

Orlando Furioso

1989

Sunday, November 19, 1989 2:00 PM

Friday, November 24, 1989 8:00 PM

Thursday, November 30, 1989 7:30 PM

Sunday, December 3, 1989 8:00 PM

Wednesday, December 6, 1989 8:00 PM

Saturday, December 9, 1989 8:00 PM

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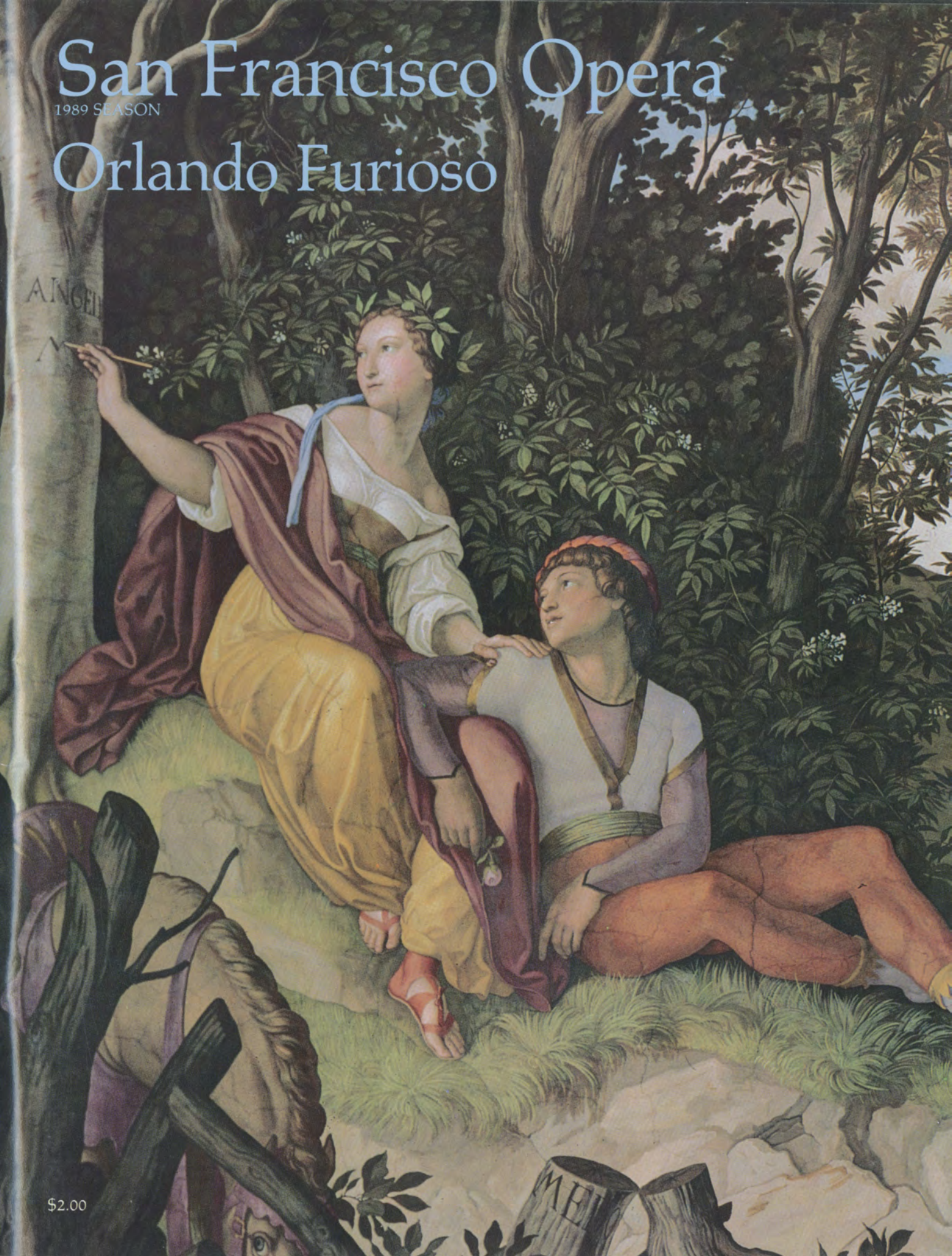
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1989 SEASON

Orlando Furioso



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San Francisco Opera

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

Orlando Furioso

1989 SEASON
Vol. 67, No. 11

FEATURES

- 26 **Introducing: Vivaldi and Orlando Furioso** by Andrew Porter
Both Antonio Vivaldi and his *Orlando Furioso* are making their first appearance at the San Francisco Opera. The eminent writer and musicologist Andrew Porter provides an introduction.
- 48 **Ariosto and His Children** by David Littlejohn
Few works of literature have spawned as many offspring as Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. The author provides an overview.

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COVER

Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, 1794-1872
Angelica and Medoro, 1825
Fresco, Ariosto Room, Cassino Massimo, Rome.

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From the Chairman of the Board and the President

We are pleased to welcome you to the 67th annual season of the San Francisco Opera, a season distinguished by no fewer than four new productions as well as ventures into new repertoire. Our own General Director Lotfi Mansouri will lead us on the first of these journeys of discovery, when he directs the Company's first presentation of the complete three-act version of Berg's *Lulu*. Boito's *Mefistofele* has not been seen in the Opera House for 26 years; this year, it returns in a new production that is our first cooperative effort with the renowned Grand Théâtre de Genève. Mozart's *Idomeneo* returns to the Company in a new production created by the team of John Copley, director; Michael Stennett, costume designer (*Julius Caesar*, *Orlando*) and John Conklin, set designer (Wagner's *Ring* cycle). With *Orlando Furioso*, San Francisco Opera adds not only a new opera but also a new composer to its list, as we present our first work ever by Antonio Vivaldi. Pier Luigi Pizzi, responsible for the gripping 1986 *Macbeth*, returns to stage this baroque opera. Our gratitude goes to the Paul L. and Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation for underwriting our new *Lulu*; the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation for *Idomeneo*; and Geoffrey Chambers Hughes who underwrote *Orlando Furioso* in memory of his grandfather, John William Hughes.

The return of productions seen in previous seasons is always a source of pleasure. Two of these, *Falstaff* and *Otello*, represent the heritage of Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, whose productions in the past contributed greatly to our Company's international stature. We are grateful to the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, the original underwriters of our *Falstaff*, and the San Francisco Opera Guild who made possible this season's revival. Two of our 1989 operas, *Aida* and *Lohengrin*, owe their existence to an anonymous friend of the San Francisco Opera, while *Die Frau ohne Schatten* was originally underwritten by Cynthia Wood, who is also making this year's staging possible. Last, but far from least, *Madama Butterfly* re-joins our repertoire in a production made possible some years ago by the San Francisco Opera Guild.

It is a privilege to be able to acknowledge our governmental funding sources, including the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council. We also extend our appreciation to the Grants for the Arts of the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, Mayor Art Agnos and Chief Administrative Officer Rudolf Nothenberg, whose support has always been gratifying.

As in previous years, we extend our appreciation to the San Francisco Opera

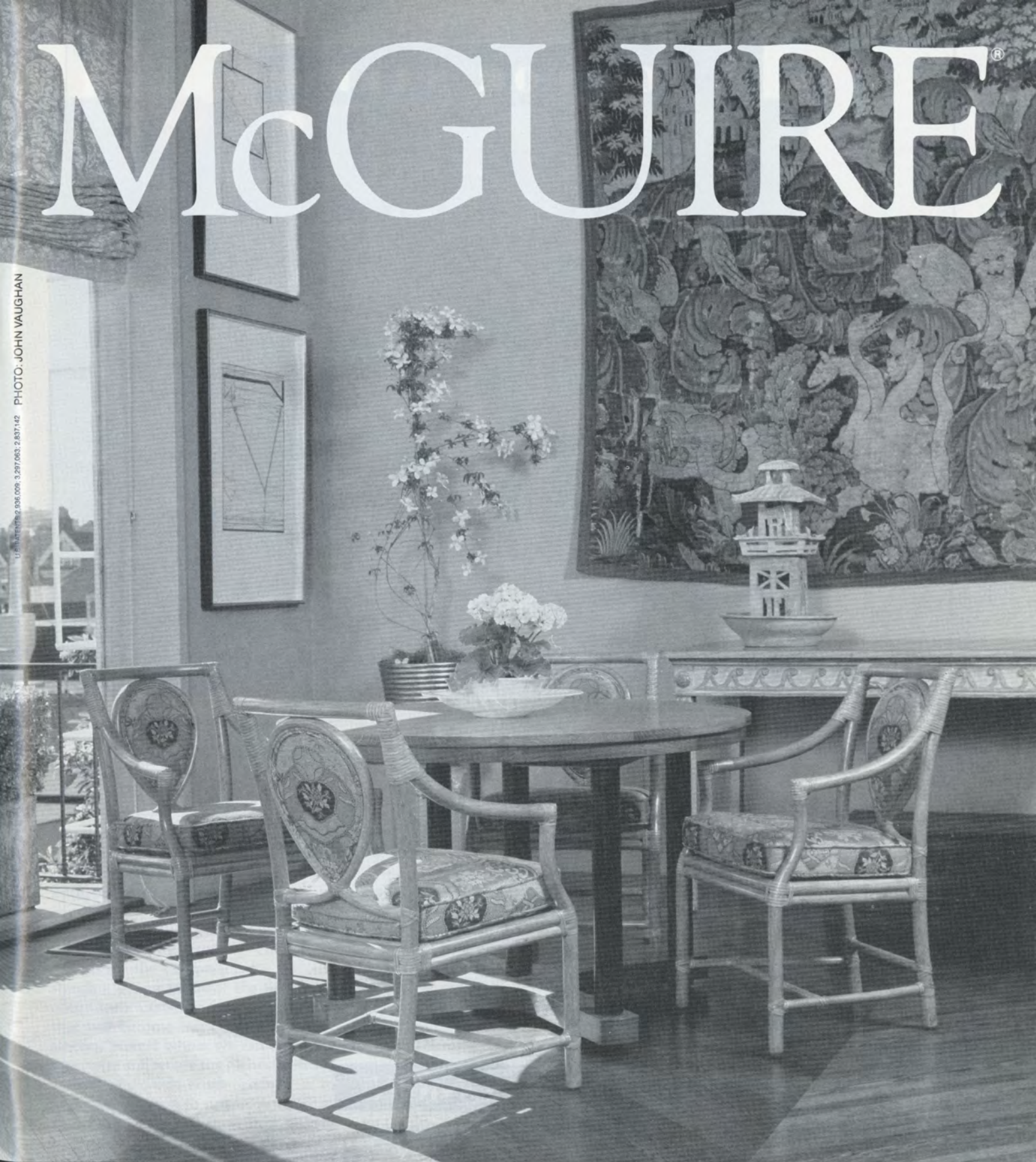
Guild and the War Memorial Board of Trustees for their ongoing support.

In the past, we have pointed out that ticket sales cover only slightly more than half of our expenses; this is no less true now than it has ever been. With the ongoing support of the individuals, foundations, corporations and government agencies already mentioned, and your own interest and financial support, we anticipate continued success and growth for our Company.

Reid W. Dennis, Chairman
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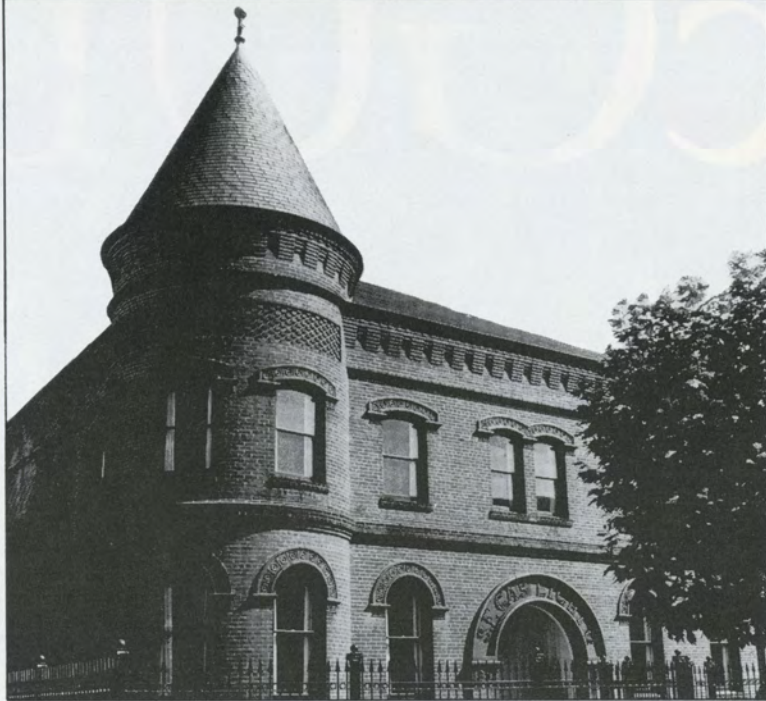
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General Director's Message

The current San Francisco Opera season is special for many reasons. The repertoire spans the gamut of operatic creativity from Antonio Vivaldi to Alban Berg, with four of the works being given in exciting new productions. There is one aspect of our 67th season, however, that I find particularly heartening. One of my dreams for the Company is for the outstanding young talent of the San Francisco Opera Center to form an ensemble that will become our core company of singers, around whom we can build our repertoire and secure the highest possible artistic standards from production to production, season to season. A glance at this year's roster will show how quickly this ideal is already starting to become a reality. Two of the title roles in our fall operas belong to two brilliant young sopranos who have come through the Center's numerous training programs: Ann Panagulias as Lulu, and Nikki Li Hartlieb as Madama Butterfly. But they will not be carrying the Center's torch

alone on the Opera House stage; virtually every production is populated with alumni who have made our Opera Center the envy of every American opera company. These are the young artists we have watched together from their first appearances at Stern Grove or the Merola Opera Program Grand Finals, through their development into full-fledged artists who would be a credit to any major opera company. With such a firm artistic foundation, and with the added excitement of numerous international stars, our 1989 season should be a pleasure to follow, and a portent of wonderful developments as San Francisco Opera grows toward the 21st century. I am delighted that you will be with us as we open the next exciting chapter in the history of the San Francisco Opera.

