

Così fan tutte
(Così fan tutte)

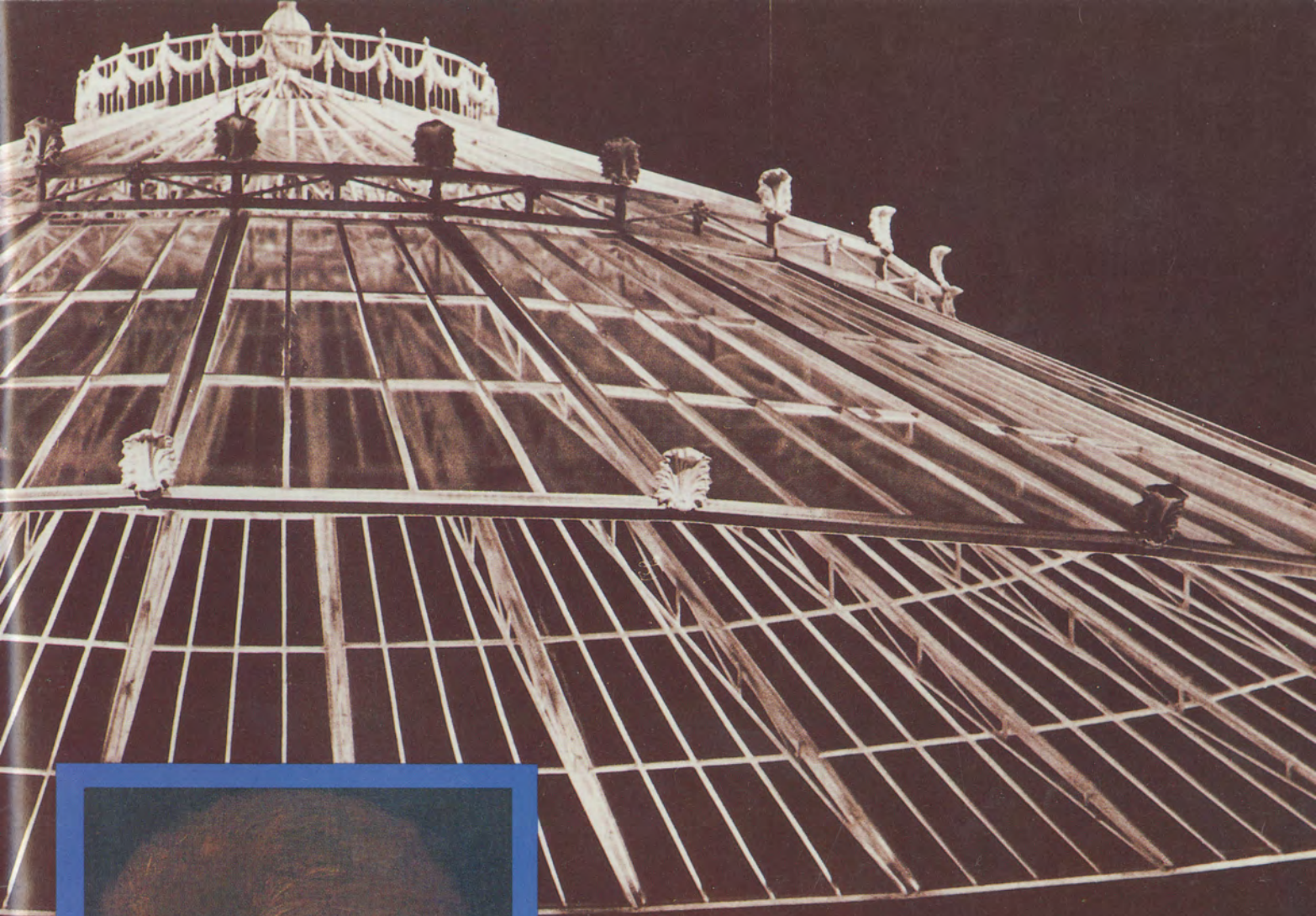
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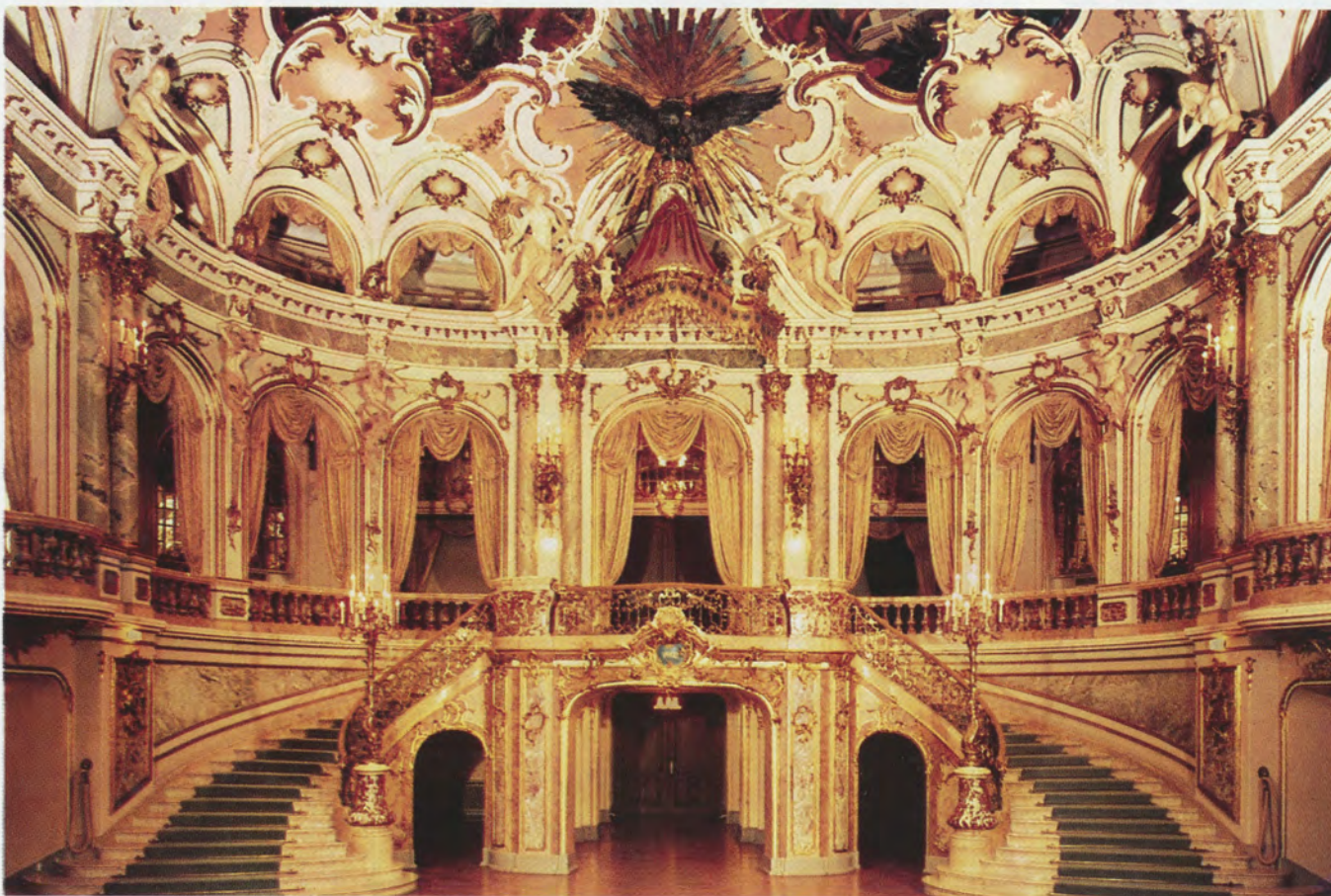
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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*

Così fan tutte

1991 MOZART SEASON

Vol. 69, No. 4

FEATURES

- 20 **The Essential *Così*** by Richard Dyer
Così fan tutte overview offers basic facts, as well as a look at the work's most important stagings.
- 30 **Putting it Together** by Timothy Pfaff
Rehearsals for San Francisco Opera's 1991 production of *Così fan tutte* yield a lot of interesting insights.
- 50 **Mozart and the Romantics** by John Schauer
In the 19th century, Mozart had a lot of diehard fans, as well as some surprising dissenters.

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COVER

Background: A scene from the Kupfer production of *Così fan tutte*, as seen at the Berlin Komische Oper.
Inset: Unfinished Mozart portrait, made by his brother-in-law Joseph Lange in 1790.



MOZART · &
HIS · TIME

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SOHL

FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Welcome to our summer season of Mozart opera! This is the first season we have devoted to a single composer—apart from Wagner's *Ring* cycle, which is in a category by itself. It is also our first participation in a city-wide arts festival devoted to a single theme.

"Mozart & His Time, A San Francisco Festival, 1991" has been underwritten by a combination of generous benefactors. The individual festival participants (some 50 different organizations) are each providing a portion of the necessary money; additional funding is being provided by BankAmerica Foundation, Grants for the Arts of the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, The James Irvine Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation and the William and Flora

Hewlett Foundation. This wonderful coalition of underwriters is a model of fiscal cooperation, and is providing our city with a cultural event from which everyone can potentially benefit.

Regarding our own festival offerings, we have also been blessed with generosity. Our magnificent David Hockney production of *Die Zauberflöte*, which was originally made possible by Bernard and Barbro Osher, is being revived with the generous assistance of Lexus, a division of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. Our imposing production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, designed by Zack Brown, was originally made possible by the San Francisco Opera Guild. In addition, our striking new production of *Così fan tutte* has been underwritten by a gift from Mr.

and Mrs. Evert B. Person. To all of these dedicated patrons of the arts, we offer a tip of our Mozartian three-cornered hat.

Once again, we acknowledge our governmental funding sources, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council and the Grants for the Arts program of the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund. We also extend our appreciation to Mayor Art Agnos and Chief Administrative Officer Rudolf Nothenberg, whose continued support has been most gratifying. And of course, along with the Opera Guild, we wish to express our thanks to the ongoing support of the War Memorial Board of Trustees.

