

La Bohème
(La Bohème)

1988

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San Francisco
1988 SEASON
Opera

La Bohème

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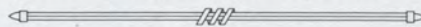
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San Francisco Opera

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

La Bohème

1988 SEASON

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COVER

Edgar Degas, 1834-1917

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MCCARTHY

From the Chairman of the Board and the President

We are pleased to welcome you to the 66th annual season of the San Francisco Opera, a season marked by many changes in the San Francisco Opera family. By now you are all aware of the arrival of Lotfi Mansouri, our new general director. He is no stranger to our audiences, having staged an astonishing 40 productions here in the last 25 years. So it is with great pleasure that we welcome him back as a permanent part of our Company and anticipate many fruitful years of collaboration under his artistic leadership.

Other changes over the last year have not been as happy, and it was with deep regret that we witnessed the passing of General Director Emeritus Kurt Herbert Adler and the resignation due to ill health of General Director Terence A. McEwen. Kurt Herbert Adler is universally acknowledged as the force that raised the San Francisco Opera to its remarkable status among the world's great opera houses during the 28 years that he led the Company. He was called the last of the old-time opera impresarios, and we shall not see his like again.

Terence McEwen had fewer years in which to give expression to his own personal vision for the Company, but his tenure was rich in outstanding new productions, including his world-

acclaimed *Ring* cycle, which continued to uphold the tradition of excellence of the San Francisco Opera. Terry's encyclopedic knowledge of opera and his great sense of humor will be fondly remembered by all of us. We wish him well in the future.

Our Board of Directors also suffered the loss of two great champions of opera in San Francisco with the passing of our Directors Emeriti Cyril Magnin and Mrs. Nion R. Tucker. Their generosity and enthusiasm will serve as an inspiration to the entire Board, which this year includes eight new members.

In looking at our repertoire this season, we have many old friends to thank for their generosity in underwriting productions, as well as new donors, whom we welcome with deepest thanks. Funds for our new *Parsifal* have been provided through the generosity of an anonymous friend, and we have the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation to thank for our production of *Maometto II*. Four production revivals have been generously underwritten: that of *L'Africaine* by the Sells Foundation; *The Rake's Progress* by Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Naify; *Così fan tutte* by the San Francisco Opera Guild; and *La Bohème* by the Bernard Osher Foundation. We also would like to express our gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. William Rollnick, whose financial assistance has made

possible most of this season's Supertitles.

As always, it is a privilege to be able to acknowledge our governmental funding sources, including such stalwarts as the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council. We also extend our deep gratitude to Grants for the Arts, Mayor Art Agnos and Chief Administrative Officer Rudolf Nothenberg, whose support has been most encouraging.

As in previous years, we extend our appreciation to the San Francisco Opera Guild, the Merola Opera Program, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees for their ongoing support.

We are further pleased to note this year's increase in our subscription base, but the reality of opera production is that ticket sales can cover only slightly more than half of our expenses. The interest of our audience in the magnificent art form of the opera has been amply demonstrated over the past years. With your continued support, and increased contributions wherever possible, we can together continue the glorious tradition of opera in San Francisco.

Reid W. Dennis, Chairman
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General Director's Message

Returning to San Francisco has always been a pleasure for me, but never more so than this year, as I embark upon my new position as general director of San Francisco Opera. Long before I received this appointment, I wrote in my autobiography that I regarded San Francisco Opera as my "home" company, and the important role it has played in my career and life cannot be overstressed. During my student years in Los Angeles, I came to know and love the operatic repertoire through San Francisco Opera performances, and my earliest participation was as a supernumerary with the Company during its tours to Los Angeles.

I've always been a great believer in the power of kismet, and I am convinced that way back when I first carried a spear in *Otello* I was already beginning to fulfill part of a grand design—a master plan of some sort that has now come full circle as I assume leadership of my "home" company.

In my work at other opera companies around the world, I have always used the excellence of San Francisco Opera productions as the standard against which all others must be measured. Now it is my fervent hope that I can contribute to the artistic growth and financial stability of this wonderful institution. To use whatever talents I may have been given, all of my energy, my fullest capabilities to maintain San Francisco Opera's status as one of the foremost performing arts organizations in the world—and to prepare the Company to enter the 21st century—that is my pledge to you, the San Francisco Opera family. I am delighted to join with all of you as together we embark upon the next stage in the continuing evolution of the most marvelous of art forms in this, the most marvelous of cities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Letitia M. Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

San Francisco Opera

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

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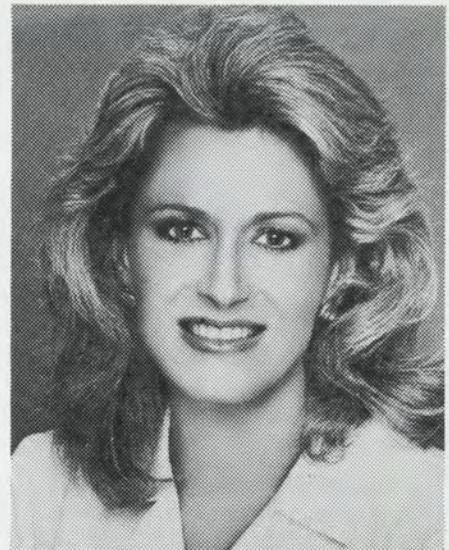
William Freeman

*San Francisco Opera debut

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San Francisco Opera

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Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

1988 Season

<p><i>Opening Night</i> Friday, September 9, 7:00 L'Africaine Meyerbeer Verrett, Swenson, Spence*; Domingo, Díaz, Devlin, Anderson, Delavan, Skinner, Rouleau Arena/Mansouri/W. Skalicki/A. Skalicki/ Munn/Ray* <i>1988 production underwritten through a generous gift from the Sells Foundation.</i></p>	<p>Tuesday, September 27, 8:00 L'Africaine Meyerbeer</p>	<p>Sunday, October 9, 2:00 Maometto II Rossini</p>
<p>Saturday, September 10, 8:00 The Rake's Progress Stravinsky S. Patterson, Christin, Vergara; Hadley* Shimell**, J. Patterson, Green, Travis* Mauceri/Cox/Hockney/Sullivan <i>Production originally made possible by a gift from the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation; revival made possible by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Naify.</i></p>	<p>Wednesday, September 28, 7:30 The Rake's Progress Stravinsky</p>	<p>Tuesday, October 11, 8:00 Der Fliegende Holländer Wagner Larson**, Young; Pederson, Ochman, Koptchak Kaltenbach/Calábria/Ponnelle/Halmen/ Munn</p>
<p>Tuesday, September 13, 7:30 L'Africaine Meyerbeer</p>	<p>Thursday, September 29, 7:30 Der Fliegende Holländer Wagner Polaski**, Young; Van Dam, Ochman, Koptchak* Kaltenbach/Calábria/Ponnelle/ Halmen/ Munn <i>Production originally made possible, in part, by the Gramma Fisher Foundation; revival made possible by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Alfred S. Wilsey.</i></p>	<p>Thursday, October 13, 8:00 Così fan tutte Mozart</p>
<p>Thursday, September 15, 7:30 The Rake's Progress Stravinsky</p>	<p>Friday, September 30, 8:00 Maometto II Rossini</p>	<p>Saturday, October 15, 7:30 Der Fliegende Holländer Wagner Larson, Young; Van Dam, Ochman, Koptchak Kaltenbach/Calábria/Ponnelle/Halmen/ Munn</p>
<p>Friday, September 16, 8:00 L'Africaine Meyerbeer</p>	<p>Saturday, October 1, 8:00 Der Fliegende Holländer Wagner Martin, Young; Van Dam, Ochman, Koptchak Kaltenbach/Calábria/Ponnelle/Halmen/ Munn</p>	<p>Sunday, October 16, 2:00 Manon Lescaut Puccini Lorengar, Manhart; Dvorský, Vanaud*, Capecchi, Wunsch, Travis, Petersen, Skinner, Anderson, Potter Pritchard/Asagaroff/Klein/Mahoney/ Arhelger</p>
<p>Saturday, September 17, 8:00 <i>American Premiere</i> Maometto II Rossini Horne, Anderson*; Alaimo*, Merritt*, Tate, Wunsch Zedda/Frisell/Benois/Arhelger <i>Production underwritten by the generous grant from the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation.</i></p>	<p>Sunday, October 2, 2:00 The Rake's Progress Stravinsky</p>	<p>Tuesday, October 18, 8:00 Così fan tutte Mozart</p>
<p>Sunday, September 18, 2:00 L'Africaine Meyerbeer</p>	<p>Tuesday, October 4, 8:00 The Rake's Progress Stravinsky</p>	<p>Wednesday, October 19, 7:30 Manon Lescaut Puccini</p>
<p>Monday, September 19, 8:00 Maometto II Rossini</p>	<p>Wednesday, October 5, 8:00 Der Fliegende Holländer Wagner Martin, Young; Van Dam, Ochman, Koptchak Kaltenbach/Calábria/Ponnelle/Halmen/ Munn</p>	<p>Friday, October 21, 8:00 Così fan tutte Mozart Csavlek, Montague, Rolandi; Gulyás, Dickson, Capecchi Bradshaw/Gleue/Ponnelle/Munn</p>
<p>Wednesday, September 21, 7:30 L'Africaine Meyerbeer</p>	<p>Thursday, October 6, 7:30 Maometto II Rossini</p>	<p>Saturday, October 22, 7:00 <i>New Production</i> Parsifal Wagner W. Meier*, S. Patterson, Panagulias*, Williams*, Manhart, Hoffman*, Spence; Kollo, Moll, Hynninen*, Berry, J. Patterson, Wunsch, Potter, Anderson, Ledbetter Pritchard/Joël/Halmen/Munn <i>Production made possible by a generous gift from a friend of San Francisco Opera.</i></p>
<p>Friday, September 23, 8:00 The Rake's Progress Stravinsky</p>	<p>Friday, October 7, 8:00 Der Fliegende Holländer Wagner Martin, Young; Van Dam, Ochman, Koptchak Kaltenbach/Calábria/Ponnelle/Halmen/ Munn</p>	<p>Sunday, October 23, 2:00 Der Fliegende Holländer Wagner Larson, Young; Van Dam, Ochman, Koptchak Kaltenbach/Calábria/Ponnelle/Halmen/ Munn</p>
<p>Saturday, September 24, 8:00 L'Africaine Meyerbeer</p>	<p>Saturday, October 8, 8:00 Così fan tutte Mozart Csavlek, Montague*, Rolandi; Gulyás, Dickson, Krause Bradshaw/Gleue*/Ponnelle/Munn <i>Production originally made possible by a grant from Crocker National Bank; revival made possible by a grant from the San Francisco Opera Guild.</i></p>	
<p>Sunday, September 25, 2:00 Maometto II Rossini</p>		

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Tuesday, October 25, 7:00 Parsifal	Wagner	Sunday, November 20, 1:30 La Gioconda	Ponchielli	Saturday, December 10, 1:00 <i>Family Matinee</i> La Bohème	Puccini
Wednesday, October 26, 8:00 Manon Lescaut	Puccini	Marton, Ciurca, Nadler; Polozov*, Ophthof, Giaiotti, Irmiter*, Petersen, Pittsinger		Hartliep, Williams; Wunsch, Ledbetter, Potter, Skinner, Travis, Harper, Coles Fiore/Zambello/Mitchell/Buttons/ Munn	
Thursday, October 27, 7:30 Così fan tutte	Mozart	Kord/Ewers*/Brown/Munn/Sulich <i>Production originally made possible by a friend of the San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Opera Guild.</i>		Saturday, December 10, 7:30 La Gioconda	Ponchielli
Friday, October 28, 7:00 Parsifal	Wagner	Monday, November 21, 8:00 Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk	Shostakovich	Sunday, December 11, 2:00 La Bohème	Puccini
Saturday, October 29, 8:00 Manon Lescaut	Puccini	Tuesday, November 22, 8:00 La Bohème	Puccini	(Same cast as December 9)	
Sunday, October 30, 2:00 Così fan tutte	Mozart	Wednesday, November 23, 7:30 La Gioconda	Ponchielli	** American opera debut * San Francisco Opera debut	
Tuesday, November 1, 8:00 Manon Lescaut	Puccini	Friday, November 25, 8:00 Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk	Shostakovich	All performances are in the original language with English Supertitles. Supertitles for <i>L'Africaine</i> , <i>The Rake's Progress</i> , <i>Maometto II</i> , <i>Manon Lescaut</i> , <i>Parsifal</i> , <i>Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk</i> , <i>La Bohème</i> and <i>La Gioconda</i> provided by a generous and most appreciated gift from William and Eloise Rollnick. <i>Così fan tutte</i> supertitles underwritten through a generous grant from American Express. Supertitles for <i>Der Fliegende Holländer</i> are underwritten through a grant from Pacific Gas and Electric Company.	
Wednesday, November 2, 7:00 Parsifal	Wagner	Saturday, November 26, 8:00 La Bohème	Puccini	Repertoire, casts and dates subject to change.	
Thursday, November 3, 7:30 Così fan tutte	Mozart	Sunday, November 27, 1:30 La Gioconda	Ponchielli	Box Office and telephone sales: (415) 864-3330.	
Friday, November 4, 8:00 Manon Lescaut	Puccini	Tuesday, November 29, 8:00 La Bohème	Puccini		
Sunday, November 6, 1:00 Parsifal	Wagner	Wednesday, November 30, 7:30 Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk	Shostakovich		
Tuesday, November 8, 7:00 Parsifal	Wagner	Thursday, December 1, 7:30 La Gioconda	Ponchielli		
Wednesday, November 9, 7:30 Manon Lescaut	Puccini	Friday, December 2, 8:00 La Bohème	Puccini		
Saturday, November 12, 8:00 Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk	Shostakovich	Saturday, December 3, 7:30 La Gioconda	Ponchielli		
Barstow, Golden*, de la Rosa, Ganz; Trussel, Lewis, Devlin, J. Patterson, Travis, Petersen, Skinner, Gudas, Coles, Anderson, Delavan, Potter Pritchard/Robertson (December 4)/ Freedman/W. Skalicki/Munn		Sunday, December 4, 2:00 Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk	Shostakovich		
Wednesday, November 16, 7:30 La Bohème	Puccini	Tuesday, December 6, 7:30 La Gioconda	Ponchielli		
Freni, Pacetti; Pavarotti, G. Quilico, Dickson, Ghiaurov, Tajo, Harper, Coles Severini**/Zambello/Mitchell/Buttons/ Munn <i>Production originally made possible by a gift in memory of George L. Quist; revival made possible by the Bernard Osher Foundation.</i>		Thursday, December 8, 7:30 La Bohème	Puccini		
Saturday, November 19, 1:00 La Bohème	Puccini	Friday, December 9, 8:00 La Bohème	Puccini		
Saturday, November 19, 8:00 Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk	Shostakovich	Gasdia*, de la Rosa; Lima, Malis, Delavan, Langan, Tajo, Harper, Coles Fiore/Zambello/Mitchell/Buttons/Munn		Tuesday, November 22 at 1:00 Friday, December 2 at 1:00 Wednesday, December 7 at 1:00	

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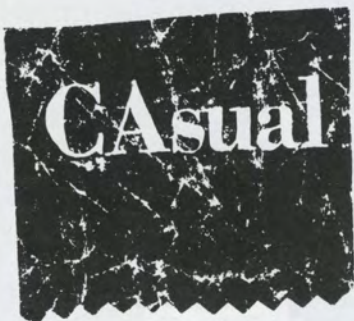
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Puccini's Hymn to Youth

By WILLIAM MANN

Most of my favorite operas are about energetic young people, at least people under 40, when life is supposed to begin; coincidentally enough, opera and drama is most often about young people; elderly heroes or protagonists, like King Lear, were dramatic rarities until modern times.

