

# Capriccio

1990

Sunday, October 21, 1990 2:00 PM  
Wednesday, October 24, 1990 7:30 PM  
Saturday, October 27, 1990 8:00 PM  
Tuesday, October 30, 1990 8:00 PM  
Friday, November 2, 1990 8:00 PM  
Wednesday, November 7, 1990 8:00 PM  
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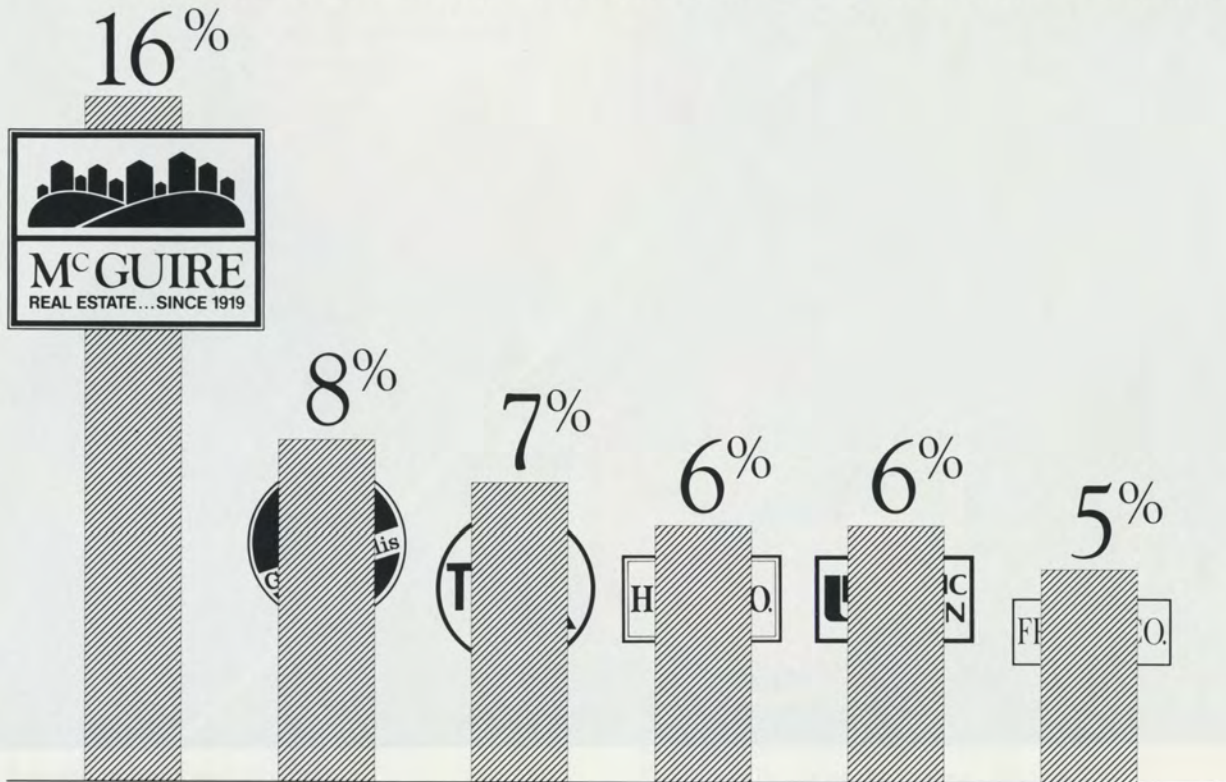
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Well, here it is six months later, and we thought it was time for an update. And this time, we're talking City-wide. For the first six months of 1990, McGuire Real Estate was involved in twice as many \$500,000 + transactions than our nearest competitor.

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# San Francisco Opera

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

## Capriccio

1990 SEASON  
Vol. 68, No. 8

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La Farge, John, 1835-1910  
*Flowers on a Window Ledge*, 1862

Oil on canvas; 24x20 in.

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SOHL

## From the President and the Chairman of the Board

Welcome to the 68th Fall Season of San Francisco Opera. Our first season of opera in the 1990s offers much that is new, including a new president of the Opera Association Board of Directors. Both of us have served on the board for a number of years, and it is most exciting to be involved as this great Company reassesses its past and prepares for a promising future.

We on the board are not always highly visible to our audiences. What appears on our stage, however, is; and this year, there is an unusually high number of productions new to San Francisco Opera audiences: seven of our eleven fall season productions have not been seen here before. The economics of opera production being what they are, we could never have such an abundance of new productions without some very creative planning on the part of our administration. Opera is the most labor-intensive, and therefore expensive, of all the performing arts; no American opera company could possibly afford to build seven new productions in one year in today's fiscal climate.

We have built three new productions in our San Francisco Opera shops this year, which in itself is an impressive

figure, and two of them have been made possible through deeply appreciated donations. Our new production of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* was underwritten by a generous grant from the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, and San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges the generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Gorham B. Knowles and The Edward E. Hills Fund to underwrite our new *Die Fledermaus*.

Opera companies can save considerable amounts of money by creating a new production together, and that is what we have done with Berg's *Wozzeck*, in tandem with the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto. For helping us cover our end of the costs of this joint venture, San Francisco Opera extends its heartfelt gratitude to the Paul L. and Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation.

Even our own productions that we revive do not come free; the costs in refurbishing a production are surprisingly high, and San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges a generous gift from Maria Manetti Farrow to underwrite our revival of *Pagliacci*. Our other revived productions owe their original creation to the generosity of previous donations: *Rigoletto* was made possible by

a gift from James D. Robertson, *Khovanshchina* by a gift from the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, and *Un Ballo in Maschera* by a gift from an anonymous friend of San Francisco Opera. To all of the benefactors whose generosity made this bright new season possible, our deepest and warmest thanks!

In addition, we 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. The continued support of Mayor Art Agnos and Chief Administrative Officer Rudolf Nothenberg has been extremely gratifying. And of course, we extend our appreciation to the San Francisco Opera Guild and the War Memorial Board of Trustees for their ongoing support.

With the continuing support of the above-mentioned individuals, foundations, corporations and governmental agencies, we anticipate an exciting operatic experience as we explore the treasures of our repertoire in the 1990s.

Reid W. Dennis, Chairman  
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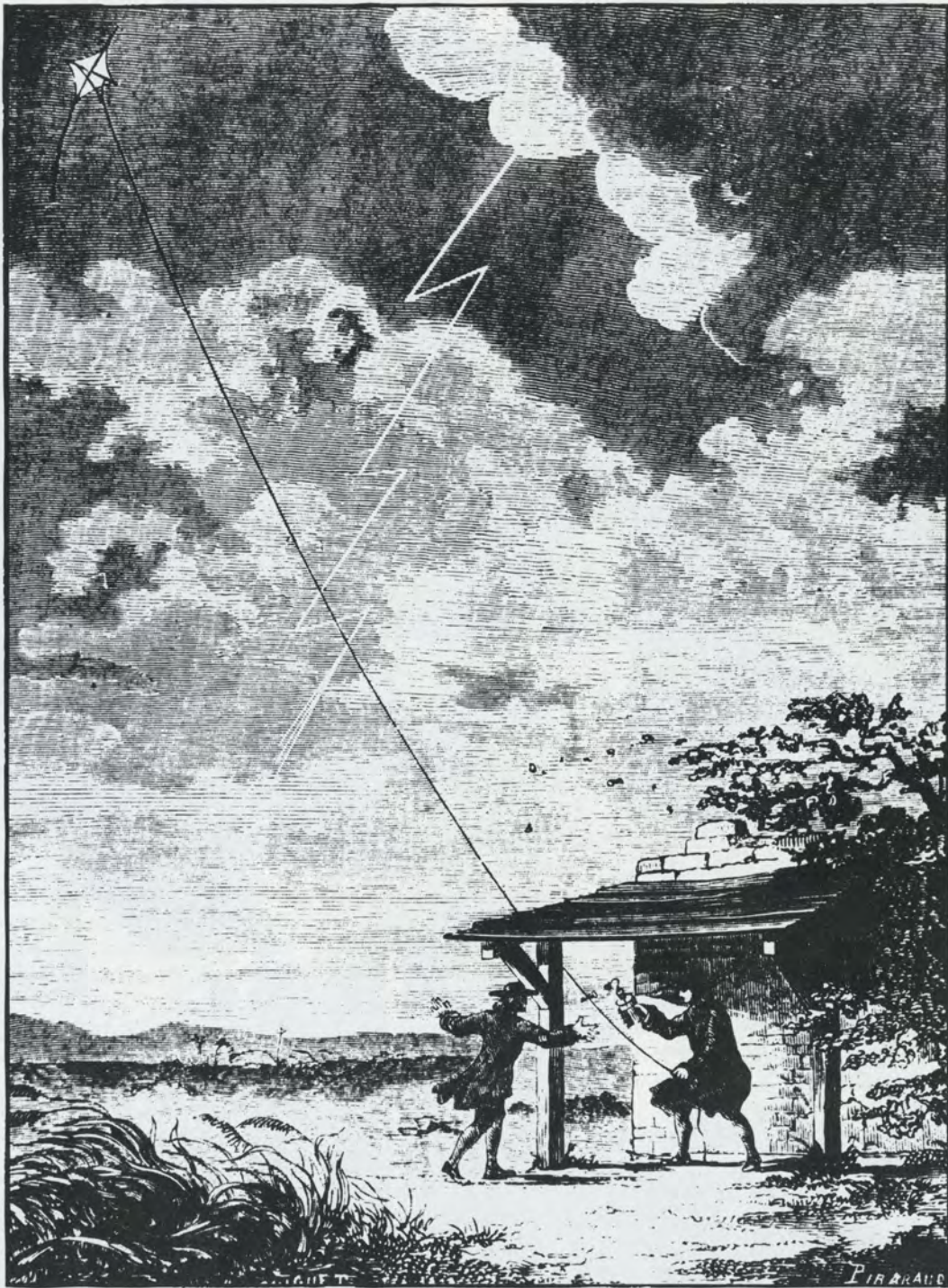
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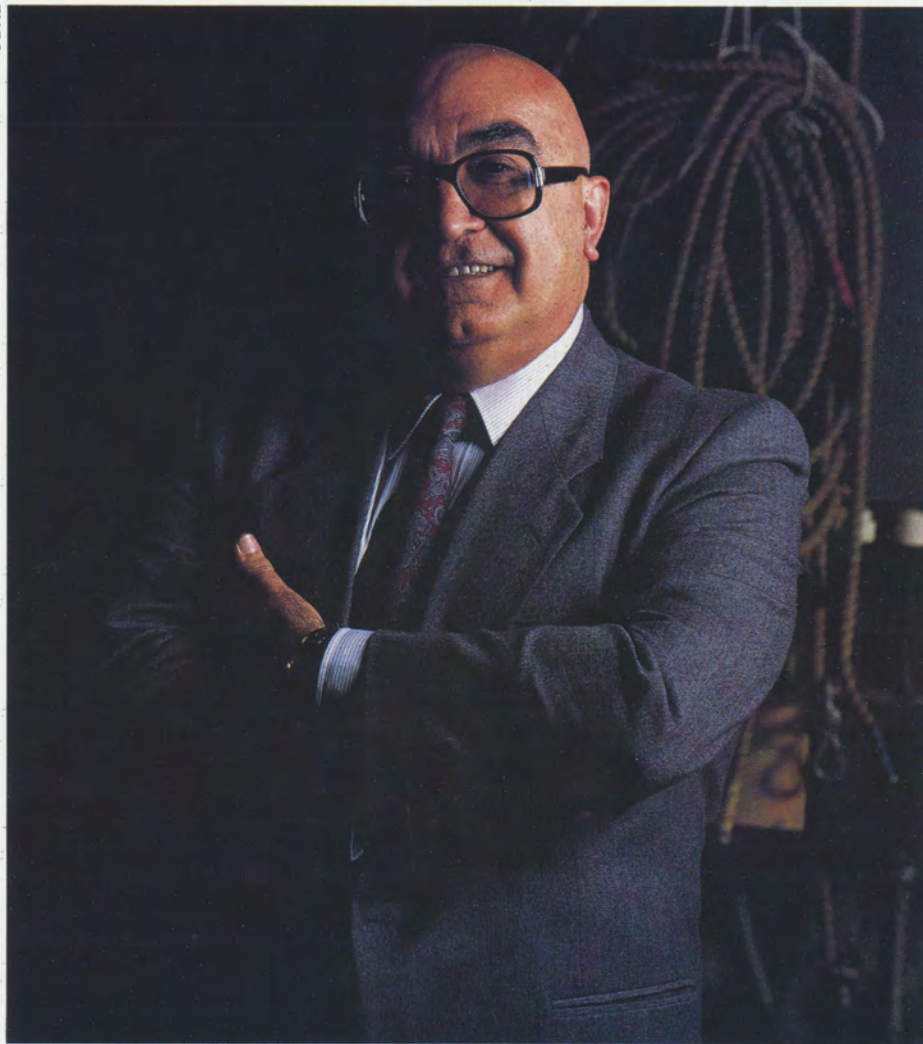
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## General Director's Message

Another fall season is upon us, and once again I take delight in welcoming you back to San Francisco Opera. There are many new elements to this fall season, many more than usual, and our regular subscribers as well as our new audience members will find themselves on an adventurous exploration of new repertoire, new productions of familiar repertoire, and exciting debuts by a number of artists.

To begin with, an amazing seven of our eleven productions are new to San Francisco. Three of them represent Company premieres: Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (previously staged by Spring Opera, but never before a part of our regular fall season), Mas-

senet's *Don Quichotte* and Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses to his Homeland*. Another opera receiving a new production, *Suor Angelica*, hasn't been performed in the War Memorial Opera House since 1952, while *Capriccio*, also new, has been part of only one previous fall season, in 1963. *Khovanshchina* has also been seen only once before, when the current production was unveiled in 1984.

The number of artists joining us for the first time this season is also impressive—so much so that it would be impossible to list everyone here: five conductors, two directors, five designers and nearly 20 singers will be making their San Francisco Opera debuts this fall,

while several returning artists will be undertaking new roles for the first time.

In short, there are many wonderful discoveries to be made this season, and I am extremely pleased that you will be here to make them along with us. The art form we call opera is nearly 400 years young, and it grows fresher, more vital and exciting every year. San Francisco Opera welcomes you as together we celebrate the liveliest of the performing arts.

# San Francisco Opera

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

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| 1932-1936 | WALLACE M. ALEXANDER | 1971-1973 | WILLIAM H. ORRICK, JR. |
| 1937-1944 | ROBERT WATT MILLER   | 1974-1984 | WALTER M. BAIRD        |
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# San Francisco Opera

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

## 1990 Season

|   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Opening Night</b> (CANCELLED)<br>Friday, September 7, 7:30<br><i>New Production</i><br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>Mitchell, Obratsova, Begg, Petersen,<br>Keen, Williams, Racette, Randell*,<br>Jepson*, Fortuna, Guo*, Claycomb*,<br>Mills, Mavrovitis*<br>Santi*/Copley/Perdziola*/Munn<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo<br>Mims*; Atlantov**, Manuguerra,<br>G. Quilico, Gordon<br>Santi/Calábria/Ponnelle/Munn<br><i>San Francisco Opera gratefully<br/>acknowledges a generous gift from Maria<br/>Manetti Farrow to underwrite the revival<br/>of this production of Pagliacci.</i> | Tuesday, Sept. 18, 8:00 (CANCELLED)<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg  | Wednesday, September 19, 7:30<br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo  | Wednesday, October 3, 7:30<br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart  |
| Saturday, Sept. 8, 8 p.m. (CANCELLED)<br><i>New production, co-produced with the<br/>Canadian Opera Company</i><br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg<br>Forst, Golden; Monk, Ellsworth, Kale**,<br>Vogel, De Haan, Travis, Ledbetter,<br>Frank<br>Layer/Mansouri/Levine/Whitfield<br><i>San Francisco Opera gratefully<br/>acknowledges a generous grant from the<br/>Paul L. and Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation<br/>to underwrite this production.</i>   | Tuesday, September 25, 8:00<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi   | Thursday, September 20, 8:00<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi  | Friday, October 5, 8:00<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi  |
| Wednesday, Sept. 12, 7:30 (CANCELLED)<br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo  | Wednesday, September 26, 7:30<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg  | Friday, September 21, 8:00†<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg  | Sunday, October 7, 2:00<br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart   |
| Friday, Sept. 14, 8:00 (CANCELLED)<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg   | Thursday, September 27, 7:30<br><i>New Production</i><br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart<br>Patterson, Parrish, Fortuna, Guo; Moll,<br>Streit*, Magnusson*, Hoffmann*, Li,<br>Graber<br>Michael*/Wadsworth*/Lynch*/Long*/<br>Arhelger<br><i>San Francisco Opera gratefully<br/>acknowledges a generous grant from the L.J.<br/>and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation to<br/>underwrite this production.</i> | Saturday, September 22, 8:00<br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo   | Tuesday, October 9, 8:00<br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart  |
| Saturday, September 15, 8:00<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi<br>Swenson, Powell**, Petersen, Fortuna,<br>Mills; Fondary, Leech* Langan, Skinner,<br>Estep, Villanueva, Ledbetter, Graber*<br>Fiore/Asagaroff/Ponnelle/Munn<br><i>This production was originally made<br/>possible by a gift from James D. Robertson.</i>  | Friday, September 28, 8:00<br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo   | Sunday, September 23, 2:00<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg   | Wednesday, October 10, 7:30<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi  |
| Sunday, September 16, 2:00<br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo   | Saturday, September 29, 2:00<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg   | Tuesday, September 25, 8:00<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi   | Thursday, October 11, 8:00<br><i>San Francisco Opera Premiere</i><br><b>Don Quichotte</b> Massenet<br>Ciesinski, Mills, Cowdrick; Ramey,<br>Tremont, Petersen, Wilborn*, Travis<br>Rudel/Roubaud**/Morgan/Arhelger<br><i>This production is owned by the Lyric<br/>Opera of Chicago.</i>   |
|   | Sunday, September 30, 2:00<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi  | Wednesday, September 26, 7:30<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg  | Friday, October 12, 7:30<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi   |
|   | Tuesday, October 2, 8:00<br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo<br>(Tonio: Timothy Noble)   | Thursday, September 27, 7:30<br><i>New Production</i><br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart<br>Patterson, Parrish, Fortuna, Guo; Moll,<br>Streit*, Magnusson*, Hoffmann*, Li,<br>Graber<br>Michael*/Wadsworth*/Lynch*/Long*/<br>Arhelger<br><i>San Francisco Opera gratefully<br/>acknowledges a generous grant from the L.J.<br/>and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation to<br/>underwrite this production.</i> | Saturday, October 13, 8:00<br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart  |
|   | †ADDED PERFORMANCE  | Friday, September 21, 8:00†<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg  | Sunday, October 14, 2:00<br><b>Don Quichotte</b> Massenet  |
|   |   | Saturday, September 22, 8:00<br><b>Suor Angelica</b> Puccini<br>and<br><b>Pagliacci</b> Leoncavallo   | Tuesday, October 16, 8:00<br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart   |
|   |   | Sunday, September 23, 2:00<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg   | Thursday, October 18, 7:30<br><b>Don Quichotte</b> Massenet  |
|   |   | Tuesday, September 25, 8:00<br><b>Rigoletto</b> Verdi   | Friday, October 19, 8:00<br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart  |
|   |   | Wednesday, September 26, 7:30<br><b>Wozzeck</b> Berg  | Saturday, October 20, 8:00<br><b>Don Quichotte</b> Massenet  |
|   |   | Thursday, September 27, 7:30<br><i>New Production</i><br><b>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</b> Mozart<br>Patterson, Parrish, Fortuna, Guo; Moll,<br>Streit*, Magnusson*, Hoffmann*, Li,<br>Graber<br>Michael*/Wadsworth*/Lynch*/Long*/<br>Arhelger<br><i>San Francisco Opera gratefully<br/>acknowledges a generous grant from the L.J.<br/>and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation to<br/>underwrite this production.</i> | Sunday, October 21, 2:00<br><i>Production new to San Francisco<br/>Co-produced with the Royal Opera,<br/>Covent Garden</i><br><b>Capriccio</b> R. Strauss<br>Te Kanawa, Schwarz, Grist; Olsen*,<br>Shimell, Hagegård, Braun, Sénéchal,<br>Estep, Travis<br>Barlow**/Cox/Pagano/Versace**/<br>Caniparoli/Munn<br><i>Sets from Théâtre de la Monnaie, Brussels</i> |