Reid W. Dennis
Chairman

Thomas Tilton
President



GENERAL DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our season of Mozart!

I am excited by this summer's presentations for a variety of reasons. First, it is always an aesthetic pleasure to present the masterpieces of a genius of Mozart's caliber. Second, our Mozart season is part of the city-wide "Mozart & His Time, A San Francisco Festival, 1991." A festival of this sort, encompassing all of the performing arts as well as the graphic arts and humanities, has been my dream for this city ever since I became general director of San Francisco Opera in 1988. No other single-theme festival on this scale—over 150 events presented by some 50 organizations—has ever been organized in San Francisco before, and to see it become a reality has been most satisfying.

It is my sincere hope that all of you will take this unique opportunity to explore the man, his music and his age by attending many of the non-operatic events in

the festival schedule, as well as our own performances. Encountering Mozart in other contexts can only enhance your enjoyment of his incomparable operas. His accomplishments are so staggering, we can only represent a sampling of his output in one month.

Our selections range chronologically from one of his earliest operas, written when he was 16, to his final dramatic work; the styles encompassed include a German *Singspiel*, an Italian opera seria never before performed by the Company, and three delicious—and highly distinctive—comedies. The season will see the American opera company debut of the celebrated German director Harry Kupfer and his design team of Reinhart Zimmermann and Eleonore Kleiber, as well as singers Monica Bacelli and Michael Kraus. Company debuts include conductor Gerard Schwarz and singers Alexandra Coku, Renée Fleming, James

Michael McGuire, Deon van der Walt, Sally Wolf. Also for the first time, the San Francisco Opera Center's annual Showcase production will be offered free to the public at Sigmund Stern Grove on June 30.

Most of all, I hope you will join us in celebrating the life-affirming spirit of Mozart, so that his insight might help us to smile at the world as he did. As awesome as his intellectual achievement is, we must not be intimidated by this most accessible of musicians. Mozart wanted, above all else, for his audiences to enjoy what he created. That is what we at San Francisco Opera want for our audiences, too.

You're torn.

Do you park it outside so the
neighbors can see it?

Or inside, so the birds can't?

You put it inside.

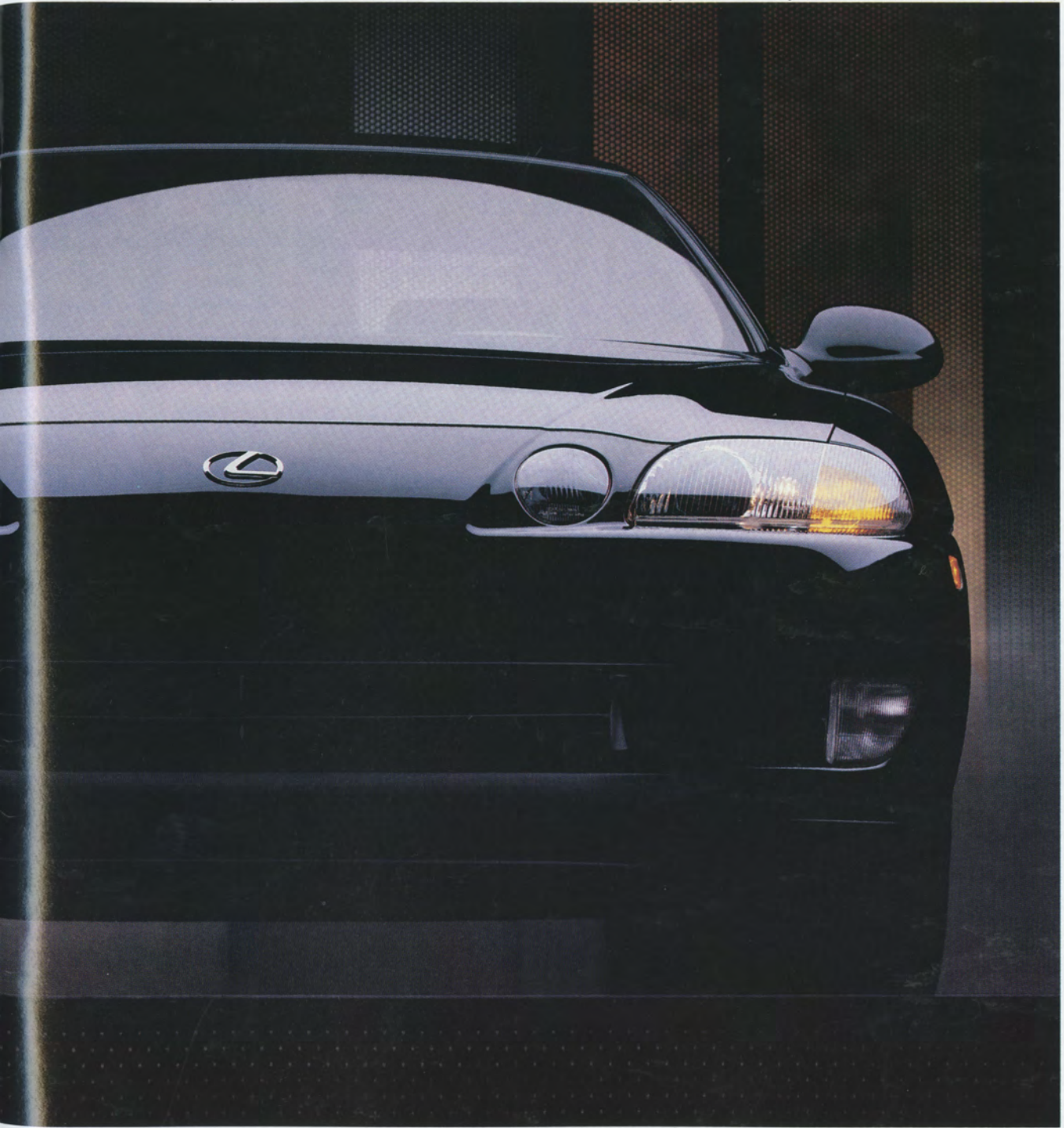
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★★★ *Jim Wood, San Francisco Examiner*

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1991 MOZART FESTIVAL

Saturday, June 1, 8:00

Die Zauberflöte

Swenson, Wolf*, Racette, Guo†, Keen, Claycomb†; Hadley, Kraus**, Langan, S. Cole, Stewart, Li, Skinner, Fischer*

This production is made possible by Lexus, a division of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. Production originally made possible by Bernard and Barbro Osher.

Sunday, June 2, 1:30

Le Nozze di Figaro

Fleming*, Parrish, von Stade, Christin, Mills†; Alaimo, Brendel, Sénéchal, Estep, Montarsolo, Drake Rennert/Copley/Brown/Arhelger

Production originally made possible by the San Francisco Opera Guild.

Tuesday, June 4, 8:00

Die Zauberflöte

Thursday, June 6, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro

Friday, June 7, 8:00

Die Zauberflöte

Sunday, June 9, 1:30

Le Nozze di Figaro

Thursday, June 13, 8:00

Die Zauberflöte

Friday, June 14, 8:00

New Production

Così fan tutte

Patterson, Forst, Williams; McGuire* van der Walt*, Travis Summers/Kupfer*/Zimmermann*/Kleiber*/Munn

Underwritten by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Evert B. Person.

Production designs from Komische Oper, Berlin, newly built by San Francisco Opera.

Saturday, June 15, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro

Sunday, June 16, 2:00

Die Zauberflöte

Tuesday, June 18, 8:00

Così fan tutte

Wednesday, June 19, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro

Thursday, June 20, 8:00

Così fan tutte

Friday, June 21, 7:30

Le Nozze di Figaro

Saturday, June 22, 8:00

Die Zauberflöte

Sunday, June 23, 2:00

Così fan tutte

Wednesday, June 26, 8:00

Così fan tutte

Friday, June 28, 8:00

San Francisco Opera Premiere

Concert Performance

Lucio Silla

Bacelli**, Panagulias, Coku*, Wolf; V. Cole, Li Rudel/Norris

Production generously sponsored by the Franklin Group of Funds.

Saturday, June 29, 8:00

Così fan tutte

Sunday, June 30, 2:00

Opera Center Showcase Production

Sigmund Stern Grove

La Finta Giardiniera

Fortuna†, Mills†, Claycomb†, Guo†; Nava, Estep, Vasquez† Takazauckas/Vendice/Wilson

Underwritten by a generous gift from Chevron U.S.A. Inc.

Sunday, June 30, 7:00

Lucio Silla

** United States debut

*United States opera company debut

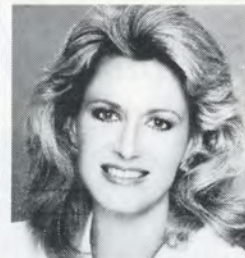
*San Francisco Opera debut

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All performances (except for *La Finta Giardiniera* which is sung in English) are in the original language with English Supertitles.

Repertoire, casts and dates subject to change.