Puccini's masterpiece *La Bohème* conforms to this tradition; apart from Benoit and Alcindoro, who are fleeting jokes about geriatric wolves, the main characters are well under 25, and the whole opera is an evocation of penurious youth, our years immediately after school; the enthusiasms, the amours, the laughter and the tears. When you are in your teens, leaving home maybe, and in love all the time, an encounter with *La Bohème* may well enslave you to the music for the rest of your life.

When I first caught the *Bohème* bug, I had to learn the piece so that I could sing it to myself whenever I wanted to—not just the tunes, but the whole score. Some of my elders regarded my task as a waste of time: Puccini was a much less estimable composer, for them, than Beethoven or Brahms, whose works I should have been learning instead. What I learned from *La Bohème*, however, was just as precisely and classically structured as any of the Mozart and Beethoven I'd previously learned by heart, and much more complicated, being Romantic music of the 1890s. In the

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

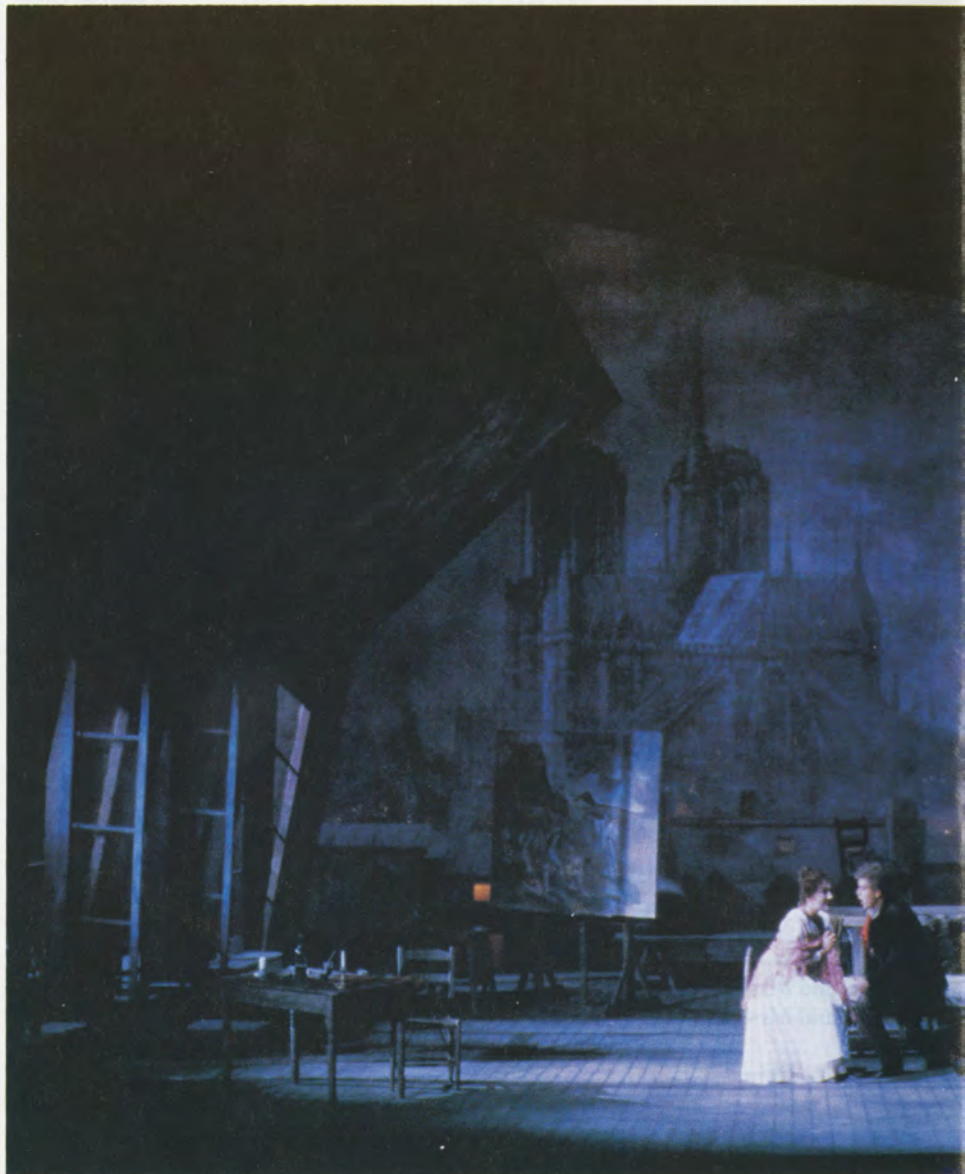
(Right) End of Act I of *La Bohème* in the current San Francisco Opera production, as seen in 1986, at which time the young lovers were portrayed by Nelly Miricioiu and Alberto Cupido.

SCHERL

Puccini operatic canon of nine works, ignoring the first two attempts, and separating the *Trittico* into component parts, *La Bohème* comes second, after *Manon Lescaut*. I love them all, from *Manon Lescaut* to *Turandot*, and I intensely admire Puccini's instant acceptance of modernism in music, his habit of integrating whatever was then new into his own creative vocabulary, and paying back the

loan in sheer quality of musical invention. The paragon among them all, the flawless diamond, was always, and for me will always be, *La Bohème*, the finest musical structure Puccini ever created, a piece of music that touches perfection and remains, like some of Mozart's greatest compositions, one that cannot technically be faulted.

Its basis is a collection of serial maga-



zine stories called *Scenes of Bohemian Life*, written in Paris by Henri Mürger and published as a book in 1848, then turned into a play. Sometime around 1892 Puccini, remembering his own hard-up student years, responded creatively and got two able librettists, Illica and Giacosa, to make him a text for an opera. He soon discovered that his colleague Leoncavallo (the composer of *Pagliacci*) was at work on



(Above) In 1948, 40 years ago, a young man was in his U.S. debut season with the San Francisco Opera: Italo Tajo. His actual debut role was that of Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and he also appeared that year as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Dr. Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. He returned to San Francisco Opera in a variety of roles in 1949, 1950, 1952, 1953, 1956 and 1982, in the last instance as the Sacristan in *Tosca*. He is shown backstage in 1948 between acts of a performance of *La Bohème*, in which he portrayed the role of Colline (center). His bohemian colleagues were Francesco Valentino (Marcello) and George Cehanovsky (Schaunard). In this season's performances of *La Bohème*, Signor Tajo performs the roles of Benoit and Alcindoro.



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the same operatic theme, though the latter read Puccini's text and was scornful of it. Puccini's version had its premiere under the young Toscanini at Turin on February 1, 1896, and was received grudgingly by the local critics. Puccini knew better, and audiences agreed, abroad as well as in Italy. It was his first big international success. Leoncavallo's *Bohème* appeared a year later and was much praised; it is a pleasant and interesting piece, as modern revivals have shown, but falls far short of Puccini's masterpiece in operatic magic.

When the gramophone records developed a few years later, items from Puccini's *La Bohème* were at once prominent in the catalogue and remained so until complete sets became a commercial speculation. Nowadays, every opera company must include *La Bohème* in its repertory, and every record company boasts its

San Francisco Opera's first Mimi was Queena Mario, who sang the role in 1923.

own recorded versions. It is the opera that makes us all feel young again. When Rodolfo begins "Che gelida manina," you reach out instinctively for a hand to hold, as you may often do on repeated hearings—the appeal to basic human emotions is direct. The *Bohème* that does not bring a lump to the throat, or a tear to the bravest eye, is an insult to Puccini's memory.

The orchestral opening to the first act was borrowed by Puccini from his earlier *Capriccio sinfonico*: its music refers usually to all four bohemians, but here and later specifically to Marcello and his painting. Rodolfo's first words, referring to grey skies and smoking chimneys, comes aptly from an earlier operatic



STROHMEYER

In 1944, the Bohème cast paused between acts to toast Company founder Gaetano Merola. L. to r.: Francesco Valentino, Ezio Pinza, George Cehanovsky, Licia Albanese, Charles Kullman, and Virginia MacWatters.

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San Francisco Opera's 1950 Bohème principals included Italo Tajo (Colline, facing camera) and (l. to r.) Giuseppe di Stefano (Rodolfo), Bidú Sayão (Mimi) and Enzo Mascherini (Marcello).

project, where the music is about smoky Mount Etna; here it also draws attention to the stove which needs combustible materials; Rodolfo will oblige with a draft of his much-revised play in five acts, *Le Vengeur*. While this masterpiece is supplying momentary warmth, another friend, the philosopher Colline arrives, shortly followed by the musician Schunard with provender for the larder, and the quartet of friends is now complete. The good fun persists through the scene in which the landlord Benoit is done out of his rent. Three of the friends go off to eat at a restaurant nearby, Café Momus, though Rodolfo remains behind to write an editorial for a magazine. His music is cheerful. Then a knock announces a neighbor, the seamstress Mimi, who needs a light for her candle, and one of the world's great love scenes is underway. Its music,

an aria for each followed by a closing duet, perfectly exemplifies the creative perfection that I have claimed for this beautiful opera. Its enchantment is summed up in the passage, after those solos, when Rodolfo answers his friends in the street below, and Marcello scents romance in a phrase of heady poetry. In the final duet, "O soave fanciulla," Puccini recapitulates tunes like any good symphonist, and we are delighted to hear them again. His orchestral colors in this act are already fresh and captivating, though his mastery of the orchestra is more obviously brilliant in the two outdoor acts.

From the garret we move out of doors to the Café Momus where the friends are going to eat on this Christmas Eve. Now is the time for crowd-music, jostling activity, and shopping. Schunard purchases a horn, Colline a capacious



Baritone Louis Quilico as Marcello in S.F. Opera's 1959 *La Bohème*. His son, Gino Quilico, performs Marcello in this season's staging of *La Bohème*. JEANETTE



Salvatore Baccaloni as Alcindoro in *Bohème* in 1960. JEANETTE

overcoat for the library he carries around with him, Rodolfo a pink bonnet for Mimì; they sit down to supper outside the cafe, even though it's a cold night. Mimì is introduced by Rodolfo in a tiny but lovely aria, answered from afar by the toyseller Parpignol—does Puccini mean that Mimì is to be Rodolfo's toy? Marcello welcomes Mimì rather cynically, and almost at once the reason for his cynicism appears: his former lover Musetta arrives with a rich elderly suitor. She is fond of Marcello, but has a taste for luxury which others have to satisfy, since he financially cannot. Musetta's prima donna manner is directed firmly at Marcello—her suitor Alcindoro finds it embarrassing—and it is to him

that she sings her famous waltz song "Quando me'n vo," which rather fizzles out, to return gloriously when Alcindoro is sent off to buy Musetta a new pair of shoes, and she leaps into the arms of her former sweetheart, Marcello, who takes up the tune.

Puccini had written it already, as a waltz for the launching of a battleship at Genoa (bizarre notion), and asked his poets to supply words that would fit the rhythm of "Cocoricò, cocoricò bistecca" or, in English, "Cockadoodledoo, cockadoodledoo beefsteak," poetry worthy of any later surrealist! This act ends marvelously: as Alcindoro bumbles off, and Musetta falls into Marcello's arms, the

JEANETTE



Mary Costa (Musetta) chats with conductor Silvio Varviso before a 1960 performance of *La Bohème*.

others gaze horrorstruck at the size of the restaurant check; a military band approaches, its music infiltrated by the themes of our principal characters, who leave among the procession as Alcindoro returns to be faced with *two* dinner checks!

The third act also takes place outdoors in winter, but after the opening with market traders entering Paris from the country through one of the city gates, the action centers entirely on the two principal couples: Mimì and Rodolfo; Musetta and Marcello. The music contrasts the solo, duet, trio and quartet so

naturally that one might miss the subtlety which Puccini put into this masterpiece of operatic invention, with each episode an unforgettable musical vignette. Think of them: Mimì with Marcello, then Rodolfo and Marcello, overheard by Mimì, leading to Rodolfo with Mimì, interrupted by Musetta and Marcello, whose quarrel spills into their final duet of reconciliation, at least until the winter is gone, and it isn't too cold to sleep alone. Puccini's music here is central heating at its most luxurious, in sumptuous G flat major—an amorous melody in vocal octaves, with

rich harmony to accompany it. The fall of the curtain reminds us of the bitter chill in which the act began, but is no longer felt by these reunited lovers. It is hard to believe that at the time *La Bohème* was new, the opening of the third act was denounced as musically ungrammatical, since its opening theme breaks the academic rule about consecutive fifths! Verdi, it is good to read, spoke up and defended Puccini's academic solecism as legitimate musical invention.

The fourth act returns to the garret where the opera began, and here are Rodolfo and Marcello again, plying their arts, one painting, the other writing, both bereft of their sweethearts who have once again left them for richer partners. Their duet, "Ah, Mimì, tu più non torni," is quite definitely one of the opera's great lyrical moments, though fortunately not the last, and it owes much to the potent lyric poetry of Giacosa, who could prompt Puccini to sentiment where his collaborator Illica supplied topical atmosphere and lively characterization. (The two complained constantly, but they worked



Marie Collier was Musetta in 1965; Howard Fried was Alcindoro.



Marilyn Horne as Musetta before a performance in 1962. JEANETTE

together with Puccini again and again to marvelous operatic purpose.) After this touching lyrical show-stopper, the act turns to horseplay for the four bohemian fellows, in what Shakespeare's Romeo calls "a lightning before death," with jokes and pranks interrupted by the arrival of Musetta with the dying Mimì.

This sobers them all at once and leaves the rest of the act to her and Rodolfo, while the others help as much as possible to ease Mimì's passing into a better life. Puccini returns to music that is already familiar, wherever appropriate, but when Mimì and Rodolfo are left alone, he introduces a new and captivating melody at "Sono andati," which will accompany Rodolfo's final outburst of grief when Mimì expires: Puccini's last

and most effective assault on the emotions in this humble yet sublime operatic masterpiece.