Tuesday, October 23, 8:00  
**Don Quichotte** Massenet

Wednesday, October 24, 7:30  
**Capriccio** R. Strauss

Friday, October 26, 8:00  
**Don Quichotte** Massenet

Saturday, October 27, 8:00  
**Capriccio** R. Strauss

Sunday, October 28, 2:00  
**Un Ballo in Maschera** Verdi  
Dunn\*, Dahl, Curry\*; Mauro, Fondary,  
Storojev\*, Skinner, Ledbetter, Petersen  
Arena/Ewers/Conklin/Morgan/Munn  
*This production was originally made  
possible by a gift from an anonymous  
friend.*

Tuesday, October 30, 8:00  
**Capriccio** R. Strauss

Wednesday, October 31, 7:30  
**Un Ballo in Maschera** Verdi

Friday, November 2, 8:00  
**Capriccio** R. Strauss

Saturday, November 3, 8:00  
**Un Ballo in Maschera** Verdi

Sunday, November 4, 2:00  
*New Production*  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.  
Holleque\* (November 4, 8, 10, 16),  
Gustafson (November 24, 25, 27, 30),  
Kilduff, TBA, Mills; Lopez-Yañez\*,  
Hagegård (November 4, 8, 25, 27),  
Baerg (November 10, 16, 24, 30), Nolen,  
Adams\*, Rideout, TBA  
Rudel (November 4, 8, 10, 16)/  
Summers (November 24, 25, 27, 30)/  
Mansouri/Skalicki/Bosquet\*/  
Tomasson\*/Munn  
*San Francisco Opera gratefully  
acknowledges the generous gifts from Mr.  
and Mrs. Gorham B. Knowles and The  
Edward E. Hills Fund to underwrite this  
production.*

Tuesday, November 6, 8:00  
**Un Ballo in Maschera** Verdi

Wednesday, November 7, 8:00  
**Capriccio** R. Strauss

Thursday, November 8, 7:30  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.

Friday, November 9, 8:00  
**Un Ballo in Maschera** Verdi

Saturday, November 10, 1:00  
*Family Matinee*  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.  
Racette, Williams, Keen, Mills; Estep,  
McNeil, Villanueva, Travis, Rideout  
Summers\*/Mansouri/Skalicki/Bosquet/  
Tomasson/Munn  
*San Francisco Opera gratefully  
acknowledges a generous gift from the  
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Matinee performance.*

Saturday, November 10, 8:00  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.

Sunday, November 11, 2:00  
**Capriccio** R. Strauss

Wednesday, November 14, 7:30  
**Un Ballo in Maschera** Verdi

Friday, November 16, 8:00  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.

Saturday, November 17, 8:00  
**Khovanshchina** Mussorgsky  
Zajick, Fortuna; Ghiaurov, Myers,  
Treleaven\*, Howell, Noble, S. Cole,  
Ledbetter, Skinner, Villanueva  
Simonov\*/Frisell/Benois/Carvajal/Munn  
*This production was originally made  
possible by a gift from the L.J. and Mary  
C. Skaggs Foundation.*

Sunday, November 18, 2:00  
**Un Ballo in Maschera** Verdi

Tuesday, November 20, 8:00  
**Khovanshchina** Mussorgsky

Friday, November 23, 8:00  
*San Francisco Opera Premiere*  
**Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria** Monteverdi  
von Stade, Graham\*, Bower\*,  
Cowdrick, Williams, Mills; Hampson\*,  
V. Cole, Lewis, Patterson, Cox, Estep,  
Rayam\*, West\*, Wilborn, Petersen  
Bernardi/Hampe/Pagano/Munn  
*This production is owned by the  
Cologne Opera.*

Saturday, November 24, 1:00  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.

Saturday, November 24, 8:00  
**Khovanshchina** Mussorgsky

Sunday, November 25, 1:00  
**Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria** Monteverdi

Sunday, November 25, 8:00  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.

Tuesday, November 27, 8:00  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.

Wednesday, November 28, 7:30  
**Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria** Monteverdi

Thursday, November 29, 8:00  
**Khovanshchina** Mussorgsky

Friday, November 30, 7:30  
**Die Fledermaus** J. Strauss, Jr.

Saturday, December 1, 1:00  
**Rigoletto** Verdi  
Hong\*, Keen, Petersen, Fortuna, Mills;  
Pons, Li, Doss\*, Skinner, Estep,  
Villanueva, Ledbetter, Graber  
Robertson/Asagaroff/Ponnelle/Munn

Saturday, December 1, 8:00  
**Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria** Monteverdi

Sunday, December 2, 2:00  
**Khovanshchina** Mussorgsky

Tuesday, December 4, 8:00  
**Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria** Monteverdi

Wednesday, December 5, 7:30  
**Khovanshchina** Mussorgsky

Thursday, December 6, 7:30  
**Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria** Monteverdi

Friday, December 7, 7:30  
**Rigoletto** Verdi  
(Same cast as December 1)

Saturday, December 8, 8:00  
**Khovanshchina** Mussorgsky

Sunday, December 9, 1:00  
**Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria** Monteverdi

\*\*United States opera debut  
\*San Francisco Opera debut

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Friday, November 16 at 1:00



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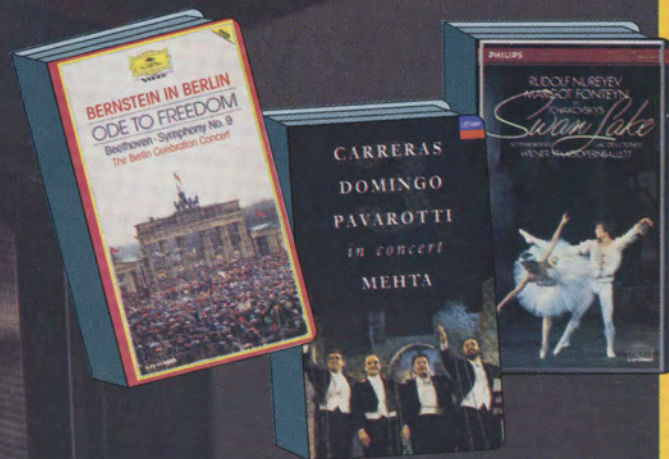
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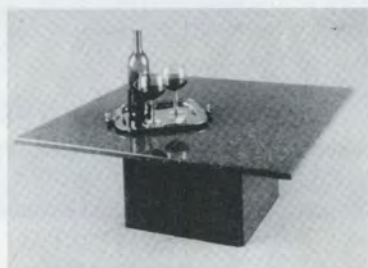
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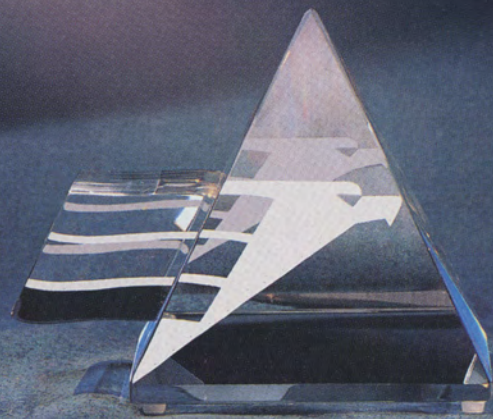
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# WORDS, MUSIC... AND LOVE

By  
ALAN JEFFERSON

*Alan Jefferson is a prolific British author, whose published works include six books on Richard Strauss. He has also been active in legitimate theater and as a London orchestra manager.*



CAHEN

Richard Strauss' life-long love affair with the soprano voice reached its apogee in *Capriccio*, his last completed opera. The central figure is a soprano and possibly the most delightful creature in any of his scores; but her artistic birth—as well as those of the characters round her—took 98 months from the first idea in 1934 to its fulfillment in 1942. But the story really begins, tragically, in 1929.

In July of that year, Hugo von Hoffmannsthal died suddenly and unexpectedly at his house in Rodaun on the outskirts of Vienna. He had been Strauss' only librettist since 1906 and together they had created seven stage works, from *Elektra* to the yet unperformed *Arabella*. Strauss felt stranded, emotionally and artistically in shock, and despite appeals to likely poets to come forward and discuss ideas with him, he failed to find a kindred spirit until 1931. He was introduced to Stefan Zweig, a sympathetic, cultured and resourceful Austrian (all Strauss' librettists were to be Austrians) successful in his own right as an author and historian, as well as a famous collector of musical autographs. Together they embarked on Zweig's adaptation of *The Silent Woman* (*Die Schweigsame Frau*).

*Arabella* had its premiere in Dresden in June of 1933. Clemens Krauss conducted, at Strauss' request, and his companion (later wife) Viorica Ursuleac sang the name part. After great successes in Berlin, Vienna and elsewhere, the original cast appeared in *Arabella* at London's Covent Garden, and Zweig accompanied them. He spent some time in the British Museum Library doing research for his biography of Mary Stuart, and happened to come across a volume of libretti by the Italian satirist, Gianbattista Casti, one of which especially caught his eye. He reported his find on a postcard to Strauss in Bavaria:

It's a marvelous title—*Prima la Musica, e poi le Parole* [First the Music, then

San Francisco Opera presented *Capriccio* once before, in 1963, at which time Elisabeth Schwarzkopf portrayed the Countess (left); she is also seen during a rehearsal, discussing the score with the conductor, Georges Prêtre.



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the Words]—and a light comedy with enchanting characters and situations ...”

This slight plot had not deterred Antonio Salieri from setting it to music and seeing it played beside Mozart's *Impresario* in the Orangery at Schönbrunn, Vienna, in 1786. Zweig knew this, but what intrigued him was the theatrical implication of its being an opera about opera. It was unsuitable as it stood, but possessed the germ of a very good idea. Strauss wholeheartedly agreed and their friendship flourished.

*The Silent Woman*, the Strauss-Zweig collaboration, was staged in Dresden and then all hell broke loose. The Nazis objected to Zweig, who was Jewish, and Strauss wrote him an angry letter denouncing Nazi methods. This was intercepted and opened. Now they were forbidden to work together any longer and Strauss was *persona non grata* for the next 12 months.

In the safety of Switzerland, Zweig arranged to meet a fellow Austrian and scholar, Joseph Gregor, and proposed that he become a “front man” in order to help Strauss. Gregor was an academician, specializing in history of the theater, self-opinionated and pompous (except to Strauss), and unfortunately he only had a limited sense of fun in his make-up rather than a genuine sense of humor. In July of 1935, Gregor met Strauss for the first time and took with him a great bundle of sketches for operatic ideas. Strauss was in the depth of despair, did not take to Gregor, and—*faute de mieux*—he picked out three from among Gregor's suggestions. At the same time, Strauss mentioned the Casti idea, which Gregor knew about already from Zweig, and promised to provide a sketch of this as well.

Gregor may have been a third-rate poet, and his menial attitude certainly irritated Strauss, but he quickly came up with a scenario for the Casti idea: “A group of comic players arrive at a feudal castle. They find an interesting situation in progress: the Lady of the castle is being courted both by a Poet and a Musician, but she cannot decide which one to accept. The leader of the comedians is a caricature of the celebrated Austrian man of the theater, Max Reinhardt, who will have a big aria glorifying the Theater.”

Strauss turned this down flat. Gregor had obviously failed to appreciate that

the suggestion inherent in Casti's *title* were what interested him, not a by-blow of *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Strauss threw up his hands and put the matter out of his mind for four years.

Two of the “other” Gregor operas were staged in 1938 (*Friedenstag* and *Daphne*) and Strauss was busy with the third, *Die Liebe der Danae*, when he suddenly asked Gregor about the Casti opera. This was in March of 1939 and Gregor was much taken aback. Yes, he had done a scenario four years earlier, which Strauss had ignored, quite a long one with some interspersed verse. The

First the music, then the words —Verdi

Only words, no music —Goethe

Only music, no words —Mozart

Neither words nor music

—only rhythm, for Ballet

(a drum and tambourine will do)”

Gregor was offended and said so. Relenting a little, Strauss apologized: “Don't be cross! Go to it! Remember what good results my boorish contribution has had in the past!”

Gregor's third draft at last began to arouse Strauss' interest. Its shape was slowly coming nearer to the work that



Clemens Krauss and Richard Strauss in 1942.

subject was quite faded for him, he said, (especially as it had not been based on his own idea) but Strauss persisted and Gregor produced a second draft.

Thinking to flatter Strauss, it began with the last few bars of *Daphne*; he also made indirect references to Ursuleac for whom the principal soprano roles were being written.

“Your Casti draft was a disappointment to me,” Strauss wrote, and he went on to give a lecture on what he wanted and to put Gregor in his place by means of a little teasing—which the latter completely failed to appreciate:

“First the words, then the music —Wagner

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"All will depend upon the dialogue which must be in completely natural prose as well as in *secco recitativo* in the manner of the *Ariadne Prologue*," wrote Strauss, who also mentioned that he had shown Gregor's work to Clemens Krauss. Krauss was then General Music Director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, a very ambitious man, long-time admirer and friend of Strauss, and an exceedingly capable musician. He was, in addition, a skilled man of the theater with 15 years' experience of how operas are put together.

Krauss had been advising Strauss on certain aspects of the score of *Die Liebe der Danae*, on which he was then working, because he wanted to obtain the rights to perform it. Had Gregor realized the danger to himself of Krauss' involvement, however indirectly, he might not have been quite as delighted and proud as his reply to Strauss indicated.

In September of 1939 Germany was at war. Strauss knew only too well, after his experience in 1915 when Hofmannsthal became unavailable for consultation, how difficult such conditions can be to creative artists; his doubts about Gregor's suitability as librettist for this somewhat fragile idea were increasing. He let out a cry of help to Krauss. Gregor had already shown his fourth draft to Krauss in Salzburg, and he was particularly critical of it.

Gregor persevered with a fifth, even a sixth draft in which Strauss approved the idea of a scene for servants. The seventh draft was Gregor's last. Krauss was scathing: "This stuff simply won't do," he told Strauss. "Why don't you write the libretto yourself? You could do it. After all, your *Intermezzo* was a great success."<sup>2</sup> He strongly suggested that they ditch Gregor and together try to compose a libretto worthy of their best ideas. On October 26, 1939, Strauss formally ended his arrangement with Gregor, thanking him for the (tremendous amount of) work which he had already put in, and citing his own *Intermezzo* as a reason for deciding to go it alone.

This was exactly what Krauss wanted. If not *the* librettist, he was now in closer association with Strauss than ever before; Ursuleac would sing the soprano



Hermann Prey at the San Francisco Opera in 1963: In rehearsal (left) and performance (right), as Capriccio's Olivier.

lead, the opera would be cast from the strength of the Munich company, would have its premiere there and his director, Rudolf Hartmann, would be in charge of the staging. *Ausgezeichnet!*

The conception of the "Casti work," as yet untitled, was to be a short curtain-raiser for the double bill of *Daphne* and *Friedenstag*; but soon it became evident that it already held far more interest and substance than that, and must stand alone.

Strauss did indeed produce a complete "book" for the first five scenes and they bear an astonishing resemblance to the finished work. Short, conversational lines mean far more than blocks of words and clogged verse such as Gregor had provided, and Strauss is proved to be endowed with great skill and sensitivity in character-building.