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1991 SEASON

Opening Night Friday, September 6, 7:30 La Traviata Verdi Vaness, Keen, Petersen; Giordani*, Coni*, Skinner, Travis Arena/Copley/Conklin/Walker/Munn <i>Production originally made possible by Louise M. Davies.</i>	Sunday, September 22, 2:00 La Traviata Verdi	Sunday, October 13, 2:00 Don Giovanni Mozart
Saturday, Sept. 7, 7:00 <i>San Francisco Opera Premiere</i> War and Peace Prokofiev Panagulias, Zaremba**, Bogachova**, Keen, Markova-Mikhailenko**, Bower, Racette; Kharitonov*, McCauley, Plishka, Galusin**, Alexeiev**, Skinner, Travis Gergieff*/Savary**/Lebois**/Schmidt**/Peduzzi**/Morgan/Munn <i>Underwritten, in part, by a generous gift from Cynthia Wood and the Columbia Foundation.</i>	Wednesday, September 25, 7:30 I Capuleti e i Montecchi Bellini	Tuesday, October 15, 8:00 Don Giovanni Mozart
Tuesday, September 10, 7:00 War and Peace Prokofiev	Thursday, September 26, 7:00 War and Peace Prokofiev	Wednesday, October 16, 7:30 Carmen Bizet
Wednesday, September 11, 7:30 La Traviata Verdi	Friday, September 27, 8:00 La Traviata Verdi	Saturday, October 19, 8:00 Don Giovanni Mozart
Thursday, September 12, 7:00 War and Peace Prokofiev	Saturday, September 28, 8:00 Don Giovanni Mozart Mims, Esperian*, Blackwell*; G. Quilico, Gallo**, Lopardo*, Dupont, Rose** Hager*/Hampe/Feldman/Businger/Munn <i>Production originally made possible by James D. Robertson.</i>	Sunday, October 20, 1:30 Carmen Bizet
Saturday, September 14, 8:00 La Traviata Verdi	Sunday, September 29, 1:00 I Capuleti e i Montecchi Bellini	Monday, October 21, 7:00 Tristan und Isolde Wagner Schnaut**, Schwarz; Johns, Muff, Welker*, De Haan, Schade* Schneider/Mansouri/Pagano/Munn <i>Production from Cologne Opera, newly built by San Francisco Opera as a co-production with Washington Opera. Underwritten by a generous gift from the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation.</i>
Sunday, September 15, 1:00 War and Peace Prokofiev	Sunday, September 29, 8:00 La Traviata Verdi	Wednesday, October 23, 7:30 Carmen Bizet
Wednesday, September 18, 7:30 La Traviata Verdi	Tuesday, October 1, 8:00 Don Giovanni Mozart	Thursday, October 24, 7:00 Tristan und Isolde Wagner
Thursday, September 19, 7:30 <i>San Francisco Opera Premiere</i> I Capuleti e i Montecchi Bellini Gasdia, Ziegler*; Plishka, Dupont* Pappano*/Chazalettes*/Santicchi*/Arhelger <i>Underwritten, in part, by a generous gift from Herman J. Miller and Edward J. Clarke. Production owned by the Lyric Opera of Chicago; created through a generous gift from Ameritech/Illinois Bell.</i>	Wednesday, October 2, 7:00 War and Peace Prokofiev	Friday, October 25, 7:30 Carmen Bizet
Friday, September 20, 7:00 War and Peace Prokofiev	Thursday, October 3, 7:30 Don Giovanni Mozart	Saturday, October 26, 7:30 Carmen Bizet Kuhlmann, Haymon*, Claycomb†, Guo†; McCauley, Hale, Vasquez† Šutej/Ponnelle/Williams/Ponnelle/Juerke/Munn
Saturday, September 21, 8:00 I Capuleti e i Montecchi Bellini	Saturday, October 5, 8:00 I Capuleti e i Montecchi Bellini	Sunday, October 27, 1:00 Tristan und Isolde Wagner
	Sunday, October 6, 2:00 Don Giovanni Mozart	Tuesday, October 29, 7:30 Carmen Bizet (Same cast as October 26)
	Tuesday, October 8, 8:00 I Capuleti e i Montecchi Bellini	Wednesday, October 30, 7:00 Tristan und Isolde Wagner
	Thursday, October 10, 8:00 I Capuleti e i Montecchi Bellini	Friday, November 1, 7:30 Carmen Bizet (Same cast as October 26)
	Friday, October 11, 8:00 Don Giovanni Mozart	Saturday, November 2, 7:00 Tristan und Isolde Wagner
	Saturday, October 12, 7:30 Carmen Bizet Horne, Racette, Fortuna†, Guo†; Shicoff, Kharitonov, Vasquez†* Šutej*/Ponnelle/Williams/Ponnelle/Juerke/Munn <i>Production originally made possible by the San Francisco Opera Guild and Friends of Kurt Herbert Adler.</i>	

Kawai is the official piano of the San Francisco Opera. Pianos provided and serviced by R. Kassman.

Tuesday, November 5, 7:00
Tristan und Isolde Wagner

Thursday, November 7, 7:30
Carmen Bizet
(Same cast as October 26)

Friday, November 8, 8:00
United States Premiere
Das Verratene Meer Henze
Putnam; Fox, Estep
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Saturday, November 9, 7:00
Tristan und Isolde Wagner

Sunday, November 10, 1:30
Carmen Bizet
(Same cast as October 26)

Wednesday, November 13, 8:00
Das Verratene Meer Henze

Saturday, November 16, 8:00
Elektra Strauss
Jones, Secunde*, Dernesch; Pederson, Fox, King
Thielemann**/Serban*/Kokkos*/Munn
Original production from Grand Théâtre de Genève.

Sunday, November 17, 2:00
Das Verratene Meer Henze

Wednesday, November 20, 7:30
Das Verratene Meer Henze

Thursday, November 21, 7:30
San Francisco Opera Premiere
Attila Verdi
Connell; Ramey, Schexnayder, Ordoñez*
Ferro*/Mansouri/Alley*/Lee/Arhelger
Production from New York City Opera.

Friday, November 22, 8:00
Elektra Strauss

Saturday, November 23, 8:00
Das Verratene Meer Henze

Sunday, November 24, 2:00
Attila Verdi

Monday, November 25, 7:30
La Traviata Verdi
Patterson, Guo†, Petersen; Lopez-Yañez, Laperrière, Skinner, Travis
Robertson/Copley/Conklin/Walker/Munn

Tuesday, November 26, 8:00
Elektra Strauss

Wednesday, November 27, 7:30
Attila Verdi

Friday, November 29, 8:00
La Traviata Verdi
(Same cast as November 25)

Saturday, November 30, 8:00
Attila Verdi

Sunday, December 1, 2:00
Elektra Strauss
(Orest: Fox)

Tuesday, December 3, 8:00
Attila Verdi

Wednesday, December 4, 7:30
Elektra Strauss
(Orest: Fox)

Thursday, December 5, 7:30
La Traviata Verdi
(Same cast as November 25)

Friday, December 6, 8:00
Attila Verdi

Saturday, December 7, 7:30
Elektra Strauss
(Orest: Fox)

Sunday, December 8, 2:00
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The Essential *Così*

By RICHARD DYER

In Vienna, in 1789, there was a revival of a moderately successful three-year-old opera called *Le Nozze di Figaro*. It met with more approval than it had at the time of its premiere, and that success led to the commission of a new work from *Figaro*'s composer, Wolfgang Amadè Mozart (no matter what the moviemakers think, he never signed his name "Amadeus").

Mozart had fallen on hard times. At 33, his star was guttering out. He was in constant need of money; his wife was unwell and had left for Baden to take the waters for a cure, and that cost a lot of money, too. Through most of 1789, Mozart probably composed less music than he had during any previous year of his adult life.

No one knows who suggested the subject of *Così fan tutte* to the composer and his librettist, Lorenzo da Ponte, who had provided the texts to *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. One rumor, which didn't reach print until well after Mozart's death, is that the Austrian Emperor Joseph II had proposed the subject because of an off-color story (about two young men who had seduced each other's mistress) which was making the rounds. It's a common enough story in literature, and maybe not unheard of in life

Richard Dyer is music critic of *The Boston Globe* and *Briggs-Copeland* associate professor of English at Harvard.

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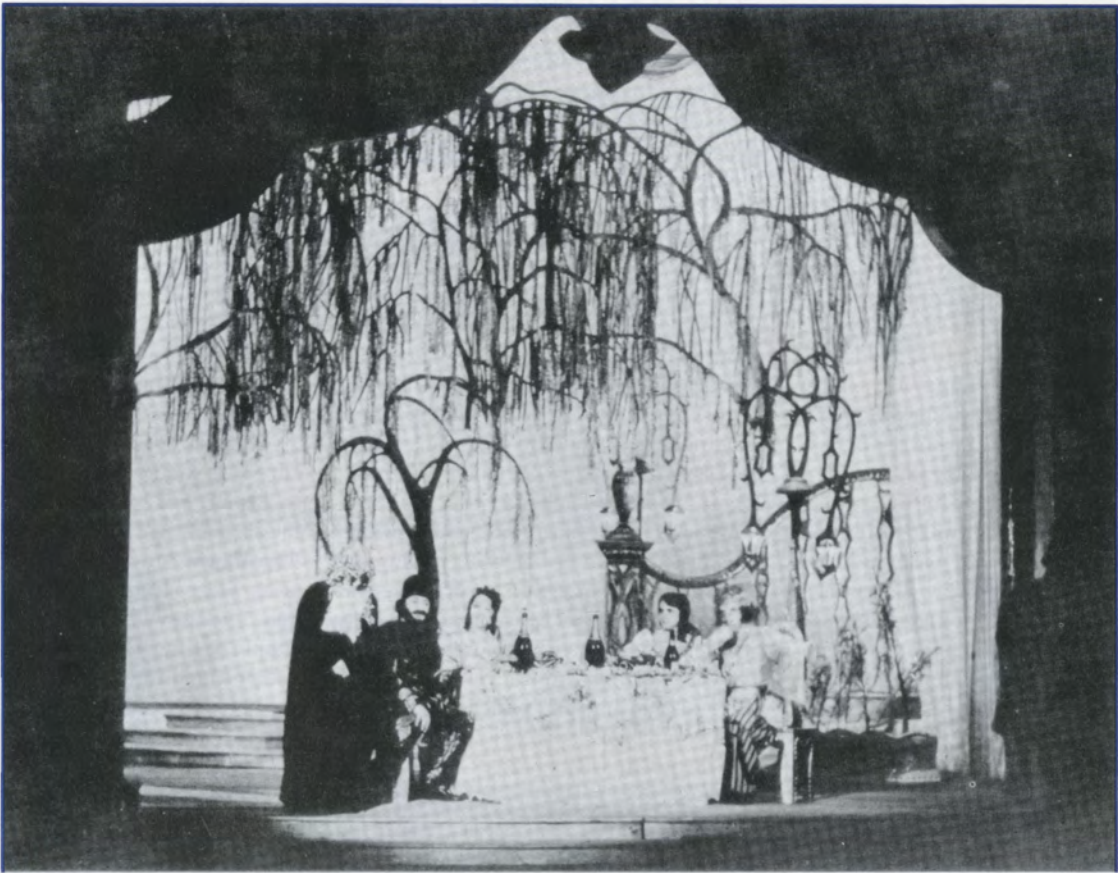
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Der Anfang ist um 7 Uhr.