Nowadays, we have been taught that Puccini was bedeviled by a sadistic streak which surfaces strongly in *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly*, even more in *Turandot*, and to some extent in his other late operas. In *La Bohème* there is none of this; there are lovers' pangs, discontent, illness, and finally death, but no cruelty, and the music is all wide-eyed optimism, the music of young people whose hearts are hopeful and whose talents are sure to bring fruition later on. As Puccini struggled with *Turandot* during his final sickness, he may well have thought back to the cloudless skies of *La Bohème*, to Schumann's virtuoso song about the poisoned parrot,



In 1967, San Francisco Opera's Mimi and Rodolfo were Mirella Freni and Luciano Pavarotti, both in their Company debuts. They are shown during a rehearsal break with stage director Matthew Farruggio.

and his sermon about Christmas Eve catering, to the toppers clinking glasses in the tavern, and the students dancing quadrilles, and the band outside Café Momus, with Musetta behind them, waving her tight shoes in the air. This was

his hymn to brief, wretched, yet ecstatic youth, soon lost forever and always regretted thereafter: he at least erected a monument to it which posterity will surely salute as long as music drama lives. ■



Teresa Stratas and José Carreras were S.F. Opera's Mimi and Rodolfo in 1973.

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ARTIST PROFILES



MIRELLA FRENI

Mirella Freni, one of the world's most beloved sopranos, returns to San Francisco Opera to recreate the role which was the vehicle of her Company debut in 1967: Mimi in *La Bohème*. She was most recently seen here in 1986 as Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* and her other roles with the Company have included the title roles of *Manon Lescaut* (1983) and *Adriana Lecouvreur* (1985). Miss Freni performs regularly at the world's most prestigious opera houses, including Milan's La Scala, Covent Garden, the Vienna State Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and recently she inaugurated the Houston Grand Opera's new Wortham Performing Arts Center singing the title role of *Aida* opposite Plácido Domingo. She has recently completed a tour of Japan, first performing Mimi in the Scala production of *La Bohème* and then singing a series of recitals. Miss Freni will return to the Met in December to sing Micaëla in *Carmen* and in February will make her long-awaited Carnegie Hall recital debut. Her discography numbers over 20 complete opera recordings as well as several laserdisc and video cassette recordings. Miss Freni holds the title of *Kammersängerin*, which was bestowed upon her at the Vienna State Opera.

Soprano **Cecilia Gasdia** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Mimi in *La Bohème*, a role she has sung in several Italian cities and is scheduled to perform in Hong Kong and at the Vienna State Opera. Born in Verona, she studied classics and piano before winning the RAI Callas Competition and performing Verdi's *Luisa Miller* in a televised performance from Pavia. She also recorded Puccini's *La Rondine* in Milan for RAI before making her official stage debut as Giulietta in Bellini's *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi* at Florence in 1982. Shortly afterwards she made an unexpected debut at Milan's La Scala in the title role of Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*. She went on to win applause as Ann Trulove in Ken Russell's production of *The Rake's Progress* at the 1982 Florence May Festival, and in the title role of Bellini's *La Sonnambula* at Naples. Subsequent debuts included her 1985 American debut in concert performances of *Rigoletto* with the Philadelphia Orchestra, her American stage



CECILIA GASDIA

debut as Bellini's Giulietta at the Lyric Opera of Chicago that same year and a recital debut at Lincoln Center. She bowed at the Vienna State Opera as Luisa Miller in 1986, the same year she made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*. Miss Gasdia opened the current season at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in the title role of *La Sonnambula*, with additional appearances scheduled in Vienna (*Simon Boccanegra*, *Il Viaggio a Reims*), Rome (*Zelmira*), Venice (*Rinaldo*) and Genoa (*Turandot*).



NIKKI LI HARTLIEP

Soprano **Nikki Li Hartliep** sings the role of Mimi in the student/family performances of *La Bohème*, a role she sang on a national Western Opera Theater tour as well as for the 1982 Opera Center Showcase and a production for Opera Colorado. She made her Company debut that summer as Anna in *Nabucco*, returning as the Slave in *Salome* that fall. Her most recent appearances with San Francisco Opera were as the Mayor's Wife in *Jenůfa* during the 1986 season. For the 1985 Fall Season, she portrayed Mistress Ford in the family performances of *Falstaff* and Marianne in *Der Rosenkavalier*. She sang the title role of *Madama Butterfly* for the 1984 family performances, and the title role of Handel's *Rodelinda* for the 1985 Showcase series. She was a 1984-85 Adler Fellow with the Opera Center and was featured in that season's Schwabacher Debut Recital series, returning for a second program last March. During the 1985 Ring Festival, she per-

LA BOHÈME



SANDRA PACETTI

formed the *Wesendoncklieder* on a program of Wagner's chamber music. She has also appeared with the Minnesota Opera, and has portrayed *Madama Butterfly* for the companies of Shreveport and Madison. In 1987 she was a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Auditions and appeared as Ellen in *Peter Grimes* for the Philadelphia Opera. Future engagements include the title role of *Madama Butterfly* for the Seattle Opera next April.

Italian soprano **Sandra Pacetti** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Musetta in *La Bohème*, a role she has sung with the Opera Company of Philadelphia as well as at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, at Modena, Genoa and in China. A graduate of the music conservatory in Terni, Miss Pacetti won the "A. Belli" competition in Spoleto and made her debut there in Pergolesi's *Lo Frate'nnamorato*. Her numerous appearances in 1980 included her Siena debut in Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona* and in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at Assisi. She was a finalist in the 1983 "Concorso Internazionale Maria Callas" and won the International Competition at Modena in 1984 for her interpretation of Elvira in *Ernani*. She returned to the Opera Company of Philadelphia for the 1985 Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition and made debuts at Florence in *Lulu* and at Cagliari in *Francesca da Rimini*. She bowed in Bilbao, Spain, as Liù in *Turandot*; in Austria as Elvira in *Ernani*; and at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples as Micaëla in *Carmen*, all in 1986. Last year she appeared in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at the Paris Opera opposite Pavarotti, with whom she sang recitals in Florence. Recent engagements include Liù in *Turandot* at Torre del Lago, Antonia in *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Bilbao and Micaëla in a new production of *Carmen* in Trieste.

Soprano **Evelyn de la Rosa** returns to San Francisco Opera to reprise the role of Aksinya in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and sing Musetta in *La Bohème*. Her first appearance with the Company was as the Celestial Voice in the 1979 production of *Don Carlo*, and she has since returned in a variety of roles. A participant in the 1979 Merola Opera Program, she appeared as Susanna



EVELYN DE LA ROSA

with Spring Opera Theater and created the part of Diana in the world premiere of Henry Mollicone's *Emperor Norton* with Brown Bag Opera. As a participant in the 1982 Western Opera Theater tour, her assignments included Susanna in *Figaro* and Musetta in *La Bohème*. A native of Reno, Miss de la Rosa has performed frequently with the Nevada Opera, appearing in their productions of *The Magic Flute*, *Cinderella*, as Marie in *The Daughter of the Regiment* and as Marguerite in *Faust*. She has also appeared with the Houston Grand Opera in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and as Constanze in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*; with the Anchorage Opera as Violetta in *La Traviata*; and at the Spoleto Festival USA as the Spinster in *Lord Byron's Love Letter*. Recent engagements include Adele in *Die Fledermaus* with Michigan Opera Theatre, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* with Des Moines Opera, and appearances with the Sacramento Symphony, the San Diego Symphony, Mendocino Music Festival and Midsummer Music Festival. Future engagements include her debut at the Kennedy Center with the Washington Opera in Mozart's *The Impresario*, followed by her first *Manon* with Sacramento Opera.



JANET WILLIAMS

Detroit native **Janet Williams** makes her San Francisco Opera debut this season as a Flower Maiden in *Parsifal* and will also portray Musetta in the student/family performances of *La Bohème*. In 1987, the



LUCIANO PAVAROTTI

young soprano became the first recipient of the Merola Advanced Training Program study grant and is currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center. Miss Williams was a participant in the 1987 Merola Opera Program and performed Lauletta in *Gianni Schicchi* at Stern Grove that year. The Indiana University graduate recently sang the role of Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Eugene Opera. Her recent Bay Area appearances have included Bach's B Minor Mass with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* with the Oakland Chamber Orchestra, a concert at Stern Grove as soprano soloist in *Carmina Burana*, the San Francisco Opera Radio Marathon Davies Hall concert and the role of Madame Silverpeal in Mozart's *The Impresario* with the San Francisco Opera Center.

One of the world's most recognized and popular operatic artists, tenor **Luciano Pavarotti** returns to San Francisco Opera as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, the role of his 1961 operatic debut in Reggio Emilia and one that became his "calling card" role as he made a succession of triumphant debuts at Covent Garden (1963), La Scala (1966), and both the San Francisco Opera (1967) and the Metropolitan (1968). His long list of career firsts with San Francisco Opera includes Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1971), Fernando in *La Favorita* (1973), Rodolfo in *Luisa Miller* (1974), Manrico in *Il Trovatore* (1975), Calaf in *Turandot* (1977), Enzo in *La Gioconda* (1979) and Radames in *Aida* (1981), the last two of which were telecast live to Europe by satellite. He has also been cheered here in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Tosca*. It was as Rodolfo that he was seen in the first "Live from the Met" telecast in 1977, and since then he has been seen in telecasts of *Ernani*, *Rigoletto*, *Idomeneo*, *Tosca*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Un Ballo in Maschera*, all from the Met; a Philadelphia Opera production of *La Bohème*; and a number of recitals and concerts. Locally he has also been presented in two recitals and four concerts, in addition to appearances at Opera in the Park. The best-selling classical recording artist today, Pavarotti has a lengthy discography featuring numerous concert and recital albums in addition to complete recordings of operas by Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini, Verdi and Puccini.



LUIS LIMA

Argentina-born **Luis Lima** returns to San Francisco Opera as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, a role in which he won great acclaim at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, in Buenos Aires and Vienna, and here during the 1983 Summer Season and during the Fall of 1986. The tenor made his highly praised San Francisco Opera debut as Pinkerton in the 1980 production of *Madama Butterfly*, and was also seen here in 1984 as Don José in *Carmen* and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and in 1986 in the title role of *Faust*. His first operatic engagement was as Pinkerton in Lisbon, followed by appearances there as Turiddu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Lima's success in these roles led to engagements in Mainz, Stuttgart, Munich, Paris and Barcelona, where he sang the lead in Donizetti's *Gemma di Vergy*. It was in that role that he made his American debut at Carnegie Hall in 1976 opposite Montserrat Caballé in a performance that was also recorded. During the 1978-79 season he bowed with the Metropolitan Opera as Alfredo in *La Traviata* and as Pinkerton, and sang in *La Bohème*, *Rigoletto* and *Faust* at the New York City Opera. The next few seasons saw Lima in Montreal, Nancy, Mannheim, Buenos Aires, Frankfurt, Geneva, Hamburg, Barcelona and at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is now recognized in the world's great opera houses, and his recent schedule included appearances in *Werther* in Buenos Aires, *Macbeth* in Rome, *Carmen* and *Luisa Miller* in Naples, and *La Bohème* in Barcelona and at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. His discography includes the world premiere recording of Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore* with Joan Sutherland.

Tenor **Douglas Wunsch** sings four roles this season: Selimo in *Maometto II*, Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut*, the First Knight of the Holy Grail in *Parsifal* and Rodolfo in the Student/Family matinee performances of *La Bohème*. A native of Washington state, he is now in his second year as an Adler Fellow with the



DOUGLAS WUNSCH

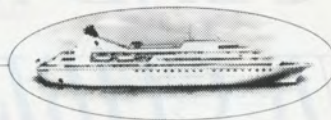
San Francisco Opera Center. Last season, Wunsch made his Company debut, appearing in *The Magic Flute*, *The Queen of Spades* and as Alfredo in the Student/Family performances of *La Traviata*. During the Spring of this year he sang Mendoza in the Opera Center Showcase productions of *Rosina*. Showcase credits from previous years include Robert in Hindemith's *There and Back*, Charles in Hindemith's *The Long Christmas Dinner*, Albazar in Rossini's *The Turk in Italy*, Jean in Sauguet's *Le Plumet du Colonel* and Samuel in Rorem's *Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters*. Wunsch's local credits include Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* with the Marin Opera Company, a role he repeated this spring with the Spokane Symphony. He has also performed with the Northwestern Symphony Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony Pops and the San Francisco Ballet. Last June, Wunsch appeared with Luciano Pavarotti in the elder tenor's San Francisco Civic Auditorium concert.



GINO QUILICO

Baritone **Gino Quilico** returns to San Francisco Opera to sing Marcello in *La Bohème*. His most recent Company appearance was in 1986, when he made his debut as Lescaut in Massenet's *Manon*. Quilico's international career began with his Paris Opera debut in 1980. He has since sung a number of roles with that company and has also performed in Munich, Berlin, Florence, *continued on p.45*

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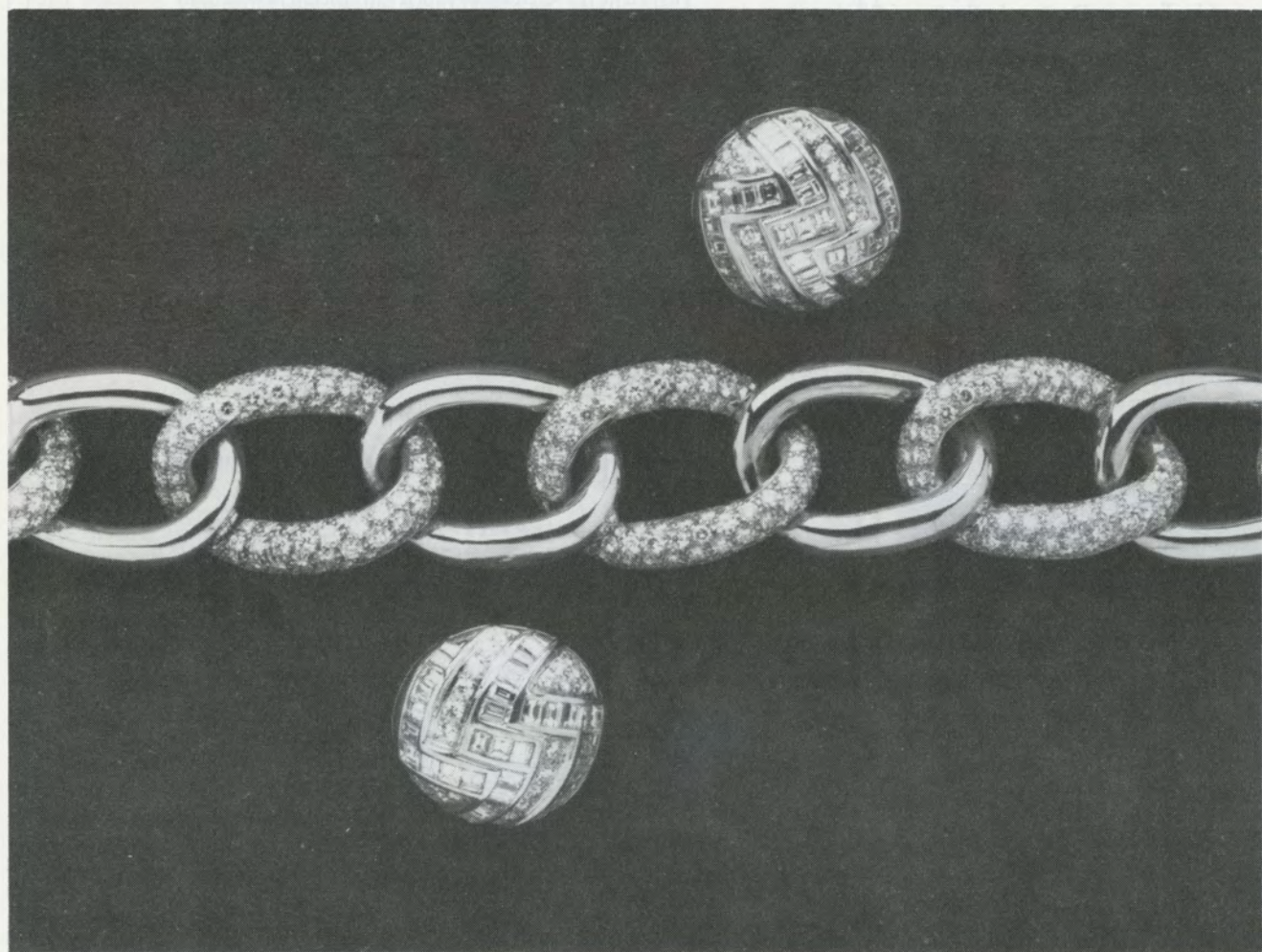
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This revival of *La Bohème* is made possible by the Bernard Osher Foundation.
The production was originally made possible by a gift in memory of George L. Quist.