San Francisco Opera

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Continued on page 13



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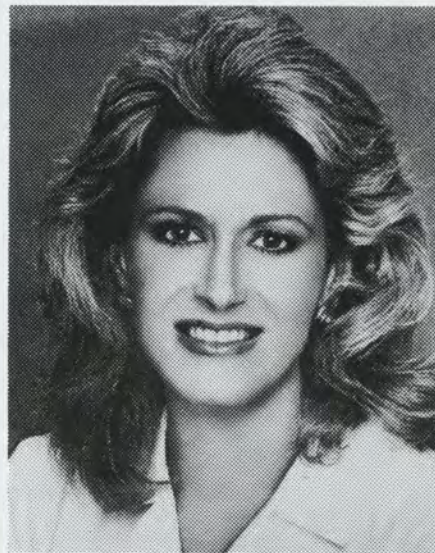
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San Francisco Opera

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

Sir John Pritchard, *Music Director*

1989 Season

Opening Night

Friday, September 8, 7:30
Falstaff Verdi
 Lorengar, Horne, Swenson, Cowdrick;
 Stewart, De Haan, Raftery, Frank,
 Pittsinger, Sénéchal*
 Kord/Calábria/Ponnelle/Ponnelle/Munn
*Production originally made possible by a
 grant from the L.J. & Mary C. Skaggs
 Foundation; Revival made possible by a
 generous gift from the San Francisco Opera
 Guild.*

Saturday, September 9, 8:00
New Production
Lulu Berg
 Panagulias, Lear, Harris*, Cook, Swift*,
 Mills*; Braun, McCauley, Hotter,
 Myers*, Cowan*, Rideout*, Travis,
 Villanueva, Petersen, Irmiter, Reinhardt
 Mauceri/Mansouri/Schneider-Siemssen/
 Mackie*/Whitfield*
*San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges
 a generous grant from the Paul L. & Phyllis
 C. Wattis Foundation to underwrite this
 production.*

Tuesday, September 12, 8:00
Lulu Berg

Wednesday, September 13, 7:30
Falstaff Verdi

Friday, September 15, 8:00
Lulu Berg

Saturday, September 16, 8:00
 Co-production with the Grand Théâtre
 de Genève
Mefistofele Boito
 Beňáčková, Christin, Manhart; O'Neill,
 Ramey, Harper, Wunsch
 Arena/Carsen*/Levine*/Poulin**/Munn
*Production made possible, in part, by Mr. &
 Mrs. John C. McGuire and by Mr. &
 Mrs. Thomas Tilton.*

Sunday, September 17, 2:00
Falstaff Verdi

Sunday, September 17, 7:30
Family Performance
Falstaff Verdi
 Racette*, Williams, Keen, Spence; Noble,
 Boutet*, Ledbetter, Rideout, Travis,
 Estep*
 Robertson/Calábria/Ponnelle/Ponnelle/
 Munn

Tuesday, September 19, 8:00
Mefistofele Boito

Wednesday, September 20, 7:30
Lulu Berg

Thursday, September 21, 8:00
Falstaff Verdi

Friday, September 22, 8:00
Mefistofele Boito

Saturday, September 23, 1:00
Lulu Berg

Saturday, September 23, 8:00
Falstaff Verdi

Sunday, September 24, 2:00
Mefistofele Boito

Tuesday, September 26, 7:30
Falstaff Verdi

Thursday, September 28, 8:00
Mefistofele Boito

Friday, September 29, 8:00
Falstaff Verdi

Saturday, September 30, 8:00
Otello Verdi
 Ricciarelli, Keen; Mauro, Ellis, De Haan,
 Pittsinger, Schwisow, Skinner,
 Villanueva
 Kord/Asagaroff/Ponnelle/Ponnelle/
 Arhelger

Sunday, October 1, 2:00
Lulu Berg

Tuesday, October 3, 8:00
Otello Verdi

Wednesday, October 4, 7:30
Mefistofele Boito

Friday, October 6, 8:00
Otello Verdi

Saturday, October 7, 8:00
New Production
Idomeneo Mozart
 Mattila*, Gustafson, Racette, Spence;
 Ochman, Blochwitz**, Lewis, Outland*,
 Cox*, Li*, Ledbetter
 Pritchard/Copley/Conklin/Stennett/
 Munn

*San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges
 a generous grant from the L.J. & Mary C.
 Skaggs Foundation for partial underwriting
 of this production.*

Sunday, October 8, 2:00
Mefistofele Boito

Tuesday, October 10, 7:30
Mefistofele Boito

Wednesday, October 11, 8:00
Idomeneo Mozart

Thursday, October 12, 7:30
Otello Verdi

Saturday, October 14, 2:00
Idomeneo Mozart

Sunday, October 15, 2:00
Otello Verdi

Tuesday, October 17, 8:00
Idomeneo Mozart

Friday, October 20, 8:00
Otello Verdi

Saturday, October 21, 8:00
Aida Verdi
 Sweet*, Zajick, Racette; Popov, Noble,
 Langan, Pittsinger, Li
 Kellogg*/Donnell/Schmidt/Casey/
 Tippet*/Munn
*This production was originally made possible
 by a gift from an anonymous donor.*

Sunday, October 22, 2:00
Idomeneo Mozart

Tuesday, October 24, 7:30
Otello Verdi

Wednesday, October 25, 7:30
Idomeneo Mozart

Thursday, October 26, 8:00
Aida Verdi

Friday, October 27, 8:00
Idomeneo Mozart

Saturday, October 28, 8:00
Madama Butterfly Puccini
 Hartlieb, Redmon*, Spence; Polozov,
 Laperrière*, Perry, Villanueva, Skinner,
 Travis, Estep
 Pritchard/Farruggio/Businger/Munn
*This production was originally made possible
 by a grant from the San Francisco Opera
 Guild.*

Sunday, October 29, 2:00
Aida Verdi

Tuesday, October 31, 8:00 Madama Butterfly	Puccini	Friday, November 24, 8:00 Orlando Furioso	Vivaldi	Thursday, December 7, 7:30 Die Frau ohne Schatten	Strauss
Wednesday, November 1, 7:30 Aida	Verdi	Saturday, November 25, 7:30 Die Frau ohne Schatten	Strauss	Friday, December 8, 7:30 Lohengrin	Wagner
Friday, November 3, 7:30 Madama Butterfly	Puccini	Johnson, Jones, Silja, Racette, Spence, Fortuna*, Parks*, Friedman, Mizell*; Muff**, Johns, Pederson, Duykers, Ledbetter, Skinner, Schwisow, Villanueva, Irmiter, Travis Dohnányi/Asagaroff/Zimmermann/ Skalicky*/Munn		Saturday, December 9, 1:00 Madama Butterfly (Same cast as December 3)	Puccini
Saturday, November 4, 8:00 Aida	Verdi	<i>This production was originally made possible by Cynthia Wood who has also underwritten the 1989 revival.</i>		Saturday, December 9, 8:00 Orlando Furioso	Vivaldi
Sunday, November 5, 2:00 Madama Butterfly	Puccini	Sunday, November 26, 1:30 Lohengrin	Wagner	Sunday, December 10, 1:30 Die Frau ohne Schatten	Strauss
Tuesday, November 7, 8:00 Aida	Verdi			**United States opera debut *San Francisco Opera debut	
Friday, November 10, 7:30 Madama Butterfly	Puccini	Tuesday, November 28, 7:30 Die Frau ohne Schatten	Strauss		
Saturday, November 11, 7:30 Lohengrin Häggander*, Randová; Frey*, Leiferkus**, Vogel*, Baerg*, Estep, Li, Ledbetter, Irmiter Mackerras/Robertson (December 8)/Weber/Montresor/Munn <i>This production was originally made possible by a gift from an anonymous donor.</i>	Wagner	Wednesday, November 29, 7:30 Lohengrin	Wagner	All performances are in the original language with English Supertitles. Supertitles for <i>Falstaff</i> , <i>Lulu</i> , <i>Mefistofele</i> , <i>Idomeneo</i> , <i>Aida</i> , <i>Madama Butterfly</i> and <i>Die Frau ohne Schatten</i> provided by a generous and most appreciated gift from William and Eloise Rollnick. <i>Otello</i> supertitles underwritten through a generous grant from Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc. Supertitles for <i>Lohengrin</i> and <i>Orlando Furioso</i> provided through a grant from The Stanley S. Langendorf Foundation.	
Sunday, November 12, 2:00 Aida	Verdi	Thursday, November 30, 7:30 Orlando Furioso	Vivaldi	Repertoire, casts and dates subject to change.	
Tuesday, November 14, 8:00 Aida	Verdi	Friday, December 1, 7:30 Die Frau ohne Schatten	Strauss	Box Office and telephone sales: (415) 864-3330.	
Wednesday, November 15, 8:00 Madama Butterfly	Puccini	Saturday, December 2, 7:30 Lohengrin	Wagner		
Friday, November 17, 7:30 Lohengrin	Wagner	Sunday, December 3, 1:00 Madama Butterfly Gauci*, Manhart, Spence; Aragall, Schexnayder*, Li, Villanueva, Skinner, Travis, Estep Pritchard/Farruggio/Businger/Munn	Puccini		
Saturday, November 18, 8:00 Madama Butterfly <i>This performance made possible by a generous grant from Shaklee Corporation.</i>	Puccini	Sunday, December 3, 8:00 Orlando Furioso	Vivaldi		
Sunday, November 19, 2:00 <i>New Production</i> Orlando Furioso	Vivaldi	Monday, December 4, 7:30 Die Frau ohne Schatten	Strauss		
Horne, Patterson, Kuhlmann, Walker; Matteuzzi*, Gall, Langan Pritchard/Pizzi/Pizzi/Munn <i>San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges a generous gift from Geoffrey Chambers Hughes to underwrite this production. His gift is made in memory of his grandfather, John William Hughes.</i>		Wednesday, December 6, 8:00 Orlando Furioso	Vivaldi		
Tuesday, November 21, 7:30 Lohengrin	Wagner				

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The San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum (formerly the Archives for the Performing Arts) invites you to an exhibit of photographs taken over several years by noted Bay Area photographer Ira Nowinski. In addition to the primary subject, Maestro Kurt Herbert Adler, the exhibit will also salute San Francisco Opera Center's Adler Fellows, the young singers who are about to embark on careers on the world's opera stages. The exhibit is located in the War Memorial Opera House Museum (box level, south side) and is open to the public during Opera House performance hours, September 8 through December 10, 1989.

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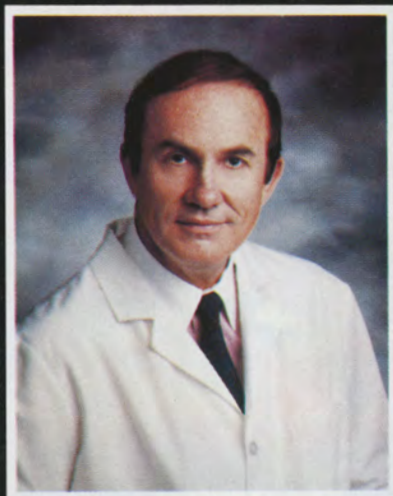
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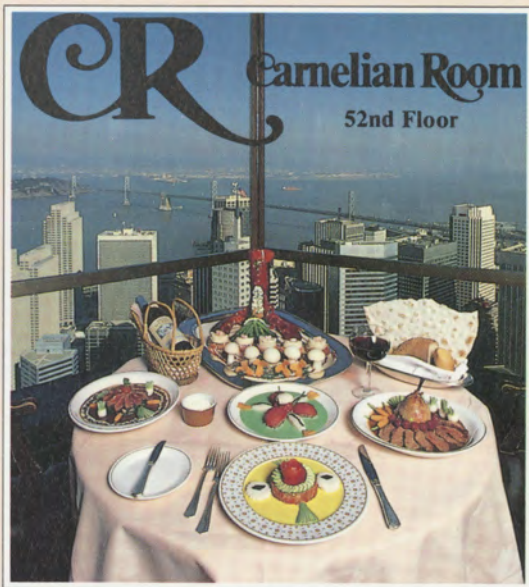
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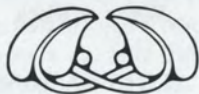
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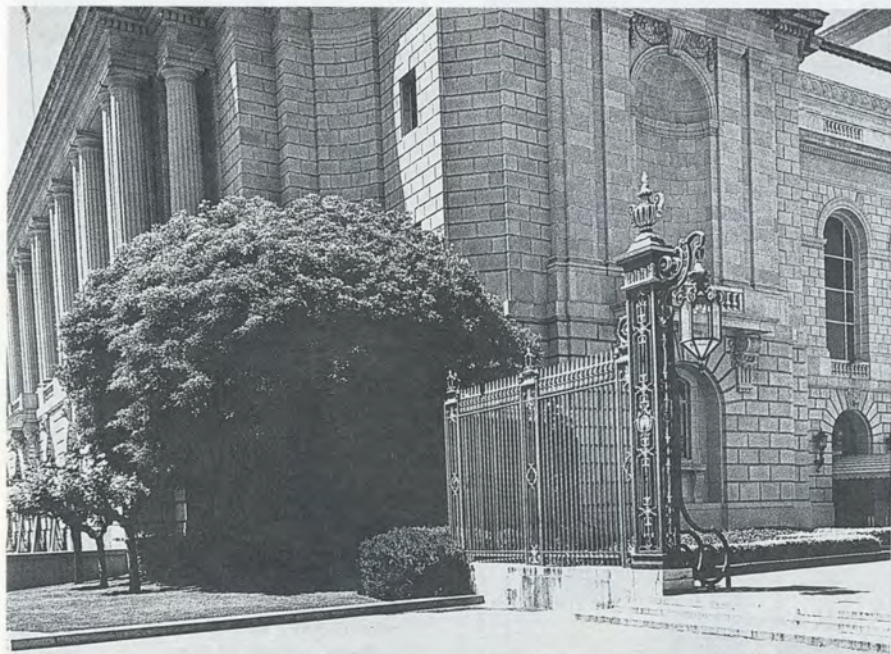
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Introducing: Vivaldi

By ANDREW PORTER

Late in his life, Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) claimed that he had composed ninety-four operas. The very precision of that figure suggests that he had been compiling some sort of list, and the Vivaldi scholar John Walter Hill calls the claim "worthy of belief." It puts Vivaldi among the most prolific of all dramatic composers, surpassed perhaps only by

Alessandro Scarlatti (about a hundred and fourteen operas) and Reinhard Keiser (about a hundred). Vivaldi's instrumental fecundity has long been famous: more than two hundred and thirty violin concertos, more than two hundred other concertos, etc. At the middle of our century, coincident with the rise of the LP, this instrumental music became newly popular, and the four violin concertos

making up *The Four Seasons* have become one of the "best-sellers" of all time. Whereas in the first edition (1951) of the Sackville-West and Shawe-Taylor *Record Guide* the authors had no Vivaldi records to list (apart from a semi-private album of the "Gloria" Mass, "too badly recorded to be recommended"), in their second edition (1955) there were many to consider, including a pioneering set of *The Four Seasons*. And in the latest Schwann LP and CD catalogue, the listing of Vivaldi records occupies fourteen packed columns of small type, with more than sixty versions of *The Four Seasons*. Now we have begun to discover the beauties of his dramatic music. Not all of it is available, though. Of those ninety-four operas that he claimed, only about sixty have been identified (a dozen of them also containing music by other composers), and only some sixteen of the scores survive in a fairly complete musical form.