Playbill for the first production of *Così fan tutte*.



KRUPENYE

(Top) Final scene of Così fan tutte at the Glyndebourne Festival in 1934. L. to r.: Irene Eisinger, Heddle Nash, Ina Sousez, Luise Helletsgruber, Willi Domgraf-Fassbänder.

(Bottom) Same scene in the recent Peter Sellars production. L. to r.: Sanford Sylvan, Sue Ellen Kuzma, Janice Felty, Susan Larson, James Maddalena, Frank Kelley.

THE ESSENTIAL COSÌ

experience; couple-swapping was a convention of *commedia dell'arte*, of Ovidian erotic verse, of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and it's still around in the movies. *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* led to Russ Meyer's absurd *The Lickerish Quartet*.

Da Ponte had certainly been caught up in some complicated amorous situations, and so, for that matter, had Mozart, who had first loved Aloysia Weber before he married her sister Constanze. At the time he began thinking of *Così*, rumors of Constanze's behavior at Baden had caused Mozart considerable pain. "I do wish," he wrote to her, "that you would sometimes not make yourself so cheap . . . A woman must always make herself respected, or else people will begin to talk about her . . . Remember that you yourself once admitted to me that you are inclined to *comply too easily*. You know the consequences of

that." The stage director Peter Sellars, whose controversial production of *Così* was televised around the world earlier this year, believes that Ferrando is Mozart's self-portrait.

Whether or not Sellars is right, there's not much that anyone can know for certain about the origins of *Così*—the letters of Mozart and various contemporary documents can tell us far more about works of his that we value less. Mozart only mentions *Così* twice, both in letters inviting friends, one of them Haydn, to drop by on New Year's Eve to hear a read-through of his new opera.

It was once believed that *Così* was composed in the greatest haste but this does not seem to be the case; during the four months in question no one else was asking for music by Mozart and the only other important work he completed then was the Clarinet Quintet. The autograph score of the first act, which disappeared

into Poland during World War II, has only recently been made available for study. The interesting thing about it, according to the research of paper and watermarks by the scholar Alan Tyson, is that Mozart apparently composed many of the ensembles before he composed the arias. To an unusual degree, *Così* was composed for a cast that the composer knew, and whose voices and vocal specialties he also knew; he entered the names of the cast into the thematic catalogue of his works. The part of Fiordiligi was composed to exploit the abilities of Adriana Ferraresi del Bene as surely as the clarinet part was composed to exploit the possibilities of the instrument that had been demonstrated to Mozart by Anton Stadler. The principal arias were almost certainly written in consultation with the singers, and a couple of them were revised or rewritten before the premiere.

The arias and ensembles of *Così*



The wedding scene at San Francisco Opera's first, 1956 production of *Così fan tutte*. (L. to r.) Frank Guarrera, Nell Rankin, Patrice Munsel, Lorenzo Alvoary, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, and Richard Lewis.

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Richard II



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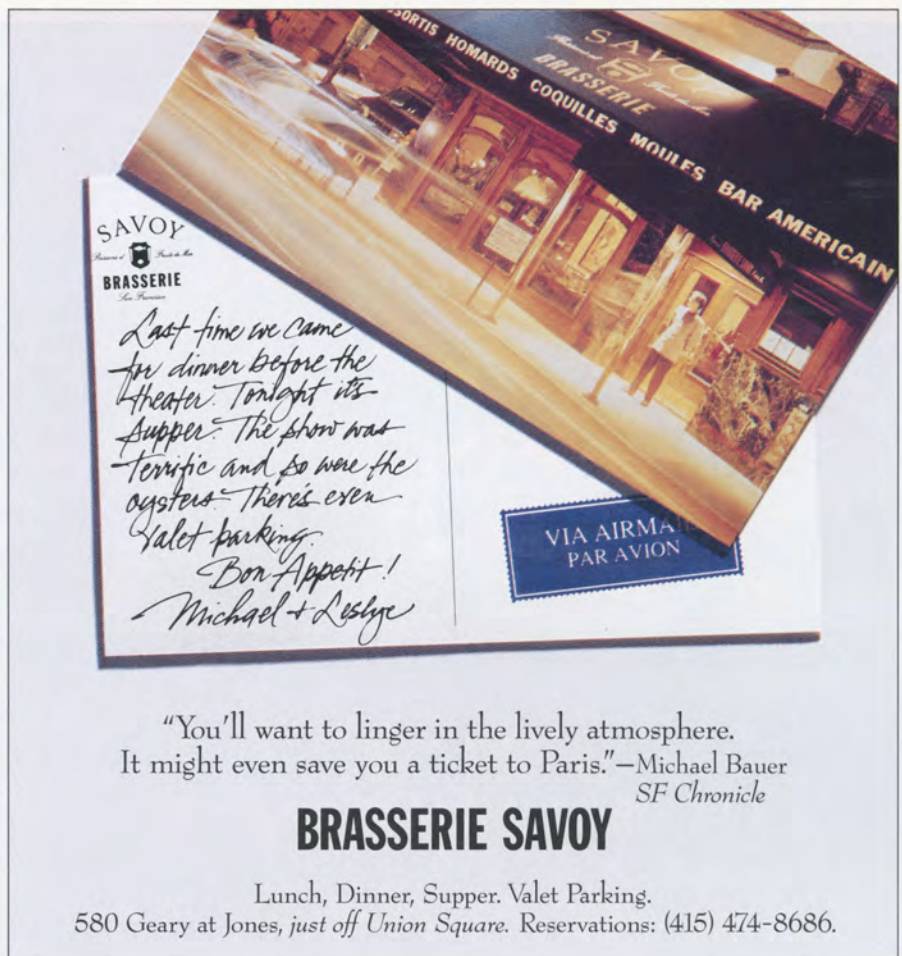
THE ESSENTIAL COSÌ

were also written in consultation with Mozart's own comprehensive knowledge of the human heart. The music's response to Da Ponte's furiously literary text displays every strength, weakness and vacillation of the heart, and the whole range of romantic and realistic reactions to life's most all-consuming passion.

To make cuts in *Così*, as is still routinely done, narrows the range of feeling and response in the music. Yes, the sequence of arias and duets for Ferrando in the second act is cruelly punishing to the tenor, and some of the arias "hold up" the action. The second act of *Così*, with its long string of arias, is much less exhilarating than the series of ensembles in the first act. But the true action of *Così* is not the tying up of the knot of its plot; the action is a series of psychological developments that lead to self-betrayal or self-realization, which turn out to be neighboring states. Mozart understands all of this, shares in it, delights in it, suffers through it, and forgives everything in radiant understanding of what Don Alfonso calls "the necessities of the heart."

A courtier present at the premiere noted that the libretto was "amusing enough" and that the music was "charming"; the press reported that the premiere had taken place and later the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* (*Journal of Luxury and Fashion*—the eighteenth century was more honest in naming its periodicals than our own is) opined, sybilinely, "I think I have said everything when I say it is by Mozart."

But *Così* enjoyed only 10 performances, and was not revived again in Vienna until long after Mozart's death. It was also published only in part—not until 1810 was a score engraved. *Così* was beginning to have a bad reputation, a reputation the opera has overcome only within the last 60 years. The opera was considered indecent and immoral, and in 1791 the actor-manager Friedrich Ludwig Schroeder wrote in his diary, "That's What They Are All Like," a *Singspiel* with music by Mozart is a wretched affair that debases women; it cannot possibly find favor with female audiences and in consequence will not be successful." Beethoven and Wagner are only two of the prominent figures who thought Da Ponte's libretto unworthy of



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Mozart. "Frivolous," said Beethoven; "stale and unworthy, hollow and empty," wrote Wagner.

Performances after Mozart's death repeated attempts to improve upon the opera with new translations—as well as the usual shifting around of the music, as when a Fiordiligi appropriated an aria of Dorabella's that she liked; in another version, arias from *Idomeneo* made their appearance. The 19th century found the plot of *Così* particularly distasteful. In Vienna, in 1814, Georg Friedrich Treitschke's version exonerated Fiordiligi and Dorabella by making them the victims of magic—thereby destroying all the human complexity of the plot. Another attempt to eradicate the immorality of *Così* that was frequently made was to let Despina tell the sisters of the masquerade, so that everyone knows a game is going on. In Lyons there was a version of *Così* with additional music by Cimarosa, Rossini, and lesser composers; in Paris, an edition which interpolated various instrumental works of Mozart. The most extreme violation of *Così* came in Dresden, in 1909; Mozart's music was grafted onto a play by Calderón.

Our own century has seen the recovery of *Così*. The process may have begun with Mahler in Vienna in 1900, although that version had its cuts and curiosities; nevertheless, it restored the recitative, which by then had long been replaced by spoken dialogue. Four prominent German musicians after Mahler played important roles in bringing *Così* back to favor—the composer Richard Strauss, who believed that the opera should "be granted a special place in the repertory of all German theaters"; Clemens Krauss, who conducted a famous production of *Così* in Vienna in 1929; Fritz Busch, who led the Glyndebourne performances in 1934 that resulted in the first complete recording, and Karl Böhm, who recorded the opera on three occasions, each reflecting different ideas about what should be cut, or not. The first performance of *Così* in America was at the Metropolitan Opera in 1922, but the production that gave the opera its momentum in America was the Metropolitan Opera's famous production of 1951, directed by the actor Alfred Lunt, conducted by Fritz Stiedry, in the durable English translation by Ruth and Thomas Martin, put across with Broadway pa-

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nache by a memorable cast including Eleanor Steber, Blanche Thebom, Patrice Munsel (later Roberta Peters), Richard Tucker, Frank Guarrera and John Brownlee. This was followed up by a production by NBC television which brought the opera its largest audience until that time.