Opera in four acts by GIACOMO PUCCINI
Text by GIUSEPPE GIACOSA and LUIGI ILLICA
Based on the novel *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème* by HENRI MÜRGER

La Bohème

(in Italian)

Conductor
Tiziano Severini**
John Fiore (Dec. 9, 10, 11)

Stage Director
Francesca Zambello

Set Designer
David Mitchell

Costume Designer
Jeanne Button

Lighting Designer
Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson

Musical Preparation
Jeffrey Goldberg
Robert Morrison
Mark Haffner
Susanna Lemberskaya

Kathryn Cathcart
Richard Amner
Joseph De Rugeriis
Philip Eisenberg

Prompter
Philip Eisenberg
Joseph De Rugeriis (Dec. 10)

Assistant Stage Directors
Fred Frumberg
Peter McClintock

Stage Manager
Jamie Call
Barbara Donner (Dec. 10)

Scenery constructed in
San Francisco Opera Scenic Studios

Costumes executed by
San Francisco Opera Costume Shop
Miss Freni's and chorus costumes
designed by Peter J. Hall and executed by
Metropolitan Opera Costume Department

First performance:
Turin, February 1, 1896

First San Francisco Opera performance:
September 26, 1923

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 1:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22 AT 8:00

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8 AT 7:30

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11 AT 2:00

Family Performance:
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10 AT 1:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

	Nov. 16, 19, 22, 26, 29; Dec. 2, 8	Dec. 9, 11	Dec. 10 (Family Performance)
<i>Marcello</i>	Gino Quilico	David Malis	Victor Ledbetter
<i>Rodolfo</i>	Luciano Pavarotti	Luis Lima	Douglas Wunsch
<i>Colline</i>	Nicolai Ghiaurov	Kevin J. Langan	Philip Skinner
<i>Schaunard</i>	Stephen Dickson	Mark Delavan	Thomas Potter
<i>Benoit</i>	Italo Tajo	Italo Tajo	Dale Travis
<i>Mimi</i>	Mirella Freni	Cecilia Gasdia*	Nikki Li Hartliep
<i>A boy</i>	John Wheeler-Rappe	John Wheeler-Rappe	John Wheeler-Rappe
<i>Parpignol</i>	Daniel Harper	Daniel Harper	Daniel Harper
<i>Musetta</i>	Sandra Pacetti*	Evelyn de la Rosa	Janet Williams
<i>Alcindoro</i>	Italo Tajo	Italo Tajo	Dale Travis
<i>Customhouse sergeant</i>	Mark Coles	Mark Coles	Mark Coles
<i>Customhouse guard</i>	Cameron Henley	Cameron Henley	Cameron Henley

*Students, townspeople, shopkeepers,
street vendors, soldiers, waiters, children*

** American opera debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

San Francisco Girls Chorus

Elizabeth Appling, Director

San Francisco Boys Chorus—Singing Boys of San Francisco Bay

Philip Hahn, Director

Catherine Doyle, Associate Director

TIME AND PLACE: Late 19th-century Paris

ACT I A garret

INTERMISSION

ACT II The Latin Quarter

INTERMISSION

ACT III A city gate, the Barrière d'Enfer

INTERMISSION

ACT IV A garret

Supertitles for *La Bohème* provided by a generous and most appreciated gift from William and Eloise Rollnick.

Supertitles by Clifford Cranna, San Francisco Opera.

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

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

The performance will last approximately three hours and ten minutes.

La Bohème/Synopsis

ACT I

As Marcello paints, Rodolfo, unable to write, gazes through the windows at the smoking chimneys of the Parisian rooftops. The bohemians are suffering from the cold. Marcello is about to sacrifice one of the sparse furnishings to the empty stove when Rodolfo has an inspiration: his drama will warm them. Amid the crackling of witticisms and burning manuscript pages the young men enjoy the unaccustomed sight of a fire on the grate. Colline returns from a fruitless visit to the pawnbrokers; it is Christmas Eve and they are all closed. As the fire dies, Schaunard saves the day by arriving with food, firewood and pockets full of money. The table is already laid before Schaunard can announce that for Christmas they will dine out. The friends are about to leave when Benoit, the landlord, comes for the rent. The bohemians trick him into talking about his amours; then, feigning moral indignation, they throw him out, unpaid. The friends leave, but Rodolfo stays behind to finish an article he is writing.

Presently there is a knock on the door. A young woman enters. She asks if she may light her candle and Rodolfo invites her in. A fainting spell comes over her and she collapses. Rodolfo offers her wine to restore her. As soon as her candle is lighted, she departs only to return moments later in search of her key. A draft from the open door extinguishes her candle and the search is conducted in darkness. Rodolfo quickly finds and pockets the lost key without informing his companion. As they continue to search, their hands touch, Rodolfo exclaims that her hands are frozen and suggests they stop looking for a moment until the moon provides better light. He tells her that he is Rodolfo, a penniless poet who has already fallen in love with her. She replies with a description of her modest existence as a seamstress. Everyone calls her Mimì, although her name is Lucia. As she ends her narrative, the voices of Rodolfo's friends rise from the street, urging him to hurry. Rodolfo goes to the window and tells them to meet him later at the Café Momus.

He turns to Mimì and declares his love, which she timidly admits is returned. When Rodolfo hesitates to leave her, she suggests that she join him and his friends. They exchange loving phrases as they leave arm in arm.

ACT II

A holiday crowd mills about the small square in the Latin Quarter dominated by the Café Momus. (Momus was the Greek god of ridicule.) The bohemians meet at the café and order dinner, after Rodolfo has presented Mimì to his friends.

Musetta and Alcindoro, whom she orders around like a pet poodle, take the table adjoining the friends. Marcello studiously avoids looking at Musetta, with whom he has recently quarreled. Musetta tries to attract his attention by staging a temper tantrum. The crowd enjoys her performance, although Marcello continues to ignore her. Raising her voice so that all may hear, Musetta delivers an oration on her beauty and its devastating effects. Alcindoro futilely tries to subdue his companion, as everyone comments on her theatrics. She decides it is time to rid herself of Alcindoro and feigns a terrible pain in her foot. As her aged admirer fumbles with her shoe, Marcello capitulates. Musetta sends Alcindoro off for a new pair of shoes. The merry-making is dampened by the arrival of the bill. The bohemians search their

pockets hopelessly until Musetta takes the bill from the waiter and deposits it together with her own at Alcindoro's place. She announces that Alcindoro will pay both bills on his return. Alcindoro returns with Musetta's new shoes and is confronted with the bills.

ACT III

Amid the snow and mist of a February dawn, the city's early risers begin their daily routines, while the revelers in a tavern continue the night's festivities. Mimì asks directions of a sergeant who points out the tavern decorated with Marcello's paintings.

Mimì asks a servant to send Marcello out to her. She appeals to him to help her and bursts into tears. She refuses to go into the tavern, because Rodolfo is inside. He has left her. Through the window Marcello sees that Rodolfo is looking for him. He promises to talk to him and Mimì steps out of view. Rodolfo attempts to justify his cruelty to Mimì on the grounds of her coquettishness, but Marcello sees through the pretext. Rodolfo admits that he still loves Mimì, but says he cannot endure watching her health fail because of his inability to provide for her. Coughing and violent sobs betray Mimì's presence. Rodolfo takes her into his arms, while Marcello charges into the tavern to investigate the cause of a burst of Musetta's brazen laughter. Mimì says goodbye to Rodolfo and tells him they must part without bitterness. She will send someone for her few possessions. They quickly realize they cannot go through with the separation. Their decision to stay together until spring is made against the background of violent quarreling between Musetta and Marcello.

ACT IV

Sadly reminiscing about their broken love affairs, Marcello and Rodolfo try to work. Rodolfo mentions having seen Musetta, sumptuously dressed, riding in a fine carriage. Marcello conveys the rumor that Mimì is living with a viscount. Both try unsuccessfully to appear pleased that their former companions are flourishing. Schaunard and Colline arrive with frugal provisions and a more cheerful outlook. They fall upon the food and stage a mock ball which is followed by a simulated duel. At the height of their clowning, Musetta appears. From her manner they guess that something is wrong. Mimì is waiting on the stairs. She is seriously ill, perhaps dying. Rodolfo rushes to Mimì and brings her in. Once Mimì has been made comfortable, Musetta draws the others to one side, leaving the lovers alone. Musetta confides to the friends that Mimì has left the viscount to return to Rodolfo.

Mimì complains of the cold. Musetta sends Marcello to pawn a pair of earrings and bring back a doctor. Colline bids a fond farewell to his overcoat which is destined for the same fate as Musetta's jewels. One by one the friends find discreet reasons to leave. The lovers are alone.

Feeble attempts at their former banter are succeeded by reminiscences of their love, interrupted now and again by spasms of coughing. Rodolfo's cry of alarm brings Schaunard running. Musetta returns with a muff to warm Mimì's hands. Marcello arrives moments later and announces that a doctor is on the way. Mimì falls asleep as Musetta murmurs a prayer. Rodolfo notices that a change has come over his friends, who already know what he only now realizes: Mimì is dead.

La Bohème

Photos taken in rehearsal by Marty Sohl



Mirella Freni, Luciano Pavarotti



Mirella Freni



Luciano Pavarotti, Gino Quilico

(below) Italo Tajo



Sandra Pacetti



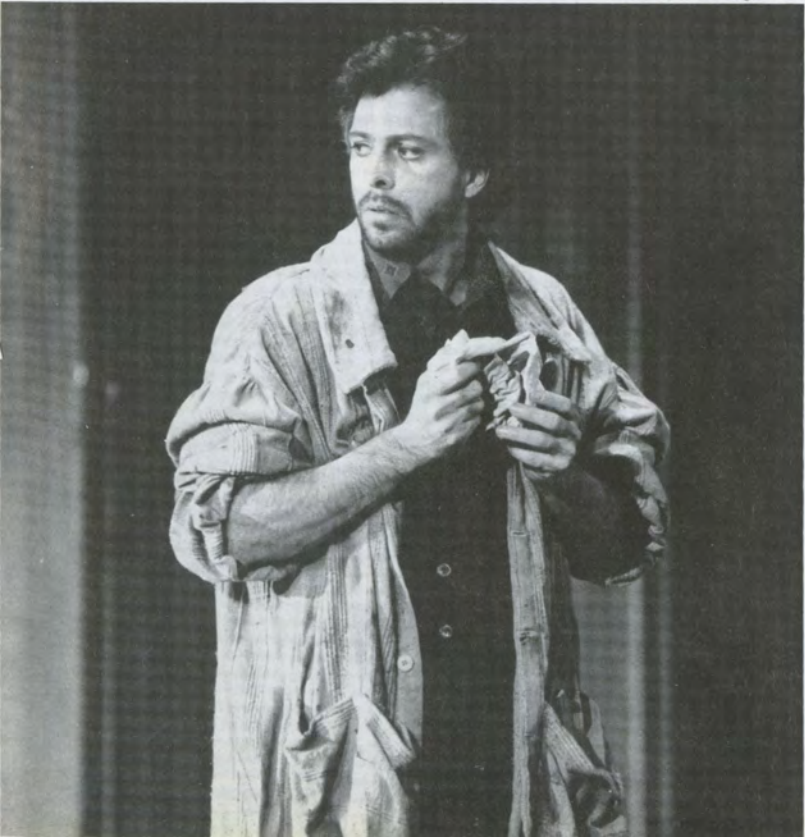


(L. to r.) Gino Quilico, Stephen Dickson, Nicolai Ghiurov, Luciano Pavarotti



Nicolai Ghiurov

(below) Gino Quilico



Luciano Pavarotti, Mirella Freni



Luciano Pavarotti



Luciano Pavarotti, Mirella Freni

(below) Stephen Dickson, Mirella Freni



Italo Tajo, Sandra Pacetti

(below) Luciano Pavarotti



(below L. to r.) Gino Quilico, Stephen Dickson, Mirella Freni, Luciano Pavarotti, Nicolai Ghiaurov





DAVID MALIS



VICTOR LEDBETTER



STEPHEN DICKSON

continued from p.37

at Covent Garden, the Salzburg Festival and on tour with the Royal Opera to the Far East in 1986. He has recently appeared with the Canadian Opera company in the title role of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and at the Metropolitan Opera as Lescaut in *Manon*. The Canadian singer, son of famed baritone Louis Quilico, will return to the Met next year to sing Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and the title role of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Quilico has made a number of complete opera recordings, including *Manon*, *Roméo et Juliette* and *Carmen*. He has also starred in a film version of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and made a soundtrack recording for a film version of *La Bohème*.

Baritone **David Malis** returns to San Francisco Opera as Marcello in *La Bohème*, a role which he has sung in Amsterdam and with Mobile Opera. He made his Company debut during the 1984 Summer Season in *Don Pasquale*, performed four roles in the 1984 Fall Season and returned again in 1985 for *Turandot*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and the family performances of *Falstaff*. He appeared here in 1986 as De Brétigny in *Manon* following his performances as Silvio in *Pagliacci*, and sang Papageno in *The Magic Flute* last fall. A native of Florida, Malis participated in the 1982 and '83 Merola Opera Programs, and also toured with Western Opera Theater in 1983. A 1984-85 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he appeared in the 1985 Showcase production of Susa's *The Love of Don Perlimplín*, repeating the title role created in the work's world premiere in 1984 in New York. In 1985, he toured with the San Francisco Opera Center Singers, and was featured twice in the Schwabacher Debut Recital Series. Among his awards are the Gold Medal and George London Award from the National Institute of Musical Theater, and top prize in the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Highlights of recent seasons include his European debut as Figaro in the acclaimed Dario Fo production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Amsterdam, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* and Valentin in *Faust* with San Diego Opera, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* with the Welsh National Opera, and Ford in

Falstaff in Wales and at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He returns to Amsterdam next year to reprise the role of Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

Baritone **Victor Ledbetter** returns this season as an Esquire in *Parsifal*, and as Marcello in the student/family performances of *La Bohème*. A 1988 Adler Fellow, he made his San Francisco Opera debut in the 1987 Fall Season as Baron Douphol in the family performances of *La Traviata*, and as Paris in *Roméo et Juliette*. He was a participant in the 1986 Merola Opera Program and sang Marcello in the Company's production of *La Bohème* at Villa Montalvo. During the 1986-87 season he sang Marcello with Western Opera Theater, including appearances on tour in China. In April of 1988, Ledbetter returned to Shanghai as Scarpia in China's first *Tosca*, and for a joint concert with the Shanghai Opera and Conservatory. A native of Georgia, the baritone is a graduate of Mercer University and has studied for two years at Indiana University with Nicola Rossi-Lemeni, and taught there as an Associate Instructor of Voice. A choir director for several years, he is also a frequent oratorio soloist, and is a recent prize winner in the Baltimore Opera Competition. He has performed with the Vancouver Opera in *The Cunning Little Vixen* and recently appeared as a soloist in San Francisco's Stern Grove. For Opera Center's 1988 Showcase production of Hiram Titus's *Rosina*, Ledbetter portrayed Count Almaviva. He will make his debut with the San Diego Opera next season in *Don Pasquale*.