For me, and for many, the discovery of the dramatic music began with an early LP recording of *La Fida Ninfa* (1732), a captivating piece. (Before it, there had been a disc of the serenata a tre *La Ninfa e il Pastore*, which is like a miniature three-person opera and offers a tiny encyclopedia of the composer's melodic freshness and instrumental charms.) For years, *La Fida Ninfa* remained the only Vivaldi opera available for hearing. Then in 1978, the tercentenary of the composer's birth, seven more of the operas were brought to performance: *Orlando Furioso* (1727) in Verona (with Marilyn Horne in the title role, who also later sang it in Dallas and Paris), *Griselda* (1735) in London, *L'Incoronazione di Dario* (1717) in Siena, and *Farnace* (1727) in New York; *Orlando Furioso* was recorded, and so were *Tito Manlio* (1719) and *L'Olimpiade* (1734).

Andrew Porter is the music critic of *The New Yorker*. His fifth volume of collected *New Yorker* reviews, *Musical Events: 1983-1986*, has just been published by Summit Books.

SCHEXNYDER



Marilyn Horne in an *Orlando Furioso* studio portrait.

and *Orlando Furioso*

Since then, there has been a recording of *Catone in Utica* (1737), of which only two acts survive; and the 1985 production of *Giustino* (1724) that opened in the Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza has traveled (along with a lifesize replica of the famous Palladian stage) to Venice, Milan, Versailles, Buenos Aires, and, in 1987, Houston.

A generation that has enjoyed Vivaldi's operas in performance is readier to reject the old charges that used to be brought against them. The fifth *Grove* (1954) remarked flatly that "Vivaldi's vocal music has been entirely forgotten." The *New Grove* (1980) is not exactly appreciative: "Viewed dramatically, the operas merely supply what was expected of a composer working within narrow and at the same time universal conventions." The satire contained in the prescriptions of Benedetto Marcello's pamphlet *Il Teatro alla Moda* seems to have stuck: the poet, Marcello wrote, "will write the whole opera without formulating any plot"; the composer "will take care never to read the whole opera"; and the evening will consist of a long, loose string of arias devised solely to display, in catalogue fashion, the varied abilities and specialties of the soloists—divided by screeds of recitative to which no one pays attention. "Be advised that the arias throughout the whole opera are to be alternately happy and pathetic, without any regard for the words, the keys, and the dramatic context." Not true. I'm prepared to affirm that each of the ten operas mentioned above has its own, distinctive tone.

Tito Manlio is a new setting of a late-17th-century libretto by Mateo Noris, drawn from Livy. In 340 B.C., the Roman consul Titus Manlius condemned his son Manlius to death for disobeying orders and slaying a Latin foe, one Geminius. The drama turns on a conflict between paternal fondness and impartial severity; Titus's hesitation to sign his son's death warrant is eloquently handled. The women are the slain man's sister, who

pleads for Manlius's life, since she loves him; and Manlius's sister, who insists on her brother's death, since she loved Geminius. All would end in tragedy did not Titus at last (in defiance of history) heed a plea for acquittal from Manlius's fellow-officers: "The will of the army is law to the law," he declares. I regret to add that there are three other characters—two of them also in love with Manlius's sister—to

disturb the neat symmetries of the central situation. Nevertheless, thirty-six well-contrasted arias, two duets, and accompanied as well as much unaccompanied recitative amount to an interesting and stirring drama.

L'Olimpiade—fifteen years and twenty-four operas later—has an even better plot: one of Metastasio's most famous libretti, based on Herodotus,



Antonio Vivaldi, 1678-1741.



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La

La Musica è del Signor Don Antonio Vivaldi Maestro di Capella di S. A. Sereniss. il Signor Principe Filippo Langravio d' Haffia d' Armeftat.

A 3 MU-

Title and cast pages from the first libretto (1727) to Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso*.

which was first set by Antonio Caldara in 1733 and later by some fifty other composers, including the young Donizetti. At the Olympic Games, various strands of rivalry and imposture (which I won't go into here) have led to a potentially tragic dénouement, anticipating that of *Idomeneo*: the priests chant; the smoking altars await a victim; he advances, brave and unfaltering; the ritual begins—but is interrupted by a heroic woman offering to die in place of a man she loves. The stern celebrant learns that the victim is his own son, but he resumes the rite: a loving father must yield to an impartial judge. But in Olympia the people claim that they have the last word to say in such matters. And they say it, pronouncing forgiveness and a happy ending. This final sequence contains a strange and beautiful quintet of contrasting emotions; a strong aria for the woman; a ritual chorus not far from Gluck; a noble setting, for the judge, of "Non so donde viene" (a text that Mozart set twice); and a *coro finale* that is not the usual quick signing-off in jubilation but a solidly worked stretch of music that contains surprises.

For *Adelaide*, whose music is lost, Vivaldi wrote a preface pointing out

contemporary political parallels. *Catone in Utica*, with a Metastasio libretto drawing on Plutarch and on Addison's *Cato*, is another opera that had political "relevance"; the libretto was apt to run into censorship trouble.

My point—I must not overstress it, however—is that Vivaldi's operas are not just strings of arias, however fascinating, lovely, and various. Those that I know are also musical dramas deserving of serious attention. This may seem a strange assertion in view of the speed with which they were composed, and of the composer's habit of transferring arias from one work to another. *Tito Manlio* is a long opera. The recording, in which the recitatives have been abridged, occupies ten LP sides—as do *Tristan*, *Die Meistersinger*, and *Parsifal*. Vivaldi noted on the score that he had composed it in five days. "It sounds like it" would not be fair comment—unless one were paying tribute to a score that flows with unlabored brilliance and effortless energy of invention.

As for the borrowings: John Walter Hill has argued and convincingly demonstrated—with special reference to *Orlando*—that they are sometimes far from casual. *Orlando*, as we shall see in a

moment, has a complicated history, spanning some fourteen years. When Handel revised and recomposed his operas for revival casts, he seldom improved them; his first vision is nearly always the freshest and finest. Not so with Vivaldi; almost by instinct, it seems, he was able to draw on numbers that he had already composed and place them in even more expressive and effective contexts, thereby enhancing the dramas to which they were added. Of the heroine's, Alcina's, role in Vivaldi's final *Orlando* (which was devised for his favorite prima donna, Anna Giraud), Mr. Hill says:

Through Vivaldi's aria substitutions and cuts, the character of the [original] Alcina becomes focused and strengthened. With far greater clarity and forcefulness, her development is traced in Vivaldi's six arias, which express, in turn, hope mixed with fear, satisfaction mixed with worry, haughty betrayal, sorrow, bitterness, and finally fury. The substituted arias trace a tragic downfall that the original arias hint at, but also obscure.

* * *



Orlando Furioso's Angelica and Medoro, featured on this magazine's cover, were also part of San Francisco Opera's previous Ariosto excursion: the 1985 production of Handel's Orlando. Valerie Masterson and Jeffrey Gall were the interpreters.

In 1713, at the Teatro Sant'Angelo in Venice, the young composer Giovanni Alberto Ristori—he was twenty-one years old, and had been raised in a theatrical troupe which his father managed—brought out his second opera, *Orlando Furioso*, with a libretto by Grazio Braccioli. It achieved a run of nearly fifty performances. A year later, at the same theater, Vivaldi—who was thirty-five—brought out his second opera, *Orlando Finto Pazzo*, which also had a Braccioli libretto but dealt with different incidents from Ariosto's poem. It was not a success, and *Orlando Furioso* was revived: Ristori's opera, but now revised and largely recomposed by Vivaldi. And then, thirteen years later, in 1727, again at the Teatro Sant'Angelo, Vivaldi's "definitive" *Orlando* appeared: an opera reconceived, reworked, recomposed—but one that included, where appropriate and effective, music from Ristori's *Orlando Furioso*, from Vivaldi's *Orlando Finto Pazzo*, and from the Ristori-Vivaldi *Orlando Furioso*.

The earliest operas—Peri's and Caccini's versions of *Euridice*, Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Gagliano's *Dafne*—drew their mythical subject matter from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The earliest opera to turn to romantic epic—to Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*—was Gagliano's *Medoro*, produced in Florence in 1619. Six years later, again in Florence, Francesca Caccini brought out *La Liberazione di Ruggiero dall'Isola d'Alcina*



Marilyn Horne's previous San Francisco Opera Orlando feat was in the title role of Handel's opera of the same title. She is seen here at the center of the final tableau.

(the first opera composed by a woman). Tasso, Homer, Virgil, and history were soon also captured for the lyric stage (as in Rossi's *Erminia*, Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse*, *Le Nozze d'Enea*, and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*). Ariosto—the romantic, high-spirited story teller, the exuberant chronicler (in the opening words of Sir John Harington's Elizabethan translation) “of dames, of knights, of arms, of love's delight, of courtesies, of high attempts”—remained a favorite of librettists and composers. They could take for granted that their audiences were familiar with him. Vivaldi did; so did Handel (in three operas: *Orlando*, *Ariodante*, and *Alcina*), and Haydn, and the Mozart and Da Ponte of *Così fan tutte*. Braccioli, in the preface to his 1713 *Orlando Furioso*, described the hero's adventures as “thoroughly familiar in every land, not just in our Italy.” The librettist of Handel's *Orlando*, produced in London in 1733, wrote confidently of having treated “an Event taken from Ariosto's incomparable Poem, which being universally known, may serve as an Argument to the present Drama, without any larger Explication.” The *Orlando Furioso* is perhaps not “universally known” today, but there is no reason why it should not be. For readers without Italian there is Barbara Reynolds's lively (and well-indexed) English translation: two Penguin volumes that have a place on all opera lovers' bookshelves in this age when operas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are current fare. Ariosto lives on. Batman and the *Star Trek* crew are in some measure modern descendants of his adventurous cast. David Lodge's novel *Small World* (another Penguin) is a modern homage to his lively imagination.

Braccioli was a cunning and sensitive librettist. In the preface, he explained how he had sought to contain something of the “essence” of the *Orlando Furioso*—with its abundant characters and with its exploits that roam half the world—within a single theatrical action. He produced a skillful and attractive essay at capturing and transforming Ariosto's poem for the lyric stage. He omitted Ariosto's military theme: the conflict of Christendom with the infidel invader (which was being waged again even as Ariosto wrote, seven centuries after the Carolingian battles that he told of). Limiting his scene to Alcina's enchanted island, he took as his main action “the love, the madness, and the recovery of Orlando.” But “the love of



Orlando in the enchanted forest, as imagined by Gustave Doré in 1879.

Bradamante and Ruggiero, the love of Angelica and Medoro, the various inclinations of Alcina, and the diverse passions of Astolfo serve to accompany this action and lead it to its end.”

Seven of Ariosto's leading characters are here. The three women are Angelica, the proud, beautiful daughter of the Grand Khan of Cathay, a new Helen who has turned the heads of half of Europe's

heroes and driven mad the mightiest of them, Orlando. Spurning them all, she loses her heart to the humble Saracen foot-soldier lad Medoro, with his black eyes and golden curls, whom she finds wounded and nurses back to health. And Alcina, King Arthur's sister, glamorous, poignant, and terrible: an old woman still greedy for sensual pleasures, her irresistible beauty preserved—as rich old wom-



Alcina, as represented by Gustave Doré in his 1879 *Ariosto* illustrations.

en's beauty still is today—by artifice. And Bradamante, an earlier exemplar of Beethoven's Leonore, the shining type of heroic, loving woman, clear-eyed and ever true to her errant, unfaithful Ruggiero.

The four men are Medoro, passive

and beautiful, made to be loved; the impetuous Ruggiero; the adventurous English prince Astolfo, who journeys into space to find a cure for his cousin Orlando's madness; and the titular Orlando, Charlemagne's nephew, Christendom's

champion against the Moorish invasion, who has been deflected from duty and battle by his intemperate love for Angelica, and whose noble mind is quite o'erthrown when he discovers that she has bestowed herself on another.

By allusions, elisions, brief narratives (as of Astolfo's space trip), and ingenious transformations and inventions that tease and please the connoisseur of Ariosto, Braccioli covers a surprising amount of the Ariosto poem, and he does so with Ariostan bravura. The libretto is a subtle and colorful achievement. In the opening scenes, the characters are brought to the island and identified, and their relations to each other are defined. Then, as in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, but against a background of bright chivalry and romantic marvels, love and the effects of love in all their variety—idyllic tenderness, steady devotion, deceit, infatuation, lust, frivolity, jealousy, obsession—are explored in a carefully balanced drama.

In composing—and in refining, long after its first appearance—this unusual *Orlando* opera, Vivaldi broke with the opera-seria "rule": that each aria should be in a different genre, contrasting with that of its predecessor. Indeed, as Mr. Hill has observed, Vivaldi seems instead to have gone out of his way to cluster, within each of *Orlando's* nine stage settings, arias of a similar type: bravura, parlante, cantabile, or whatever. Variety depends, rather, on differences of texture and instrumentation. And thus the composer achieves a diversity subtler, less mechanical, more interesting than that of the automatic, instant contrasts mocked by Marcello in *Il Teatro alla Moda*. One hears how a similar emotion—resolve, tenderness—can catch different characters in different ways. Moreover, Vivaldi, like the best of his colleagues, bends and breaks the conventions with dramatic surprises: by embarking on an aria without preliminary recitative; by cutting a number short; by keeping a singer onstage after he or she has sung an apparent "exit aria."