As Krauss advised and suggested quietly and Strauss warmed even more to his ever-ready ear, they both realized that they needed a third person to provide an essential element: the Sonnet. It is this which binds Words and Music as well as the principal characters in their interrelationships and emotions. It is a very special element, and it needed a special person to find it. Krauss supplied him.

Hans Swarowsky (another Austrian) was a former pupil of Arnold Schönberg

and Anton Webern; he was an opera conductor in Berlin when he fell afoul of the Nazis. Krauss rescued him by giving him a job in Munich in 1935. Swarowsky was a linguist and a well-read man in addition to being a musician, and eagerly accepted his assignment from Strauss and Krauss. He searched among French literature and poetry of the 18th century but, finding nothing suitable, he wisely turned back the calendar a hundred years to Pierre Ronsard and among his *Amours* discovered the ideal 14 lines. Dedicated by Ronsard to the beauty of an especially chaste Florentine lady, in idealized manner, it was translated into German with unerring skill by Swarowsky who even managed to retain the same rhyming pattern as the 17th-century French original.

"Long live the Triumvirate!" wrote the cheerful and delighted Strauss, immensely grateful to Swarowsky for his contribution. Krauss remained silent. There was also a need for some lines "in the old style" for a pair of visiting Italians to sing in the opera, not so idiotic that they debased the scene, but simple enough to be immediately understood. Krauss took the credit for finding the appropriate *Addio, mia vita, addio!* from Metastasio,<sup>3</sup> and thanks to his acquaintanceship with Dr. Goebbels, soon found Swarowsky a job in the music department of a govern-

ment office in Dresden.

By June of 1940, around Strauss' 76th birthday, a continuous flow of correspondence with Krauss was propelling the opera forward, shaping it, giving flesh and blood to those characters who had been no more than stock types. Now they became:

- The Countess Madeleine
- The Poet, Olivier
- The Composer, Flamand
- The Theater Director, La Roche
- The Actress, Mlle Clairon
- The Prompter, Monsieur Taupe.

Among the principals, only the Count has no name but he declares "An Opera is an absurd thing!" so no wonder!

Strauss was beginning to compose the score, for the first part was firmly established, and their efforts now needed clothing with music to give him and Krauss an even better feeling for their opera. The introduction is played by a string sextet in the orchestra pit and this chamber work embodies six themes which recur frequently throughout the whole work, not so much *Leitmotive*, as germinal material compacted into—what is almost—a sonata movement. Then magically, as the curtain goes up, a recapitulation of the same music is heard from the stage, an invisible and duplicate sextet playing "a work by Flamand" for the Countess' benefit in another room.





Thomas Stewart as the Count in S.F. Opera's 1963 *Capriccio*.

There are three men on stage; Poet, Composer and Theater Director. Olivier and Flamand exchange quiet courtesies about the Countess, declaring their own association as rivals for her attentions, but otherwise friendly exponents of their own professions. *Prima la Musica*, says Flamand, to Olivier's reply: *Prima le Parole*. La Roche sprawls, snoozing, in a chair, unimpressed by this "modern" music that has no attraction for him. And thus *Capriccio* begins.

The scene is the same throughout: a drawing room in the Countess' country house. The Countess Madeleine is a young widow and what we see is the chateau in which she lives with her brother. All those present, with the exception of the servants, are her guests. She is the central character just as the Sonnet is the central motif. Her attraction for the Poet and Composer unites Words and Music; only when the Sonnet has been set can she—and we—appreciate the new depth of feeling which the music gives to the words.

There is a rather obvious parallel here with Wagner's *Mastersingers of Nuremberg*. The Sonnet is the Prize Song (although the prize is not won outright) and one cannot help wondering whether Wagner's Walther would have got very far if he had only said, not sung his words! One of the many attractions of *Capriccio* lies in the fact that we never know, for sure, upon whom the Coun-

ness bestows—if she ever does bestow—her favor. And in this production, there is the gloss of yet another uncertainty in an exquisitely subtle piece of business for her at the very end.

After the point of the Sonnet has first been made in the action, there has to be a reason for the protagonists' presence there, arguing and debating. Strauss conceived the idea of them all embarking on an opera about themselves and the events of the day, rather than having the whole piece be a prelude to an existing opera. This elaborates the hypothesis—it has been said like "a set of endlessly reflecting mirrors."<sup>4</sup> The Theater Director (Gregor's idea) was to be a kind of actor-manager-director of the old school, very set in his ways, yet learned and sincere. (The only known personal thing about him is his penchant for a young dancer whom he has taken from another man's clutches, and has brought along!) An octet of male servants offers light relief with comments on the proceedings, while remaining entirely appropriate in the context. They are juxtaposed, musically, with two great ensembles by the principals, important for contrast with the many passages of conversational parlando. But the work's subtitle remains "A Conversation-piece for Music . . ."

One night, while driving home to Munich in a rainstorm, Krauss suddenly saw clearly before him the opera's penultimate scene: a bedraggled, bewildered old man enters the empty stage from the depths of his domain where he, the Prompter, has been asleep during the whole rehearsal. He blinks his way up to the unaccustomed light—almost like a mole—hence the name of Monsieur Taupe! It is a brilliant stroke. He is led off by the Major Domo, and once more the stage is empty.

Many years before this opera came to life, Strauss' son, Franz, asked his father why he had done nothing else with a wonderful theme lying almost forgotten among a set of rather scurrilous songs for male voice and piano called *The Tradesman's Mirror* (*Krämerspiegel*), composed reluctantly in fulfillment of a 1918 contract. Strauss reintroduces that theme here, after Monsieur Taupe's departure, and for the Countess Madeleine's entrance from the moonlit garden. It is for solo horn and orchestra—another dazzling feature of the Strauss score.

Viorica Ursuleac said<sup>5</sup> that sustaining this last scene was not only an arduous vocal challenge, but required great expertise in acting through the orchestral

(non-singing) passages—more than any other role Strauss had composed for her.

The Countess is in a state of high excitement and, accompanying herself on a harp, she sings the Sonnet that is the clue—but not the key—to her indecision. She gets up and looks at her reflection in the mirror over the fireplace. She asks her other self what to do, whom to choose, but of course there is no reply. This sophisticated comedy in *Capriccio* is sustained to the end.

Rehearsals in Munich were carried on between air raids in September and October of 1942. Viorica Ursuleac sang Madeleine; Hans Hotter, Oliver; Horst Taubmann, Flamand; Walter Höfermayer, the Count; Georg Hann, La Roche; Hildegard Ranczak, Clairon and Carl Seydel, Monsieur Taupe. Clemens Krauss conducted, had the opera dedicated to him by Strauss and was also cited as librettist. The first performance took place "under the special protection of Reichsminister Dr. Joseph Goebbels" at the National Theater, Munich, on October 28, 1942, 11 months before the building was destroyed by bombs.

There are a number of color photographs of that production still in existence and three original members of the cast are alive. There is also a recording made very soon afterwards, though with some changes in the cast—sufficiently authentic, nevertheless, to give an idea of the style of singing *Capriccio* nearly 50 years ago.

In this San Francisco production, updated from the Strauss and Krauss period setting, there is a more intimate feeling about the whole piece. Touching and kissing and erotic displays are allowed, bringing the scene into a more familiar atmosphere for today's audience. And there is no doubt that all these elements are in the libretto, and especially in the score, Strauss' last complete opera score, that ends in his very special key of D-flat major. ■

#### Notes

- 1 In 1962, at the British Library (as it is now called) I handled—with considerable awe—the selfsame book!
- 2 Strauss wrote the libretto and composed *Intermezzo*, a domestic opera about his own family, produced in Dresden in 1924.
- 3 When I met Swarowsky in Vienna in 1973, he said how much he regretted the fact that his name had not appeared as joint librettist of *Capriccio* because he had done far more than finding and translating Ronsard's Sonnet.
- 4 Norman Del Mar: *Richard Strauss* Vol. III, p. 196.
- 5 During an afternoon spent with Viorica Ursuleac in Ehrwald, Winter 1980.

CALL IT KELLY, LIKE THE BAG.



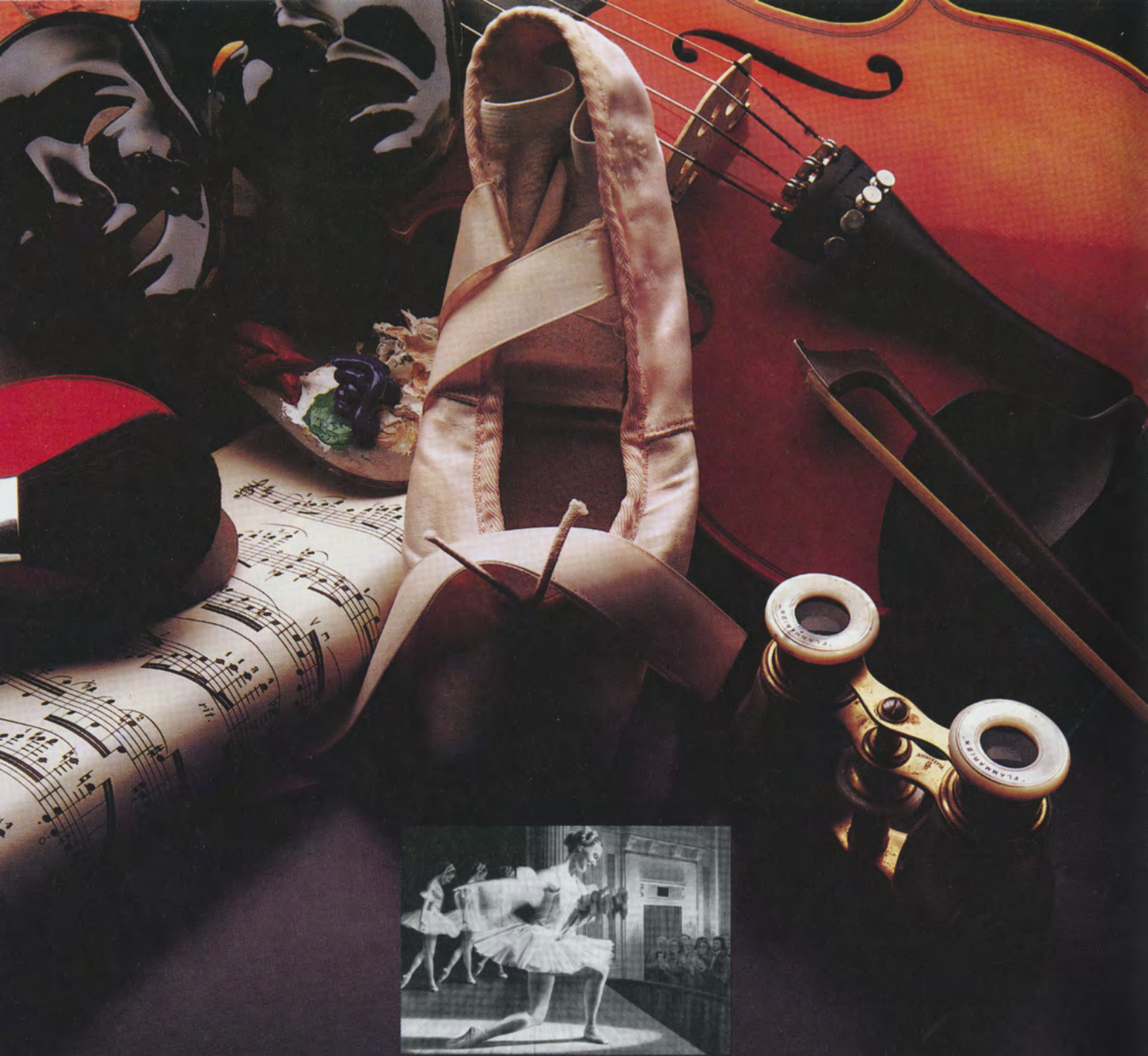
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KIRI TE KANAWA

**Kiri Te Kanawa** adds a new role to her extensive repertoire, singing Countess Madeleine in San Francisco Opera's production of *Capriccio*. She last appeared with the Company in 1986 as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the same role that was the vehicle of her debut here in 1972. She returned in 1975 to sing Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* and the first *Magic Flute* Pamina of her career; in 1980 in the title role of *Arabella*; in 1985 as the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*; and was presented in recital by San Francisco Opera last year. Born in New Zealand, she became a member of the Royal Opera at Covent Garden in 1970, and it was there in 1971 that she attracted international attention as Mozart's Countess, a success she repeated in 1973 at Glyndebourne, and for her 1971 U.S. debut at Santa Fe. She made a triumphant debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1974 as Desdemona in *Otello* and returned the following season as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, a role she portrayed in Joseph Losey's film version of that work and for her 1975 debut with the Paris Opera, where she has been a favorite ever since. She appeared with the Australian Opera during the 1976-77 season, singing in *La Bohème* and *Simon Boccanegra*. In 1977 she made a tour of major European music festivals with the Vienna Philharmonic and Claudio Abbado in the Strauss *Four Last Songs* and Mahler's Fourth Symphony, a program she repeated at Milan's La Scala. She was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth as part of the 1982 Birthday Honors list. Most recently, she appeared in recital and in concert in the U.S., Australia and New Zealand, singing before more than 75,000 people in Wellington, 160,000 in Auckland, and 9,000 in Australia's outback. She also portrayed the title role of *Arabella* at the Royal Opera House, and recorded *Der Rosenkavalier*. The soprano's television and film credits include an



HANNA SCHWARZ

internationally-televized production of *Die Fledermaus* from Covent Garden, "Live from the Met" telecasts of *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Die Fledermaus*, and Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's film of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Her extensive discography ranges from complete operas (*Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Arabella*, *Tosca*, *La Rondine*, etc.) to song and aria collections and, more recently, such "crossover" albums as *West Side Story*, *South Pacific*, *My Fair Lady*, *Blue Skies* with Nelson Riddle, and *Kiri Sings Gershwin*. Future plans include *Capriccio's* Countess at the Royal Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro's* Countess at the Metropolitan Opera, and a recital tour throughout the United States.

German mezzo-soprano **Hanna Schwarz** returns to San Francisco Opera as Clairon in *Capriccio* and Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*. She made her American debut with the Company in 1977 as Fricka in *Das Rheingold*, returning to the War Memorial stage in the same role in Summer of 1983 and as Fricka in the 1985 Ring cycle, as well as Erda in *Siegfried*. She has also appeared here as Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* in 1978, and in the title role of *Carmen* during the 1981 Fall Season. The Hamburg-born singer, a leading artist at the Hamburg Opera since 1983, made her Bayreuth debut in 1975 and sang each year in the Chéreau Ring production, telecast in the U.S. in 1983. She also appeared in a film version of *Tristan und Isolde* as Brangäne, which was directed by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, and was Fricka and Waltraute in the Bayreuth 1985 Ring directed by Peter Hall. Miss Schwarz has been praised in Munich as the Principessa in *Adriana Lecouvreur* (a production which has been recorded); at the Metropolitan Opera as Fricka; at the Vienna Staatsoper as Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*; and at the Hamburg Opera as Brangäne in a new production of *Tristan und Isolde*. Her discography includes numerous



RERI GRIST

recordings of complete operas, lieder and concerts led by such conductors as Claudio Abbado, Pierre Boulez, Colin Davis, Herbert von Karajan, and Wolfgang Sawallisch. Recent engagements include Fricka in the Cologne Opera's complete (1989/90/91) *Ring of the Nibelung*, and Erda in Munich's complete *Ring* cycle. Later this season she is scheduled for performances of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *Orpheus und Euridice* in Bonn.

Internationally acclaimed soprano **Reri Grist** returns to San Francisco Opera as the Italian Soprano in *Capriccio*. She made her Company debut in 1963, singing three roles: Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Despina in *Così fan tutte*, and Sister Constance in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. From 1964 to 1969 she was warmly applauded here as Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and in three of her signature roles—Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Oscar in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and Gilda in *Rigoletto*. She made her last appearance with San Francisco Opera in 1981, when she sang the title role of Massenet's *Manon* for the first time. Born and raised in New York, Miss Grist made her operatic debut at Santa Fe Opera as Blondchen in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and came to international attention after a highly acclaimed European debut as Zerbinetta at the Zurich Opera and Vienna Staatsoper. She was applauded in Europe over the next several seasons in Berlin, London, Milan, Vienna and Munich. Following successful appearances in San Francisco and Chicago, she made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 1966 as Rosina. She has subsequently been applauded at the Met as Norina in *Don Pasquale*, and as Oscar, Sophie, Zerbinetta, and Gilda. Miss Grist has performed at the major opera houses throughout the world, and at the world's major festivals, including Glyndebourne, Munich, Vienna and, above all, Salzburg,

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In order to increase the enjoyment of opera for hearing-impaired members of the audience, the War Memorial Opera House has recently installed a Sennheiser Listening System. Wireless headphones and induction devices (adaptable to hearing aids) are available at the north end of the main lobby. A rental fee of \$2.00 is requested, in addition to an ID deposit, such as a driver's license or major credit card. The devices can be used in any seat in the Opera House.

## Opera House Tours

Sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild, tours of the War Memorial Opera House will be conducted every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12 noon weekdays/Saturdays, and from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Sundays on the following dates:

Wednesday, October 10  
Sunday, October 14  
Saturday, October 27  
Wednesday, October 31  
Saturday, November 17  
Wednesday, November 28

The cost is \$2 for Guild members (limit 4 tickets per member); non-members \$5. Advance reservations required. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432.

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KEITH OLSEN

where she sang for 13 consecutive years, specializing in operas by Mozart and Richard Strauss. She is also noted for her work on the concert stage both as recitalist and as guest soloist with major orchestras. The soprano has numerous complete opera recordings to her credit, including *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Rigoletto*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, Mozart's *Il Re Pastore*, and two versions of *Un Ballo in Maschera*. She has appeared in numerous films and live broadcasts for German and Austrian television, including an award-winning biographical portrait entitled *Reri Grist—Singer*. Next year, she travels to the Netherlands Opera for the Morton Feldman-Samuel Beckett one-woman opera, *Neither*.