Today, *Così* may be the most-performed of the Mozart operas because it is the most practical—it needs only six principal singers and the role of the chorus is unimportant and can even be omitted. Unlike *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Die Zauberflöte*, elaborate scenic elements are not crucial to the presentation of the story, although there have certainly been some very elaborate productions of *Così*. But it can be convincingly performed with a set of two benches and a screen; Naples doesn't need specific visual evocation. For that reason, among others, it has become a favorite piece for opera workshops.

The history of Mozart's operas in the theater awaits full investigation; Rudolf Angermüller's handsomely illustrated *Mozart's Operas* (Rizzoli) makes an interesting start. The important thing is that the operas do have a history, and a history that is still in progress. Little of that fluid evolution has taken place in America, where the dominant style of Mozart production was derived from the evolving Mozart style at Glyndebourne after 1934. That style is apparently what many people have in mind when condemning more contemporary interpretations for "failing to respect the composer's intentions." Somehow the "correct" way to perform *Così* or *Figaro*, unlike the "correct" way to stage the plays of Shakespeare, got frozen half a century ago; freezer-burned *Figaros* and cold-nipped *Cosìs* are regularly defrosted for our delectation.

But of course nothing in the theater is ever frozen; every generation reinvents Mozart's operas, and probably every performance does too. Sometimes this is a self-conscious process; more often it is unconscious. Photographs and recordings of older productions of *Così* or any of the other operas say "Glyndebourne, 1934" or "Vienna, 1952" as clearly as they say "Naples, sometime in the 18th century"; it's fun to play guessing games with Angermüller's photographs—you can almost always tell the country and the decade. Each era finds its

reflection in the opera—it has been performed as a supreme example of artificiality (enough to drive anyone to soubretticide, this), an extreme example of realism; a model of decorum, and a piece about the violation of decorum; it has been played as high comedy and low farce and even a story skirting tragedy; it has been played as heroic, mock-heroic and anti-heroic, for it is all three; the men have been depicted as being as foolish as the women (the first English translation was called "Tit for Tat"); the opera has been prized for its certainties and for its ambiguities. There is no reason to suppose that future students of *Così* will fail to recognize photographs of the current production as "San Francisco, 1991; after East Berlin."

From the standpoint of two centuries of accumulated study and knowledge, it still isn't all that easy to divine "Mozart's intentions," even though they are spelled out on lines and staves and in words and notes. The simplest musical phrase is open to diverse possibilities of interpretation. To an inconceivably more complicated extent, so are the characters who reveal themselves through text, song, and by moving through prescribed stage directions that unravel a plot.

Certainly the efforts of the original-instrument movement have taught us how far even the greatest musical performances of Mozart in our century—and they *were* great—departed from anything the composer might have expected to hear. He wrote *Così* to be sung by a mostly-young cast in a theater that seated about 1350 people—not by singers loud enough, and experienced enough, to fill a 4000-seat theater, with orchestras of modern instruments arrayed across the pit. The changes contemporary circumstances of performance enforce have altered pitch, articulation, balance, color and the requirements for vocal weight. So have those 200 years—Lilli Lehmann sang Donna Anna's narrative and curse the way she did because she had also sung Isolde's Narrative and Curse; some interpreters of Fiordiligi have also sung Schönbert's *Erwartung*.

We are still at the beginning of what the early-instrument movement can tell us about the stylish way to sing Mozart, and we've barely started working on an attempt to recreate the conditions and conventions of the 18th-century stage—



Title page of the score for *Labors of Love*, an 1863 Parisian disguise for *Così fan tutte*. Mozart's music was fitted to a new text by J. Barbier and M. Carré, based on Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*. It was performed in French.

not that we can be sure what that would "prove," let alone what, if anything, it would communicate to an audience in the late 20th century that has experienced movies, television, and rock videos.

The *Così* production of our time that has been most widely seen in the theater is the elegant period piece designed and directed by the late Jean-Pierre Ponnelle [S.F. Opera: 1970, '73, '79, '83 and '88]. But two other recent productions of the opera, both extensively documented, demonstrate more interesting, and complimentary, approaches to staging the work for audiences of today. One is Jonathan Miller's production which began at Kent Opera in 1975 and developed over the years into a BBC television film in 1985; the other is Peter Sellars's version, which began at the Castle Hill Festival in Massachusetts in 1982 and arrived on television a decade later.

Miller, in his lively book *Subsequent Performances* (Viking Penguin) writes of his dissatisfaction with the attitude you can still come across which regards *Così* as "a delicious, artificial romp." His approach was not only to consider a stage setting that would reflect neoclassical

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THE ESSENTIAL COSÌ

ideas about space, but also to consider just what the opera might have meant in the context of 18th-century thought, specifically in the context of the much-debated question of the relative roles of reason and nature. Miller posited that Don Alfonso represents Reason, "a mixture of Diderot and Voltaire," and not "a waggish, lorgnette-wielding figure who simply sets up the wager as an old cynic." Despina, in this interpretation, represents Nature. "The two couples revolve around this axis, and the men discover themselves by going through the process of pretending to be someone else." The "mesmerizing" Act I finale is usually performed as a huge joke; Miller returned to the serious scientific intent of Dr. Mesmer's experience, and pres-

ented it as "not only a remedy but a regeneration. There is a sense in which the participants of the mesmeric seance undergo a secular baptism and re-birth; both the young men and the young women are transformed by it and everything that then occurs is magic." Somehow we find ourselves back with Treitschke in Vienna in 1814, but in an entirely different way; "secular baptism and rebirth" brings together an ancient and a modern concept.

Sellars's point of departure was altogether different. As he once remarked, "I don't know what it felt like to be young, alone, and confused in a café in Naples in 1790; I do know what it is like to be in the same condition in a diner in America after midnight." So he set *Così* in

PETERS



THE ESSENTIAL COSÌ

a diner on the Connecticut coast—but it is also a diner of 18th-century symmetry and proportion placed in a theatrical context, for the surrounding groves and descending clouds are drops his designer Adrienne Lobel copied from period decor preserved in the Drottningholm Court Theater. His lovers are American teenagers; Don Alfonso and Despina are older and have been 'round the track; Dr. Mesmer's techniques become the channeling of a caftan-clad Shirley MacLaine. The young women tumble to the masquerade pretty fast and decide to play the game—again a historic solution to the “problem” of *Così*, but also a contemporary one, because the game very soon gets out of hand and comic complications begin to unmask deep and troubling

feelings that admit of no resolution. “Bella calma troverà,” sings the ensemble at the end, “The man who takes everything for the best will in the midst of the world’s whirlwinds find a lovely calm,” but the music is telling more of whirlwind than of calm.

No single production of *Così* is going to put all the latent possibilities of such a work onto the stage and in the same equilibrium the music holds them in; every production cuts it down to size. On the other hand, every production inescapably points to what the dimensions of *Così* actually are. The reason *Così* is the most performed of Mozart operas today is not that it's practical—instead, the reason is that Mozart's music for it is so intractably true. ■

Così fan tutte at the San Francisco Opera in 1963: (Left) The women, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Helen Vanni; (Center) the men, Cesare Valletti, Leonardo Wolovsky and Hermann Prey; (Right) Despina, Reri Grist.

PETERS

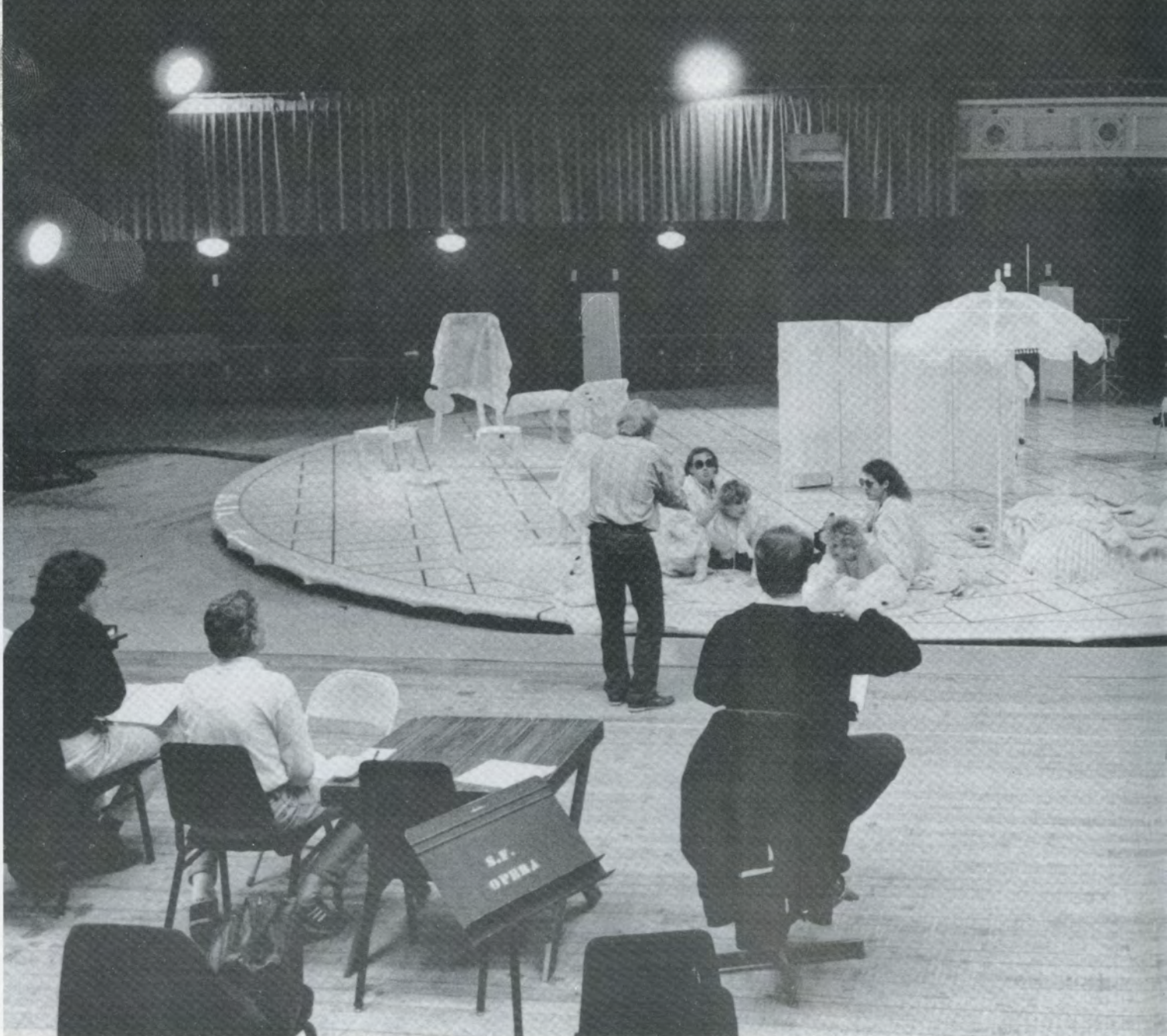
PETERS



Putting It Together

By **TIMOTHY PFAFF**

All photos by Marty Sohl except as noted.