On the simplest level, Vivaldi's *Orlando* is a feast of felicitous melodic inventions, one after another, sustained by a master of animated instrumentation. On a deeper level, it is one of music's high responses to Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, a work that—along with the works of Homer, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, and Goethe, but perhaps more merrily—has, directly or indirectly, helped to shape the imaginative world in which we live. ■



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MARILYN HORNE

Internationally renowned mezzo-soprano **Marilyn Horne** returns to San Francisco Opera in two roles: as Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, a role she sang for the first time during San Francisco Opera's 1985 fall season; and in the title role of *Orlando Furioso*, the part she portrayed at the work's first revival in 275 years at Verona (televised by the RAI) and subsequently in Paris and Dallas and for a complete recording. San Francisco Opera is the company with which she made her first major operatic appearance, singing Marie in *Wozzeck* (1960). Since then she has not only sung a wide variety of roles with the Company—including Marie in *Daughter of the Regiment*, Nedda in *Pagliacci*, Eboli in *Don Carlo*, Adalgisa in *Norma*, Dalila in *Samson et Dalila*, Arsace in *Semiramide* and the title roles of *Tancredi*, *La Cenerentola* and Handel's *Orlando*—but has won the highest accolades in performances with all the world's great opera companies. A native of Pennsylvania, she is also Spring Opera Theater's most illustrious alumna, having portrayed Carmen (1961), Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* (1962) and the title role of *L'Italiana in Algeri* (1964), three roles she has recorded complete and performed to critical plaudits at the Met and elsewhere. Miss Horne has also devoted a major portion of her career to concerts and recitals, having been featured in numerous concert performances of operas in Carnegie Hall and over 1,000 recitals around the world, as well as national telecasts of a recital and concerts with Joan Sutherland, Luciano Pavarotti and Leontyne Price. Her lengthy discography includes recordings for five major labels, and her autobiography, *My Life, Marilyn Horne*, has been published by Atheneum. Among her numerous awards are the Handel Medallion (New York City's highest cultural award); the "Comendatore al merito della Repubblica



SUSAN PATTERSON

Italiana" awarded to her by President Pertini of Italy in 1983; and the first Golden Plaque awarded by the Rossini Foundation, honoring her as "the greatest singer in the world." This past July, she was awarded the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden Medal in honor of the 25th anniversary of her debut as Marie in *Wozzeck* in 1964.

Soprano **Susan Patterson** sings Angelica in *Orlando Furioso*. A 1986-87 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, she has performed a number of roles with the Company, including Inez in *Il Trovatore* (Summer 1986), her debut; Mrs. Gobineau in *The Medium* (Summer 1986); Thibault in *Don Carlos* (Fall 1986); Marguerite in the Student Matinee performances of *Faust* (Fall 1986); Violetta in one Student Matinee performance of *La Traviata* (1987); and Chloe in *The Queen of Spades* (1987). She was most recently seen here last fall as Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* and as the First Flower Maiden in *Parsifal*. As a member of the Merola Opera Program and Western Opera Theater, she sang roles ranging from Helen in *There and Back* and Lucia I/Lucia II in *The Long Christmas Dinner* (both by Hindemith), to Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*. Miss Patterson is a frequent concert soloist and has sung in Handel's *Jephtha* and *Messiah*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and Beethoven's *Egmont*. In recent seasons she has performed Musetta in *La Bohème* with Atlanta Civic Opera, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* with Marin Opera, all three soprano roles in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Palm Beach, and scored a major success in her European debut as Violetta in *La Traviata* with the Welsh National Opera conducted by Charles Mackerras.



KATHLEEN KUHLMANN

Recent appearances include Violetta with Atlanta Opera; Constanze in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* at the Carmel Bach Festival; her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut as Violetta in their student performances of *La Traviata*; her Canadian debut with the Vancouver Opera as Gilda in *Rigoletto*; a debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*; and her Minnesota Orchestra debut in the *Messiah*. Upcoming engagements include the *Messiah* with the Honolulu Symphony, Mahler's Second Symphony with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* for Opera Pacific, and her Netherlands Opera debut as Countess Adele in *Count Ory*. Miss Patterson is a graduate of the universities of Samford and Florida State, and is currently working toward a doctorate at Indiana University.

After making her San Francisco Opera debut during the 1982 Summer Festival as Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, mezzo-soprano **Kathleen Kuhlmann** returns to the Company to sing Alcina in *Orlando Furioso*. The native San Franciscan studied at the Chicago Lyric Opera School and made her professional debut with the parent company, appearing as Clarissa in *The Love for Three Oranges*, Maddalena in *Rigoletto* and Bersi in *Andrea Chénier*. In 1980 she made her debut with the Cologne Opera, and continued her association with the company in productions of *L'Orfeo* and *La Cenerentola*. That same year she bowed at Milan's La Scala as Meg Page in *Falstaff*. In 1981 she received the grand prize in a Belgian radio and television singing contest and appeared in a film version of *Rigoletto* directed by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. She has since been acclaimed in the major opera houses of Europe and the



SANDRA WALKER

United States. Her numerous appearances at the Cologne Opera include Rosina, Charlotte in *Werther*, and the title roles of *Carmen* and *La Cenerentola*. Other European credits include Rosina, and Ino/Juno in Handel's *Semele* at Covent Garden; Rosina at the Vienna State Opera, in Bilbao, Lucca and Hamburg; Arsace in *Semiramide* in Parma, Naples, Vienna, Bilbao, Bonn and Toulouse; *La Cenerentola* at the Glyndebourne Festival and in Stuttgart; and *Carmen* in Hamburg, Naples, Sydney and Vienna. Festival appearances include the title role of *Tancredi* at Wexford, and Penelope in the world premiere of Henze's edition of Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* at Salzburg. In North America, she recently made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Charlotte, and has appeared as Rosina at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, as Carmen at the Montreal Opera, and in performances of *Bianca e Faliero* at Miami Opera. As concert soloist she has sung in many European performing arts centers. Recording credits include Bradamante in *Orlando Furioso*, Alisa in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Bersi in *Andrea Chénier*, and Grimgerde in *Die Walküre*. Future engagements include Charlotte in *Werther* at the Hamburg State Opera, Malcolm in *La Donna del Lago* at Parma's Teatro Regio, as well as *Semiramide* at the Munich Festival, Handel's *Alcina* in Paris and Geneva, and *Orfeo ed Euridice* in Cologne.

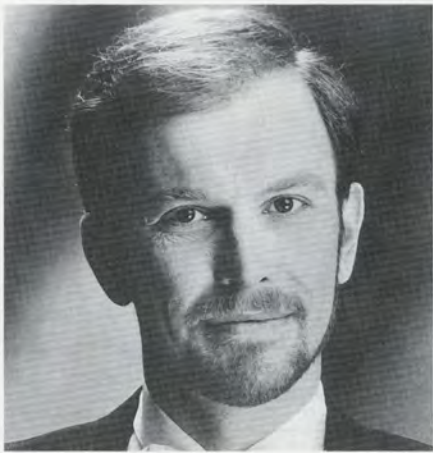
Mezzo-soprano **Sandra Walker** is Bradamante in *Orlando Furioso*. The North Carolina native made her San Francisco Opera debut in the 1972 production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle, and returned in 1974 as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*. She most recently appeared with the Company in 1986 as Magdalene in *Die Meistersinger*

and Olga in *Eugene Onegin*. That same year she made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Micah in Handel's *Samson*, a role she had previously performed at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and at the Teatro Comunale in Florence. She returned to the Met this past season for Olga in *Eugene Onegin* and Maddalena in *Rigoletto*. The 1976 Spoleto Festival was the occasion for Miss Walker's European debut in a highly acclaimed production of *The Rape of Lucretia* in which she sang the title role. Based in Germany since 1980, she has often appeared at the Frankfurt Opera as well as other German opera houses. Her roles there included Fricka in *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*, Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Orfeo in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Ottavia in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, and Ramiro in *La Finta Giardiniera*. Highlights of recent seasons include her Rome debut with the Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* under the baton of Mstislav Rostropovich; Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet* in Paris, and the world premiere of Hans Zender's *Stephen Climax*, in which she created the role of Bella Cohen, in Frankfurt and The Hague. This season she sang the Nurse in Dukas's *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* with the Netherlands Opera. Miss Walker has appeared as soloist with the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, St. Louis Symphony and the American Symphony. She has recorded the song cycle *King Midas* by Ned Rorem, and appears in the recently released videos of *Eugene Onegin* with Mirella Freni and *Manon* with Beverly Sills.



WILLIAM MATTEUZZI

Renowned in the bel canto repertory, Italian tenor **William Matteuzzi** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as Medoro in *Orlando Furioso*. Born in Bologna, he won several international vocal competitions and made his debut in Milan as Des Grieux in *Manon*. He continued his vocal studies at the Opera School of Milan's La Scala, and his first performance with the parent company was in Donizetti's *Rita*, followed by roles in *Idomeneo*, *Alceste*, *La Sonnambula*, Grossi's *Orfeo*, and Stravinsky's *Mavra* and *Renard*. During the 1986 season, he sang at the opening performance of Rossini's *Le Comte Ory* at the Pesaro Rossini Festival, and appeared at Padua in Rossini's *Ermione*. Other engagements during that season included *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *La Rondine* and *Pagliacci* at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna; *Pagliacci* at La Scala and *L'Italiana in Algeri* in Lisbon and at Pesaro. The tenor's busy schedule during the 1987-88 season included *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Bergamo, Hamburg, Bari and Lecce; Orff's *Carmina Burana* in Rome; *L'Italiana in Algeri* in Zurich; *Le Comte Ory* in Venice; *La Cenerentola* in Munich; and *Il Cappello di Paglia di Firenze* in Reggio Emilia and Paris. Matteuzzi's recent engagements include his Metropolitan Opera debut as Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*; *La Figlia del Reggimento* in Bologna; *Un Viaggio a Reims* in Vienna; *Il Barbiere* in Zurich and Vienna; and *La Gazza Ladra* in Pesaro. Next year he is slated for *L'Italiana in Algeri* in Monte Carlo and Vienna, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Vienna and Munich, *Semiramide* in Munich, *La Cenerentola* in Malaga, and will sing his first Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* in Florence. He will also return to Pesaro's Rossini Festival for the recently discovered *Ricciardo e Zoraide*. Also active on the concert stage, he has sung in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, Handel's *Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno*, and Rossini's *Stabat*



JEFFREY GALL

Mater. He has made a number of recordings including *Il Viaggio a Reims*, *Ermione*, *Don Pasquale* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. He will be in the recording studio next year for *Semiramide*, *Armida*, and *Ricciardo e Zoraide*.

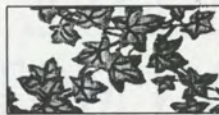
Countertenor **Jeffrey Gall** portrays Ruggero in *Orlando Furioso*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut as Nireus in the 1982 Summer Festival production of *Julius Caesar*, and was most recently here in 1985 as Medoro in Handel's *Orlando*. In 1979 he sang the role of Apollo in Britten's *Death in Venice* for Spring Opera Theater, but is known primarily for his performances of the baroque repertory. It was in the title role of *Orlando* for the Peter Sellars production at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge that Gall first came to national prominence. He has sung with numerous early-music ensembles, including the Waverly Consort, the New York Renaissance Band, Pomerium Musices, the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, Banchetto Musicale, the Castle Hill Festival, the Cantata Singers and Emmanuel Music. He has appeared for two seasons at Milan's La Scala, as well as with the Festwoche der Alten Musik at Innsbruck; at the Spoleto, Edinburgh and Bordeaux Festivals; at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples in Jommelli's *La Schiava Liberata*; at La Fenice in Venice in Cesti's *Il Tito*; at the Théâtre Municipal de Lausanne in *Ariodante*; and at the Canadian Opera Company in *Death in Venice*. In the U.S. he appeared in the American premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies's *Taverner* with the Opera Company of Boston, and was heard at the Chicago Lyric Opera as Medoro; as Ottone in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Santa Fe Opera; and as

continued on p.45

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Orlando Furioso

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Libretto by GRAZIO BRACCIOLI

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(Critical revision according to the original manuscript edited by Ulysses Roseman, Jr., G. Ricordi & Co., Milan, Italy; Hendon Music, Inc., a Boosey & Hawkes Company, sole agents in the U.S.)

San Francisco Opera Premiere

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John Pritchard

Production

Pier Luigi Pizzi

Realized by

Ugo Tessitore*

Designer

Pier Luigi Pizzi

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Musical Preparation

Randall Behr

Christopher Larkin

Mark Haffner

Susan Miller Hult

Kathryn Cathcart

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Venice, Autumn, 1727

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24 AT 8:00

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30 AT 7:30

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6 AT 8:00

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9 AT 8:00

Orlando Furioso

(in Italian)

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Angelica, princess of Cathay Susan Patterson

Medoro, a young Saracen William Matteuzzi*

Alcina, a sorceress Kathleen Kuhlmann

Orlando, Christian knight, nephew of Charlemagne Marilyn Horne

Ruggiero, Saracen knight, later Christian Jeffrey Gall

Bradamante, cousin of Orlando Sandra Walker

Astolfo, Christian knight, cousin of Orlando Kevin Langan

Mimes

Alcina's attendants; Merlin; Arontes—Loren Nordlund, David Reed

Statues and guards—Huguette Combes, Ann Fitzgerald, Candace Kahn,

Bill Roehl, Steven Rosen

Musicians

Alan Cox, flute

Patricia Wells, viola

*San Francisco Opera debut

TIME AND PLACE: Late 8th century, during the reign of Charlemagne; an enchanted island of the sorceress Alcina

THERE WILL BE TWO INTERMISSIONS

Supertitles for *Orlando Furioso* provided through a grant from The Stanley S. Langendorf Foundation

Supertitles by Clifford Cranna, San Francisco Opera.