American tenor **Keith Olsen** makes his first appearance with San Francisco Opera as Flamand in *Capriccio*. He made his European debut in 1988 as Rodolfo in a new Gian Carlo Del Monaco production of *La Bohème* at the Staatstheater in Karlsruhe. This portrayal led to additional invitations to sing the role in the opera houses of Hamburg, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hannover and Wiesbaden. That same season he also sang Macduff in *Macbeth* in Karlsruhe and Aachen, the Duke in Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's production of *Rigoletto* in Düsseldorf, and collaborated with Del Monaco in Karlsruhe as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*. Most recently, Olsen sang the roles of Hans in *The Bartered Bride* and Pinkerton, both in Hannover, as well as Alfredo in *La Traviata* in Düsseldorf and Hannover. He also appeared as Turiddu in a televised production of *Cavalleria Rusticana* in Durban, South Africa. Future plans include Alfredo in his Finnish National Opera debut, Gustavus III/Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Cape Town, Lionel in *Martha* in Stuttgart, Manrico in *Il Trovatore* in Leipzig (a production which will celebrate the unification of East and West Germany), and *La Damnation de Faust* with the Royal Philharmonic of Flanders at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. A native of Denver, Olsen was a scholar-



WILLIAM SHIMELL

ship recipient at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he earned his Bachelor of Music degree, later receiving a Master of Music degree from the University of Tennessee, where he was awarded the prestigious Grace Moore Graduate Fellowship. He completed his training at the Juilliard School's American Opera Center, and was subsequently a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Auditions.

After making his United States opera debut with San Francisco Opera in 1988 as Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, British baritone **William Shimell** returns to sing Olivier in *Capriccio*. Born in England, he studied with Ellis Keeler at the Guildhall School of Music and with Otakar Kraus at the National Opera Studio in London. He began his career in Britain, singing with all the major opera companies in roles including Dandini in *La Cenerentola*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the title role of *Don Giovanni*, and Nick Shadow. He began his international career in 1986 with the roles of Dandini in Paris, Don Giovanni in Hong Kong, and Guglielmo in Tokyo. The following year he was invited by Riccardo Muti to sing Almaviva at Milan's La Scala. He sang Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with the Netherlands Opera, returning to Amsterdam in 1988 in the title role of *Don Giovanni*, Nikolaus Harnoncourt conducting. Additional engagements that year included Fernando in *La Gazza Ladra* in Paris, and *Don Giovanni* in Frankfurt. Last year, Shimell appeared as Mozart's Don in Santiago and Düsseldorf, portrayed Count Almaviva in Geneva, Zurich, at La Scala and Glyndebourne, and traveled with the La Scala company to the Bolshoi in Moscow to portray Guglielmo. He most recently made his debut at the Vienna Staatsoper as Count Almaviva, and future engagements include return visits to Covent Garden, Amsterdam, and Geneva. A recording of Shimell in the title role of *Don Giovanni*, Maestro Muti conducting, will be released next summer.



HÅKAN HAGEGÅRD

After making his 1981 San Francisco Opera debut as Danilo Danilovitch in *The Merry Widow*, Swedish baritone **Håkan Hagegård** returns to sing the Count in *Capriccio*. He made his operatic debut in 1968 at the Stockholm Royal Opera as Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, a role he subsequently portrayed in Ingmar Bergman's film version of the Mozart opera. He has since been applauded at the major opera houses of the world, as well as for his performances in recital, symphony and on recordings. Hagegård made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 1973 as Dr. Malatesta in a new production of *Don Pasquale*, and he has subsequently returned there in the title role of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, as Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* and, most recently, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, which was telecast live over PBS. He made his highly successful debut at Milan's La Scala in 1985 as Papageno, and has sung an acclaimed Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Santa Fe Opera. The baritone is a favorite guest of many of this country's outstanding symphony orchestras and music festivals. His recordings include two versions of Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and *Liederkreis*, Schubert's *Winterreise*, *Schwanengesang* and *Die Schöne Müllerin*, and a critically acclaimed recording of lieder by Richard Strauss and Hugo Wolf. His recording of the Brahms Requiem with James Levine and the Chicago Symphony won a Grammy Award in 1985. Recent engagements include his highly acclaimed debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Wolfram in the Peter Sellars production of *Tannhäuser*; Rodrigo in *Don Carlo* in Geneva; an annual recital tour which included a performance at Alice Tully Hall; and concerts with the San Francisco Symphony and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Future plans include a return to the Met as Beaumarchais in the world premiere of John Corigliano's *Figaro for Antonia*, and his first Ford in *Falstaff* in Bonn.



VICTOR BRAUN

After his highly acclaimed portrayals of Dr. Schön and Jack the Ripper in last season's new production of *Lulu*, Canadian baritone **Victor Braun** sings La Roche in *Capriccio*. He made his San Francisco Opera debut in 1968 as Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Conte di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, returning in 1969 to sing the latter role on the Company's tour to Los Angeles. Braun has earned the reputation of an extremely versatile singing actor, winning acclaim for his wide repertoire, which includes the title role of *Don Giovanni*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Mandryka in *Arabella*, Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande* and Jokanaan in *Salome*. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in the title role of *Eugene Onegin* and also sang his first Wozzeck at the Met. He has for many seasons been closely associated with the Santa Fe, Stuttgart, and Munich Operas, as well as the Cologne Opera, where he has been heard in a wide variety of roles including the four villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Gérard in *Andrea Chénier*, and most recently as Jokanaan in the Ponnelle production of *Salome*. Highlights of his 1988-89 season include Hans Sachs in a new production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Paris Opera and at the opening of the new opera house in Essen; his first Orest in *Elektra* and Pizarro in *Fidelio* in Brussels; Golaud at the opening of the Florence May Festival; Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* at the Netherlands Opera; and his first performances of the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* with the Edmonton Opera. Future projects include his first Iago in *Otello* in Palermo, *Pelléas et Mélisande* in Chicago and Cologne, *Peter Grimes* in Geneva, and his first Wanderer in a new *Ring* cycle in Brussels. Throughout his career, Braun has been active on the concert stage, and is currently busy recording a number of compact discs for Dorian.



MICHEL SÉNÉCHAL

After making a highly successful debut with San Francisco Opera last year as Dr. Caius in *Falstaff*, French tenor **Michel Sénéchal** returns to the Company as Monsieur Taupe in *Capriccio*. Celebrating nearly 40 years of professional operatic activity, he made his debut at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie of Brussels in 1950. He has since performed at the major opera houses of the world, and has been a regular guest artist at the Paris Opera and at the Opéra-Comique since 1958. He has sung at all of the major festivals, including those at Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg, and at Glyndebourne. New York's Metropolitan Opera has engaged him in the French and Italian repertoire every year since 1978, and he has been one of the few French tenors to have sung principal Mozart roles at the Vienna Staatsoper. A frequent recitalist and concert performer throughout North America, France, Italy, and the USSR, he has also performed in several operatic films. A prolific recording artist, Sénéchal's discography includes Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole* and *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, Rameau's *Platée*, Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ*, and an anthology of songs by Francis Poulenc. He is currently Director of the School of Lyric Art at the Paris Opera, and regularly offers master classes at the Metropolitan Opera. His numerous awards include Officer of the National Order of Merit, Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters, and the coveted Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

A 1990 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, tenor **Craig Estep** appears as Borsa in *Rigoletto*, the Italian Tenor in *Capriccio*, Alfred in the family performance of *Die Fledermaus*, and Anfimono in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. He made his Company debut last fall as Dr. Caius in the family performance of *Falstaff*, and also appeared in *Madama Butterfly* and *Lohengrin*. A 1987 and 1988 Merola Opera Program participant, Estep sang in *Madame Butterfly* on Western Opera Theater's national tour and in

Continued on page 45



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William and Eloise Rollnick supporting this production of *Capriccio*.

*Production new to San Francisco*

A Conversation Piece for Music by RICHARD STRAUSS

Text by CLEMENS KRAUSS and the composer  
(By arrangement with Boosey and Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner)

# Capriccio

(in German)

*Conductor*

Stephen Barlow\*\*

*Stage Director*

John Cox

*Set Designer*

Mauro Pagano

*Costumes*

Gianni Versace\*\*

*Lighting Designer*

Thomas J. Munn

*Choreographer*

Val Caniparoli†

*Musical Preparation*

Robert Morrison

Bryndon Hassman

Alistair Dawes\*

Patrick Summers

*Prompter*

Alistair Dawes

*Harp/sichord*

Patrick Summers

*Assistant Stage Director*

Peter McClintock

*Stage Manager*

Jerry Sherk

This presentation of *Capriccio*

is a co-production with the  
Royal Opera, Covent Garden

Scenery from the

Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels

First performance:

Munich, October 28, 1942

First San Francisco Opera performance:

October 25, 1963

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21 AT 2:00

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11 AT 2:00

## CAST

(in order of appearance)

*Flamand, a composer* Keith Olsen\*

*Olivier, a poet* William Shimell

*La Roche, a theater director* Victor Braun

*The Countess* Kiri Te Kanawa

*The Count, her brother* Håkan Hagegård

*The Major Domo* Dale Travis

*Clairon, an actress* Hanna Schwarz

*Eight Servants* Kip Wilborn

Victor Ledbetter

Hong-Shen Li

Micah Graber

Charles R. Austin\*

Dennis McNeil\*

LeRoy Villanueva

Mark Moliterno\*

*Two Dancers* Isabelle Creste\*

Jim Sohm\*†

*An Italian Tenor* Craig Estep

*An Italian Soprano* Reri Grist

*Monsieur Taupe, a prompter* Michel Sénéchal

*Musicians:* Leonid Igudesman, James Dahlgren (violins)  
Sergei Rakitchenkov, Patrick Kroboth (violins)  
David Budd, Emil Miland (cellos)

\*\*United States opera debut

\*San Francisco Opera debut

†Courtesy of the San Francisco Ballet

The action takes place in the salon of a château near Paris.

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, 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 two hours and forty-five minutes.*



# Capriccio/Synopsis

## PART I

The birthday of the young, widowed Countess, Madeleine, is to be celebrated. Flamand, a composer, and Olivier, a poet, are listening to the rehearsal of Flamand's sextet, written for the occasion, while a theater director, La Roche, is asleep. While listening, Flamand and Olivier discover that they are both in love with the Countess. What will impress her more—Flamand's music or Olivier's poetry? *Prima la musica, dopo le parole, or prima le parole, dopo la musica?* They agree to let the Countess decide. La Roche awakens and joins the argument. Neither poetry nor music, he says, is the greatest of the arts. His own, the art of theatrical production, overshadows them both and uses them as its servants. He believes in entertainment—splendid decor, top notes, beautiful women, such as the actress Clairon, who had recently had an affair with Olivier. La Roche reveals that she is on her way to the château to play opposite the Count in Olivier's play. Flamand, Olivier and La Roche leave to prepare for the rehearsal in the theater, and the Count and Countess enter. They engage in a discussion about the relative merits of music and poetry. The Count admits that music leaves him cold, that words will always be superior to music. He teases his sister about her interest in the composer Flamand. She, in turn, brings up the name of Clairon. He admits he is interested in the actress, but praises a life of quickly-won, quickly-lost attachments. The Countess longs for lasting love. La Roche and his protégés return. Clairon arrives for the rehearsal. She and the Count read a scene from Olivier's play which ends with the Count's declamation of a passionate sonnet. He is congratulated, and La Roche leads them both off to rehearsal, leaving Flamand and Olivier alone with the Countess. Olivier remarks that the Count addressed the sonnet to the wrong person: it was written for the Countess, and he recites it again to her. Flamand rushes off to set it to music. In his absence, Olivier declares his love. Flamand returns to sing the sonnet he has just set. Olivier and Flamand quarrel about the true authorship of the sonnet, but the Countess decides the issue: it is now hers! La Roche takes Olivier away to rehearsal, and Flamand in his turn is able to declare his love to the Countess. He asks her to decide: music or poetry, Flamand or Olivier? The Countess promises that he shall have the answer the next morning at eleven o'clock. Flamand rushes out in great excitement, leaving the Countess alone with her thoughts and the sounds of the rehearsal next door. She orders refreshments for the company.

## PART II

The rehearsal over, the participants return. The Count and his sister discuss the progress of their love affairs. While refreshments are served, La Roche introduces some dancers who perform for the company. Flamand and Olivier resume their argument of words versus music. The others join in. The Count ridicules opera—all opera! La Roche introduces a pair of Italian singers who perform a duet. Then he tells of the spectacle he has planned for the Count's birthday—"The Birth of Pallas Athene" and "The Fall of Carthage." The company make cruel fun of his grandiose and traditional ideas, while the Italian singers worry whether they will be paid and stuff themselves with food. La Roche finally gets a chance to speak for himself and bitterly attacks his attackers, expressing his intense faith in the theater. He wants drama to show human beings in all their aspects as creatures of flesh and blood, and orders Flamand and Olivier to create good new works that speak for their time. His listeners are deeply moved and, as a sign of their reconciliation, Olivier and Flamand agree to write an opera. The Count has a very original idea: write an opera on the events of that very day at the château, depicting the company as its characters. The suggestion is accepted by everyone, and the company breaks up. Eight servants enter and tidy up the now deserted room, commenting on the events of the afternoon from their point of view—"backstage" as they put it—for isn't the whole world playing at theater? The major domo gives them the night off. Then appears Monsieur Taupe, the prompter, who had fallen asleep during the rehearsal. He tells the major domo that, in fact, *he* is the most important person in the theater because without him the show couldn't go on. But now he has been left behind. The major domo offers to help in his predicament. The Countess enters followed by the major domo who gives her two messages: that her brother will not be at home for dinner that evening, and that Olivier will call the next morning at eleven to hear from her the ending of the opera. The Countess exclaims that since the sonnet, the composer and the poet are fated to be inseparable—now they will both wait on her tomorrow at the same time! She sings two verses of the sonnet to herself. Which of the two men does she love? After an agony of indecision and self searching, she gazes at herself in the mirror and comes to realize that she cannot make the choice which would give the opera an ending. The major domo solves the problem by announcing that dinner is served.

*Gianni Versace acknowledgements:*

Costumes executed by the shops of Umberto Tirelli and Pia Rame

Antonio D'Amico, *costume assistance and coordination*

Massimo Comoli, *technical assistance*

Christian Fischbacher S.p.A., *interior decoration fabrics*

Ugo Correani S.r.l., *jewelry*

# Capriccio

Photos taken in rehearsal  
by Marty Sohl



*Kiri Te Kanawa*



Keith Olsen



Hanna Schwarz

Jim Sohm, Isabelle Creste

Håkan Hagegård



(L. to r.) LeRoy Villanueva, Micah Graber, Mark Moliterno, Kip Wilborn, Charles Austin, Hong-Shen Li, Dennis McNeil, Victor Ledbetter

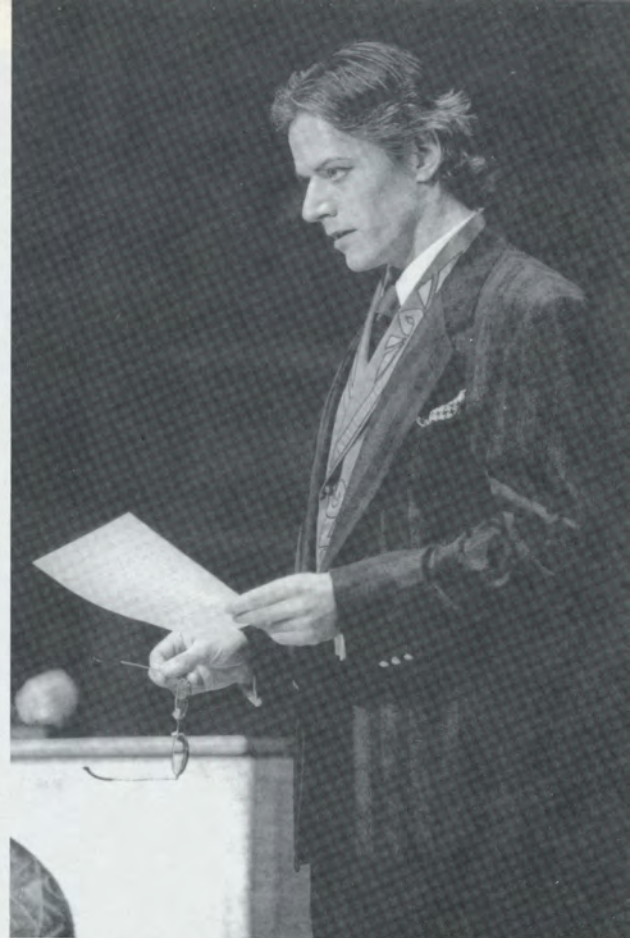




(L. to r.) Leonid Igudesman, James Dahlgren, Patrick Kroboth, Sergei Rakitchenkov, Emil Miland, David Budd