Baritone **Stephen Dickson** returns to San Francisco Opera as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, the role of his 1977 Santa Fe Opera debut, and as Schanard in *La Bohème*. He made his 1982 San Francisco Opera debut as Prince Yeletsky in *The Queen of Spades* and returned in 1985 as Albert in *Werther* and last fall as Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette*. Dickson's professional debut took place in a 1976 production of *Albert Herring* at St. Louis; during the 1979-80 season he made his European debut as Papageno in *The Magic Flute* at Nancy. He made his Glynde-

bourne debut in 1980 as Papageno, the vehicle of his 1981 Metropolitan Opera debut. The next year, he bowed with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in *Die Fledermaus* and with the Pittsburgh Opera in *Pagliacci*. That same year he was seen on a live telecast from the White House. Dickson has also performed with the opera companies of Houston, Fort Worth, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Omaha, Philadelphia and Wolf Trap. Last season included his debut with the Munich Opera as Silvio in *Pagliacci*, appearances with the Metropolitan Opera as Arlecchino (telecast "Live from the Met") and with New York City Opera as Valentin in *Faust* and Papageno.



MARK DELAVAN

Baritone **Mark Delavan** portrays the High Priest of Brahma in *L'Africaine*, a Sergeant in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and Schanard in *La Bohème*. He made his Company debut in 1986 in *Don Carlos* and also appeared in *Faust*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Manon*, and as Valentin in student performances of *Faust*. An Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center from 1986-87, Delavan was a participant in the 1985 Merola Opera Program and performed the title role of *Don Giovanni* on Western Opera Theater's 1985-86 national tour. He received his training at Grand Canyon College and Oral Roberts University. Last summer he was a guest artist with the Merola Opera Program in the



THOMAS POTTER

title role of *Gianni Schicchi* at Stern Grove. Delavan is the 1986 winner of the Pacific Region of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions and the winner of the Institute for International Education's travel grant, which allowed him to compete in the International Mozart Competition in Salzburg where he was a finalist. Recent engagements include Danilo in *The Merry Widow* with the New England Lyric Operetta Company; Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier* at the Portland Opera; and, at Wolf Trap, Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia* and Pantaloon in *The Love for Three Oranges*.

Baritone **Thomas Potter** returns this season to portray the Innkeeper in *Manon Lescaut*, the second Knight of the Grail in *Parsifal*, the Sentry in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and Schaunard in the family performances of *La Bohème*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut in the 1985 production of *Der Rosenkavalier*, and returned in 1986 for *Die Meistersinger* and *Macbeth*. A 1987-88 Adler Fellow, he performed in *Salome* and sang Germont in the family performances of *La Traviata*. A participant in the Merola Opera Program in 1985 and 1986, he portrayed Valentin in the Stern Grove production of *Faust* and at Villa Montalvo sang Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, a role he recreated for Western Opera Theater's 1985-86 national tour. He returned to Villa Montalvo in the summer of 1986 for Marcello in *La Bohème*, and repeated it on Western Opera Theater's national tours, culminating with performances in Shanghai, China. He portrayed Silvano in the Lyric Opera of Philadelphia's production of *Un Ballo in Maschera* featuring Luciano Pavarotti. A recipient of a master's degree in voice from Indiana University, Potter won the 1985 Pavarotti Vocal Competition in Philadelphia and received the 1986 Kent Family Award at the Merola Opera Program's Grand Finals. Recent engagements include the San Francisco Symphony Pops Series, and the role of Mr. Scruples in the Opera Center's special production of Mozart's *The Impresario* at the Chalk Hill Winery.



NICOLAI GHIAUROV

One of the outstanding singers of our time, Bulgarian basso **Nicolai Ghiaurov** returns to San Francisco Opera as Colline in *La Bohème*. Most recently seen here as Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* last fall, he made his Company debut in 1967 as Méphistophélès in Gounod's *Faust*, returned in 1983 to recreate one of his most celebrated portrayals, the title role of *Boris Godunov*, and sang Prince Gremin in the 1986 *Eugene Onegin*. Ghiaurov appears in all of the major opera houses of the world and has the distinction of performing at Milan's La Scala for 28 consecutive seasons. He has been lauded for his many and varied portrayals, including King Philip in *Don Carlo*, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, Fiesco in *Simon Boccanegra* and the title roles of *Don Quichotte*, *Don Giovanni* and Boito's *Mefistofele*. Ghiaurov has an extensive discography encompassing complete recordings of operas by Bellini, Donizetti, Gounod, Massenet, Tchaikovsky and Verdi, including new recordings of *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*.



KEVIN J. LANGAN

Bass **Kevin J. Langan** returns to San Francisco Opera as Colline in *La Bohème*, a role that will be the vehicle for his debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1990. Langan was a member of the 1979 and 1980 Merola Opera Program and has appeared in over 25 different productions here since his debut in the 1980 telecast production of *Samson et Dalila*.



PHILIP SKINNER

This past season his performances have included The Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlos* and Prokofiev's *Fiery Angel* in Geneva, as well as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* in Miami, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* at Seattle, Ramfis in *Aida* at Houston, and the King of Scotland in Santa Fe's *Ariodante*. His appearances this season include King Philip in *Don Carlos* with the Canadian Opera, a debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in *Falstaff*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with San Diego Opera, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino* with Washington Opera, and Sarastro with Canadian Opera and New York City Opera. Langan made his American recital debut at Carnegie Recital Hall in April, 1984 presenting a similar program to the one that marked his recital debut in London at Wigmore Hall in 1979. Langan received his training at Indiana University School of Music with soprano Margaret Harshaw, and is the recipient of numerous grants and awards.

Bass-baritone **Philip Skinner** appears this fall as Don Diego in *L'Africaine*, a Sea Captain in *Manon Lescaut*, the Priest in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and Colline in the family performance of *La Bohème*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut as Quinault in the 1985 Fall Season production of *Adriana Lecouvreur*, and has since appeared in *Il Trovatore*, *Don Carlos*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Faust*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Macbeth*, *Salome*, *La Traviata*, *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *The Queen of Spades*. He participated in the 1985 Merola Opera Program and went on to tour with Western Opera Theater in the title role of *Don Giovanni*. In 1986, he appeared in the Opera Center's Showcase performances of Hindemith's *There and Back* and *The Long Christmas Dinner*. That same year, he was made an Adler Fellow and in 1987 appeared as the Colonel in the Showcase production of *Le Plumet du Colonel*. A graduate of Northwestern University, Skinner received his master's degree from Indiana University, where he performed in several productions. He has also sung with Kentucky Opera, the Columbus Symphony, the Savannah Symphony and at the San Antonio Festival. Recent engagements include Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville* with the New York City



ITALO TAJO

Opera National Company, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* with Kentucky and Nashville Operas, and appearances with the Atlanta Opera, Edmonton Opera, and at the Spoleto Festival. Skinner will make his Minnesota Orchestra debut this December in Handel's *Messiah*.

World-renowned bass **Italo Tajo** returns to San Francisco Opera as Benoit and Alcindoro in *La Bohème*. He made his Company debut 40 years ago, singing the part of Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*. With his appearance here this year, Tajo earns the rare distinction of having sung under all four general directors of San Francisco Opera; his last appearance in the War Memorial was as the Sacristan in *Tosca* during the 1982 Fall Season. Born in Italy, he made his operatic debut at the Teatro Regio in Turin as Fafner in *Das Rheingold* in 1935. Since that time, he has sung in every principal opera house in the world and has an operatic repertoire of more than 160 roles in Italian, English, French and Spanish. His San Francisco Opera credits include Colline in *La Bohème*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, the title roles of *Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, Ramfis in *Aida*, Timur in *Turandot* and Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. In addition to his extensive performance experience in opera, motion pictures, television, radio, recordings and the concert and recital stage, Tajo (who became an American citizen in 1979) is also a busy director. He has staged works for Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, San Carlo Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Dallas Opera, Grand Rapids (Michigan) Opera, and the Teheran Opera. In 1982 Tajo became the first holder of the J. Ralph Corbett Distinguished Chair in Opera at the University of Cincinnati, from which he retired in 1985 with the title of J. Ralph Corbett Distinguished Professor Emeritus in Opera. In 1987 the University awarded him an Honorary Doctor of Performing Arts Degree.

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DALE TRAVIS

Bass Dale Travis makes his Company debut as the Warden in *The Rake's Progress*, and will also appear in *Manon Lescaut* as a Sergeant, in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* as the Police Inspector and in the Student/Family production of *La Bohème* as Benoit and Alcindoro. Currently an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he was a member of the 1986 and '87 Merola Opera Program and toured with Western Opera Theater for two seasons, performing in *Don Pasquale* and *La Bohème*, a production which also traveled to China. Travis is originally from New Jersey and has attended Susquehanna University and the University of Cincinnati's College Conservatory of Music. His college credits include roles in *The Secret Marriage*, *Don Giovanni*, *Falstaff*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *The Love for Three Oranges*. He has appeared locally in the title role of *Don Pasquale* with Opera San Jose, as Méphistophélès in *Faust* with Marin Opera and as Mr. Bluff in *The Impresario* with the Opera Center at Chalk Hill Winery.



MARK COLES

member of the 1983 Merola Opera Program, he sang the title role in the Stern Grove performances of *The Tales of Hoffmann* and Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly*, a role he also performed on Western Opera Theater's 1983 nationwide tour. As an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center for two years, Harper sang the role of Grimaldo in Handel's *Rodelinda* for the 1985 Showcase series, and that same year made an unscheduled debut with the San Francisco Symphony as tenor soloist in the Verdi Requiem. A graduate of North Park College in Illinois, he has extensive concert credits in the Chicago area, including performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Handel's *Messiah*, the Mozart Requiem, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, and a recording of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* with the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti. He recently appeared with the San Francisco Symphony as soloist in the Berlioz Requiem.



DANIEL HARPER

Tenor Daniel Harper returns to the San Francisco Opera as Parpignol in *La Bohème*. His 1987 Company credits include the Second Jew in *Salome*, the First Armored Man in *The Magic Flute*, Abdallo in *Nabucco*, and Spalanzani in *The Tales of Hoffmann*. He made his Company debut in *Aida* during the 1984 Summer Season and has since returned to perform nearly 15 roles here. A

Bass-baritone Mark Coles returns this season to play the Millhand in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and the Sergeant in *La Bohème*. Coles made his Company debut in 1986 when he undertook five roles: the Foreman in *Jenůfa*, a Surgeon in *La Forza del Destino*, Hans Foltz in *Die Meistersinger*, the Guard in *La Bohème*, and the Herald in *Macbeth*. He returned in 1987 to play the Fifth Jew in *Salome*. A national finalist in the 1985 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, he joined the Merola Opera Program after two seasons with the San Francisco Opera Chorus and appeared as Leporello in Western Opera Theater's 1985-86 national touring production of *Don Giovanni*. Last year, he made his Michigan Opera Theatre debut as the Innkeeper and Governor in *Man of La Mancha*, and most recently sang Zuniga in *Carmen* to open Calgary Opera's 1988-89 season. He will be appearing with the Glendale Symphony later this year as soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. A graduate of Kent State University, Coles appeared as soloist with the Kent State Chorus at the 1981 Spoleto Festival. Other concert credits include performances with the Midsummer Mozart Festival Orchestra and in Berlioz's *L'Enfant du Christ* with the Master Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra.



TIZIANO SEVERINI

Italian conductor **Tiziano Severini** makes his American opera debut conducting *La Bohème*. A graduate of the Santa Cecilia Academy in Rome, he made his official conducting debut in Milan in 1982 with Pergolesi's *Il Flaminio*. Later that season he conducted Bellini's *La Straniera* in Martina Franca, in addition to performances of Vivaldi's rarely-performed *Il Farnace* in Bergamo, and *Don Giovanni* in Brescia and at the Piccola Scala in Milan. He was named official conductor of the Filharmonia Veneta in 1983, as well as artistic director of the 1984-85 season, when he led performances of *La Bohème*, *Werther*, *La Traviata* and *Madama Butterfly*. In subsequent seasons, he has conducted *The Magic Flute*, *La Sonnambula*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Il Pirata*, *Le Villi* and *Gianni Schicchi*. Maestro Severini recently won acclaim for a series of concerts in Moscow with Mirella Freni and Renato Bruson, and scored a triumph conducting *La Bohème* for his debut at La Scala in Milan. Next year he returns to La Scala for *Tosca*, and will conduct the same work with Luciano Pavarotti at the Vienna State Opera. In addition to his operatic engagements, Severini appears as guest conductor for such ensembles as the Pomeriggi Musicali of Milan and the symphony orchestras of Trieste and Toscana.