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

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

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

Orlando Furioso/Synopsis

The action takes place on the enchanted island of the sorceress Alcina. Although old and ugly, Alcina succeeds in appearing beautiful by casting spells, and she bewitches those courtiers who set foot in her realm. She has also tried to make her power eternal by gaining possession of the ashes of the magician Merlin and keeping them, with the help of the invincible guard Arontes, under the statue of the wizard in the Temple of Infernal Hecate. Brought there by fate, the characters of the opera roam the island.

ACT I

Orlando vows he will triumph over adverse fate and find happiness with Angelica. She, however, is mourning the loss of her beloved Medoro when suddenly he appears, having narrowly escaped death in a shipwreck. Orlando enters the garden and, seeing them together, wants to kill Medoro. Alcina saves the young man's life by convincing Orlando that Angelica and Medoro are sister and brother. Angelica then feigns love for Orlando, at the same time assuring Medoro of her true devotion. Orlando regrets his rash behavior. Left alone, Alcina welcomes Ruggiero and bewitches him by having him drink from her magic fountains. He is enchanted and sings of his love for her, as Bradamante, his betrothed, enters the scene. Under Alcina's spell, Ruggiero does not recognize Bradamante who is furious at finding him in Alcina's arms. Alcina declares her own love for Ruggiero. Finding Ruggiero alone, Bradamante breaks Alcina's spell with her magic ring and scornfully leaves the knight. Orlando assures him that calm follows every storm.

ACT II

Alcina practices her wiles on Astolfo and torments him, saying she can never be satisfied with only one lover. Bradamante and Ruggiero meet again, but this time, free of Alcina's spell, they confess their mutual love. Angelica reveals to Medoro her plan to free herself from Orlando and, after declarations of love, Medoro leaves her. Orlando appears and Angelica asks him to obtain for her

a magic youth potion which is guarded by a cruel monster. Eager to display his prowess and win her love, Orlando descends into a cavern and challenges the monster. A voice from within the cave tells him he is a prisoner of Alcina. He realizes that he has been tricked and, through mighty effort, frees himself. In another part of the forest, Angelica and Medoro celebrate their marriage, witnessed by Alcina who laments her loss of Ruggiero. The bride and groom carve their names on nearby trees and depart as Orlando enters. He reads the inscriptions and his anger and despair drive him to madness.

ACT III

Ruggiero, Astolfo and Bradamante, who is disguised as a man named Aldarico, lament Orlando's fate and plan revenge on Alcina. Astolfo declares that valor will prevail against the fury of Hell. The sorceress appears and prays to the gods to help her find Ruggiero. When Aldarico (Bradamante) approaches, however, Alcina quickly sees in him a prospective new lover. Orlando, now totally mad, wanders in and rants of Angelica's betrayal. His ravings arouse compassion in all, and Angelica weeps in repentance. Left alone, Orlando continues his lament, mistaking the statue of Merlin in the temple for his beloved Angelica. This provokes the fearful guard Arontes. In the ensuing struggle, Orlando disarms him. Orlando falls into a deep swoon. The spell is broken and the realm and magic of Alcina collapse. The defeated Alcina appears, sees the prostrate Orlando and attempts to kill him, but is stopped by Ruggiero. Aldarico contributes to her distress by revealing his true identity as "Bradamante, your greatest enemy." Even Angelica and Medoro, whom Alcina befriended, are witnesses to her final defeat as Astolfo arrives. Orlando awakens in time to see Alcina depart. She leaves, calling upon the gods of the underworld to avenge her. With Alcina's downfall Orlando regains his senses and, to the great happiness of his friends, is able to accept the union of Angelica and Medoro and give them his blessing.

Orlando Furioso

Photos taken in rehearsal by Larry Merkle



Marilyn Horne



Susan Patterson

(below) Sandra Walker



William Matteuzzi



Marilyn Horne

(below) Kevin Langan





Kathleen Kuhlmann, Jeffrey Gall



Marilyn Horne

(below) Marilyn Horne



Jeffrey Gall





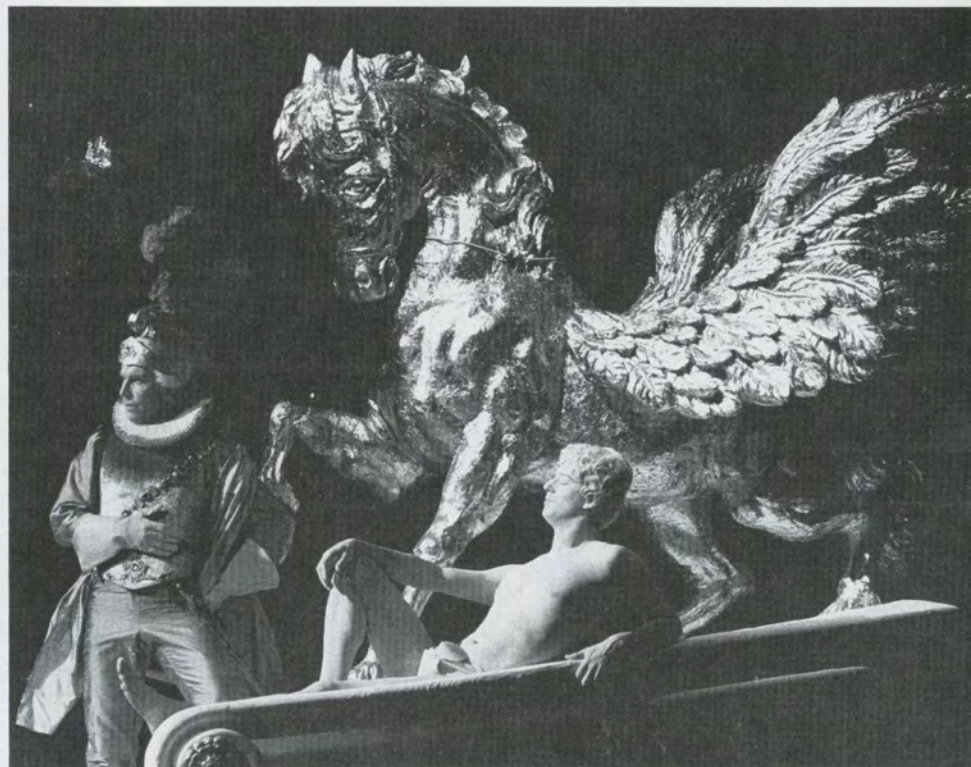
Kathleen Kuhlmann, David Reed



Susan Patterson, Marilyn Horne, Kathleen Kuhlmann, David Reed



Alan Cox



Jeffrey Gall, Loren Nordlund

continued from p.37



KEVIN J. LANGAN

Athamas in Handel's *Semele* which was broadcast nationally from Carnegie Hall. He has also performed the *Messiah* with Musica Sacra, Handel's *Belshazzar* at Alice Tully Hall, and the title role of *Julius Caesar* in Peter Sellars's production at the PepsiCo Summerfare, SUNY, New York, at Boston, and in Brussels. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut last year as Ptolemy in *Julius Caesar*, the first counter-tenor ever to appear at the Met. His discography includes the Smithsonian's recording of the *Messiah*, as well as Handel's *Flavio* and Cavalli's *Xerxes* for Harmonia Mundi. Born in Cleveland, Gall studied voice at the Yale School of Music and holds degrees in Slavic languages from Princeton and Yale universities.

American bass **Kevin J. Langan**, who this year celebrates his 10th consecutive season with San Francisco Opera, sings Ramfis in *Aida* and Astolfo in *Orlando Furioso*. His return this year will mark his 200th performance with the Company over the past decade. A member of the 1979 and 1980 Merola Opera Program, he has appeared here in over 25 different productions beginning with his debut in the 1980 telecast production of *Samson et Dalila*, through performances of Timur in *Turandot* (1982), Colline in *La Bohème* (1983, 1986, 1988), Ramfis in *Aida* (1984), Henry VIII in *Anna Bolena* (1984), Zoroastro in Handel's *Orlando* (1985), and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (1987). His performances this past season have included Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel* and the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlos* in Geneva, Switzerland, and his first King Philip II in *Don Carlos* with the Canadian Opera Company, where he has sung Pimen in *Boris Godunov*, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, and Seneca in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. He recently made his Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in the Ponnelle production of

Falstaff, and also appeared as Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with San Diego Opera, Padre Guardiano in *La Forza del Destino* with Washington Opera, Sarastro with the Canadian Opera Company, Colline with the Opera Company of Boston, Giove in Cavalli's *La Calisto* with Santa Fe Opera, Rocco in Beethoven's original version of *Leonore* at the Caramoor Festival, and Ramfis in the world tour of the International Opera Festival of Canada's production of *Aida*. Langan's engagements this season include his Metropolitan Opera debut as Colline, a return to the Opera Company of Philadelphia as the King of Scotland in Handel's *Ariodante*, Colline with San Diego Opera, Rocco in *Fidelio* at the Cincinnati May Festival, return engagements to Opera Colorado as Méphistophélès in *Faust*, and the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, and his Los Angeles Music Center Opera debut as Antinoo in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse*. His orchestral engagements have included concert versions of *Fidelio* with the Orange County Pacific Symphony, *Boris Godunov* with the St. Louis Symphony, and *Guillaume Tell* with the Opera Orchestra of New York. He has also appeared with the Chicago Symphony, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the National Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, and with the Oakland Symphony. Langan made his American recital debut at Carnegie Recital Hall in 1984, presenting a similar program to the one that marked his recital debut in London at Wigmore Hall in 1979. He received his training at Indiana University School of Music with soprano Margaret Harshaw, and is the recipient of numerous grants and awards.

San Francisco Opera Music Director **Sir John Pritchard** conducts two operas this season: *Idomeneo* and *Orlando Furioso*. He made his 1970 Company debut with *Così fan tutte* (repeated in 1973 and 1979) and returned for *Peter Grimes* (1973 and '76), *Don Giovanni* and *La Cenerentola* (1974), *Thaïs* (1976), *Idomeneo* (1977), *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Der Rosenkavalier* (1985), *Don Carlos* (1986), *Salome* and *Fidelio* (1987) and, last fall, *Manon Lescaut*, *Parsifal* and *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. A protégé of Fritz Busch, Pritchard made his operatic conducting debut at Glyndebourne in 1951 with three Mozart operas: *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte* and *Don Giovanni*. That same year he made his Vienna Staatsoper debut leading *La Forza del Destino*. He opened the 1952-53 season at Covent Garden with *Un Ballo in Maschera* for his first assignment with the Royal Opera



JOHN PRITCHARD

and conducted more than 80 performances of 11 operas in his first two seasons there. He has returned virtually every season since; among the historic performances he led there are the world premieres of Britten's *Gloriana*, Tippett's *King Priam* and *The Midsummer Marriage*, and the famous Visconti production of *Don Carlos*. From 1956 to 1962 he was musical director of the Liverpool Philharmonic, which earned a royal charter during his tenure. He was musical director of the London Philharmonic from 1962 to 1966, and in 1963 was appointed principal conductor and artistic counselor of the Glyndebourne Festival, of which he became music director in 1969. In 1978 he relinquished his Glyndebourne post to become chief conductor at the Cologne Opera, a position he will leave at the end of this year, becoming Cologne's chief guest conductor. In 1980 he became principal guest conductor with the BBC Symphony and since 1982 has been chief conductor of that organization. At the beginning of the 1981-82 season he was named music director of the National Opera in Belgium. Maestro Pritchard is one of the most well-traveled of international conductors, and has taken the BBC Symphony on tours to Germany, Spain, Switzerland and the United States. Recent assignments have included *Così fan tutte* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago; *The Magic Flute* in Geneva; *Aida* and *Wozzeck* at Cologne; *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Covent Garden; Rossini's *Otello* at the Rossini Festival in Pesaro; plus assorted concerts in London, Brussels and Paris. The most recent addition to Maestro Pritchard's sizeable discography is a new recording of *Idomeneo*, his second, which was nominated for a Grammy award.

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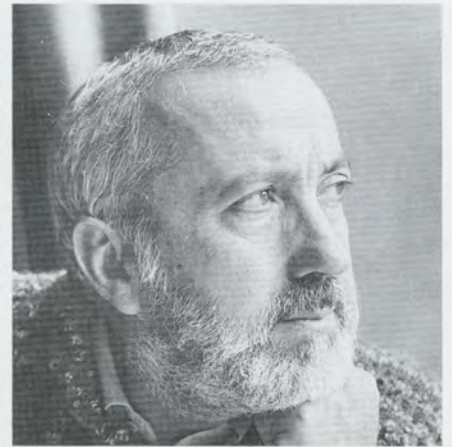
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PIER LUIGI PIZZI

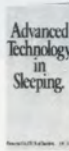
Internationally renowned director and designer **Pier Luigi Pizzi** created and designed San Francisco Opera's new production of *Orlando Furioso*, originally conceived for Verona, subsequently seen in Dallas and Paris, and renewed for the War Memorial stage. His first directing assignment for San Francisco Opera was recreating his production of *Semiramide* for the 1981 Fall Season, and he was here in 1986 for his acclaimed new production of *Macbeth*. His designs for sets and costumes have been seen for more than 22 years in many of the world's major operatic capitals, and in 1977 he directed his first production, *Don Giovanni*, in Turin. Among the many productions he has both designed and directed are Verdi's *I Masnadieri* and *I Due Foscari* and Handel's *Ariodante* for Milan's La Scala; *Khovanshchina* in Geneva and at the Théâtre Musical de Paris-Châtelet; Gluck's *Alceste* in Geneva and at the Paris Opera; Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* for the Paris Opéra-Comique and Aix-en-Provence Festival; *Parsifal* (recently seen at the Chicago Lyric Opera), Bach's *St. John Passion*, *La Clemenza di Tito* and Verdi's *Stiffelio* and *Aroldo* at Venice; and *La Battaglia di Legnano* and *The Devils of Loudon* for the Rome Opera. For the last few years he has participated in the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro with productions of *Mosè in Egitto*, *Tancredi*, *Maometto II*, *Bianca e Faliero* and *Le Comte Ory*. Recent projects include La Scala productions of *Alceste* and *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*, Nino Rota's *The Italian Straw Hat* at Reggio Emilia, Rossini's *Armida* in Bonn, and *Lohengrin* at La Fenice in Venice. In the fall of 1987 he inaugurated Houston Grand Opera's Brown Theater with a new production of *Aida*.