Victor Braun

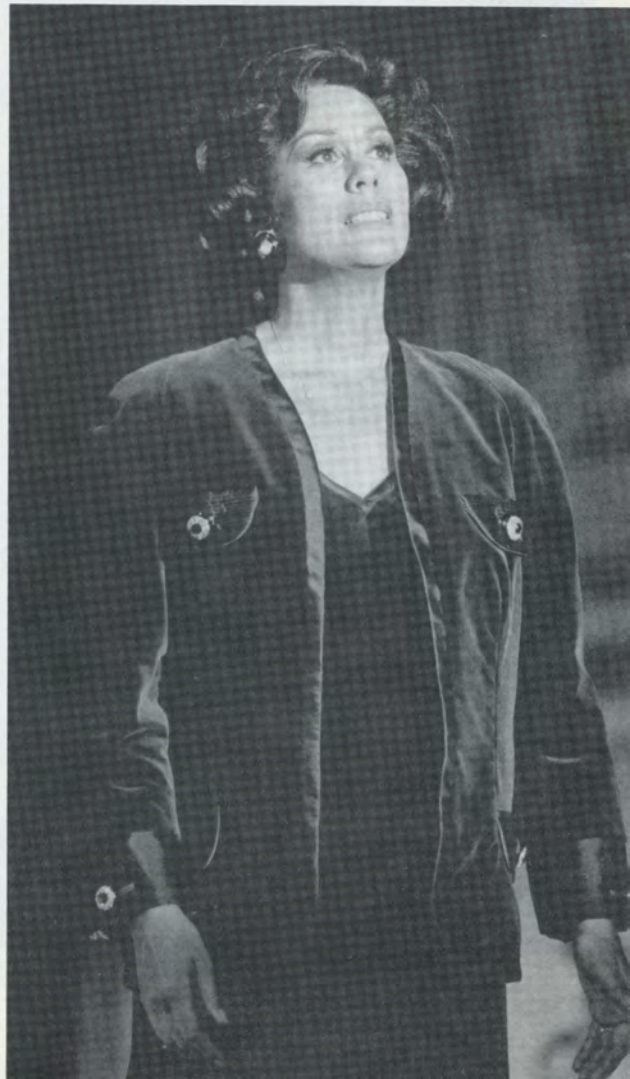


William Shimell

Kiri Te Kanawa



Craig Estep, Reri Grist





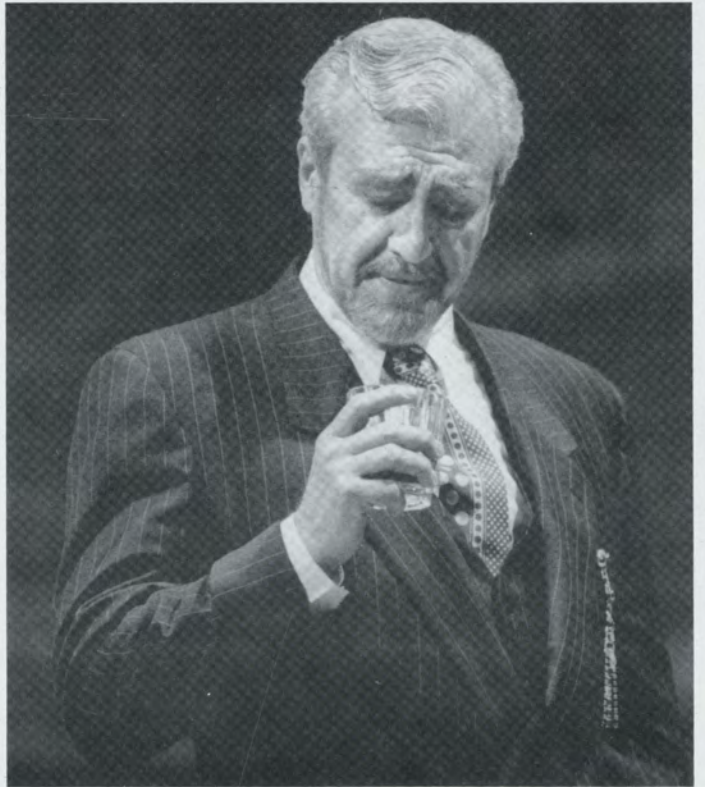
*Kiri Te Kanawa, Håkan Hagegård*



*Michel Sénéchal, Dale Travis*



*Keith Olsen, William Shimell*



*Victor Braun*



CRAIG ESTEP

*Continued from page 37*

Japan with the Center's Pacific Rim Exchange Program. He has also toured in Western Opera Theater's production of *Don Pasquale*. The tenor traveled to Shanghai in 1988 to sing Spoletta in the first production of *Tosca* ever seen in China. Last year, he appeared in the Opera Center's Showcase production of Handel's *Giustino*, and was a soloist in the San Francisco Symphony Pops Series. Recent engagements include his Canadian debut with the Calgary Opera as Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment*, Hal in the world premiere of Gordon Getty's *Plump Jack* with Marin Opera, and Arkenholz in the Opera Center's Showcase production of Reimann's *The Ghost Sonata*. The North Carolina native has a master's degree in vocal performance and has sung with the North Carolina Opera, Connecticut Grand Opera and the Charleston Opera.

A 1988-89 Adler Fellow with the S.F. Opera Center, bass **Dale Travis** appears in four roles this season: the First Workman in *Wozzeck*, the Chief Bandit in *Don Quichotte*, the Major Domo in *Capriccio*, and Frank in the Family Performance of *Die Fledermaus*. He made his Company debut in 1988 singing five roles, and appeared on the stage of the War Memorial last summer as Lord Krishna in *Satyagraha*. He was seen here last fall as Pistola in the Family Performance of *Falstaff*, the Theater Manager and the Banker in *Lulu*, the Imperial Commissioner in *Madama Butterfly*, and a Watchman in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. As a member of the 1986 and '87 Merola Opera Program, he sang Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* and the title role of *Don Pasquale* and toured with Western Opera Theater for two seasons, performing in *Don Pasquale* and *La Bohème*, a production which also traveled to China. A native of New Jersey, Travis received his bachelor's degree from Susquehanna University and both a master's degree and an Artist Diploma in Opera from the University of Cincinnati's College Conservatory of Music. The recipient of numerous awards and scholarships, including winner of this year's 1990 Season



DALE TRAVIS

Metropolitan Opera Pacific Region Auditions, he has been heard locally in the title role of *Don Pasquale*, as Dr. Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville*, and as Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with Opera San Jose; as Méphistophélès in *Faust* and as Falstaff in Gordon Getty's *Plump Jack* with Marin Opera; and as a soloist in Mozart's Mass in C Minor and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the San Francisco Symphony, Bach's Mass in B Minor at the Carmel Bach Festival, Mozart's *Coronation Mass* with the Santa Rosa Symphony, and in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Sacramento Symphony.



KIP WILBORN

In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, tenor **Kip Wilborn** sings Rodriguez in *Don Quichotte*, a Servant in *Capriccio*, and Eurimaco in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. The native of Texas began his musical career as a pianist, and started his vocal pursuits after winning the Award for Encouragement in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions. A former apprentice with the Lake George, Sarasota and Santa Fe operas, his repertoire includes both traditional as well as contemporary opera. Wilborn has appeared as Mr. Owen in *A Postcard from Morocco* and Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* at Arkansas Opera Theater, Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* at Eugene Opera, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* at Beaumont Civic



VICTOR LEDBETTER

Opera, Alfredo in *La Traviata* at Kansas City Community Opera, and Beppe in Donizetti's *Rita* at the Lake George Opera Festival. He has also appeared in the title role of *L'Amico Fritz*, and as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* and Piquillo in *La Périochole*. On the concert stage, he has been a soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Handel's *Messiah*. Recent engagements include his debut with Seattle Opera and San Diego Opera as the Chevalier in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Fenton in *Falstaff* at Piedmont Opera Theater, a guest performance as Tom Rakewell in a new production of *The Rake's Progress* at the Manhattan School of Music, and his Carnegie Hall debut in a concert performance of Jerome Kern's *The Cat and the Fiddle*. Future plans include a return to Arkansas Opera Theater for Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* with Tulsa Opera, and Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with Knoxville Opera.

Baritone **Victor Ledbetter** sings five roles for the Company this fall: the Second Workman in *Wozzeck*, Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, a Servant in *Capriccio*, Christian (Silvano) in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and Kuzka in *Khovanshchina*. A 1988-89 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he made his Company debut in the 1987 season as Baron Douchol in the family performances of *La Traviata*, and as Paris in *Roméo et Juliette*. He returned the following year as an Esquire in *Parsifal* and as Marcello in the student/family performances of *La Bohème*, and appeared here last fall as Ford in the Family Performance of *Falstaff*, a Trojan Man in *Idomeneo*, and the One-Eyed Man in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. For the Opera Center's 1988 Showcase series, he sang Count Almaviva in the West Coast premiere of Hiram Titus's *Rosina*, and was seen here as Mr. Kaltenbach in Glass' *Satyagraha*. A participant in the 1986 Merola Opera Program, he sang Marcello at Villa Montalvo, repeating the role on Western Opera

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HONG-SHEN LI

Theater's 1986-87 tour which included performances in China. In April of 1988, Ledbetter returned to Shanghai as Scarpia in China's first *Tosca*, and for a joint concert with the Shanghai Opera and Conservatory. He was a Schwabacher Debut recitalist last year, and has performed with the Vancouver Opera in *The Cunning Little Vixen* and the San Diego Opera in *Don Pasquale*. Ledbetter's recent engagements include Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* for the Dublin Grand Opera, and Valentin in *Faust* for the Cincinnati Opera. Future assignments include Falke in *Die Fledermaus* for San Diego Opera, and Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Washington Opera.

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Tenor **Hong-Shen Li**, a 1990 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, portrays the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, and also appears in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Capriccio*. He made his debut with the Company last fall as Goro in *Madama Butterfly*, and also sang in *Idomeneo*, *Aida* and *Lohengrin*. A native of the People's Republic of China, he received his initial musical training while studying under a five-year Highest Fellowship Scholarship at the Central Conservatory of Beijing and traveled throughout Asia and Eastern Europe with the Art Ensemble of Beijing. He continued his studies at the Juilliard School, where he appeared as Benedict in Berlioz's *Beatrice and Benedict*. As a member of the 1987 Merola Opera Program, he performed the role of Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, and returned to the Merola Program in 1988 to sing Lindoro in *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. During Western Opera Theater's 1988-89 tour he portrayed Goro in *Madame Butterfly* and, with the Opera Center Singers, sang Count Almaviva in the 1989 *Barber of Seville*. Li's recent engagements include the Duke of Mantua in the Stockton Symphony's concert version of *Rigoletto*, a debut with the San Diego Opera in *Die Zauberflöte*, participation in the farewell gala for soprano Régine Crespin in Paris, and the role of the Colonel in the Opera Center's Showcase production of Reimann's *The Ghost Sonata*.

*San Francisco Opera*



MICAH GRABER

Bass **Micah Graber** sings four roles in his first appearance with the Company: an Usher in *Rigoletto*, a Member of the Quartet in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, a Servant in *Capriccio*, and the Second Strelets in *Khovanshchina*. A 1990 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he was a 1989 Merola Opera Program participant and portrayed Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* and Zuniga in *Carmen*, the latter a role he repeated during the 1989-90 Western Opera Theater national tour. He recently appeared as Falstaff in the Merola Opera Program's production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and was a soloist in the San Francisco Symphony Pops Series under the baton of Victor Borge. Graber holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance/opera from Bowling Green State University, where he performed nine operatic roles and was named Outstanding Vocalist in 1988. A former apprentice with Des Moines Metro Opera in 1986 and Santa Fe Opera in 1987, he has appeared with the Ohio Light Opera as Old Adam in *Ruddigore*, Massakroff in *The Chocolate Soldier*, and Matteo in *Fra Diavolo*, and recently made his debut with Toledo Opera in *The Magic Flute* and *Madame Butterfly*. Graber will make his debut with Skylight Opera next year as Osmin in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*.

Bass-baritone **Charles R. Austin** makes his first appearance with San Francisco Opera as a Servant in *Capriccio*. The Nebraska native is currently a resident artist with the Academy of Vocal Art in Philadelphia, where he has studied for the past two years. Roles he has performed at the Academy include the title role of *Falstaff*, Frank in *Die Fledermaus*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. He has also appeared with Opera/Omaha, Annapolis Opera, and has just completed his first summer as an apprentice artist with the Santa Fe Opera, where he performed in *La Bohème* and the American premiere of Siegfried Matthus's *Judith*. Austin has performed as soloist at the Princeton Bach Festival,



CHARLES R. AUSTIN

with the West Jersey Chamber Symphony, and most recently with the Omaha Symphony in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony conducted by Robert Shaw. Future engagements include Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* with the Canadian Opera Company, performances of Prokofiev's *War and Peace* with the Amsterdam Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, and the world premiere of Frederick Kaufman's *Masada* in Jerusalem. He has received awards from the Oratorio Society of New York, the Metropolitan Opera National Council, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing.



DENNIS McNEIL

Tenor **Dennis McNeil** makes his San Francisco Opera debut as a Servant in *Capriccio*, Amelia's Servant in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and Eisenstein in the family performance of *Die Fledermaus*. A member of the 1989 Merola Opera Program, he sang Don José in *Carmen* both at Villa Montalvo and on Western Opera Theater's 1989-90 national tour. In 1989, he made his debut with the Los Angeles Music Center Opera as Ferrando in their student outreach production of *Così fan tutte*, followed by performances with the main company as the Second Jew in *Salome*. He has also sung the roles of Prince Paul in *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, Jenik in *The Bartered Bride*, and Piquillo in *La Pèrichole*. Equally comforta-

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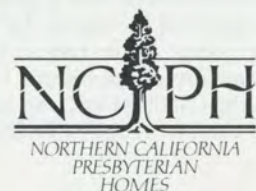
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LeROY VILLANUEVA

ble on the musical theater stage, he has performed the role of Mr. Snow in *Carousel* over 140 times. In Los Angeles recently, he appeared as Niko in *Zorba* with John Raitt in the title role. In 1988, McNeil toured with Sammy Cahn in the lyricist's hit musical review *Words with Music*, which completed its run at San Francisco's Marines' Memorial Theater. A fifth generation Californian, he is a graduate of the American Center for Musical Theater where he was trained in both opera and musical comedy. He lives in Southern California where he studies with New York City Opera baritone William Chapman and his wife, Irene.

A 1989-90 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, baritone **LeRoy Villanueva** appears this fall as Marullo in *Rigoletto*, a Servant in *Capriccio*, Dr. Falke in the family performance of *Die Fledermaus*, and Streshnev in *Khovanshchina*. He made his Company debut last year as Prince Arjuna in Glass' *Satyagraha*, sang Polidarte in the Opera Center's production of Handel's *Giustino*, and appeared in four roles during the 1989 fall season. He was a member of the Merola Opera Program in 1988, performing Taddeo in *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, and he won the Schwabacher Memorial First Prize Award at the Program's Grand Finals. He sang Sharpless in Western Opera Theater's 1988-89 tour of *Madame Butterfly*, and completed a trip to Japan with the Opera Center Singers. Earlier this year he traveled with the Opera Center Singers to China where he appeared as Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* at the Shanghai Music Festival. In 1987 he took part in Italy's Festa Musicale Stiana, where he performed in Antonio Sacchini's *Amor Soldato*, and in the world premiere of Delia Robotti's *La Pentola*. Additional credits include a joint performance with Ned Rorem in the composer's *War Scenes*, a solo role in the West Coast premiere of Harbison's *Flight into Egypt* at the Ojai Festival, and appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic,



MARK MOLITERNO

the Los Angeles Master Chorale, and the S.F. Symphony Pops Series. He was a Schwabacher Debut Recitalist this year, and most recently performed Director Hummel in the Opera Center's production of Reimann's *The Ghost Sonata*. A native of Southern California, Villanueva is a national winner of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, first place winner of the National Opera Association Auditions, and the recipient of a 1988 Robert M. Jacobson Study Grant, funded by the Astral Foundation, and bestowed by the Richard Tucker Music Foundation. He is scheduled to make his debut next year at Carnegie Recital Hall.