The Nourse Auditorium rehearsal setting: The singers, on the Così fan tutte turntable, face the musical and production staff during a rehearsal.



Timothy Pfaff is editor of Historical Performance, the journal of Early Music America, West Coast correspondent for London's Financial Times, and a free-lance writer on the arts.

The atmosphere in the otherwise drab Nourse Auditorium, where the cast of San Francisco Opera's new production of *Così fan tutte* has already spent a few weeks of grueling exacting rehearsals, fairly crackles—less with tension than with a palpably electric charge. The power surge comes from Harry Kupfer, the celebrated German opera director who has arrived in San Francisco (in late May) to transform the *Così* production he first unveiled in Berlin in 1984 into a vital new version of the familiar masterpiece that draws on the particular strengths of the cast the Company has assembled for this summer's festival production. Previously, the six principals had been put through their intricate paces by Klaus Dieter Müller, Kupfer's assistant and chief collaborator for the past decade, working from Kupfer's thick Berlin production book documenting his Komische Oper staging. Now, the homework done, the real work begins.

The scene—the Guglielmo-Dorabella duet, "Il core vi dono," early in Act II, and the recitative leading up to it—is pivotal. The sisters are beginning to succumb to the advances of their new suitors, the more impulsive and sensual Dorabella taking the lead. The hyperalert singers, Judith Forst (Dorabella) and James Michael ("Mick") McGuire (Guglielmo), both versed in their music from previous *Così*s and now thoroughly drilled in the characteristic Kupfer blocking (so detailed as to qualify as choreographic), are braced for their challenging task. Kupfer wants the scene not only to tingle with the energy of sexual pursuit—but also to communicate the conflicting emotions and thoughts driving both characters.

The sizzling moment when Dorabella's hand first wanders onto Guglielmo's thigh prompts a typically excited interjection from the dynamic Kupfer, a man of medium stature yet enormous physical presence. "Mick," he interjects urgently, "don't just notice it; feel it. Let us see the shock of it a little bit more." In several passages of the relatively short scene there are teases of the kiss with which the duet will culminate. Kupfer enjoins his singers—who in more traditional productions have the leisure to concentrate on sustaining the glassy smoothness of the Mozart line and attending to the niceties of articulation—to discharge

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the better part of their closely-timed music at a near-kiss: "one finger between the two pairs of lips." The singers' responses to Kupfer's fevered exhortations seem equal parts unflinching obedience and fired-by-the-moment imagination.

To add to the complications, Kupfer's direction investigates countless minutiae of the complex motivations underlying the animal sexuality of the scene. Guglielmo's lust for Dorabella is not so all-consuming that the character does not also have the time to contemplate, vainly, the bust she is sculpting and, mid-clinch, to look victoriously at Dorabella's locket, bearing the likeness of the friend he is in the process of besting. Kupfer's prescription for Dorabella's deportment at the beginning of the scene—"Full of empty clichés; you think the way you saw it on the opera stage last night is the way all lovers do it"—in no way precludes a contradictory response moments later. When Guglielmo presents Dorabella with the heart-shaped trinket, "Show that you think it is tasteless," Kupfer advises. "It's a real Turkish treat—worth twenty cents at the corner." "Do everything you do with *mind*," Kupfer tells his wide-eyed singers as he exits the stage for his director's chair. "And," he adds in a disconcertingly off-hand final thought, "do it in tempo."

Yet for all the careful preparation, and the resourceful, on-the-spot work of a team of artists working at white heat, there still are temporary impasses. Midway through the duet, the would-be lovers lie in a tangle on the floor that Kupfer fears won't "read" clearly enough in the Opera House. Leaping from the table on which he has been perched like a watchful, all-seeing raptor, he joins the couple on the floor for an artistic *ménage à trois* as ultimately illuminating as it is, initially, disarming. Forst's suggestion that she use McGuire's left nipple as the power switch to turn him on elicits an ecstatic cry of "YES" from Kupfer, who then turns their attention to the way she will begin to remove McGuire's Greek god costume. The search for telling gestures is a spontaneous, improvisatory one. But the all-important motivation for each is thoroughly thought out. "Judith, your fantasy must open up here," Kupfer explains. Later: "Mick, you work out every morning, so you must *show off* your body. When she starts to undress you, let her do the work. To your way of thinking, it's the women who have to work. You just have to lie there and be beautiful."

Off-stage, Müller's *sotto voce* com-

Continued on page 44
San Francisco Opera

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SUSAN PATTERSON

Soprano **Susan Patterson** portrays Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*. A 1986-87 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, she has performed a number of roles with the Company: Inez in *Il Trovatore*, Mrs. Gobineau in *The Medium*, Thibault in *Don Carlos*, Marguerite in the student matinee performances of *Faust*, Violetta in a student matinee performance of *La Traviata*, Chloe in *The Queen of Spades*, Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress*, the First Flower Maiden in *Parsifal*, Angelica in *Orlando Furioso* and, last fall, Constanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. As a member of the Merola Opera Program and Western Opera Theater, she sang roles ranging from Helen in *There and Back and Lucia* / *Lucia II* in *The Long Christmas Dinner* (both by Hindemith), to Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*. Since scoring a major success in her European debut as Violetta with the Welsh National Opera, she has repeated the role at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Atlanta Opera. She has also performed Musetta in *La Bohème* in Atlanta, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* with Marin Opera, all three soprano roles in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Palm Beach, and Constanze at the Carmel Bach Festival and at last summer's Aix-en-Provence Festival. Recent operatic engagements include her debut at Milan's La Scala in Cherubini's *Lodoïska*, Countess Adele in *Le Comte Ory* at the Netherlands Opera, her Canadian debut with the Vancouver Opera as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* for Opera Pacific. Miss Patterson is a popular concert performer and has most recently appeared as soloist in Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater* and Mahler's Second Symphony with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, as well as in Handel's *Messiah* with the Minnesota Orchestra and the Honolulu Symphony. Future engagements include Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and performances of *La Donna del Lago* at La Scala, Aspasia in *Mitridate, Re di Ponto* at the Netherlands Opera,



JUDITH FORST

Lodoïska at Italy's Ravenna Festival, *Le Comte Ory* with Rome's RAI Symphony, as well as Violetta in *La Traviata* with Palm Beach Opera and San Francisco Opera this fall. The soprano is a graduate of the universities of Samford and Florida State, and is currently working toward a doctorate at Indiana University.

Mezzo-soprano **Judith Forst** portrays Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*. The Canadian artist made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1974, when she appeared as a Flowermaid in *Parsifal* and as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*. Subsequent appearances here include Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino* (1979 and 1986), Valencienne in *The Merry Widow* (1981), Jane Seymour in *Anna Bolena* (1984) and, last fall, Marie in *Wozzeck*. She was the first contestant ever offered a Metropolitan Opera contract following her audition in the national semifinals and she went on to perform at the Met for several seasons in a wide variety of roles. Her extensive repertoire includes Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, the title roles of *Carmen* and *La Cenerentola*, Charlotte in *Werther*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, and Adalgisa in *Norma*. In recent seasons Miss Forst has added several new roles to her repertoire. In 1987 she sang her first performances of Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* with the opera companies of Calgary, Edmonton, Miami, and at the 1989 summer season at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. She sang her first Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with the Canadian Opera Company in 1988, and assumed the role of Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for the first time with the Miami Opera in 1989. Recent engagements include a return to the Met as Giulietta; Marie in *Wozzeck* in Toronto; Charlotte in *Werther* in her native Vancouver; the title role of *La Cenerentola* for Tulsa Opera; Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Opera Pacific; Musetta with the Baltimore Opera; the Composer in Vancouver; the title role of *Carmen* in Milwaukee; her first Dido in



JANET WILLIAMS

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* with the Montreal Symphony; *La Forza del Destino* at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich; and a Berlioz concert in Barcelona. Future plans include Dorabella for San Diego Opera; her debut with Seattle Opera as Jane Seymour; Donna Elvira at the Met and in Manitoba; as well as concerts with the Calgary Philharmonic and the Vancouver Bach Choir. New roles in preparation for future seasons include Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, and Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. A renowned concert artist and recitalist, Miss Forst was the subject of CBC Television portraits in 1987 and 1990. Her disc of operatic arias was released in 1988.