John Fiore conducts *La Bohème* performances on December 9, 10 (Family Matinee) and 11. He was a member of the San Francisco Opera music staff from 1983 to 1987, and made his Company conducting debut in the Fall of 1986 with the student matinee performances of *Faust*, returning last year to lead the family performances of *La Traviata*. Born in New York, the musician was raised in Seattle, where at the age of 14 he had the opportunity of becoming a coach and rehearsal pianist for Seattle Opera's annual Ring cycle, an engagement that continued for six years. While studying at the Eastman School of Music, he was invited to join the music staff of the Santa Fe Opera, where he specialized in the music of Richard Strauss between 1981 and 1984. After hearing Fiore in Santa Fe, Edo de Waart brought him to San Francisco to assist him on the *Ring* (1983-85). He also became an assistant

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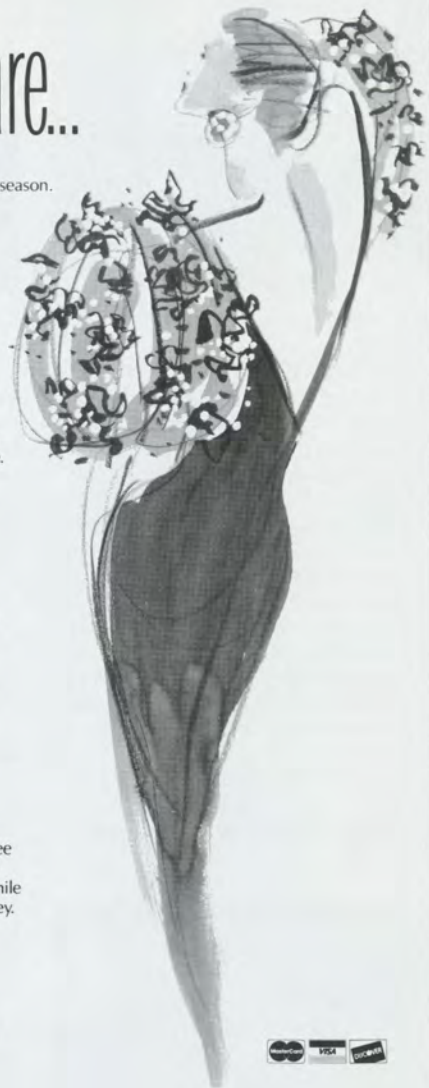
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JOHN FIORE

conductor at the Lyric Opera of Chicago (Fall 1983) and the Metropolitan Opera (Spring 1984), where he continues to work. He has assisted a variety of conductors such as Leonard Bernstein, James Levine, Zubin Mehta, Andrew Davis, James Conlon and Marek Janowski, and since 1986 has been assistant to Daniel Barenboim at the Bayreuth Festival. Recent engagements include the student matinee performances of *Così fan tutte* and the evening performances of *La Traviata* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and his Chicago Symphony Orchestra debut in a Young Conductors concert with Leonard Bernstein. Future assignments include his conducting debut at Santa Fe Opera with *La Traviata*, *Die Fledermaus* with Sarasota Opera, and a concert with the Maggio Musicale of Florence featuring the music of Richard Strauss.



DAVID MITCHELL

productions for the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, the Teatro Regio in Parma, the Rome Opera, the Wexford Festival in Ireland, and the opera companies of St. Louis, Houston, Miami, Seattle, San Diego and Wolf Trap. This season's assignments include a revival of *L'Occasione Fa il Ladro* for the Pesaro Festival and for La Scala in Milan, *Gli Orazi ed i Curiazi* for the Rome Opera, *Werther* for Seattle, *The Devil and Kate* for the Wexford Festival, and the American premiere of Stephen Oliver's *Mario and the Magician* at the Skylight Comic Opera.

David Mitchell designed the sets for *La Bohème*, a production first seen here during the 1986 Fall Season. He was also set designer for the Company's production of *Manon*, presented first in 1971 and repeated in 1981. His first opera designs were for a 1966 production of *Madama Butterfly* at the Juilliard School. Since then he has worked for the opera companies of Toronto, Paris, Cincinnati, Houston, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., as well as for New York City Opera and the Deutsche Oper, Berlin. Operas he has designed include *Mefistofele*, *Boris Godunov*, *Aida*, *Macbeth* and *Il Trovatore*. A set and costume designer for theater, film and television as well as opera, Mitchell has served as resident designer for the New York Shakespeare Festival, for which he designed his first show, *Medea*, in 1965. He has also created set designs for the Eastside Playhouse, Vivien Beaumont Theater and St. Clement's Church in New York, as well as for the Goodman Theater in Chicago. He has been particularly successful on Broadway, with settings for *I Love My Wife*, *The Gin Game*, *Annie*, *I Remember Mama*, *Barnum*, and the highly acclaimed *La Cage aux Folles*. Additional theater design credits include *In the Boom Boom Room*, *Little Black Sheep*, *Apple Pie* and *The Price*.



THOMAS J. MUNN

Thomas J. Munn is lighting designer for *L'Africaine*, *Parsifal*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *La Bohème* and *La Gioconda*. Last fall, he was responsible for *Salome*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *La Traviata*, *Nabucco*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Roméo et Juliette* and *The Queen of Spades*, in addition to designing the sets for *Nabucco* and co-designing those for *Salome*. In his 13th year with the Company, he has lighted over 100 productions for San Francisco Opera, including the lighting and special effects for all four operas of the 1985 Ring Festival. He serves as scenic adviser for the Company, and has designed scenery for *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *Billy Budd*. 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, industrials 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, the Pavarotti concert of 1983, and the Aid and Comfort broadcast in May of 1987. Recent projects include lighting and projection designs for *Madama Butterfly* for the Netherlands Opera; scenery and lighting for Hartford Ballet's production of *Coppélia* and *The Nutcracker*; and lighting designs for the Hartford Opera and Pittsburgh Opera productions of *Hansel and Gretel*. In 1986, Munn entered a partnership with Tom Janus in New York to form "Munn/Janus Associates," through which he handles his architectural lighting and consulting projects. His most notable achievement in this area is the new Muziektheater in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, for which he was the American lighting consultant.



FRANCESCA ZAMBELLO

Francesca Zambello, stage director of *La Bohème*, is an Artistic Director of the Skylight Comic Opera of Milwaukee. She made her San Francisco Opera debut directing the Family Matinee performances of *La Traviata* during the 1983 Fall Season, returned to stage Poulenc's *La Voix humaine* for the 1986 Summer Season, and directed *Faust* for the Company that Fall. An innovator of the system of Supertitles, she has authored over 15 English translations for San Francisco Opera productions, including all four operas of the 1985 Ring cycle. She has directed new

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Verismo On The Huang Po

By NINA BECKWITH

Photos by Lisa Kohler

You are at the premiere performance of *Tosca*, thrilled by the new music of Puccini, enthralled by the drama of love and power and treachery.

But this is not January 14, 1900, at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome. It is 88 years, four months and eleven days later, and when you leave the theater you will not climb into a horse-drawn *carrozza* and clip-clop away over the cobblestones. You will climb onto a bicycle or a crowded bus and travel through the teeming streets of a city 35 times the size of Rome in 1900. The river is nearby, not the muddy little Tiber but rather the wide sweep of the Yellow River, the Huang Po. For you are seeing *Tosca* for the first time in your life and this is Shanghai.

It was to help create this experience, to collaborate on the first performances of *Tosca* ever produced in China, that the San Francisco Opera Center was asked to send its young artists again to Shanghai in April of 1988.

The year before, the Center's Western Opera Theater had been invited to Shanghai, San Francisco's Sister City, to present three performances of Puccini's *La Bohème*, becoming the first American professional opera company to perform in the People's Republic.

That quintessentially veristic opera had been produced in Chinese by the Shanghai Opera a few months earlier. Also, many Chinese had seen the telecast of Luciano Pavarotti in *Bohème* with the Genoa Opera Company from Italy during their visit to Beijing. All this only heightened appreciation of the opera by the Shanghai audiences who responded with unrestrained enthusiasm to the fresh voices of Western Opera Theater's young singers and the naturalness and credibility of their acting.

Western Opera Theater took its own touring production of *Bohème* to China but

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

not its own orchestra. The Shanghai Opera Orchestra, under WOT's then-music director Evan Whallon, had to learn quite a different interpretation of the opera from the one its own company had performed. And in the same two-week period, assistant conductor Patrick Summers was preparing the orchestra and the American singers and young Chinese singers from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music for the climax of the tour: a gala concert of opera arias and selections from Broadway musicals.

Much of the music was new to the Chinese; that concert celebrated the first time Chinese singers had performed western music together with western singers before a Chinese public. It was a smashing success. Both the Western Opera *Bohème* and the joint concert were shown on Chinese TV.

Along with performers, the 1987 San Francisco contingent included opera experts who gave master classes at the

Shanghai Conservatory and took part in technical theater exchanges at the Shanghai Drama Institute. The hope that the visit would be a mind-opening people-to-people, artist-to-artist exchange was realized, and it left both the Chinese and the Americans with a strong desire to reinforce the link.

The warmth of their welcome delighted the Americans but what amazed this group of opera people, coming to a land where western music had been forbidden until a few short years before, was the extraordinary quality of the operatic voices they heard among the Conservatory students and the high level of accomplishment that had been achieved against severe odds. Students had almost no chance to see live opera or perform it; they were often working from hand-copied, error-filled music instead of printed scores, without books of opera stories, good recordings, and for the most part without language coaches.



Tosca's Act I Church of Sant'Andrea della Valle as seen in Shanghai in 1988.

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Backstage in Shanghai: one of the stage craftsmen who carved Scarpia's desk out of styrofoam prepares the article for gluing and gilding.

But they had a passionate, irrepres- sible desire to participate in western music, and their responsiveness and eagerness to learn gladdened the westerners and moved them deeply.

As it happened, San Francisco Ope- ra's then-general director Terry McEwen made his first visit to Shanghai soon afterward, in May of 1987, aboard a Royal Viking cruise on which several of the Opera Center's Adler Fellows performed. McEwen was captivated and impressed by Mme. Zhou Xiao Yen, revered teacher and guiding spirit of the Conservatory, herself a former singer who had studied in Paris before World War II and had been confined to keeping chickens during the Cultural Revolution.

When he heard a number of Conser- vatory singers, McEwen was "just knocked out by what they have done with

so very little besides talent and determina- tion and incredible diligence." He decided to use a discretionary gift of \$25,000 he had received from an anonymous donor to San Francisco Opera to start an Opera Center Shanghai Exchange Fund.

Supplemented by proceeds from benefits, that fund made it possible for the Opera Center to send some of the needed study materials to Mme. Zhou at the Conservatory and to respond to Shang- hai's major 1988 requests. The Shanghai Opera wanted Patrick Summers back to conduct its premiere production of *Tosca* and invited singers for the roles of *Tosca*, *Scarpia*, and *Spoletta*. The Conservatory asked for an Italian coach to work with singers; to have Summers do some musi- cal coaching, and to put on another, more ambitious joint concert. As part of the exchange, the Conservatory would send

two singers and a teacher to San Francisco to take part in the Opera Center's 1988 Merola Program.

With the abundance of fine voices in Shanghai, why were western singers needed? Shanghai Opera welcomed the opportunity to carry forward this flourishing exchange and to have its audience hear and see western singers perform in the original language of the opera. So the Opera Center sent soprano Susan Neves to sing Tosca, baritone Victor Ledbetter for Scarpia, and tenor Craig Estep for the role of Spoletta, Scarpia's henchman, as well as soprano Susan Graham to take part in the joint concert.

The singers were to arrive in mid-April, with San Francisco Opera's Italian coach, Elena Servi Burgess, and Christine Bullin, Manager of the Opera Center. Summers went ahead and spent the entire month of April in Shanghai. It turned out to be the most exhausting and exhilarating time of his young life. He was 24 and had recently become Western Opera Theater's music director and assistant musical supervisor of the Opera Center.

Bicycling to work, along with Shanghai's 14 million other people, Summers rehearsed the Opera Orchestra for three hours each morning, three or four hours in the afternoon, and then went to the Conservatory for four to five hours of coaching every evening. "This was a completely different trip," he says. "Last year the orchestra had played *Bohème* for many months before we arrived. *Tosca* they had looked at for a couple of weeks. At the first rehearsal it took us three hours to get up to the entrance of *Tosca*, which is not very long into the opera.

"It's a treacherously difficult score for the orchestra and they didn't want to be embarrassed in front of me because they didn't know it. I let them know it was all right to make errors, that's why I was there; let's just get them worked on. Those musicians are very diligent: they'd go off and practice on their own, but that doesn't help one to follow the baton and do everything one's section does. Most of them have moonlighting jobs to make ends meet and then I come barreling in there and work them to death on *Tosca*. In the end they played it very well, but if I'd been a member of that orchestra I'd have run me out of town."

Shanghai Opera's was an elaborate and costly production with some 200 people in the company, including a flock of small children, as shown in the colorful footage of a video-tape crew chronicling

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the Opera Center/Shanghai exchange, which had also been done for the 1987 trip in the award-winning documentary *Scaling the Wall*. Shanghai's stage director, Zhang Yuanwen, had seen Franco Zeffirelli's *Tosca* at the Metropolitan with Plácido Domingo as Cavaradossi. "That soul-shocking performance," she wrote in her program note, "was the very trigger which sent me immediately back to China to contribute this precious operatic treasure to my compatriots . . . Fortunately, the artists from San Francisco Opera Center have come to Shanghai once again to promote cultural exchanges and joint performances. This kind of cooperation, I think, is significant and worth celebrations. It will strengthen the existing friendship between China and the United States and accelerate the development and the prosperity of the operatic cause."

Music is indeed a universal language but in Shanghai it was matching the words to the notes that presented a nice little challenge for both the bilingual and Chinese performances. "Even when the meaning has been correctly translated," Summers says, "the line may be longer or shorter, a key word in the aria may have three syllables instead of two, and the sequence of words may have changed. Since I couldn't learn Chinese in a month, I went through the text over and over with a translator and numbered each syllable so I could give the proper cues."

Susan Neves sang the role of Tosca twice during the three performances given on successive evenings. The Chinese Tosca, Huang Baohui, had been trained before the Cultural Revolution but had not been allowed to sing western opera for many years. She was making a comeback and it was a remarkable one.

"She gave the most moving rendition of 'Vissi d'arte' I've ever heard in any language," Christine Bullin says. "She began very quietly, then crossed the stage slowly, trailing a long white stole she wore over her scarlet dress, and weeping. You had to think of what those words must have meant to her. . . 'I lived for art, I lived for love. I never harmed a living soul. . . ' And later when Cavaradossi is shot and Tosca says 'Ecco un artista!' ('He is a real artist!'), she blew him a little kiss. It was just so right, it was fabulous."

For Elena Servi Burgess, San Francisco Opera's Italian coach since 1976, China was one of the most thrilling experiences of her life. She found the Conservatory students "so anxious to get everything they can from you that it's a



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Huang Baohui in the title role of *Tosca*.

delight. They always had one more question after class, and then another and another. They take correction with grace and they help each other with a wonderful kind of spirit. By the end of those two weeks their Italian diction was getting much better but I would like to have had two months with them.

"Huang Baohui asked me to go over 'Vissi d'arte' with her in Italian and I think she did try it at one rehearsal but there just wasn't time. She is an accomplished artist. At her performance I was in tears the way I haven't been in tears for *Tosca* in a thousand years. It was a marvelous mix of Chinese movement imposed on a verismo opera and it worked miraculously."

There were other unfamiliar and ingenious elements. The portrait Cavaradossi is painting as the opera begins was actually a copy of a Leonardo da Vinci Madonna with downcast eyelids, looking at the child in her lap. So much for *Tosca's* jealousy of her lover's blue-eyed model.

Michelangelesque statues from the Medici Chapels in Florence adorned Scarpia's Roman apartments. Instead of off-stage, the torture of Cavaradossi in the second act took place in a greenish glow upstage in full view of *Tosca* and the audience. And at the end, as Patrick Summers describes, "After *Tosca* jumps from the parapet, from behind Castel Sant'Angelo came a terrific red light, as though she had jumped into hell.

"We all felt that you have to go to China to see real verismo now. The audience was completely involved. *Tosca* is

not an opera that ends quietly; usually the applause begins before the music is finished. There, *Tosca* said her 'O Scarpia avanti a Dio' ('God will be our judge'), and we played the postlude. There were five seconds of total silence, and then this incredible roar from those 4,000 people in the theater."