**Mark Moliterno** makes his San Francisco Opera debut in two roles: a Servant in *Capriccio* and the First Strelets in *Khovanshchina*. He recently sang the role of Escamillo in Western Opera Theater's national touring production of *Carmen*. The American baritone has performed a variety of operatic roles throughout the U.S., Canada and Great Britain. He toured with the New York City Opera National Company in their productions of *La Traviata* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and has appeared as Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the Philharmonia Orchestra of New York and as Figaro in Rossini's *Barbiere* with the Tri-County Regional Opera. He also sang the title role of *Falstaff* to critical acclaim, as well as the Shoe Salesman in *Postcard from Morocco*, at the Banff Festival of the Arts. In past seasons, he has been heard as Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* and as the Vicar in *Albert Herring*, both at England's Aldeburgh Festival; as Lockit in *The Beggar's Opera* for Opera Theatre of St. Louis; and as Marcello in *La Bohème*, Dandini in *La Cenerentola*, and Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the Los Angeles Opera Theater Company. Moliterno is a frequent soloist on the concert stage and in recital, and has appeared with the Masterworks Chorus at Avery Fisher Hall and Carnegie Hall in Handel's *Messiah*, and with the St. Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra in the Brahms Requiem at



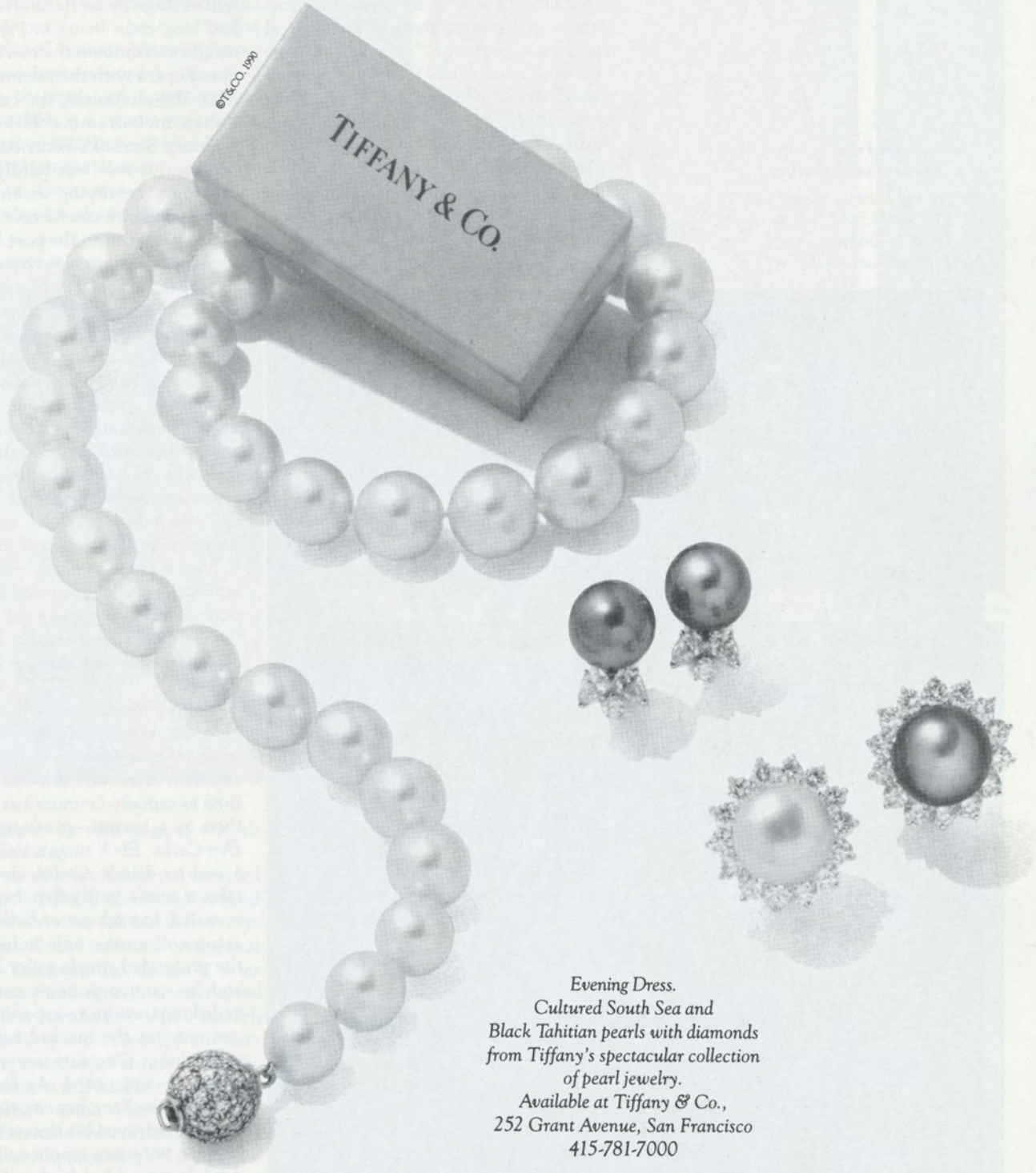
ISABELLE CRESTE

Carnegie Hall. He sang in an all-Mozart concert in Aldeburgh, and performed Ned Rorem's *War Scenes* in recital with the composer at the piano. The recipient of numerous awards and grants, he received both his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and has furthered his studies at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, and at the Britten-Pears School in England.

**Isabelle Creste** makes her San Francisco Opera debut as a solo dancer in *Capriccio*. The native of France received her training with Rosella Hightower's Centre International de Danse in Cannes, and at Lycette Darsonval's Conservatoire National de Nice. She has appeared as soloist with the Paris Opera Ballet, Basel Ballet, Ballet West, London Festival Ballet, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Geneve, and as guest artist with the Eugene Ballet and Alabama Ballet. Miss Creste has a wide repertoire of both classical and contemporary works, ranging from Petipa's *The Sleeping Beauty* to Val Caniparoli's *Ophelia*. She has performed leading roles in Lew Christensen's *The Nutcracker*; George Balanchine's *Raymonda Variations*, *Symphony in C*, *Concerto Barocco* and *Allegro Brillante*; John Cranko's *Pineapple Poll* and *Jeu de Cartes*; Alvin Ailey's *Au Bord du Précipice*; Michael Smuin's *Romeo and Juliet*; Sir Frederick Ashton's *Les Patineurs* and *The Dream*; and Caniparoli's *Kinetic Impressions*. Miss Creste has also been highly praised in the ballets *Cinderella*, *Giselle*, *La Bayadère*, *The Miraculous Mandarin*, *Don Quichotte pas de deux*, *La Sylphide*, *Pulcinella*, *Swan Lake*, and *Billy the Kid*.

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JIM SOHM

**Jim Sohm**, the 1990 winner of the Isadora Duncan Lifetime Achievement Award, makes his San Francisco Opera debut as a solo dancer in *Capriccio*. The California native received his initial training in the Bay Area, and was awarded a Ford Foundation scholarship to further his studies at New York's School of American Ballet. In 1975, he joined the San Francisco Ballet, where he is currently a Principal Dancer, and has been featured by that company in over 30 classical ballet and dance roles. He has danced leading roles in *Symphony in C*, *Chaconne*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Symphony in C* (Balanchine); *La Fille mal gardée* (Ashton); *Rodeo* (de Mille); *Connotations* and *Hamlet and Ophelia* (Caniparoli); *Beauty and the Beast*, *Cinderella* and *Jinx* (Christensen); *Romeo and Juliet* (Smuin); *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Concerto in D: Poulenc*, *Menuetto*, *Swan Lake*, and *Handel—A Celebration* (Tomasson); and *The Nutcracker* (Christensen/Tomasson). His film and television credits include the role of Romeo in Smuin's *Romeo and Juliet* for WNET's "Dance in America" series, as well as the Pas de Deux from the same ballet for the "Aid and Comfort" benefit gala which was broadcast on KQED. Sohm has also performed with the Oakland Ballet, Berlin's Deutsche Oper Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada, and at the 1990 Reykjavik Arts Festival in Iceland.

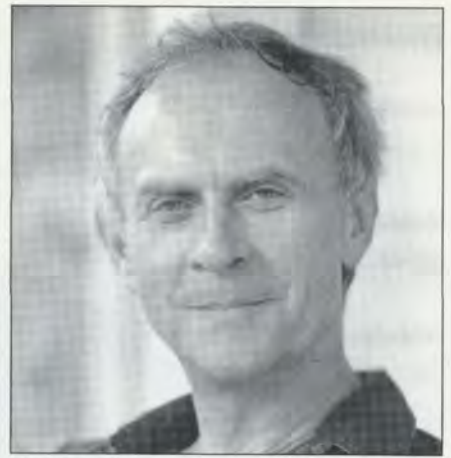
**Stephen Barlow** makes his United States debut with San Francisco Opera leading performances of *Capriccio*. The English conductor was educated at Canterbury Cathedral Choir School, King's School Canterbury, Trinity College, Cambridge, and the Guildhall School of Music. He was a frequent guest conductor at Glyndebourne from 1978 to 1985, conducting *Die Schweigsame Frau*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, and *Arabella* during the summer festivals, and *Così fan tutte*, Gluck's *Orfeo*, *The Rake's Progress* and *The Love of Three Oranges* on tour. He has led performances with the English National Opera (*The Flying Dutchman*, *Carmen*, *La Cenerentola* and *The Barber of Seville*),



STEPHEN BARLOW

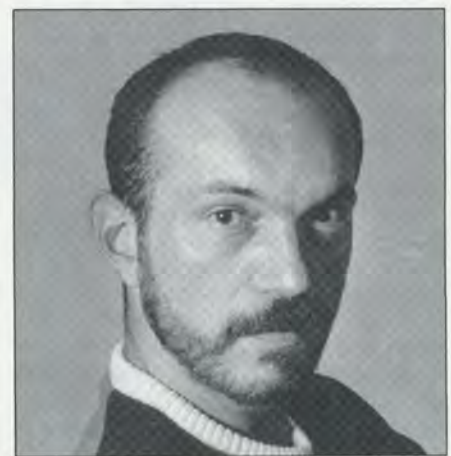
Scottish Opera (*Hansel and Gretel*, *The Bartered Bride* and *Intermezzo*), Opera North (*The Marriage of Figaro* and *Intermezzo*), and Opera 80 (*A Masked Ball*, *The Rake's Progress*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *La Cenerentola*). He has been music director of Opera 80 since 1987. Recent engagements include *The Barber of Seville* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* for the Netherlands Opera, *Turandot* in Lausanne, *The Rake's Progress* for the Vancouver Opera, and his debut at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden with *Turandot*. Maestro Barlow returns to Covent Garden later this season for *Die Zauberflöte* and to Vancouver for *Madama Butterfly*.

Internationally celebrated stage director **John Cox** returns to San Francisco Opera to direct *Capriccio*. He made his Company debut with Strauss' *Arabella* in 1980. Subsequent assignments here have been *The Rake's Progress* in the summer of 1982 (reprised in 1988), *Don Carlos*, which opened the 1986 Fall Season, and *The Magic Flute* in 1987. He began his professional career at Glyndebourne but was soon more active in legitimate theater, directing many plays and musicals around England and for BBC-TV. He maintained his connection with classical music through productions at Sadler's Wells, the Wexford Festival and the Music Theatre Ensemble, which he founded with composer Alexander Goehr, commissioning important experiments in new music theater. From 1972 to 1982, he was Director of Production at Glyndebourne, where he has directed more productions to date than any director since founder Carl Ebert. Among them was a cycle of Richard Strauss' six comedies, of which the outstanding success was a *Capriccio*, set in the 1920s, which has since been seen in Paris, Brussels and New York. Simultaneously, he has staged productions for opera companies worldwide, including Vienna, La Scala, Amsterdam, Nice, Sydney, Stockholm and Brussels; in Germany at Cologne, Frankfurt, Munich, Nuremberg and Hannover; and in the United States at the Metropolitan Opera and the



JOHN COX

New York City Opera, as well as Houston, Santa Fe and Washington, D.C. In July of 1981 he was appointed General Administrator of Scottish Opera. He resigned from the company in 1986, but continued to direct there with productions of *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Flying Dutchman* and *Lulu*. In 1988, he was appointed Production Director of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, where he directed *Manon* and *Die Fledermaus*. In 1989, he made his Salzburg and Florence Maggio Musicale debuts, and this year at Covent Garden he has directed *Die Meistersinger* and *Guillaume Tell*, the first production of the Russian work there in over 100 years.



MAURO PAGANO

The late **Mauro Pagano** created the sets for *Capriccio*. The internationally renowned designer's first assignment for San Francisco Opera was designing the 1986 production of Menotti's *The Medium*. Pagano designed the sets for La Scala's 1985 season-opening production of *Aida*, along with the sets for Massenet's *Cendrillon* and Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann* in Brussels; the set design for the world premiere of Hans Werner Henze's version of Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* at the Salzburg Festival and, at the Paris Opera, costumes for Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*. He



GIANNI VERSACE

has also created the sets for *The Barber of Seville* at the Edinburgh Festival, *Così fan tutte* at the Salzburg Festival and at La Scala, and productions of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and *La Gazza Ladra* in Cologne. Additional projects include new productions of *La Sonnambula* and *Alceste* at La Scala, *Don Giovanni* in Salzburg, and, in 1988, *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Bayreuth Festival.

Internationally acclaimed costume and fashion designer **Gianni Versace** undertakes his first U.S. operatic assignment with the costumes for *Capriccio*. Born in Reggio Calabria, in the south of Italy, he literally learned his craft from his mother, a dressmaker. As a youth, he went with her to Paris to view the clothes of the leading couturiers and to learn more about the world of fashion. The designer burst forth onto the fashion scene in the mid-1970s, when he became responsible for the collections of Genny, Callaghan and Complice. 1978 saw the birth of the Gianni Versace label and the inauguration of his own house—the first of 120 exclusive shops. He began designing for the theater in 1982, creating the costumes for Richard Strauss' *Josephslegende* ballet at Milan's La Scala. In 1984, he began an artistic association with choreographer Maurice Béjart, designing the costumes for Béjart's *Dionysos* (1984); *Malraux ou la métamorphose des Dieux* (1986); *Leda and the Swan* and *Souvenir de Leningrad* (1987); a ballet based on the life of Eva Peron (1988); and *Elégie pour elle, "L" . . . , aile* (1989). His first designs for opera were seen in 1984, with the Scala production of *Don Pasquale*, followed by the costume designs for Robert Wilson's controversial 1986 staging of *Salome* in Milan, and, in 1989, for Manzoni's contemporary opera *Doktor Faustus*, also at La Scala. Versace has won numerous awards and honors for his costumes, outfits, and accessories created for on-

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VAL CANIPAROLI

and off-stage consumption. They include awards from the governments of Italy, France and Germany, as well as from the fashion industry, which honored him with the Stanley Marcus Award, the most prestigious among fashion awards. The innovative couturier's designs have been exhibited in museums worldwide, and he is also the creator of two popular fragrances.

Val Caniparoli is the choreographer for *Capriccio*. Choreographer in Residence and Principal Character Dancer with the San Francisco Ballet, he made his San Francisco Opera choreographic debut in 1986 with the dances for *Manon*. Born in Renton, Washington, he studied music and theater at Washington State University and, in 1972, received a Ford Foundation Scholarship to study at the S.F. Ballet School, joining the parent company in 1973. He has created a series of premieres for San Francisco Ballet which the company has performed on tours across the country. They include *Love-Lies-Bleeding*, choreographed for the 1982 Stravinsky Festival; *Windows* (1984); *Hamlet and Ophelia pas de deux* (1985); *Narcisse* (1987); and, most recently, *Connotations* (1989) and *In Perpetuum* (1990), both nominated for the 1990 Isadora Duncan Award for outstanding achievement in choreography. In addition to his work at San Francisco Ballet, he has created several works which have been performed by companies throughout the U.S. and abroad, including Seattle's Pacific Northwest Ballet, Oakland Ballet, Marin Ballet, Hong Kong Ballet, the Ririe Woodbury Company in Salt Lake City, Jacob's Pillow and Ballet West. As a dancer, he has performed such character roles as the Juggler in Lew Christensen's *Jinx*, Drosselmeyer in



THOMAS J. MUNN

Christensen's *Nutcracker*, Widow Simone in Sir Frederick Ashton's *La Fille mal gardée*, and Madge in *La Sylphide* (Bournonville/Tomasson). For San Francisco Ballet's 1991 season, Caniparoli is creating his eighth premiere, *Pulcinella*, and will be creating new works for Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and Pacific Northwest Ballet. Since 1981, he has been the recipient of six grants for choreography from the National Endowment for the Arts, and was honored with the 1987 Isadora Duncan Award for Choreography for his work *Aubade*, which he created for the Israel Ballet and later performance by the Oakland Ballet.

Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera, Thomas J. Munn created the lighting for *Suor Angelica/Pagliacci*, *Rigoletto*, *Capriccio*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Khovanshchina*, and *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. In his 15th season with the Company, he has lighted over 130 productions for here and most recently created the lighting and special effects for this summer's Ring cycle. He also 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 films. 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 credits 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*. His most notable achievement as a lighting consultant is the new Muziektheater in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

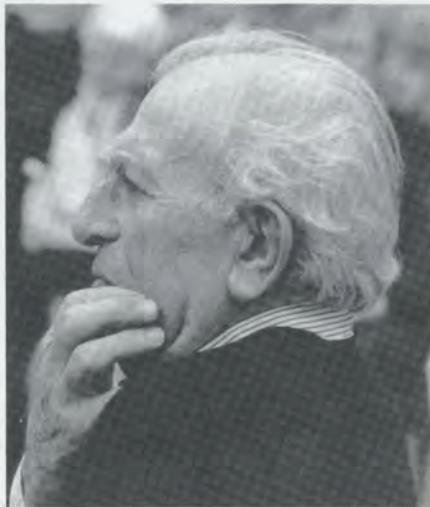
# Hans Hotter:

For dramatic soprano Dora Koutelas, one of the immensely talented young singers in the San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program, "... my highest ambition is to study one of the great *Ring* roles with Hans Hotter. Soon, perhaps Sieglinde, and ten years down the road, maybe Brünnhilde."

Some of Koutelas's reasons for wishing to coach these important roles with Hotter will be obvious to all opera-lovers. After all, the great bass-baritone was for 25 years the world's most sought-after Wotan, famous in particular for his keen dramatic insights. For Koutelas, "it was incredible what he was able to do with the way in which the individual words were spoken—with the meaning of the words and how they fit musically. After going over a passage with Herr Hotter, it was as if the words themselves could have had a musical content all by themselves, entirely aside from the score."

Yet, the multi-talented Hotter can do more for young singers than just teach them how to draw out the dramatic powers of the words. In addition to his verbal insights, his vast knowledge of the art of singing comes into play when he conducts a master class, such as the one this author was privileged to attend during last June's *Ring* cycle.

Ann Panagulias, who sang Lulu to Hotter's Schigolch in last year's triumphant production of Alban Berg's *Lulu*, began with the "unveiling," as she called it, of her "Come scoglio," Fiordiligi's famous first act aria from Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. In this piece, Fiordiligi declares that she will remain "firm as a rock" against all and any temptations from the handsome Albanian soldier who is so precipitously attempting to seduce her. After Panagulias's splendid rendition, Hotter joined in the applause, but then he stepped back and explained the teacher's purpose: "While you are learning an aria, it is acceptable to tackle just the notes and put into your singing all the determination you feel, but you [that day's participants were mostly Adler Fellows] are all advanced singers and it is time to learn the things we all have to add to our singing in order to communicate better with our audience. Sometimes this



PICKER



Hans Hotter during San Francisco Opera's 1990 master classes.

involves certain tricks we use to make the whole more interesting, or more colorful, or to give it more variety. In the end, what I am here to do is to help you find a way of making up your own mind about these things. Try to decide if you want this this way and that that way—so long as it is within the terms of the composer's work. Try to do it your own way, while you keep within the composer's intentions."