Soprano **Janet Williams** portrays Despina in *Così fan tutte*, the role in which she made her 1988 San Francisco Opera debut when she stepped in on short notice to replace an ailing colleague. She was also heard that season in *Parsifal* and as Musetta in the student/family performances of *La Bohème*. She appeared here in 1989 as Nannetta in the family performance of *Falstaff*, and was heard with the Company in last summer's Ring cycle as the Forest Bird in *Siegfried*. Last fall she sang Sister Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica*, Adele in the family performance of *Die Fledermaus*, and Amore in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. A 1988-89 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, Miss Williams was a participant in the 1987 Merola Opera Program, singing the role of Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* at Stern Grove, and winning the Florence Bruce Award at that year's Grand Finals. For the Opera Center, she has also performed as soloist in *Carmina Burana*, and sang Madame Silverpeal in *The Impresario*. She has appeared with the Budapest State Opera Orchestra, and several U.S. orchestras as soloist in Bach's B Minor Mass, Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *The Seasons*, and Villa-Lobos's *Bachiana Brasileira No. 5*. She has also performed the roles of Susanna in *Le*

Continued on page 41

San Francisco Opera

San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges a generous grant from
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New Production

Opera in two acts by WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Text by LORENZO DA PONTE

Così fan tutte

(in Italian)

*Conductor and
Harpichord Continuo*
Patrick Summers

Production
Harry Kupfer**

Assisted by
Klaus Dieter Müller**

Set Designer
Reinhart Zimmermann**

Costume Designer
Eleonore Kleiber**

Lighting Designer
Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson

Musical Preparation
Bryndon Hassman
Bonnie Koestner*
Philip Eisenberg

Prompter
Philip Eisenberg

Assistant Stage Director
Peter McClintock

Stage Manager
Jamie Call

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First performance:
Vienna, January 26, 1790

First San Francisco Opera performance:
October 2, 1956

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THURSDAY, JUNE 20 AT 8:00
SUNDAY, JUNE 23 AT 2:00
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26 AT 8:00
SATURDAY, JUNE 29 AT 8:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Don Alfonso Dale Travis

Ferrando Deon van der Walt*

Guglielmo James Michael McGuire*

Fiordiligi Susan Patterson

Dorabella Judith Forst

Despina Janet Williams

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*San Francisco Opera debut

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COSÌ FAN TUTTE OR: SCHOOL FOR LOVERS

Notes

"Così fan tutte!" ("They're all like that!") claims the "old philosopher" Don Alfonso, and he means women (otherwise, he would have said "tutti"). He likens women's fidelity to the phoenix bird, which the whole world talks about but has never seen. His young friends Ferrando and Guglielmo are of a completely different opinion, at least where it concerns their fiancées, Fiordiligi and her sister Dorabella. The matter is to be resolved by a wager. The young men see the battle as already won; but then all comes to pass just as Don Alfonso predicted. No sooner are the ladies parted from their betrothed than they fall in love anew. Fidelity is no more. *Così fan tutte*. The proof seems conclusive.

Or is it?

At any rate, deception, moral blackmail and erotic assault all do their part. And not only the ladies, but also the gentlemen—disguised as "foreigners" to promote the seduction—are plagued by hopelessly confused emotions. Each of the four is paired with the other's partner; yet if Eros has managed to conquer as yet not fully formed feelings of love and fidelity, male vanity (to be interchangeable is unacceptable!) steps in to threaten the seemingly solid new liaisons. The men demand an explanation, as if they themselves were angelically innocent. The "old philosopher" must quickly restore the old connections. Only Despina, the chambermaid, is thoroughly ashamed to have been used for such mean-spirited ends.

What kind of world is it

whose ideals prove to be such empty conventions? They no longer offer refuge. Only through bad experiences and the knowledge of the dark abyss within man do the young people have a chance. Will they seize the opportunity? The question is no longer limited to the characters, but applies to us as well.

Mozart's opera buffa

Così fan tutte had its premiere at Vienna's Burgtheater on January 26, 1790.

It is known

that Mozart received the commission for the composition from Emperor Joseph II; legend has it that the Emperor himself insisted on the choice of the subject, which was supposedly based on a true incident in Viennese society. After *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, it was Mozart's third collaboration with Lorenzo da Ponte, who was shortly thereafter relieved of his duties by Joseph's successor Leopold II and made to leave Vienna. Contrary to a widely held belief in the 19th century—which rejected the piece for its "improbabilities" and "frivolity"—Mozart was not unwilling to undertake the task. Today there is no doubt that the work's inspired music, especially in the great ensemble scenes, belongs to the most important of Mozart's creations. The illumination of interpersonal relationships begun in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* is carried to its conclusion, though not without sarcasm. Bitterness is mitigated only by the comedic form. On one hand the piece is rooted firmly in the theatrical tradition of the Enlightenment, but it points far beyond that. To reveal the work's complicated and charming ambiguity is the task of the production by

HARRY KUPFER
and all the people listed on
the preceding page.

Così fan tutte

Photos taken in rehearsal by Marty Sohl

*(L. to r.) Deon van der Walt, James Michael McGuire,
Susan Patterson, Judith Forst*





Deon van der Walt, James Michael McGuire

Judith Forst, Susan Patterson, James Michael McGuire, Deon van der Walt



Janet Williams, Dale Travis

Susan Patterson, Judith Forst, Deon van der Walt, James Michael McGuire





*Deon van der Walt, Susan Patterson
Judith Forst, James Michael McGuire*



Susan Patterson, Judith Forst





Dale Travis

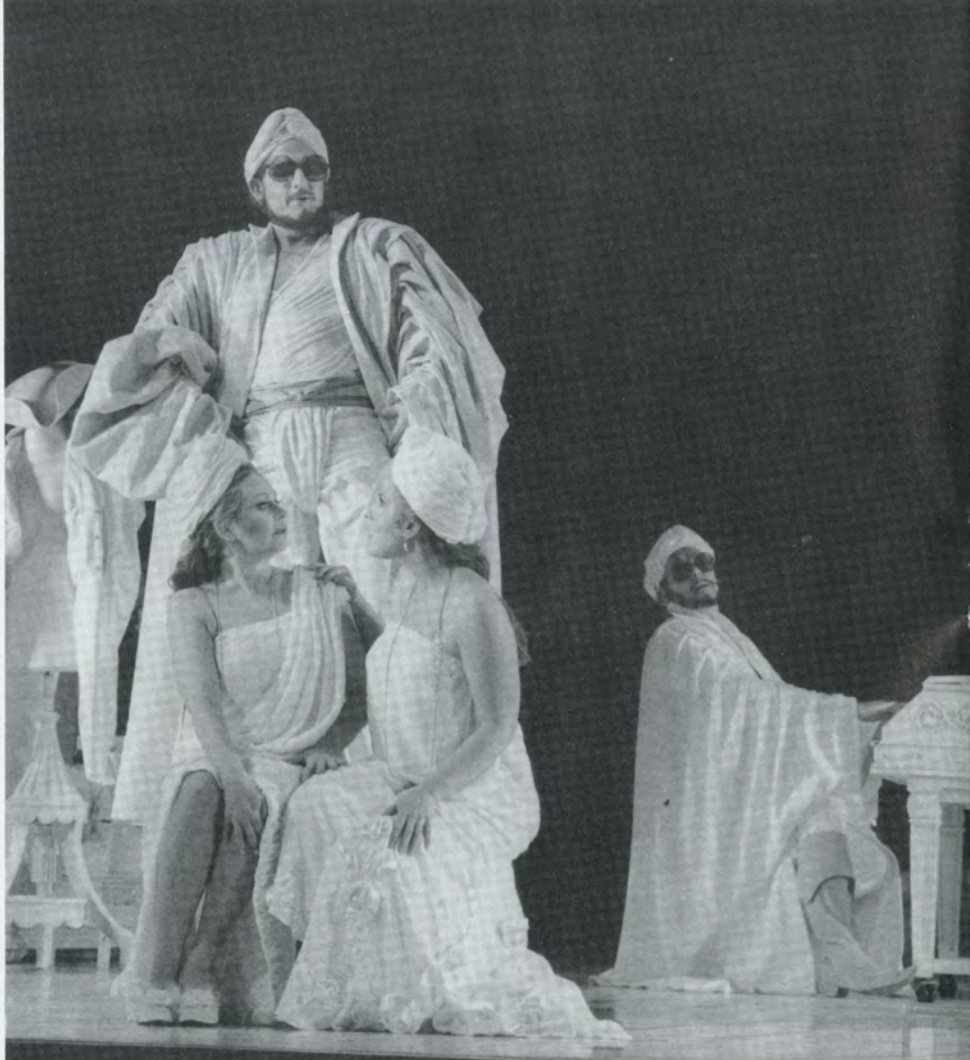


Judith Forst



Susan Patterson

Janet Williams



James Michael McGuire, Judith Forst, Susan Patterson, Deon van der Walt

James Michael McGuire, Judith Forst





DEON VAN DER WALT

Continued from page 35

Nozze di Figaro for Eugene Opera, Arianna in the Opera Center's 1989 presentation of Handel's *Giustino* and, in her European debut, Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with the Lyons Opera, as well as appearing in Schönberg's *Moses und Aron* in Lyons. Recent engagements include her Michigan Opera Theatre debut as Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, *Roméo et Juliette* with the Detroit Symphony, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* at Wolf Trap, Blonde in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and debuts at the Opéra de Nice as Elise in *Il Re Pastore* and at the Miami Opera as Despina. Earlier this year she was a Schwabacher Debut Recitalist and recorded the *Messiah* with the Philharmonia Baroque conducted by Nicholas McGegan. Future plans include Sister Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica* and Nella in *Il Tabarro* for her Dallas Opera debut, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and Pamina in France, as well as concerts at the Santa Fe Chamber Festival. Miss Williams is a native of Detroit and a graduate of Indiana University, where she earned a Master of Music degree in Voice.