After all, they were seeing *Tosca* for the first time.

During that same burgeoning April, the Opera Center's artists shared several more thrills of discovery with Chinese colleagues and public. Sixteen Conservatory singers took part in the joint concert with the four Americans. They sang a taxing program which included the trio from *Il Trovatore*, the *Rigoletto* quartet, the *Carmen* quintet, and the sextets from *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Don Giovanni*, as well as music of Jerome Kern and Leonard Bernstein, but most exciting was the great final trio from *Der Rosenkavalier*, an opera first performed only 11 years after *Tosca*.

Warm friendships were formed as the singers worked on the program, coaching with Summers and helping each other. Tenor Craig Estep, a 1987-88 Merola Program graduate who is also a teacher, held a "tenorama" with 10 Conservatory tenors. The baritones gathered around Victor Ledbetter, and Susan Graham helped soprano Yuan Xiaoming learn the difficult music of Sophie, which she had never even heard before. No one in

the orchestra or the audience had ever heard *Der Rosenkavalier* before either. "It was an amazing experience to be in on the ground level with them," says Susan Graham. "I've been singing this music for about seven years. She learned it in a few days, which is phenomenal. The parts are so intricate. Strauss is a master of coordinating women's voices particularly. The power of that music went through the whole room. The first time they played it through, those people were ecstatic and it showed on their faces."

Patrick Summers felt "an indescribable elation in presenting that music and having people hear those glorious sonorities for the first time.

"And beyond the concert was the experience, all of us coming together," Summers says, "bridging two cultures. I don't think that is only words because I've seen first-hand that it is not. The young Chinese singers I heard last year were astounding, much more so this year, and they will be enriching us. We want to go on exchanging teachers and singers.

"In September 1988 Mme Zhou Xiao Yen was able to see her long-held dream become reality with the founding of an opera training center at the Shanghai Conservatory. It is named for her and it will be modeled on the San Francisco Opera Center. There's something very powerful when you connect with people's dreams. It's a reason for living." ■



Part of the children's contingent prepares to go on stage for *Tosca's* Act I finale.

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Corporations and the Opera: An Unlimited Partnership

By MOLLY ROTH

You might not be aware that San Francisco's corporate community has formed a partnership with San Francisco Opera in a joint venture of the first importance. The prospective investor finds, however, that collaboration between these two players takes a wide variety of forms and is far-reaching in scope, and that what emerges as the ultimate product of this venture is nothing less than the quality of life in our community.

"History will judge every civilization by its cultural accomplishments. A corporate citizen has a huge stake in a society's overall achievement," General Director Lotfi Mansouri explains. "By entering into partnership with the Opera, San Francisco's corporations take a direct role in enhancing our community." Some of the benefits of the cultural flowering of a society are intangible, but one representative of a major national corporation can point to a very different outcome. "The arts attract high-caliber employees. We have a very high-ranking corporate officer who just came on board out of New York and the reason she took the job is that this city has San Francisco Opera. A city that can support an opera is a city that cares deeply about the arts and about the people who live there. It's the kind of place one wants to live in."

The people of Chevron USA, Inc., made this connection decades ago when they made the first major corporate contribution to the arts in San Francisco in 1926. Chevron's Arts Liaison Ralph Wootton points out that, "while \$10,000 might not sound like a lot of money today, in 1926 dollars it certainly was, and Chevron has continued to take the lead in corporate support of the arts from that time up to the present." For Wootton, the rationale for Chevron's committed investment in the Opera as the keystone of the arts community is very clear-cut. "As a major corporate citizen in San Francisco, we

have a responsibility to the community. We have employees here and we also have customers and stockholders here, so the vitality of this community is *our* vitality."

The Opera receives support from some of the area's largest corporations in some spectacular forms. But lest anybody think that a corporate investor has to spend \$50,000 to play a meaningful role in this unlimited partnership, Assistant Director of Development Judy Loura, responsible for corporate contributions, is quick to point to the general membership of the Opera's Corporate Council. "There are approximately 130 companies that give between \$1500 and \$10,000 to the Opera each year, and, as you can imagine, that is a considerable amount of money."

It is not merely fanciful to call a corporate contribution to the opera an investment. Just as in business, a philanthropic investment in the Opera is predicted on faith in the Company's product, it engenders an ongoing relationship, and it pays many dividends. The returns on this kind of an investment come in many forms and most of them are not monetary, but are mostly clear and measurable. When three studies of the economic impact of the arts sponsored by the Bay Area and State/Local Partnership programs came out last year, they found that the non-profit arts have a direct economic impact on the Bay Area of almost \$150 million and a total impact on San Francisco alone estimated as ranging from \$208 to \$240 million.

The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce's Arts and Culture Council published an executive summary of the studies to support the Council's "Arts for Our Sake" campaign, with the aim of increasing business support for the arts. American Express Company's Sharon

Molly Roth is Writer for the San Francisco Opera Development Department.

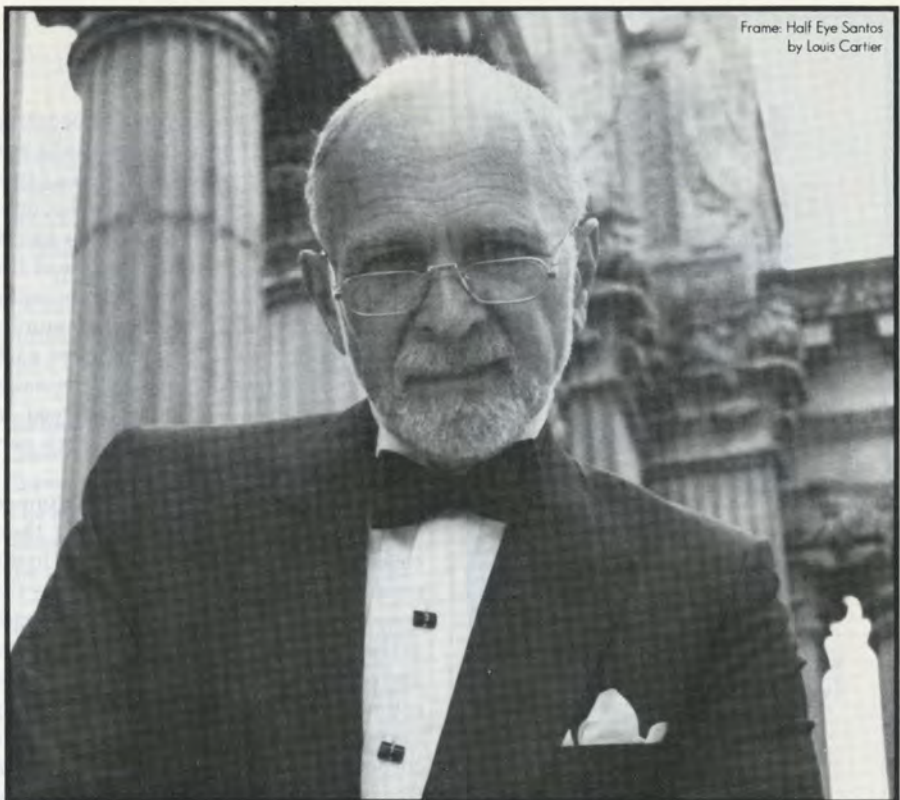
Rosenbaum, who is very active in arts partnerships and sits on the Council, recalls that the dollar impact was significantly greater than originally estimated. "I had just never thought about the arts attracting dollars to community businesses on that scale."

Naturally, not all of the dividends of corporate philanthropy can be counted in dollar terms. For Alden Yates, CEO of Bechtel and co-chair of the Opera's Corporate Council, "you cannot put a price tag on corporate citizenship. Opera is basic to any great city, and a corporation as an integral part of a city supports the opera because it has a responsibility to help make its city great. People know which corporations are acting on this responsibility and it enhances their image, for everyone. That good name is a priceless possession."

High-level volunteers have been some of the key players in forging partnerships between the Opera and the area's corporations. Myron Du Bain, Chairman of the Board of the Stanford Research Institute and co-chair of San Francisco Opera's Corporate Council, has built on a lifetime's successful career in the business world to make a very special contribution. Du Bain feels that "we are blessed to have such a high level of cultural activity here and the Opera, in addition to being my first love, is the highlight. We can never take that for granted. I am lucky to be in a position to be able to help support the Opera and because of my connections in the business world, corporate fund-raising is the way in which I can serve the Opera best. It is also a really enjoyable endeavor."

Other members of San Francisco Opera's Board of Directors have taken active roles in the Corporate Council with Yates and Du Bain. Samuel Armacost of Merrill Lynch, John Basler formerly of the Pacific Telesis Group, R. Dennis Bonney of Chevron, David Chamberlain of Shaklee, Richard Madden of Potlatch, and Osamu Yamada of The Bank of California have each been instrumental in providing generous support of the Opera from their own companies as well as in encouraging others.

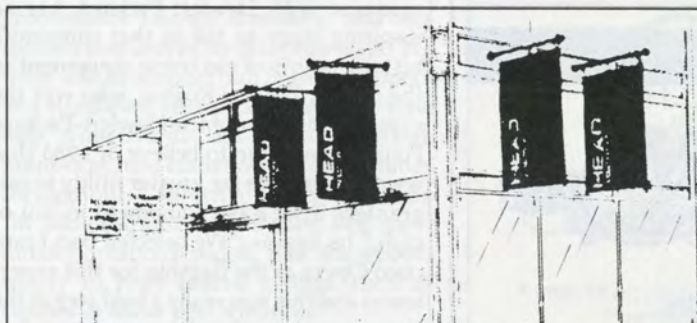
There are many rewards, both tangible and intangible, to be gained from partnership with such a vibrant performing arts institution. Judy Loura points out that "the benefits offered to the member companies of our Corporate Council are



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excellent. They are invited to working rehearsals to see how an opera production actually comes together and, among other cast parties and artist receptions throughout the season, they are invited to a special cocktail party at which the leaders of the Council are honored. This is an occasion for members of the corporate community who support the Opera to meet each other and 'network.' Not least, the name of each member is proudly displayed on the Corporate Council page of each performance magazine."

In this way, the corporate patrons of the Opera will be recognized by their colleagues in the business world and in the world of social and civic involvement—the people represented on the Opera's Board of Directors, for instance. And these peers and colleagues cannot help but raise their estimation of the companies that they know to support the Opera. As one corporate funder puts it, "It is hard to pin this down, but it has very real value. And besides, we would be conspicuous by our absence."

Some outstanding corporate contributors have designed model partnerships with the Opera, and have reaped rewards to match. Carl Nale, a manufacturing manager with Hewlett-Packard, has an inspiring story to tell in that company's historic grants of electronic equipment to the Opera. "Emery Rogers, who was the executive director of the Hewlett-Packard Foundation, came to believe in 1983 that we could provide far greater utility to our grantees if we gave equipment in lieu of cash," he begins. "We selected San Francisco Opera as the flagship for this experiment and this was really a bold step at the time, since no other large company had ever tried a large equipment grant to the world of arts and culture."

Rogers asked Nale to be involved, knowing that he was a confirmed opera-lover. Nale's initial step was to break down some of the perceived barriers between business and the arts. When he first came to the Opera, he encountered a group of technical theater professionals who had not yet entered the electronic age and, in some cases, were a little reluctant. He designed a brilliant strategy; he told them, "I know how complex your job is, how many things have to be brought together for the Opera House curtain to go up. But what I do is just as complex. We run a manufacturing operation responsible for building 5,000 different products. They

are made up of many thousands of different parts and they all have to be put together to achieve certain results. They have to be matched with customer orders and shipped at the right cost at the right time. And believe me," he got to the clincher, "what you do is no different in principle from what I do and if the right application of technology can greatly increase our productivity, then it can increase yours." He brought the Opera technical department down to Palo Alto to have a look at Hewlett-Packard operations for themselves and, he reminisces, "you could just see the wheels begin to turn inside their heads."

From that very basic beginning, Hewlett-Packard, working closely with the Opera staff, has designed a series of equipment grants allied with the technical assistance of a host of devoted volunteers that have brought San Francisco Opera's Scenic Design, Supertitles, and Rehearsal Department scheduling operations to the rank of "state of the art." In the five phases of equipment grants that have been made to the Opera since 1983, the Rehearsal Department was given a personal computer, the word-processing and database software, and the programming assistance to create a scheduling system that can respond to a myriad rapid changes with up-to-the-minute documents. The Production Department received the word-processing and film-recording equipment that, together with specialized firmware, has cut the cost of creating Supertitles by a factor of 18 and the turn-around time from graphic data to recorded film to almost nothing, in effect granting San Francisco Opera its leadership status in the creation of Supertitles. In addition, the Technical Department, perhaps the only theater technical department in the world that can boast the same, now creates its Opera House floor plans and scenic ground plans with computer-aided drafting equipment. This was a true breakthrough and Nale insists that a great deal of credit be given to Opera Associate Technical Director Larry Klein and volunteer Hewlett-Packard Sales Representative Steve de Simon who worked together against enormous odds to craft this remarkable business-arts partnership.

Hewlett-Packard has granted San Francisco Opera close to \$200,000 in its high-quality electronics equipment, and this is in terms of cost to the company. Nale himself had only intended to be

involved for the first year, playing a variety of roles for his company in addition to overseeing a vast manufacturing outfit. But he was hooked, and has been closely involved with the project ever since. "It has been a grand experiment." Based on their success with the Opera, equipment grants such as this have become the model for Hewlett-Packard's corporate contributions overall. "It has allowed us to make larger contributions and this enables us to go farther toward our corporate objective to make a major commitment to the community in which we live. But, more than that, it has enhanced the quality of our contribution; we feel that our two institutions have a lasting relationship. Both Hewlett-Packard and the Opera will be able to see the concrete evidence of this partnership for many years to come."

On the second Sunday of September each year, the Music Concourse of Golden Gate Park becomes another front on which the Opera's partnership with the businesses of San Francisco is advanced. The *San Francisco Examiner* Charities have joined with the Opera and the Friends of Recreation and Parks to make the beloved annual "Opera in the Park" concert a reality for the past 15 years. *Examiner* Charities' Terri Robbins talks about the origin of this joint venture. "Kurt Herbert Adler came to us after he had put on the first 'Opera in the Park' concert and said that he had a dream for San Francisco. His dream was to bring the world's most exciting singers and the best musicians to perform for the people of this city for free. Well, needless to say, that was just the kind of vision that we had." *San Francisco Examiner* Charities, Inc., has been underwriting the costs of the opening weekend concert ever since.

For Robbins, the *Examiner* Charities' sponsorship of "Opera in the Park" is, "really just a way of thanking the people of San Francisco for supporting the *Examiner* throughout the year. We certainly do not try to turn this concert into a major circulation promotion for ourselves. Although, interestingly enough, at this past concert we put together a special edition of the paper and sold it out at the park—and we sold thousands of them." Robbins feels that, in some important ways, "Opera in the Park" is "what opera is really supposed to be. It is just beautiful music in a beautiful setting—it is perfect! You are not surprised to get an enormous

crowd when somebody like Pavarotti or a Domingo sings, but when there are no world-renowned names on the bill and you still find 20,000 people out there, that is really exciting."