Having stated his general proposition, Hotter went back to the beginning. "We should always regard or respect a recitative almost like an aria. The usual idea is to put all the talking into the recitative and all the singing in the aria, but there is still some arietta quality left in the recitative. In the recit, don't just sing all the phrases separately, leaving each to fend for it. Instead, try to give coherence to the whole by joining together those verbal ideas that belong together. Usually you will find that the composer has helped you along in this. And then it is always very important to consider how you join the recit with the aria. Sometimes you want to rush right into it and sometimes you need to wait a moment."

Hotter now turned to one of the tricks he had spoken of earlier that help the singer communicate with his or her audience. "Don't forget that you can use a certain legato line also in the recitative," he admonished. The idea of legato that Hotter has introduced here is a technical term from the Italian verb *legare*, meaning to bind or tie, and it refers to a smooth passage from note to note, binding them together with a thread of voice. "One of the singer's most important concerns, or tricks if you will," the master singer continued, "is bound up with legato. As I have tried to explain before, there is an enormous emotional impact on the audience whenever you move from staccato to legato singing. When you sing a passage legato, it gives the audience the

*William Huck is a San Francisco-based music critic and opera librettist. His writing appears in the San Francisco Sentinel, Opera Quarterly and the Los Angeles Times. He is editor and program annotator for San Francisco Ballet magazine.*

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Ann Panagulias sings "Come scoglio" for Hans Hotter and master class attendees.

unexpected impression that there is an added feeling involved in what you are saying."

Hotter elaborated: "In singing we are always addressing the audience in the language of music; we must remember that we are also talking to them in the language of our emotions. And we must learn how those emotions are projected across the vast spaces of an opera house. Sometimes we instinctively know the result of what we do, but sometimes the result is much different from what we intended. One thing about singing is certain: as soon as you introduce a legato line, everyone senses, even if unconsciously, that there is an added emotional expression in what you are saying, so the use of legato and especially the movement into it from staccato is very important and should involve a conscious decision on our part."

Of the aria, Hotter found "most of it very good, very good indeed." But then came the teacher's inevitable "... still, on a raising line, try not to reach for the top notes, but put them into a continuously connected stream of sound. And you know the way to do this: put the support on the note from below. On the F, for example, keep your placement steady." Placement is another technical term indicating the way a singer forms a note by how he or she shapes the central vowel to be sung and thus where the sound is placed in the mouth. For Hotter, "This is most important: do not change the placement of the vowel while you are going up. Do not let it get disturbed by consonants or by your pronunciation of them. When you are going up the scale—or down for that matter—it is not the right time to start doing something different. As soon as you change the way you are forming your sound, the color of your tone changes, and when the tone color changes, the line stops."

One of Hotter's other concerns was

breath control and the way the singer manages to negotiate the need to breathe between phrases. "Of course we all must breathe at times while we are singing. It's not that you don't breathe between some phrases, it's that you don't show any effort—any visible or audible breathing. This is something so many very famous singers do not take advantage of: the possibility of breathing but not showing. They think the choice is only between breathing and not breathing, but it is more subtle than that. A little hidden work can make a much greater variety of expression available to you."

Hotter concluded his remarks to the remarkable Miss Panagulias with some heartfelt advice. "You must have confidence, you must believe that the top notes will come. Don't think of an extra effort, just continue on up and then the note will not pop out of the line. That won't call attention to the top note, which so many singers mistakenly want to do, but it will be more beautiful and in its quiet way more astonishing for the audience. Those high notes are frequently a sheer psychological matter; once you believe in your voice and your abilities, they will become easy. Thank you."

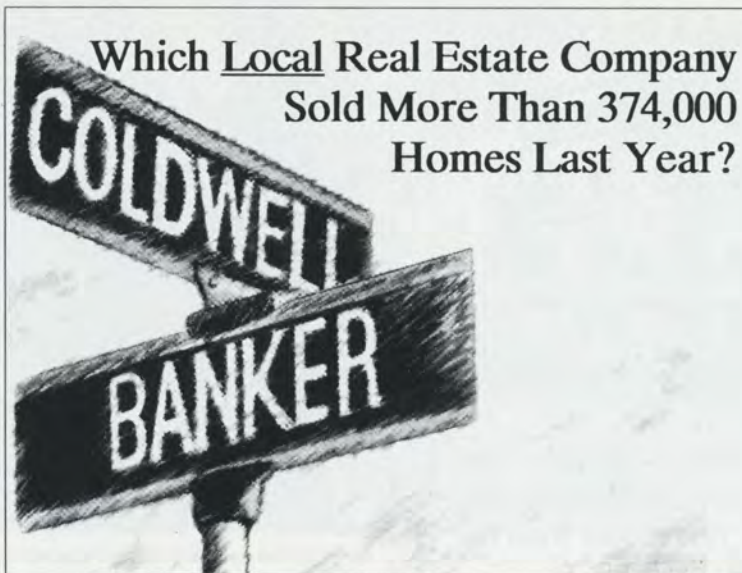
Next, tenor Craig Estep, who is singing four roles during this fall season, stepped up. He explained that when he sang for Herr Hotter, he always chose arias that made him work on specific problems, such as legato phrasing, or arias that forced him to sing through the *passaggio* of the voice, by which he referred to that treacherous passage between the chest voice and the head voice. In Tonio's second act aria, "Pour me rapprocher de Marie" from Donizetti's *La Fille du Régiment*, he almost embarrassingly admitted that he had found a piece that exposed both of these conditions.

The *passaggio* is a problem that singers talk about constantly—it's an obsession

almost like fingering for a pianist—but like fingering, it is one that is hidden from the general audience. Hotter clearly defined the difficulty of this connective link between chest and head voice when he complimented Estep. “Everyone will be impressed by the ease and brilliance of your top, which is such a problem for other tenors, but if it sounds completely disengaged from the rest of your voice, it sounds unfinished.” As Hotter explained, “impressive as your C# may be, it is the whole thing, the relationship between the top note and what lays below, that is really and truly important. Like many tenors, you make your bridge [between chest and head voice] on F and F#. You are too open in your F# when you are going up, and when you go down, you are always over-cover which you do not need to do. That is what makes the notes within the staff sometimes sound hollow and blustery. Going up it is not that you change position, which I warned our Fiordiligi about, but that the position itself is a little in favor of the front of the mouth. Try to bring the sound back towards the throat.”

Amid this specialized analysis of vocal production, Hotter reached for a homely and most illuminating metaphor. “When you bring the sound back in the mouth, try to imitate a little the mechanism of a yawn, which puts the air and the sound further back.” If the reader will try to say “ah” as when the doctor tells you stick out your tongue, and then tries to yawn, the difference between the way the sound goes to the front of the mouth in the first instance and the way it goes to the back of the mouth in the second, will become evident. Hotter’s yawn is a clever explanatory device, for it immediately puts the sound into the back of the mouth and it is from there that a singer gets access to the sinus cavities of the head, which in turn allow the singer to make a smooth transition between the chest and the head voice.

This line of reasoning became clearer as Hotter worked with the next Adler Fellow Catherine Keen, who sang the contralto aria “Erbarme dich,” from Bach’s *Passion According to St. Matthew*. This heartfelt outpouring symbolizes Peter’s grief when he realizes that (just as had been predicted) he has denied Christ three times. This aria is particularly important for Hotter’s argument, for its rising central phrase, “Erbarme dich” (“Have mercy, Lord”), continuously crosses the mezzo-soprano’s break between chest and head voice. Keen sang the aria with a rich, wonderful sound, but the teacher’s inevitable “still” lurked.



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Craig Estep and Hans Hotter communicating during a Donizetti aria.

"When the sun is covered by a whole eclipse, the earth is darker and gloomier. Your voice sounds like a partial eclipse. I don't know why all mezzos in the world over-cover their voices, but they do." At this comment, general laughter broke out from all the singers assembled for the master class. "But it's true," Hotter rejoined. "I'm not excusing any other vocal categories because they have their own troubles, but it is strange. This covering is like an innate thing in mezzos, and it doesn't have to be. The voice is so dark by nature that you don't have to shade it any more."

Of course, all singers need to cover their sound somewhat in order to delineate the note they want to produce. This writer remembers listening to an established soprano who seemed to think that when she got above the staff all she needed to do was to differentiate the notes by their floor. They had no ceiling at all, because they had no cover. But as Hotter pointed out, "you can sing with 80% resonance and only 20% cover. It is not a question of sharp or flat. That is not your problem; your pitch is firm and secure. It is a question of color. Let a little sunshine into your sound, by trying to sing an uncovered 'ah.'"

When singers cover their sound, especially in the tricky *passaggio*, what they are doing is shutting off access to the resonating chambers in what is called the mask of the face, that area on either side of the nose and around the base of the eyes that the Lone Ranger used to keep hidden from sight. As Hotter explained, "there is always a little cover, but according to where your 'ah' is placed in the mouth, you must find a way to connect the notes and make whatever changes, either up or down, more gradually. The voice is like a car, you don't just abruptly shift gears, but try to knit everything together to make for a smooth ride.

Coming down, you must always find a way to keep a hold of the resonance from the top, just as on going up you must find an early way into those resonating cavities. This is where we singers live from, because the [continued use of the] resonance smooths over, both visually and audibly, the changing into another register. One of the most important reasons why it is better to sing a natural 'ah' is because on a covered 'ah' it is more difficult to get into the resonance on top."

As Catherine Keen attempted Hotter's new "uncovered" technique on the *passaggio*, a throbbing or exaggerated vibrato entered her voice on a particularly difficult passage. "Believe me, my dear," the old master sympathized, "it is very difficult to change habits that go back as far as the traditional mezzo covering." When Keen repeated the passage, and the problem reappeared, Hotter nodded knowingly. "Now I hear what you noticed. The vibrations always tell the story of what you are doing. You need more air to produce a steady tone, because to use the resonating chambers requires more air than to shut off the mask of the face. That's quite normal. Think of it: resonance means the vibrations that are created by the bit of air coming up through the vocal cords and into the sinus cavities of the face." To explain what Hotter means here, let us take the example of the violin. The basic note is produced by the bow setting up the vibrations of the string, but the resonance, and with it the warmth and the richness, in short, the beauty of the sound, is created by the bit of air coming from the vibrating string as it resonates in the whole body of the violin. It is the same with the singer, except that in this case the body of the violin is to be found in the singer's sinus cavities.

"It needs a certain amount of air to get the resonating chambers of the head to

start vibrating," Hotter continued. "The exact amount is not something that can be taught, it must be learned by each individual singer for herself or himself. Get the right amount and the vibrations are smooth. Then the whole system vibrates together and this is the moment when we really enjoy our own singing.

"Usually we think that as we go higher we need more air, but really the opposite is true. Up there we need less air. The vibrations are faster and shorter and they need less force to set the chamber itself vibrating. The reason for this confusion is not hard to find. It's because on the high notes, the air must go between the almost completely closed vocal cords and of course it has a problem getting through. We feel this as a sort of resistance, and we naturally try to push more to get through the restricted passage. But it is not a problem to solve, rather it is something we must learn to recognize and live with. Going down means that the cords open and more air is needed to fill the passage between them and make them vibrate correctly. On the lower notes we need more air to supply the voice with the same dynamics."

It was at this point that a light went on for Dora Koutelas, who appeared next and sang "Pace, pace" from Verdi's *La*



KOHLER

Dora Koutelas and Catherine Keen talk to Hans Hotter during a break in the master class.

*Forza del Destino*. "It was like a revelation," Koutelas reports, "and I can still hear him saying it: in the top part of the voice, one needs less air, the cords are smaller and more stretched, they have smaller vibrations. Because when you are going to the high note doesn't mean that you have to get all of your strength behind it. You need to save all of that for the middle voice, which has to be full and

takes more air, but when you go through the *passaggio* and up to the top you don't need nearly that much. It is less, less, less.

"That is a particular problem, especially when you are trying to be dramatic. When you are really into the emotions of a part, you tend to think to yourself: 'here comes the high note, let's make it the big climax, let's get behind it and throw our

*Continued on page 63*

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## “Capriccio” in a Twenties Setting

The central issue in *Capriccio* can happily never be resolved. The superiority of music over poetry, or vice versa, must always be a matter of personal preference. The Countess, not wishing to sacrifice one by choosing the other, proposes opera as a way to possess both. But this compromise, far from being a solution, sharpens a mere topic of conversation into a vexed confrontation; for in opera, the conflict of priorities between words and music is enacted with every performance. Those of us who work in opera are inevitably caught up in the battle.

*Capriccio* is a conversation piece, concerned with ideas. Given that the issues embodied in these ideas are as alive today as they ever were, and that by performing the opera at all we are contributing to the argument, I wanted to find a way of doing it which would stress its contemporaneity. In a piece which is of necessity rather static, the 18th-century convention of paniered skirts and powdered wigs could easily lend to proceedings an air of the museum. So often with *Capriccio* one gets the impression of a group of silk and satin dilettantes idling their way affectedly through a vacuous afternoon, whereas the essence of the situation is a number of professional artists discussing their work with their patrons.

However, unlike the ideas, the social circumstances embodied in *Capriccio* are not of the present. Where now do we find an elite wealthy and cultivated enough to patronize artists as extravagantly as the Countess and her brother do? The task was thus to find a time as close as possible to our own which would be true to the dramatic content of the opera.

Paris in the decade after the First World War had all that was needed. Patronesses like the Princesse de Polignac commisi-

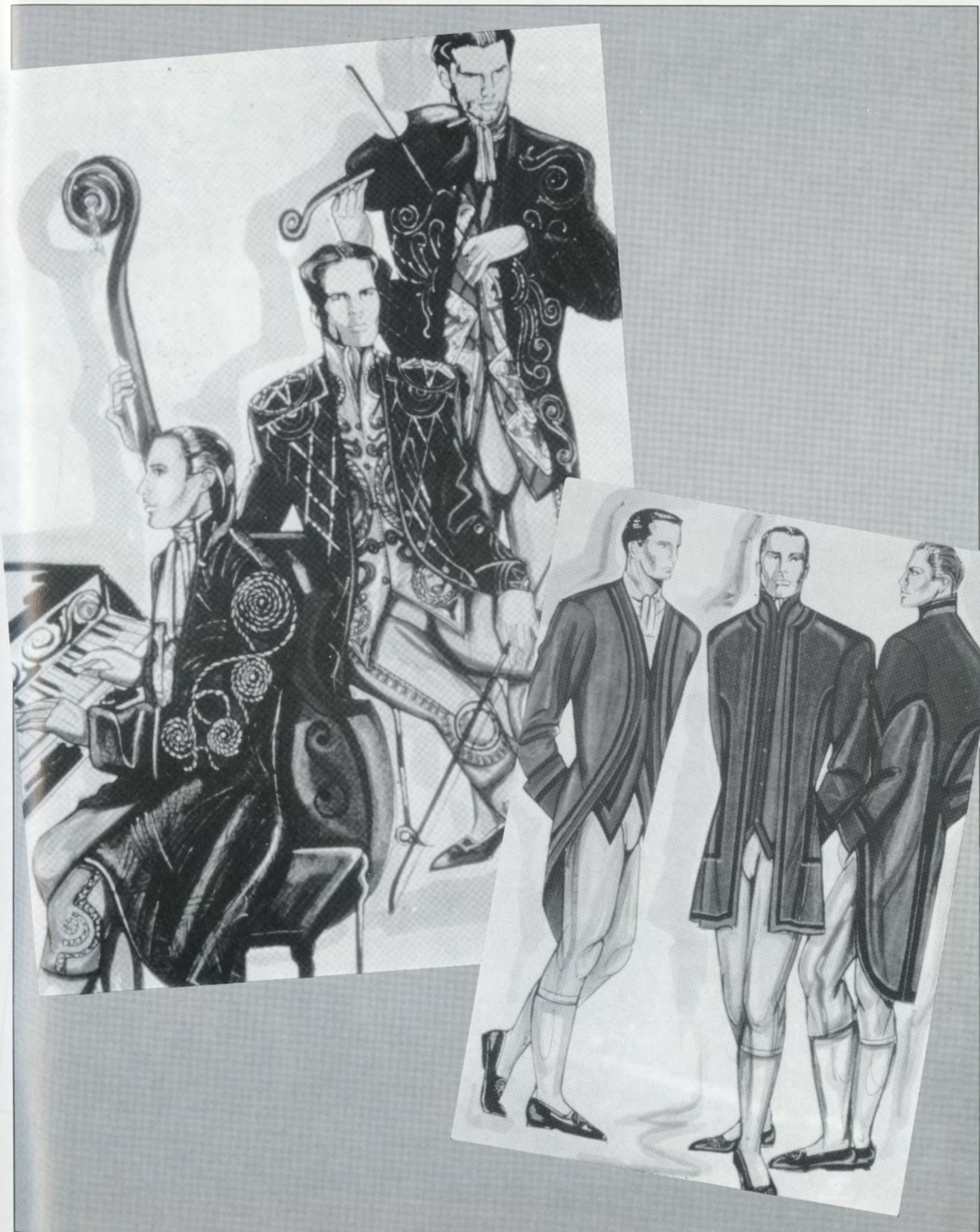
oned works from Stravinsky, Cocteau, the composers of Les Six and others for private consumption. All of them were concerned with problems of form, many with finding new ways of combining words and music for the theater. Diaghilev and Reinhardt bestrode the theatrical scene.

Most of all, the post-war relaxation in style of social behavior, with its ingenious emphasis on comfort, but not yet at the expense of elegance, would seem to look back to the 18th century, and forward to our own. It releases to the performer a rich vocabulary of gesture, posture and moment-to-moment activity which is more accessible to both audience and actors, being much closer to their own, and which, therefore, can only assist in pointing the relevance of the conversation to us as we watch and listen.

Those who find the references within our text to 18th-century composers and writers problematic should reflect that every age has its reformers and traditionalists. Names change but issues remain. Strauss, by claiming in his preface to *Capriccio* that he himself was the direct heir of Gluck's reforms, cleared the way for an exposition in words and music of his own compositional concerns. (As if to leave us in no doubt at all of this musical self-portrait, he even quotes frequently from his own work.) In short, everything he represents was as true during his working life as it was in Gluck's—indeed, in many instances, notably in the wholly 20th-century figure of the producer La Roche, even more so.