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THOMAS J. MUNN

Thomas J. Munn is lighting designer for *Falstaff*, *Mefistofele*, *Idomeneo*, *Aida*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Lohengrin*, *Orlando Furioso* and *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Last fall, he was responsible for *L'Africaine*, *Parsifal*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *La Bohème* and *La Gioconda*. In his 14th 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*, *Billy Budd* and *Nabucco*. 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*, *Aida*, *L'Africaine* and *La Bohème*. 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*. As a consultant on numerous lighting projects, his most notable achievement in this area is the new Muziektheater in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, for which he was the American lighting consultant.

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Ariosto and His Children



Ludovico Ariosto, 1474-1533, in an engraving, made after a painting by Titian.

By DAVID LITTLEJOHN

A work of literature may be considered a "classic" even if very few people read it any more. Durability need not mean immortality; it's enough that a book *was* enjoyed by many generations of readers past for it to have earned classical status. One might also measure the originality, the capaciousness, and the fertility of a book—all possible marks of a classic—by the number and quality of the *other* works of art it has directly or indirectly inspired.

By either test, Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*— a 38,736-line Italian poem first printed in its complete form in 1532—must be judged one of the most enduring and fruitful works of literature ever written. It is also, for those who are still able and willing to enter it, one of the most captivating books ever written. Lost in its dark forests, stormy seas, desert islands, and enchanted castles, entangled in its bloody combats, its passionate love affairs, its vile and heroic deeds—and guided throughout by one of the most engaging narrators in all literature—I find myself wanting the book never to end.

Over 300 years, *Orlando Furioso* spawned an extraordinary progeny of other works, in literature, music, and art. But (with the exception of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*), I think it remains richer, more humane, and more valuable than any of the paintings, poems, plays, novels, songs, and operas it engendered.

The first version of *Orlando* (or the *Furioso*, as Italians familiarly call it) was published in 1516, in an edition subsidized by Cardinal Ippolito I d'Este of Ferrara, to

David Littlejohn is a writer, critic, and professor of journalism at U.C. Berkeley, who also reviews the San Francisco Opera for the London Times

whom it was dedicated. Ariosto had served in the Cardinal's household as a courtier/diplomat from 1503 to 1517. Although he had worked steadily on the poem since about 1505, it was only after he quit the Cardinal's service and went to work for his brother Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, that he was able to devote most of his time to his writing. He published a second and enlarged version of the *Furioso* in 1521, and the final version eleven years later. In October of 1531, he was granted a pension of 100 gold ducats a year for the rest of his life—which, unfortunately, ended 21 months later.

* * *

By 1600, *Orlando Furioso* had gone through 154 editions, and been translated into all the major European languages. (Some of the translations, like John Harington's into English of 1591, were regarded as important creative accomplishments in their own right.) It has been estimated that 25,000 copies were printed during the century—more than any other work of its time.

After the translators came the imitators, the rivals, the sequels, the parodies. The most notable successor in Italy was Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* of 1581, a more orderly, moralistic, and quasi-historical work of some 15,000 lines, whose author—another courtier of the Duke of Ferrara—specifically set out to rival the "Ferrarese Homer." Italian, Spanish, and French writers kept turning out *Orlando III*s and *IV*s, and *V*s, inventing new adventures for Ariosto's characters in order to cash in on the "knight-errant" craze—a phenomenon that was in turn seized upon, and turned into an even more popular and enduring masterpiece, by Miguel de Cervantes, in 1604.

For 300 years, important authors all over Europe acknowledged their admiration and affection for Ariosto's work. Some neo-classical writers were dismayed by its paganism and profanity, its "irregularity" and fantasy. But even Voltaire, who started out hostile, ended up regarding Ariosto as one of the consummate masters: "The *Orlando Furioso* [he wrote in 1764] is at once the *Odyssey*, the *Iliad*, and the *Don Quixote*." "For God's sake," the British statesman Charles James Fox wrote to a friend, "learn Italian as fast as you can in order to read Ariosto."

Historians of the novel (the growing popularity of which helped to kill the audience for poetic epics) frequently begin

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with *Don Quixote*. But *Don Quixote* depends crucially on *Orlando Furioso*. Cervantes refers to Ariosto and his characters 83 times in his text. Readers of Cervantes will recall Don Quixote christening a barber's basin "Mambrino's helmet"—the enchanted helmet, in Ariosto, that Rinaldo wears. Examining the demented knight's library, his rational friends discover a copy of Ariosto, and decide to save it from the bonfire. At one point, concerned that his Lady Dulcinea will think him insufficiently in love, Don Quixote decides to strip himself naked and cut a few capers in the manner of Orlando-gone-mad, so that Sancho can report back to her his amorous antics.

With that, slipping off his Breeches and stripping himself naked to the waist, he gave two or three Frisks in the Air, and then pitching on his Hands, he fetch'd his Heels over his head twice together; and as he tumbled with his Legs aloft, discover'd such Rarities, that *Sancho e'en* made Haste to turn his Horse's Head, that he might no longer see 'em, and rode away full satisfy'd, that he might swear his Master was mad.

Another landmark of Western literature that could never have existed without Ariosto's is *The Faerie Queene* of 1596—a 35,000-line allegorical/romantic poem which, like the *Furioso*, is more respected today than read. Edmund Spenser acknowledged in his letter-preface to Sir Walter Raleigh that he had purposely "followed" Ariosto. In another letter, he confessed his hope to "outgo" his Italian master. (He did not.)

Tasso, Cervantes, and Spenser are the major authors most directly and obviously indebted to Ariosto's poem. But the nationalistic-romantic epics of Portugal and France (Camões's *Os Lusíadas* and Ronsard's *La Franciade*) also clearly depend on the *Furioso*. The French poets Du Bellay and La Fontaine, both great admirers, borrowed from it considerably. Sidney, Jonson, and Marlowe made use of or reference to it. Molière collaborated with the composer Lully on an extravagant three-day spectacle at Versailles in 1664 based (very freely) on the Alcina's-island episodes, in which young Louis XIV himself played Ruggiero. Milton referred frequently to Ariosto in his early works and notebooks, and (to Dr. Johnson's dismay) borrowed his "depraved" and manic style for his portrait of Limbo in

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Paradise Lost. Part of the serious plot of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* was derived (perhaps at second hand) from the inset Ginevra/Ariodante story of Cantos IV-VI. Orlando in *As You Like It* (though in no way comparable to his heroic namesake), carving his lady-love's name on the bark of every tree in the Forest of Arden, probably owes something to the tree-carving of Angelica and Medoro in the *Furioso*—the discovery of which, in fact, drove the original Orlando *furioso*.

Several Italian playwrights staged adaptations of episodes from the *Furioso* during the 17th and 18th centuries, not unlike those set to music as operas. Byron's *Don Juan* is demonstrably "arios-tesco." He praised the Italian poet in his own works ("His fancy like a rainbow, and his Fire/Like that of Heaven, immortal"), as did Goethe in his play based on the tragic life of Tasso. Pushkin very clearly followed his model in his own romantic epic *Ruslan and Ludmilla* (1820), the source of Glinka's opera. Sir Walter Scott (once called the "Scottish Ariosto") was a fanatic devotee of the Italian poet.

Although "people stopped reading" Ariosto, according to literary historians, more than a century ago, substantial chunks of *Orlando Furioso* are still required reading in most Italian schools. The ever-growing, ever-thirsty literary-academic establishment has absorbed Ariosto like a sponge, and squeezed out thousands of articles and books analyzing and explaining his great work. One professor is currently struggling to persuade American college students to read *Orlando Furioso*, by comparing it to Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, and citing episodes from *Star Trek* that sound to him like borrowings from Ariosto.

More interesting to me are the responses of two of the freest and most imaginative fiction writers of our time, the Argentine Jorge Luis Borges and the Italian Italo Calvino. Borges, who admitted to being a "reader and rereader of Dante and Ariosto," wrote a poem entitled "Ariosto and the Arabs." Calvino, who published his own witty condensation of *Orlando Furioso* in 1970, frequently credited Ariosto as a major influence on his work. Three of his great novels—*The Nonexistent Knight*, *The Cloven Viscount*, and *The Castle of Crossed Destinies*—are the nearest things we have to a 20th-century version of Ariosto. Both authors tried to recapture the absolute, unbound freedom

of the *Furioso*, by creating magical other worlds in which anything can happen.

* * *

Partly because of the time and place at which he wrote, Ariosto and his epic were from the very start identified with the visual arts. The poem itself is full of elaborate descriptions of architecture (mostly enchanted palaces of a fantastic, super-luxurious sort), sculpture, and painting.

Working at a sophisticated early-16th-century Italian court, one with close family ties to the no-less sophisticated courts of Mantua, Milan, and Urbino, a dynamic rivalry with Venice, and a nagging dependence on Rome, the poet could not help but meet many celebrated Renaissance painters. Titian he knew personally, and praised (along with Leonardo, Mantegna, Giovanni Bellini, Michelangelo, Sebastiano del Piombo, Raphael, and the two Dossi brothers of Ferrara) at the start of Canto XXXII. In return, Titian painted a portrait of Ariosto—a bearded, balding, hook-nosed, tired-eyed gentleman in profile—reproduced in an engraving for the 1532 edition.

The first works of visual art "inspired" by the poem, in fact, were the woodcut engravings that were printed—one for each of the 46 cantos—in early Venetian editions. For the editions of 1556 and 1584, the engravers populated extensive stretches of foreshortened geography with agitated little comic-strip figures (helpfully captioned by their names), fighting or weeping or making love or dying in overlapping and picturesque settings. For his 1591 translation, Sir John Harington's publishers had these engravings redrawn (adding, in one case, pornographic details) and cut on copper.

Ariosto's poem was used frequently after 1532 by major and minor western artists. Before 1600, Nicolò dell'Abate had decorated a palace in Bologna with a series of frescoes depicting Ruggiero's adventures on Alcina's island. In the 17th century, several painters of the Bolognese school (Albani, Domenichino, Guercino, Guido Reni) rendered episodes from the *Furioso*—mainly the love-idyll of Angelica and Medoro. In 1641, Duke Francesco I d'Este had his Villa at Sassuolo decorated with a series of self-celebrating frescoes from the book. Rubens painted a salacious view of a dirty-minded old hermit (the story is in Canto VIII) gaping at a sleeping, nude, and remarkably fleshy Angelica. In 1757, G.B. Tiepolo did a wonderfully

"operatic" series of frescoes on the walls of Palladio's Villa Valmarana outside of Vicenza, including four rich and sensuous scenes from Ariosto; his son G.D. drew many episodes out of the *Furioso*. In a recent book devoted *entirely* to renderings of the Angelica-Medoro tree-carving motif, the author describes and illustrates 25 different versions of this one scene made between 1577 and 1825.

Boucher executed some wonderfully erotic scenes from the poem; Fragonard, working towards an edition de luxe that was never published, made a total of 150 drawings after Ariosto, which include some of his most deft and evocative work. At the Paris salons between 1806 and 1827, 21 scenes from *Orlando Furioso* (mostly Angelicas and Medoros) were displayed—more decorous and sentimental than erotic, with the one wild exception of the Ingres "Ruggiero saving Angelica" of 1819, a voluptuous subject he painted several times. In 1826, Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld covered the walls and ceiling of the "Ariosto Room" of the Cassino Massimo in Rome with ten scenes from the poem.* Between 1830 and 1920, 40 more Ariostan subjects were displayed at the Paris salons, including one painting and three sketches by Delacroix.

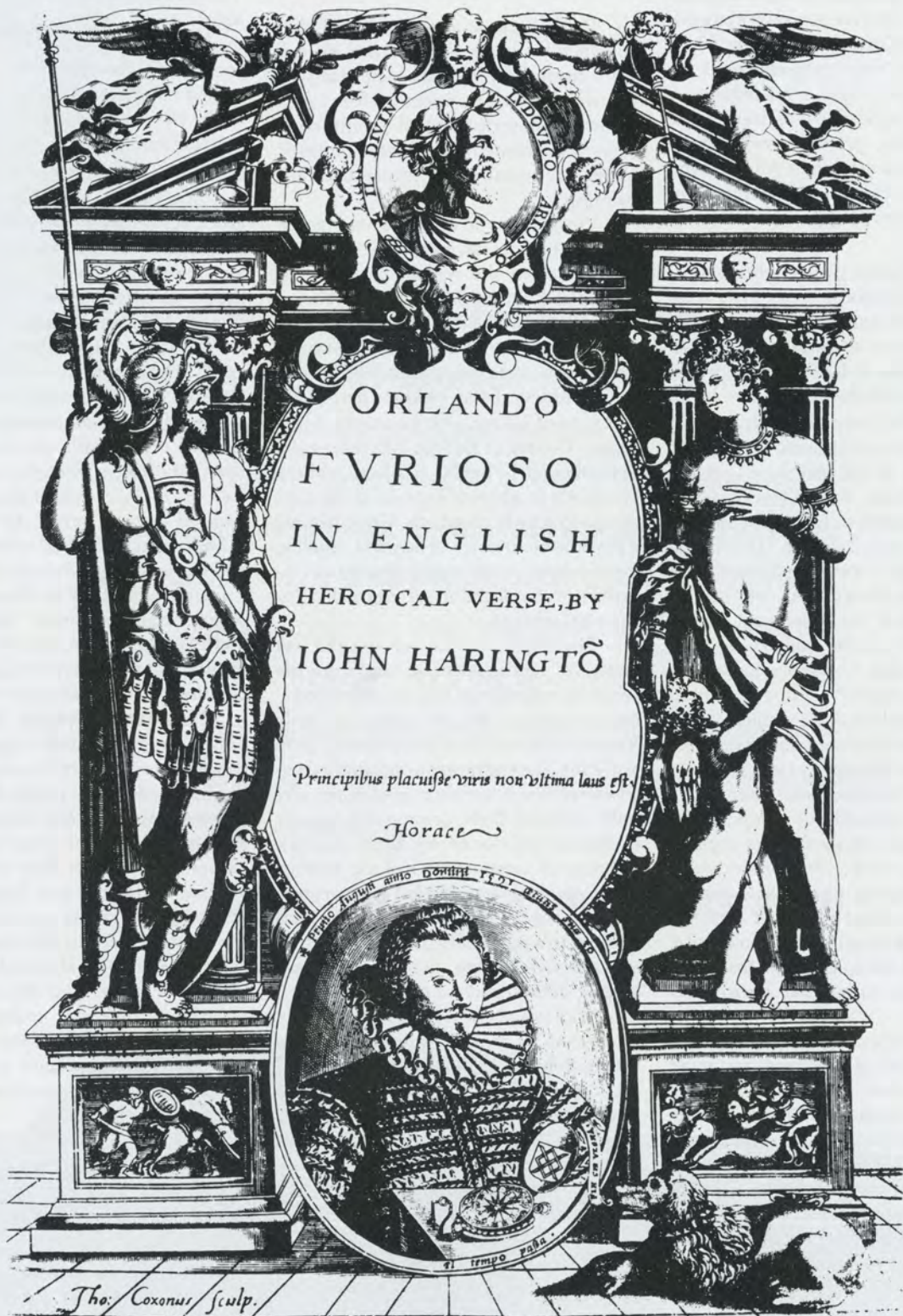
With rare exceptions, these painted, drawn, engraved, and sculpted versions concentrate on a very few episodes, out of the hundreds in the poem: the love affair between Angelica and Medoro (usually showing one or the other carving their names on a tree, as they loll naked in a verdant landscape); and Ruggiero, on his winged horse, saving poor Angelica from the horrible orc. In the hands of four centuries of visual artists, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* was, thereby, usually reduced to one sado-masochistic male fantasy scene; and an image taken from the one idyllic romance in the poem, which occupies 20 stanzas (of 4,842) in the middle of Canto XIX.

