi to Gilda Cruz-Romo's Tosca, sang Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*, and appeared as Alfredo in *La Traviata* to close the season. His performance in *Roméo et Juliette*, as seen on the stage of the company's home in Mexico City's Palacio de las Bellas Artes, was the subject of a national broadcast over Mexican television. A protégé of tenor Plácido Domingo, De La Mora was urged by his elder colleague to audition for San Francisco Opera General Director Terence McEwen, which in turn resulted in an invitation to appear on short notice in tonight's performance. The occasion represents Fernando De La Mora's United States debut.