La Roche is anxious to people the stage with “creatures of flesh and blood,” “people like ourselves with whom we can identify.” This interpretation of *Capriccio* is an attempt to please him.

—John Cox



Some of Gianni Versace's Capriccio costume designs: (Above) Musicians and servants; (Opposite page) The dancer.

## A Word from Gianni Versace:

In *Capriccio*, I considered all of the women in the opera and imagined them choosing famous dressmakers for their clothes, with the choices made according to their different personalities and moods.

The Countess, for instance, would choose Chanel for the daytime and the Atelier Simultané of Sonia Delaunay for the evening. Clairon would have given her preference to Poiret, because she needs to "appear" on the scene.

The Italian Soprano would wear something that might have come from the hand of Madame Vionnet.

Maybe I ought to say that what I have created are not costumes but clothes. As a matter of fact, although I have often worked for the theater, I have always rejected the definition of costume designer. This is perhaps because when I create for the theater, I try to detach myself as much as possible from all sorts of clichés and want to feel free to re-interpret each period with a modern eye.

I love the research one has to do and the task of reviewing shapes and materials with a contemporary approach. I see myself more as a tailor working on everyday clothes trying to make them look theatrical, rather than someone who creates something especially for the stage.

One of the interesting things about *Capriccio* is that it is usually represented in the 18th century. This time, John Cox has decided, in certain situations, to make the 18th and 20th century live together. This has created a very pleasant contrast on the stage and has given me the opportunity to emphasize certain typical shapes of the 1700s opposed to some modern intuitions with a Delaunay flavor.

*Capriccio* has been, therefore, a very challenging experience, rewarding and intriguing, all at the same time.



*Gianni Versace's design for one of Clairon's and Count's costumes.*

## Hans Hotter

*Continued from page 57*

tonsils against the back wall.' But that instinctive way of thinking is the opposite of the truth. One of the things Herr Hotter kept on saying was 'energy efficient, always make your singing energy efficient.' With those huge and incredibly expressive hands of his, he would show you what he meant. He would put them together, then separate them about three or four inches and keep them parallel, thus telling you that the sound remains the same up and down, and the beauty resides in that."

The first thing Hotter asked when Koutelas finished her luscious reading of "Pace, pace," was whether the emerging dramatic soprano had once sung in a lower vocal category. "Were you once a mezzo? I thought so, from the way you tend to cover your sound so much. Take advantage of a voice that goes naturally down to the bottom of your range. It will be most useful, especially with a dramatic voice like yours. But at the same time, try not to cover so much and try to get a little more resonance. Your sound is very well placed, but you can still do it with less effort."

For Koutelas, Hotter's other special secret was a new vision of that "ah"

sound mentioned above. "That might sound funny," the singer remarked almost apologetically, "but it is something that I have been searching for for the past two or three years—trying to find exactly where the placement is best. One thing he suggested was to make the 'ah' sound as if one were saying the French 'a' instead of the American one." Once again the reader can duplicate Hotter's distinction by a little experiment. Try first saying the "ah" as in a doctor's office again and then switching to the "a" as in "father." The sound is naturally placed farther back in the mouth. "It's a sound," Koutelas explains, "that is more in the hard palate and it definitely goes right into the resonating cavities, right up into the mask of the face. It doesn't go into the nasal passages, but right behind your cheek bones, where your cheek bones come up under your eyes. Using the French sound, it takes very little effort, less air—or as he'd always say 'you don't have to push it there, you just have to let it fill what is already there to be filled.'"

This new, Frenchified "a" gave Koutelas access to the resonating chamber, from which, as Hotter had told Keen, singers get their command of legato and hence a lyrical sense of phrasing. "Ever

since Hotter's coaching, it has been apparent in my lessons and my singing that I now can make a brighter, clearer sound with my 'ahs' and especially in my middle voice. Although I do not ever intentionally cover or color, because there is enough there already, I think that my training as a contralto and a mezzo did encourage me, though unconsciously, to over-cover my voice, to make it mysterious and haunting. The insight was finding this new place, which was always there, and which I didn't need to create, but just to find. Now that I have become aware of it, it has made a great deal of difference. All the new music I am working on and all the old that I have been going over again is, well, just better. I can feel it in the face. The sound is much smaller; I can't any longer luxuriate in the bigness of the sound that I can make. But that was a false security anyway. In the end, it will lead to blowing your top, and blowing your middle. They're both important, the middle quite as much as the top, especially for a dramatic soprano who does so much of her real work in that area."

Koutelas summed up the experience that all the Merola singers had working with Herr Hotter, when she said: "When you go to work with someone like that

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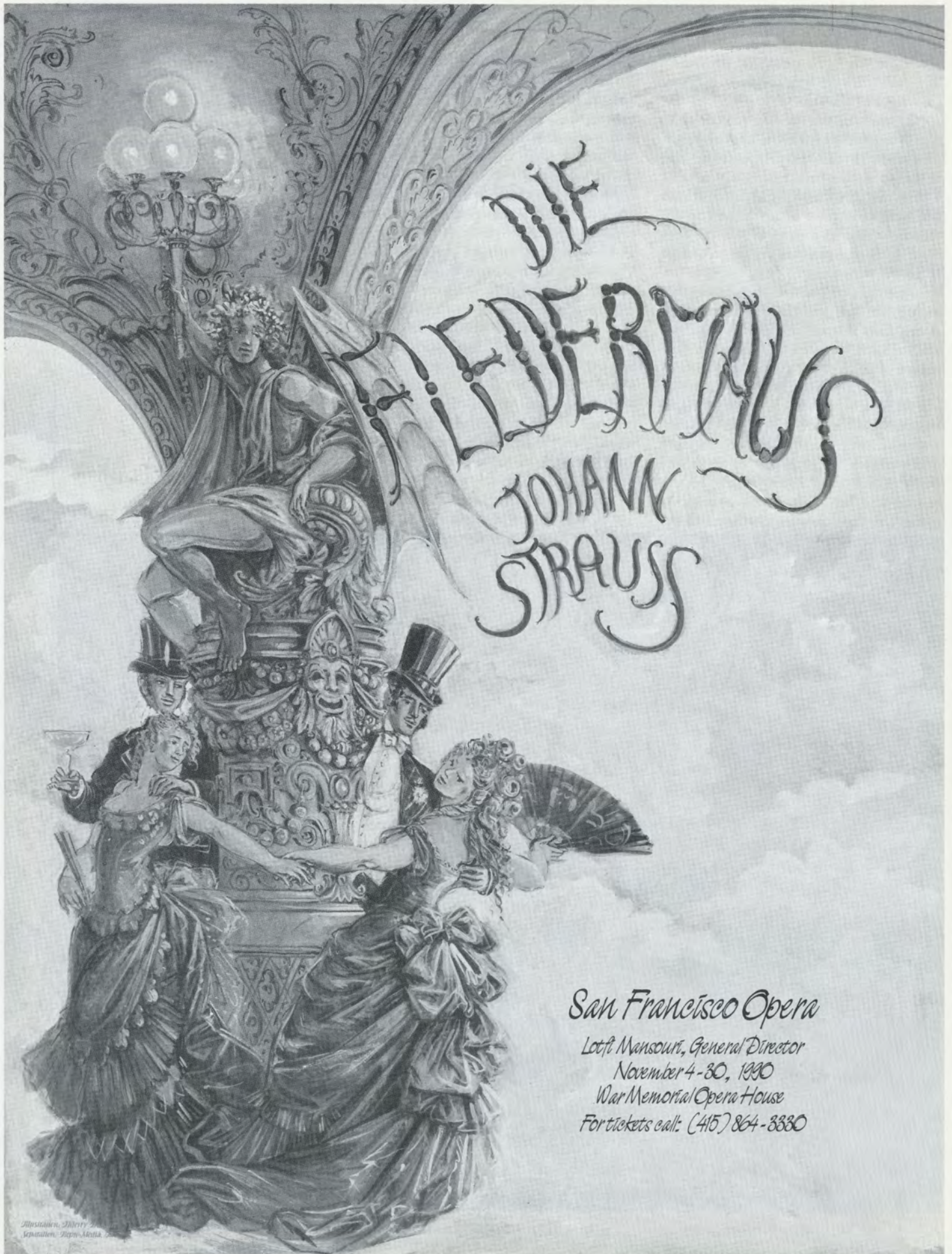
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you always think, oh my God, how am I going to do it. But then you think: finally, here's someone who understands and whom I totally trust. I am going to put myself in your hands and not be afraid. There could have been 5,000 people listening to the master classes and I wouldn't have cared. It was *his* listening that was important.

"The most gratifying thing was to do something he asked for consistently, because what he demands passes even what is excellent. He would ask you for the near-impossible, but when you achieved it, not once but several times, then a look came into his eyes. They would twinkle, and that twinkle filled your heart with a reward that made all the impossible effort seem like nothing."

At the end of the class, Hotter had his own summing up. "We use these tricks, these technical devices, not for themselves but to further our communication with the audience. It is for them that we sing. I don't want to try to encapsulate all that we have talked about here in a short speech, but I do wonder if we sometimes forget how privileged we are by the things we have been given by nature and how privileged and how responsible we actually are to be allowed to do our work in the service of art." ■

## PERFORMING ARTS LIBRARY PRESENTS NEW EXHIBITION

The San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum (SF PALM for short; formerly known as The Archives for the Performing Arts) will present *Tapestry: The Threads of Bay Area Multicultural Art* in its new gallery at 399 Grove Street, one block west of the Opera House.

This exhibition of three photographic collections, presented in conjunction with *Festival 2000*, will run from mid-October through January:

*Prime Movers*—a look at the many important living figures who have helped shape the Bay Area multicultural arts scene;

*In Performance*—an overview of the multicultural performers and performing organizations in the Bay Area;

*Portraits and Profiles*—a behind-the-scenes examination of artists in rehearsal and in the community.

Each of these three sections has been created by a different Bay Area photographer, selected by a jury of five from nearly 40 applicants, whose work has been specially commissioned by *Festival 2000* for this exhibition. The commissioned photographers are Marion Gray, Robert Hsiang, and Holman "Bob" Turner.

Ultimately, these photographs, along with appropriate documentation, will become part of SF PALM's permanent collection.

The gallery is open from noon to 5 pm, Monday, Thursday and Friday, and from noon to 6 pm on Tuesday and Wednesday. For information and special group viewings, please call 255-4800.

*Tapestry* has been made possible, in part, by generous support from the James Irvine Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Fund, and *Festival 2000*.

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# 1990 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 current previews and lectures that are open to the public.

## SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD INSIGHTS

Renowned artists and personalities (to be announced) from the world of opera share their insights and experiences during informal interviews.

Held in Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., in San Francisco. All discussions begin at 6 p.m.; doors open at 5:30 p.m. There is no charge for Guild members. Individual tickets may be purchased at the door for \$5. For further information, please call (415) 565-6432. Programs are subject to change.

*Capriccio* 10/8  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/22

## 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. Series registration is \$36 for 7 previews (\$30 for students and seniors). Single tickets are \$6 (\$5 for students and seniors). For further information, please call (415) 388-6789.

*Don Quichotte* 10/10  
Michael Mitchell  
*Capriccio* 10/17  
James Keolker  
*Khovanshchina* 11/14  
Richard Taruskin  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/19  
William Mahrt

## SOUTH PENINSULA

Previews held at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant, at 8 p.m. Series registration is \$30 (students \$15); single tickets are \$5 (students \$4). For further information, please call (415) 948-8717.

*Don Quichotte* 10/9  
Michael Mitchell  
*Capriccio* 10/16  
James Keolker  
*Khovanshchina* 11/13  
Richard Taruskin  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/20  
William Mahrt

## 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 for San Jose

Opera Guild members). For further information, please call (408) 354-7525.

*Don Quichotte* 10/9  
Michael Mitchell  
*Capriccio* 10/16  
James Keolker  
*Khovanshchina* 11/13  
Richard Taruskin  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/20  
William Mahrt

## SONOMA COUNTY CHAPTER

Previews held at various times and locations (see below). Series registration is \$40 for 6 previews (chapter member); \$48 non-member. Single tickets \$8. Extra cost of luncheons \$10; dinner \$24. For further information and reservations for luncheons and dinner, please call (707) 935-1957 or (707) 996-2590.

*Don Quichotte* 10/8, 10:30 a.m. lecture, Michael Mitchell lunch following La Provence, 141 Stony Circle, Santa Rosa  
*Khovanshchina* 11/12, 6:15 p.m. lecture, Richard Taruskin dinner following Sts. Peter & Paul Russian Orthodox Church, 3395 Stony Point Rd., Santa Rosa  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/9, 10:30 a.m. lecture William Mahrt lunch following Villa Restaurant 3901 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa

## JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

Previews held in Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., in San Francisco. Previews begin at noon, and there is no admission charge. For further information, please call (415) 626-0609.

*Don Quichotte* 10/10  
Michael Mitchell  
*Khovanshchina* 11/14  
Richard Taruskin  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/21  
William Mahrt

## OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of the operas of the 1990 season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International. Lectures will be presented at the

Pacific Jewish Theatre, 820 Heinz Ave., in Berkeley, at 7:30 p.m. Admission to the series of 9 previews is \$65; individual admission at the door is \$8. For further information, please call (415) 526-5244.

*Don Quichotte* 10/1  
*Capriccio* 10/15  
*Un Ballo in Maschera* 10/22  
*Die Fledermaus* 10/29  
*Khovanshchina* 11/12  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/19

## 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 1990 fall season, on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m., beginning August 21 and ending in December. 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

Eight previews on San Francisco Opera's season; offered on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. Sessions are held at the First Congregational Church, Post at Mason, in San Francisco. Admission is \$12 per class. For further information, please call (415) 956-1271.

*Don Quichotte* 10/8  
*Capriccio* 10/15  
*Un Ballo in Maschera* 10/22  
*Die Fledermaus* 10/29  
*Khovanshchina* 11/12  
*Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* 11/19

## SAN FRANCISCO CITY COLLEGE OPERA PREVIEWS

City College of San Francisco is offering an opera preview class, Music 27B, featuring San Francisco Opera's 1990 fall season, on Thursday evenings from 7 to 10 p.m., beginning August 23 and ending December 13. The course is free of charge and there are no prerequisites to enroll. Classes are held at the College, 50 Phelan Ave., Creative Arts Building, Room A-135, in San Francisco. For further information, please call (415) 239-3641.

# 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 first-rate opera. In addition to enjoying outstanding entertainment on stage, contributors to 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.

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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All of the above, plus

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## **SUSTAINING PATRON \$200-\$299**

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- Invitation to a Sitzprobe (musical rehearsal with principal singers)

## **MEMBER \$300-\$499**

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- Invitation to a working rehearsal
- Voting membership in San Francisco Opera Association
- Invitation to Annual Meeting and Reception

## **SUPPORTING MEMBER \$500-\$999**

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- Listing of your name in performance magazines

## **SUSTAINING MEMBER \$1,000-\$1,999**

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

## Medallion Society/Corporate Council

The Medallion Society, the premier support group of the San Francisco Opera family, and the Corporate Council play a vital role in maintaining the company's stature as one of the world's leading opera companies. The generosity of these members help to ensure the fiscal stability necessary for the production of first-rate opera, season after season.

## **FOUNDER \$2,000-\$2,999**

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## **SPONSOR \$3,000-\$4,999**

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- Opportunity to attend orchestra rehearsal in stage set (upon request)

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- Private reception with artists
- Increased ticket priority, subject to availability

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- Opportunity to follow the stages of the production of an opera
- Increased ticket priority, subject to availability

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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.*

# Corporate Council

San Francisco Opera appreciates the generous support of the following businesses whose leadership contributions made for Performance Years 1989 or 1990 (recorded February 1, 1989 through August 20, 1990) 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. San Francisco Opera seeks to add new members to the Corporate 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. 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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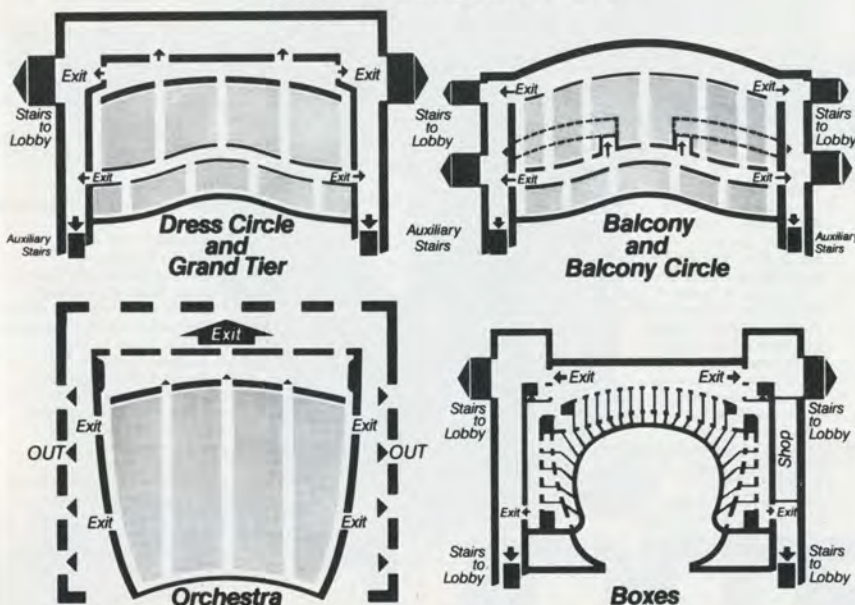
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## Errata

The list of *Capriccio* performances on page 39 should read as follows:

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21 AT 2:00

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7 AT 8:00

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11 AT 2:00