* * *

To a substantial degree, the same process of sentimental reductionism took place in the music that drew upon Arios-

*The cover of this *Orlando Furioso* magazine features one of these frescoes. There's an interesting sidelight to their author: he is the father of Ludwig Schnorr von Carolsfeld, a tenor who so impressed Richard Wagner in the title role of *Lohengrin*, he invited him to perform Tristan in the world premiere of *Tristan und Isolde*, which he did, in 1865.

—Ed.



Title page of the 1591 John Harington edition of Orlando Furioso, featuring Orlando on the left, Angelica on the right, Ludovico Ariosto on the top, and John Harington on the bottom.

to's great poem. Ariosto's translation into music began in the 16th century, when individual 8-line stanzas of *Orlando Furioso*, or groups and cycles of stanzas, were converted into madrigals, for performance before aristocratic gatherings. (Parts of the poem were also recited, probably to stock guitar accompaniments, by traveling minstrels or *cantastorie* before working-class crowds in piazzas all over Italy.)

The emotionally expressive, musically sophisticated madrigal form was another of the artistic triumphs of the d'Este court of Ferrara, primarily in the generation *after* Ariosto's death. Bartolomeo Tromboncino first musicked a portion of the still-unpublished *Furioso* in 1512, for Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, Marchesa of Mantua, patroness of Mantegna and Perugino, sister of Ariosto's Cardinal-padrone, and "probably the most learned woman of her time." Between then and 1623—primarily between 1540 and 1580—a total of 226 different stanzas of the *Furioso* were used as texts for at least 730 published madrigals, composed by people like Orlando [!] de Lassus, Andrea Gabrieli, William Byrd, and Palestrina.

Of the 21 stanzas set to music ten times or more, *eight* are taken from the longing outbursts of Bradamante (a tender-hearted woman-warrior) for her errant knight-lover, Ruggiero. Three are similar expressions of anxious longing by two of Angelica's many spurned lovers. In all 11 of these, the speaker is tormented by jealousy of a possible rival—the very emotion that drove Orlando mad. XVIII, 127—the stanza where Orlando first begins to crack—was set to music 16 times, making it third in popularity after VIII, 26 (Orlando longing for his lost Angelica) and I, 42—the all-time hit stanza, madrigaled 19 times—which forms part of another of her suitors' laments.

La verginella è simile alla rosa
 ch' in bel giardin su la nativa spina
 mentre sola e sicura si riposa,
 né gregge né pastor se le avvicina;
 l'aura soave e l'alba rugiadosa,
 l'acqua, la terra al suo favor s'inchina:
 gioveni vaghi e donne inamorate
 amano averne e seni e tempie ornate.

*(A virgin is like a rose: while she
 reposes on her native thorns, alone and
 safe in a lovely garden, neither flocks nor
 shepherd comes near. The gentle breeze
 and the morning dew, the rain, the earth*

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Orlando in pursuit of the Giant. Illustrated by Thomas Coxon, 1591.

bend to do her homage. Young lovers like to wear her on their breasts and brows.)

In the next stanza, the speaker goes on—like most male lovers in the poem—to express his mortal terror that someone else has “plucked his rose” (i.e., deflowered the virginal Angelica) before he has had the chance. A kind of rabid lust and sexual possessiveness permeates the poem, if not the stanzas favored by composers.

Four of the 21 most popular stanzas are taken from the opening lines, or *proemi*, of cantos, in three of which the poet is declaiming passionately *against* Love for the wretched things it does to males and females alike, but especially males (like him). One stanza is from a long letter of Bradamante’s to her wandering lover, insisting on *her* rock-like fidelity.

Of the remaining four stanzas most favored by Renaissance composers, two are pure (and magnificent) pieces of landscape painting: one of Alcina’s enchanted island, as seen from the back of a flying horse; the other of the Garden of Paradise. A third is a famous portrait-in-words of the beauties of the naked virgin Olimpia, whom Orlando has just saved from being devoured by another horrible monster. Fifteen composers set to music Ariosto’s splendid image of her face, smiling through tears after her recovery. Five of them went on to musick the next stanza as well, in which the poet describes the impact of her eyes and hair on a young man standing nearby. No composer took on the challenge of the next three stanzas, in which Ariosto describes in tactile, glowing detail Olimpia’s bare breasts, hips, belly, thighs, and private parts.

Stanza XXV, 68, by way of one of Ariosto’s frequent similes, gives at least a hint of the joyful, Mediterranean eroticism with which the poem is packed. In this instance, Ricciardetto has cleverly tricked a damsel into bed by pretending to be his twin sister Bradamante (whom the damsel adores)—but a Bradamante suddenly enchanted into male shape in order to satisfy the surprised girl’s needs.

Non rumor di tamburi o suon di trombe

furon principio all’amoroso assalto,
ma baci ch’imitavan le colombe,
devan segno or di gire, or di far alto.
Usammo alti’armi che saette o frombe.

Io senza scale in su la ròcca salto
e lo stendardo piantovi di botto,
e la nimica mia mi caccio sotto.

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A typical Orlando Furioso scene, complete with battles, burning buildings, chopped-off limbs, soldiers, paladins, plebeians . . . The site of the battle is Paris, but Damascus looms in the background. Illustrated by Thomas Coxon, 1591.

(No roll of drums, no trumpets' peal gave warning of the amorous assault. [Sixteenth century madrigalists, like Handel later on, loved setting lines like that to music.] Instead, dovelike kisses gave the signal whether to advance, or stand firm. We used other weapons than arrows and catapults. I leapt upon the battlements without a ladder, and planted my standard there at one jab, and buried my enemy beneath me.)

In the hands of the madrigalists, then, the immense and tangled world of *Orlando Furioso* was reduced to a sequence of songs of sad love-longing, fearful jealousy, lust thwarted and (more rarely) satisfied, gorgeous spring gardens, and voluptuous nudes.

* * *

As converted into opera, *Orlando Furioso* emerges no less dominated by *Amor*, no less tender-pathetic, no less a poem almost exclusively about the sweet sadness and cruel suffering of love—which represents perhaps one-fifth of the poem that Ariosto wrote.

I have turned up a total of 40 operas (there were doubtless more) based on Ariosto's epic, produced between 1619 and 1801. Orlando, Angelica, Medoro, Bradamante, Ruggiero, Alcina, Ginevra, Ariodante, Atlante, Olimpia, and Rodomonte all turn up, alone or in pairs, as titular heroes of their own operas—which gives some idea of what a department store full of plots opera librettists found in the *Furioso*.

The original poem is much too long, too cosmic, too busy, too multiple in its affects and intentions to be reduced to one evening of opera. In his preface to the 1713 version of *Orlando Furioso*, Vivaldi's librettist Grazio Braccioli wrote, "the numerous exploits of the vast epic involve half the world, so to speak. Such actions have been limited by us in this drama to one." By and large, the operatic versions of *Orlando Furioso* concentrate on one of three broad areas of action.

(1) Most often, they focus on Orlando's passionate love for Angelica, the madness to which this leads him, and—sometimes—his eventual cure; along with the love of Angelica and Medoro. This is, essentially, the substance of Handel's *Orlando*, and a great many other operas. Some "pastoral" versions concentrate almost exclusively on Angelica and Medoro—even on what happens to them after they disappear from Ariosto's story.

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(2) Many of the *Furioso* operas are set entirely on the enchanted, lotus-land island of Alcina, a sorceress who (in Cantos VI-VIII) tempts brave knights to become her lovers, then discards them and turns them into rocks or trees. Ruggiero, the Saracen superhero, is the most notable of her conquests. In some operatic versions (like Vivaldi's *Orlando Furioso*, or Handel's *Alcina*), Bradamante goes to the island to save him; in the original, this was done by the "good witch" Melissa. Librettists like Braccioli sometimes combined a number of Ariosto's plots by setting them all on Alcina's island; or conflated *her* enchanted castle with Atlante's.

(3) Canto V, and parts of Cantos IV and VI, tell the independent story of Ginevra and Ariodante, a tale of lust, romance, and chivalry in Arthurian Scotland, which became a popular opera plot in its own right. The best known of these is Handel's *Ariodante* of 1735.

After selecting one of these three basic areas of action, most opera librettists proceeded to "improve" on the original, by adding new magical scenes, or comic characters, or pathetic events of their own.

Wandering through Ariosto's epic are about 20 major characters, another 20 with substantial stories of their own, and several thousand extras. There are at least as many separate adventures as there are cantos (46), many of which Ariosto keeps moving simultaneously. When any one of these—beyond the three basic situations—is introduced into an opera, it is usually in a glancing, comic, or irrelevant manner. The Saracen giant Rodomonte, for example, a magnificent opponent for Charlemagne's forces, slaughters hundreds of people with a few swipes of his sword, and comes near to destroying all of Paris single-handed. In Haydn's *Orlando Paladino*, he is simply a great oversized clown, who frightens people by talking (or singing) in the style his name has given to the English language. [*Rodomontade*: vainglorious boasting or bragging; pretentious, blustering talk.]

* * *

I do not mean to belittle the achievements of the many writers, artists, and musicians who have drawn their characters, ideas, and incidents from the bottomless well of Ariosto's epic. But it is important to remember—especially at a time when people are likely to know the children better than the parent—how much

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more there is in the poem than in any of the works it inspired.

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Before he became president of Yale, before he became commissioner of baseball, the late A. Bartlett Giamatti was best known as an eminent scholar and eloquent defender of Ludovico Ariosto. No doubt his Italian heritage had something to do with this. But his deep-lying affection for the *Orlando Furioso* was also a good indication that this latter-day "Renaissance man" had his priorities straight.

The *Orlando Furioso* contains far more than a shimmering, translucent vision of the chivalric world; it also conveys a clear, acute sense of the shortcomings, the limitations, the horrors, and the follies of that world. Within the harmonious, ordered universe of the poem—perpetual in its perfection—Ariosto gives us an image of a world which is changing and in decay. We are exposed to the beautiful surface, and also to the brutal realities of life. . . . in the solitary figure of Orlando, we see the extremes to which a man's folly can bring him, and we have an insight into all the power latent in the delightful world of the poem, and into all the despair.

A. Bartlett Giamatti, Introduction to *Orlando Furioso* (1968) ■

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1989 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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Edgardo Garcia
Michelle Jacobs
Dianne Meier

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Lylliam Whitford

Seamstresses/Seamsters

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Lisa Bubon
Gladys Campbell
Adela Cantor
Vilma Castro
Viria Castro
Shuk Chi Chan
Eddie Cheung
Creta Cozijn-Pullen
Celia Damon
Guillermina Flores
Mileta Foster
Ligia Libreros
Francisca Martinez
Judy Masliyah
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Office Manager

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Anya Lem
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Brad Martinez
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1989 Opera Previews

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

MERCHANDISING DEPARTMENT (OPERA SHOP)

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Nat Segal, *Nurse*
Elisabeth Dumont, *South Elevator*
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Attendant
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Susan Weiss, *Usher Coordinator*
Mildred Smith, *Head Usher*
Bill Ayers, *Head Usher/Green Room*
Coordinator

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD PREVIEWS MARIN

Previews held at United Methodist Church, 410 Sycamore Ave., Mill Valley; refreshments served at 7:30 p.m., previews at 8 p.m. Single tickets are \$5 (\$4 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 435-1141.

Orlando Furioso 11/16
Eleanor Selfridge-Field
Die Frau ohne Schatten 11/20
George Martin

SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant, at 8 p.m. Single tickets are \$5 (students \$3). For further information, please call (415) 941-3890 or (415) 326-1971.

Orlando Furioso 11/14
Eleanor Selfridge-Field
Die Frau ohne Schatten 11/21
George Martin

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

Previews held at the Los Gatos History Club, 123 Los Gatos Blvd., at 10 a.m. Series is open to the public at a cost of \$5 per lecture (free of charge to San Jose Opera Guild members). For further information, please call (408) 354-7525.

Orlando Furioso 11/14
Eleanor Selfridge-Field
Die Frau ohne Schatten 11/21
George Martin

SONOMA COUNTY CHAPTER

Previews held at various times and locations (see below). Single tickets (member) \$5, non-member \$6, students \$3. For further information and reservations for luncheons and dinner, please call (707) 938-2432 or (707) 996-2590.

Orlando Furioso 11/13, 6:00 p.m. (dinner)
Eleanor Selfridge-Field 7:30 p.m.
(lecture)
Oakmont Chalet, 7025 Oakmont Dr.,
Santa Rosa
Die Frau ohne Schatten 11/20, 10:30 a.m.
George Martin 1229 Los Robles Dr.,
Sonoma

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

Previews held in the Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco. Lectures begin at noon and there is no admission charge. For further information, please call (415) 852-2220.