It is clear that Robbins feels good about "Opera in the Park." "It is a very successful partnership, and it's nice that the Opera feels that it is as special as we do. 'Opera in the Park' is one of the definite high points on the *Examiner's* calendar and the interest on behalf of the *Examiner* staff has been overwhelming. The audience is just full of our writers and editors, they are some of the first people in the park, and that says a lot."

Sue Diekman, executive director of the Pacific Telesis Foundation, also takes a broad view of the Opera's benefit to the community. "If there's value in the opera, there is value for everyone, not just those who can regularly attend performances. Our priority in supporting San Francisco Opera is to extend its value beyond the walls of the Opera House. That's why we sponsored the California tour of Western Opera Theater in 1986-87."

The Pacific Telesis Foundation was the first corporation to underwrite the California tour of the Opera Center's professional touring company, and this sponsorship served its priorities well. "We were able to support San Francisco Opera in a significant way and at the same time help bring world-class opera to a large number of new audiences in communities throughout California," says Diekman. "In addition, our local Pacific Bell community relations people had the opportunity to host special groups such as seniors at these performances."

Pacific Telesis Foundation's sponsorship of Brown Bag Opera performances in 1989 is another example of the Foundation's focus on extending the reach of the Opera. Brown Bag Opera presents free concerts in parks, hospitals, nursing homes, senior centers, office complexes, schools, and colleges throughout the Bay Area. Sue Diekman explains one special aspect of the sponsorship of these concerts that shows just how serious the foundation is about getting the message of opera across. "Part of our grant will fund a portable public address system to allow the singers' introductions and explanations of the performances to be heard clearly by all who attend the concerts."

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gala concert by Luciano Pavarotti that San Francisco Opera presented at the Civic Auditorium in June. Ralph Wooton explains that, "the Pavarotti concert appealed to us both because it was an extension of the regular season activities for the community and because, by underwriting the concert, Chevron was able to leverage all of the ticket revenues for the Opera. If you can take our \$50,000 and use it to bring in \$170,000, we think that's great."

Chevron has shown its support for the Opera in a variety of forms. In 1986, the company underwrote Supertitles for five of the season's productions and in 1987 Chevron sponsored the revival of *The Queen of Spades*. Although Chevron has entered into these partnerships with the Opera out of its high-minded sense of corporate citizenship, Wooton has one tale to tell of a small but direct return on the investment. "A woman called me up a couple of weeks ago to say that she had appreciated our support of the arts outreach programs to such an extent that she was going to cut her other gasoline credit card in half and use her Chevron card exclusively from now on. Now people do not often communicate to you like that, but it is awfully nice when it happens."

When the American Express Company made a \$100,000 grant to underwrite Supertitles for the 1985 fall and 1986 summer seasons, it not only broke new ground for American Express but for S.F. Opera as well. Supertitles, having just emerged on the opera scene, recalls Sharon Rosenbaum, was one of the most innovative ideas on the horizon in the cultural community in San Francisco.

Rosenbaum correctly perceived that "Supertitles could have tremendous effect on attracting new audiences and that this, in turn, would ultimately broaden the base of the Opera's support. When American Express regionalized its philanthropic program in 1985, the company identified that the critical need for the arts organizations in this area was to extend their bases of support for their own long-term well-being. Supertitles could be a powerful vehicle for achieving that aim." Needless to add, Supertitles have done more to popularize opera than any other development in recent memory and American Express has every right to take some of the credit. For Rosenbaum, "it feels like a triumph every time I hear somebody else talking about Supertitles. It is so marve-

lous, it just keeps reaffirming what a fantastic project that actually was."

American Express has reaffirmed that in another way. Last year the company made a grant to underwrite Supertitle marketing activities: to develop additional Supertitles, to create a marketing brochure for the titles, and to subsidize the rental of titles to smaller companies. "Basically, our interest was to build upon and enhance our original investment for the continuing benefit of the Opera. A return on a 'philanthropic' investment can obviously take a variety of forms. In this case, we wanted the original investment to return dollars to the Opera by generating a revenue stream. Subsidizing rentals to smaller companies was another way to work on the gift-that-keeps-on-giving premise."

Investments are votes of confidence and, as such, corporate investments have a special importance to the Opera. For Lotfi Mansouri, "Corporate support lends a kind of validity and business respectability to the Opera. The involvement of a shoe factory or a steel company says 'this is a sound proposition, not a playground for the elite.' That goes beyond sponsorships. When a company subscribes to the Opera for its employees, takes a role in spreading the gospel of culture, we are building a partnership that will bear fruit far into the future."

Many of the largest corporate citizens headquartered in this area have already come into this joint venture whole-heartedly. "In order to strengthen this enterprise," points out Judy Loura, "what we really have to accomplish is broadening the base of corporate support. Smaller companies in the area have to be shown that their investments in the Opera are terribly important, both for us and for them. The next step will be to bring national companies on board, remind national firms that San Francisco opera is a national treasure, and a worthy investment for them as well." In Loura's hands, the base membership of the Corporate Council has grown by nearly 30% in two years. But she measures this progress against the potential for future growth.

In closing, words by American Express Vice-President Frederic O. Williams: "The arts do give back more than they take. We're confident their support makes sound business sense for all of us." ■

1988 San Francisco Opera Company (Continued)

Although our program magazines regularly list members of the Administration and Company (please see pages 10 and 13), we know that those lists are by necessity incomplete. In order to give recognition to the many skilled professionals whose work has contributed so greatly to the quality of San Francisco Opera productions, we provide, once a year, a list of everyone involved in our 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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The Medallion Society, the premier support group of the San Francisco Opera family, plays a vital role in maintaining the company's stature as one of the world's leading opera companies. The generosity of Medallion Society members helps to ensure the fiscal stability necessary for the production of world-class opera, season after season.

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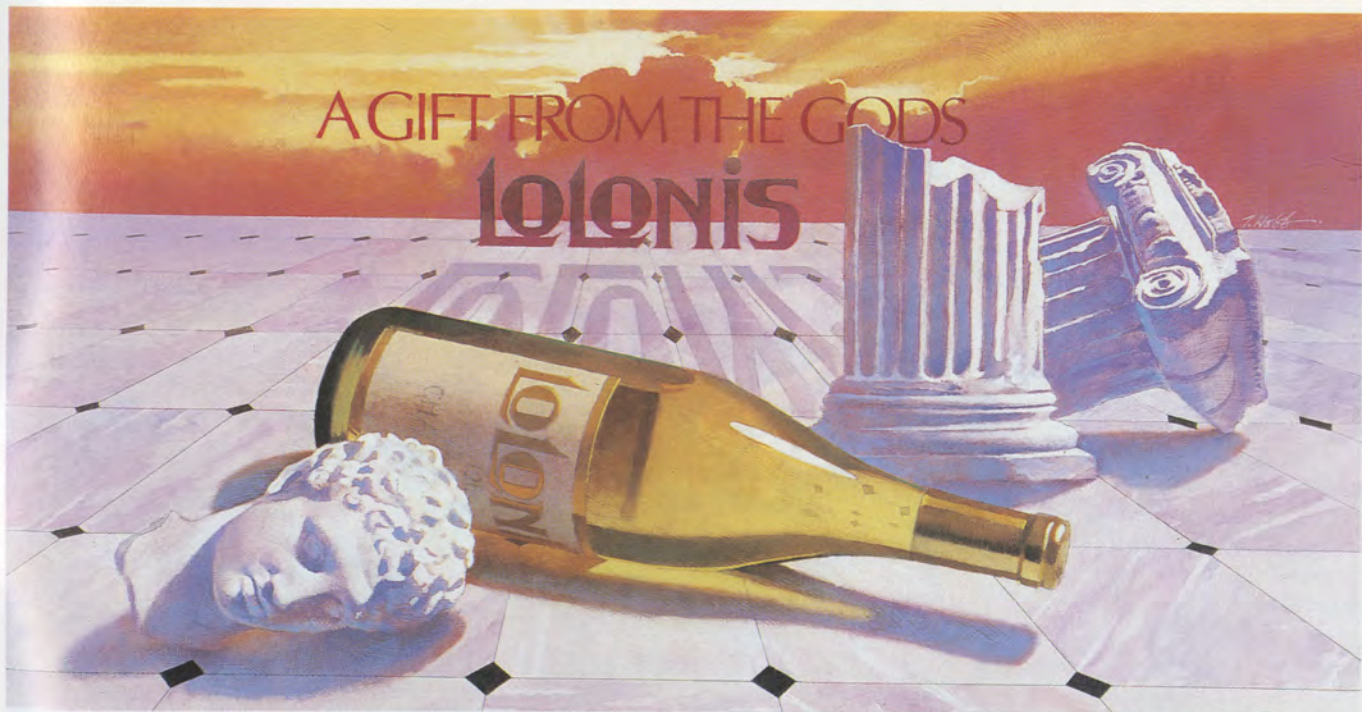
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Bus Service Many operagoers who live in the northern section of San Francisco are regular patrons of the Municipal Railway special "Opera Bus."

This bus is added to Muni's north-bound 47 line following all evening performances of the Opera. The service is also provided for all 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 to 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.

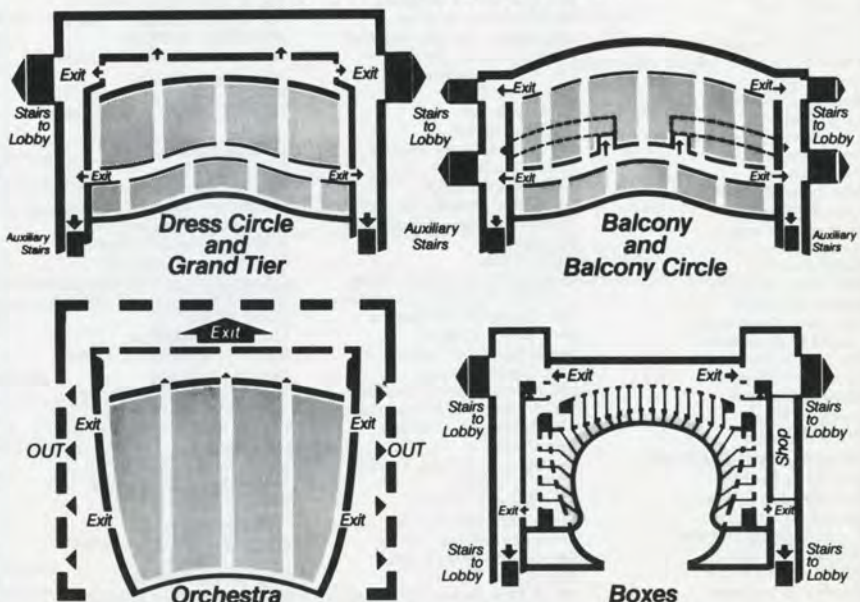
Management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

For lost and found information, inquire at check room No. 3 or call (415) 621-6600, 8:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. Monday through Friday. For the safety and comfort of our audience all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at the Opera House cloakrooms.

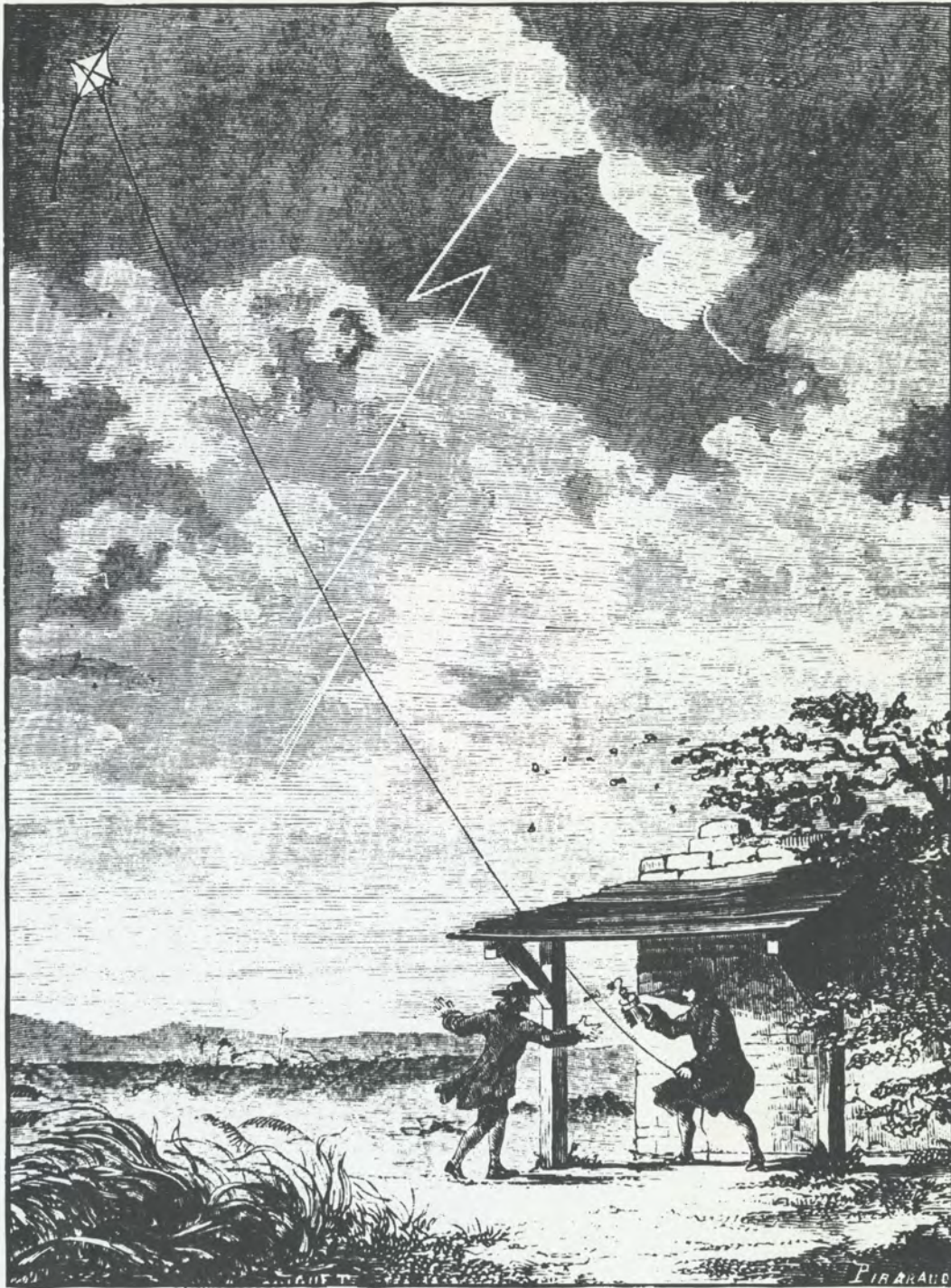
Taxi Service Patrons needing a cab at the end of the performance should reserve one with the doorman at the taxi entrance before the end of the final intermission.

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

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



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



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