Orlando Furioso 11/15
Eleanor Selfridge-Field
Die Frau ohne Schatten 11/22
George Martin

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of the operas of the 1989 season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International. Lectures will be presented in the auditorium of the Cetus Corp., 1400—53rd St., in Emeryville, at 7:30 p.m. Individual admission at the door is \$8. For further information, please call (415) 526-5244.

Orlando Furioso 11/13
Die Frau ohne Schatten 11/20

MERRITT COLLEGE OPERA LECTURE SERIES

Merritt College is offering an opera preview class, Introduction to Opera (Music 13A), with emphasis on the operas of the 1989 season, on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m., beginning August 29 and ending December 19. The enrollment fee is \$15. Classes will be held at the College, 12500 Campus Drive, Building R, Room 125, in Oakland. For further information, please call (415) 436-2430.

ROBERT GOODHUE'S FALL OPERA COURSE

Ten classes on San Francisco Opera's season are offered, and there is a choice of three series: Mondays from August 21 to November 20 at 6:30 p.m.; Thursdays from August 31 to November 16 at 6:30 p.m.; and Saturdays from September 9 to November 18 from 10 a.m. to noon or from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Sessions are held at the Galleria Park Hotel, 191 Sutter, S.F. Individual previews are \$10. For further information, please call (415) 956-1271.

Donor Categories and Benefits

Without the generous support of our Opera family it would be impossible for the San Francisco Opera to continue to produce world-class opera. In addition to enjoying outstanding entertainment on stage, contributors to the San Francisco Opera receive a number of benefits which enable them to observe many stages of opera production, to meet the artists and to have behind-the-scenes opportunities to participate in Opera life.

The donor categories and benefits outlined below are effective as of February 1, 1989. For information on becoming involved in these interesting and exciting donor benefits and services contact the Development Department (415) 861-4008, x416.

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 - Invitation to a production preview and working rehearsal with box supper



Medallion Society

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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- All of the above, plus
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 - Highest priority in all patron privileges and benefits, subject to availability

All rehearsals are subject to space availability, change of scheduling, and management decisions.

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San Francisco Opera appreciates the generous support of the following businesses whose leadership contributions made from August 31, 1988 through August 31, 1989 are recognized through their membership in the Corporate Council. Donors of \$2,000 and above are eligible for membership in the Corporate Council.

The San Francisco Opera Corporate Council includes Bay Area businesses and corporations that play an active role in the Opera. The San Francisco Opera seeks to add new members to the Council so that it reflects the varied Bay Area business community. Council activities include participation in members-only dress rehearsals, numerous Council evenings at the Opera, and special behind-the-scenes glimpses into the world of opera. These benefits can be enjoyed by your business clients and employees.

We invite you to join the Corporate Council. The San Francisco Opera plays a major role in the cultural, economic and educational life of the City. When you invest in the Opera, you are investing in a richer, higher quality of living for everyone in the Bay Area

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We would also like to acknowledge the following Sponsors whose contributions were received prior to February 1, 1989, when new membership levels became effective.

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ANNUAL S.F. OPERA



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San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges members of the Medallion Society who have made contributions from September 30, 1988 through September 30, 1989. This premier group of donors 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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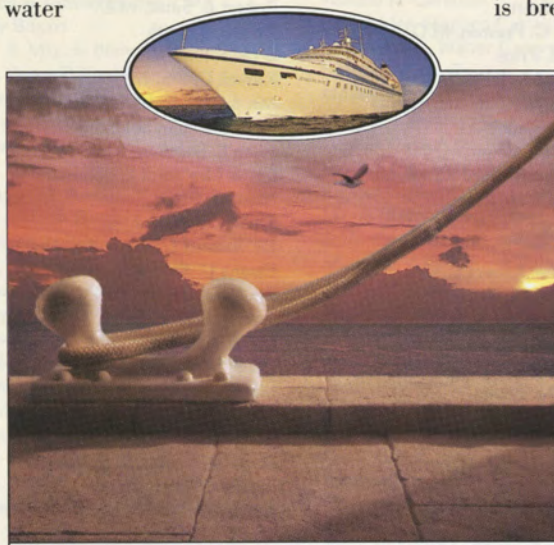
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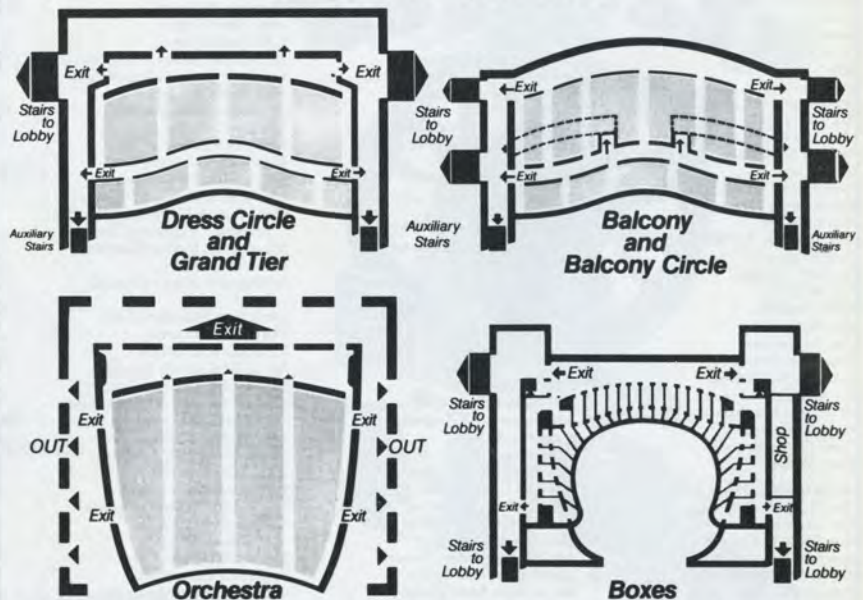
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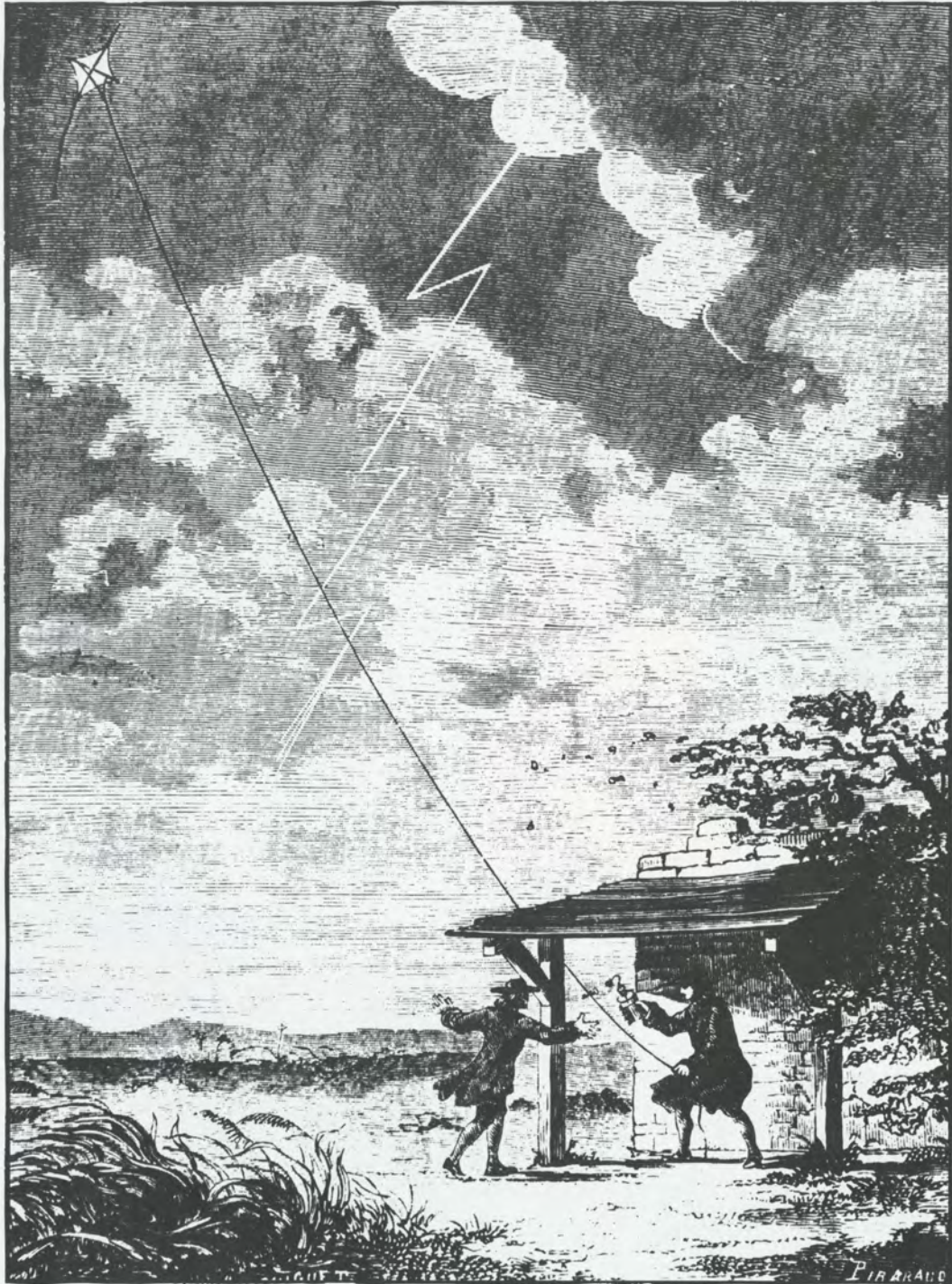
Performing Arts Center Tours Tours of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center, which include the War Memorial Opera House, the Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall and the Herbst Theatre take place as follows: Mondays, 10:00-2:30 on the hour and half hour. Davies Hall only: Wednesday, 1:30/2:30. Saturday 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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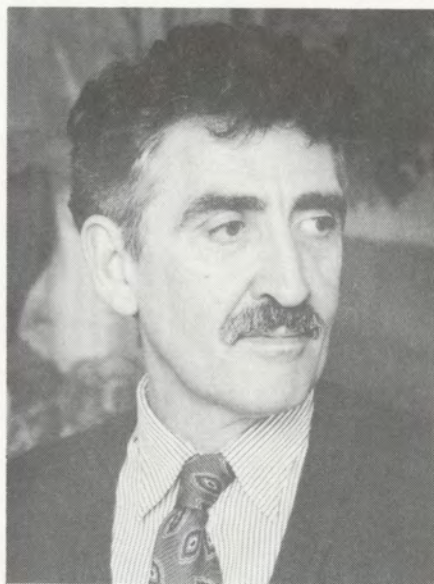


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November 19, 1989

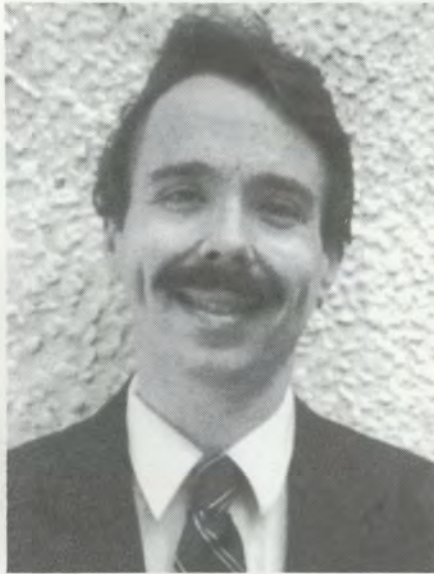
In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, Italian director Ugo Tessitore stages the Company premiere of *Orlando Furioso*, taking over the assignment for the ailing Pier Luigi Pizzi.



The native of Rome began his musical studies at UC-Berkeley and is back in the Bay Area after 20 years of activity in opera houses around the world. He has been associate director of productions in Verona, Venice, Florence, Rome, Paris, Vienna, East Berlin, Tokyo, New York, Edinburgh, Pesaro and Milan. He directed his own productions of *Carmen* in Venice, *La Sonnambula* in Bologna, *La Donna del Lago* in Nice and Trieste, and worked at the world premiere of Stockhausen's *Samstag aus Licht* at La Scala in Milan. He also staged a revival of Luca Ronconi's production of *La Traviata* at the Châtelet in Paris, and, with Frank Dunlop, co-directed Weber's *Oberon* for the Tanglewood and Edinburgh Festivals. In recent seasons he has staged revivals of productions by Pier Luigi Pizzi: *Mosè in Egitto* in Rome; *William Tell* in Paris; *Carmen* in Bercy; and *Don Carlo* at the Vienna Staatsoper. In addition to his directing assignments, Tessitore also designed the sets and costumes for *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Bonn.

December 6 and 9, 1989

These performances of *Orlando Furioso* will be conducted by Randall Behr.



Currently music director for Long Beach Opera, **Randall Behr** is a member of the faculty at the University of Southern California where he is music director of the Opera Workshop. He made his Long Beach Opera conducting debut in 1987 with *Ariadne auf Naxos* and led a benefit concert with Marilyn Horne for that company the same year, subsequently conducting *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Long Beach last year. This season, as associate conductor for Los Angeles Music Center Opera, he led the critically acclaimed production of *Salome* with Maria Ewing, as well as a performance of *Tosca* with Miss Ewing and Plácido Domingo. Long associated with San Francisco Opera, he made his Spring Opera Theater debut in 1976 with *La Périchole*, subsequently returning for SPOT productions of *Viva La Mamma* (1977), *La Rondine* (1978), and Conrad Susa's *Transformations* (1980). He first appeared on the War Memorial podium to lead the 1975 student matinee performances of *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and that same year led Western Opera Theater's production of *Don Giovanni* at Stern Grove. He has been guest conductor for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Spoleto USA, Central City Opera, Opera/Omaha, Michigan Opera Theatre, Opera Memphis and Utah Opera, as well as for Italy's Festival Opera Barga. Maestro Behr was on the podium for the controversial Peter Brook production of *La Tragédie de Carmen* on Broadway, and has also conducted for the American Ballet Theatre and served as music director of the Hidden Valley Opera Theatre in Carmel.