Tenor **Deon van der Walt** makes his first appearance with San Francisco Opera as Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*. Born in Capetown, South Africa, he was a member of the Drakensberg Boys' Choir, studied at Stellenbosch University and, after winning several vocal competitions, was given a scholarship to study in Europe. He promptly won first prize after training at the Summer Academy of the Salzburg Mozarteum. He made his operatic debut in 1981 as Jacquino in Capetown's production of *Fidelio*, and was invited to sing Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* a year later. He returned to Europe and became a member of the Munich State Opera Studio and was a regular performer on a popular German TV show, *Anneliese Rothenberger Presents*. He soon became a soloist at the Stuttgart Opera where he sang Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, and Fenton in



JAMES MICHAEL MCGUIRE

Falstaff and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Soon to follow were international engagements: Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* and Jupiter in Handel's *Semele* at the Ludwigsburger Schloss Festspiele (both telecast); Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* at the Cologne Opera; Lindoro in *L'Italiana in Algeri* and a concert of Mozart arias at the Salzburg Festival; Almaviva in his Royal Opera House Covent Garden debut in 1985; Belmonte at the Salzburg Festival in 1987, as well as engagements at the opera houses of Hamburg, Hannover, Berlin, Monte Carlo, Zurich, Vienna and Houston. Since his Covent Garden debut, van der Walt has returned there to appear in new productions of *L'Italiana in Algeri* and Tippet's *King Priam*, and in revivals of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *La Cenerentola* and *Die Zauberflöte*. He returned to the Salzburg Festival in 1988 and 1989 as Belmonte, and in 1990 as Ferrando in Michael Hampe's highly acclaimed production of *Così fan tutte*, and has been seen most recently at the Zurich Opera as Tonio in *The Daughter of the Regiment* and, in a role new to his repertoire, as Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut last year as Belmonte. Van der Walt also has an active concert career, and has appeared as soloist at various festivals and well-known concert halls. His discography includes a new recording of *Così fan tutte* led by Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Schoeck's *Massimilla Doni*, and Lortzing's *Zar und Zimmermann*.

In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, baritone **James Michael McGuire** portrays Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, the role he sang for his European debut earlier this season at the Opéra de Nice. The native of Emporia, Kansas graduated from Emporia State University and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, receiving early professional experience and training at Central City Opera and the Houston Opera Studio. A Merola Opera Program participant in 1984, he won the first place Schwabacher Memorial Award in the San Francisco Opera Auditions and sang Dandini in *La Cene-*



DALE TRAVIS

rentola, a role he repeated on tour with Western Opera Theater. The following year he sang at Wolf Trap Opera, appearing as Papageno in *The Magic Flute* and in Donizetti's *Viva la Mamma* and Rossini's *Il Signor Bruschino*. He made his Opera Theater of St. Louis debut as Bob in Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and has since returned to that company in the world premiere of Stephen Paulus's *The Woodlanders*, as Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera*, Sherasmin in Weber's *Oberon*, and as Dandini. McGuire has appeared with Houston Grand Opera in *Wozzeck*, *Rigoletto* and *Madama Butterfly*, and sang in the world premiere of Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* and its companion piece, *Trouble in Tahiti*. Additional appearances include the title role of *Don Giovanni* and Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro* at Skylight Opera, Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* at Chautauqua Opera, Papageno with Central City Opera, Plunkett in *Martha* for Baltimore Opera, Albert in *Werther* for Seattle Opera, and performances of *Orfeo* and *Andrea Chénier* at the Dallas Opera. In the 1989-90 season, McGuire's engagements included *The Merry Widow* with Joan Sutherland in Dallas, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Minnesota Opera, his Santa Fe Opera debut as Harlequin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and Dandini in Austin. Future plans include a return to Nice as Papageno, his debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in *Turandot*, and a re-engagement in Chicago during the 1992-93 season for *La Bohème*. The baritone has also frequently appeared as soloist with major orchestras and in recital. Awards include grants from the National Institute of Music Theater and the Richard Tucker Foundation.

Bass-baritone **Dale Travis** sings Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*. A 1988-89 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center and a member of the Merola Opera Program in 1986 and '87, the artist is quickly earning a growing reputation as a talented young performer specializ-

ing in the buffo repertoire. He made his Company debut in 1988 singing five roles, and appeared on the stage of the War Memorial in the summer of 1989 as Lord Krishna in *Satyagraha*. That fall he was seen 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*. Last season he sang four roles for the Company: 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*. Opera Center credits include Don Alfonso, the three bass roles in *La Bohème* (a production which was also presented in the Peoples Republic of China), and the title role of *Don Pasquale* for Western Opera Theater's 1987-88 tour. Travis has also appeared with the opera companies of Marin and San Jose as Don Pasquale, Méphistophélès in *Faust*, Dr. Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville*, Falstaff in the fully-staged premiere of Gordon Getty's *Plump Jack*, Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love*, and as Don Alfonso. Last summer he sang the role of Leporello in *Don Giovanni* at the Opera Festival of New Jersey before returning to California to perform at the Carmel Bach Festival as Plutone in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and as bass soloist in the B Minor Mass. He has also appeared in concert with the San Francisco Symphony, Sacramento Symphony, and at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Future engagements include Masetto in *Don Giovanni* and Ottone in Handel's *Agrippina* for his Washington Opera debut, his first appearance with Santa Fe Opera in a new production of Hans-Jürgen von Bose's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, and a return to San Francisco Opera this fall for *La Traviata* and *War and Peace*. Travis was a winner of the 1990 Metropolitan Opera Pacific Region Auditions, and was chosen by *Musical America* magazine as a "Young Artist of 1990" in its annual survey of rising talent in the U.S.

In his second year as Music Director of the San Francisco Opera Center, **Patrick Summers** made his Company conducting debut last fall with performances of *Die Fledermaus*, and is on the podium for the new production of *Così fan tutte*. He acts as liaison between the Center and San Francisco Opera, and has conducted a number of Opera Center presentations including the Showcase series, Grand Finals, and the Fall Season Preview Concert. An apprentice coach for the Merola Opera Program in 1986 and 1987, he was twice awarded the Otto Guth Memorial Award. As assistant conductor, he joined Western Opera Theater's 1986-87 tour of *La Bohème*, which culminated in performances in Shanghai, and led the Shanghai Orchestra in a joint concert with American and



PATRICK SUMMERS

Chinese singers. For the Merola Opera Program, he led the Villa Montalvo performances of *Don Pasquale* in 1987, *Madame Butterfly* in 1988, *Carmen* in 1989, and also conducted Western Opera's national tours of *Don Pasquale* and *Madame Butterfly*. For the Opera Center's Showcase series, Maestro Summers led the West Coast premiere of Hiram Titus's *Rosina* in 1988, as well as last year's U.S. premiere of Reimann's *The Ghost Sonata*. He has traveled to China four times since 1987, coaching students at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in preparation for their performances of *Rigoletto* (1989) and *Don Pasquale* (1990), as well as preparing and conducting the first production of *Tosca* ever presented in China. Earlier this year Summers conducted Opera Center-sponsored performances of *Carmen* in Japan (with the Sendai Philharmonic) and Guam, and was most recently on the podium of the War Memorial for the SFO's Mozart Gala Concert. Future conducting engagements include the Merola Opera Program's production of *The Bartered Bride* at Stern Grove, his European debut at the European Center for Vocal Arts leading *Le Nozze di Figaro* with the Warsaw Philharmonic, the student matinee presentations of *La Traviata* for the Company this fall, and his debut at Long Beach Opera with *Lucio Silla*. Maestro Summers was recently named "Outstanding Young San Franciscan" by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, the only award winner involved in the arts.

Celebrated German director **Harry Kupfer**, who is making his U.S. opera company debut with San Francisco Opera, conceived the new production of *Così fan tutte*. Chief director at the Komische Oper in Berlin since 1981, he was educated in Leipzig and began his career as assistant director at the Halle Landestheater, where he made his directing debut with Dvořák's *Rusalka* in 1958. After several years as chief director at the Stralsund Theater and the Chemnitz Municipal Theaters, he spent six seasons



HARRY KUPFER

as opera director at Weimar's National Theater, where he staged his first production of *Tannhäuser*. In 1972, he was appointed director of opera at the Dresden Staatsoper, where his first production was *Le Nozze di Figaro*. During the 1970s, he directed at the principal German and Austrian theaters—*Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Berlin Staatsoper, *Elektra* at the Graz Opera House, and *Der Fliegende Holländer* for his debut at the Bayreuth Festival. Additional important debuts were to follow: *Die Meistersinger* at the Komische Oper in 1981, and Penderecki's *The Black Mask* at the Salzburg Festival in 1986. In 1987, he directed the final installment of the Komische Oper's Mozart cycle, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the house, and a year later mounted a widely discussed new production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the Bayreuth Festival. Additional recent successes include *Elektra* and *Fidelio* at the Welsh National Opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the English National Opera, *Tannhäuser* in Hamburg, *Die Soldaten* in Stuttgart and at the Vienna Staatsoper, Gluck's *Orpheus und Eurydike* (with the forces of the Komische Oper) at the Royal Opera Covent Garden, the Brooklyn Academy of Music and in Wiesbaden and, most recently, *Idomeneo* in Berlin. Kupfer's production of the Gluck opera, which will be revived at the Royal Opera later this summer, was awarded the prestigious Laurence Olivier Award earlier this year. The distinguished director, who has held professorships at the Carl Maria von Weber Conservatory in Dresden and the Hanns Eisler Conservatory of Berlin, is the recipient of numerous awards from the German Democratic Republic and the German Critics' Association. Last year he was appointed a member of the Free Academy of the Arts in Hamburg and Berlin, and was awarded the "Golden Apollo" prize by the International Association of Opera Theaters in recognition of his directing accomplishments.



REINHART ZIMMERMANN

Reinhart Zimmermann, who is making his U.S. opera company debut with San Francisco Opera, created the set designs for *Così fan tutte*. Head scenic designer for Berlin's Komische Oper since 1964, the native of Germany has worked with that company's founder and general director, Walter Felsenstein, as well as with other renowned opera producers, including Götz Freidrich, Joachim Herz, and Harry Kupfer. His numerous designs for theater, opera and ballet have been seen in Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo, Amsterdam, Graz, Vienna, London, Cardiff, Paris, Vancouver and Dresden. Highlights of his work at the Komische Oper include the acclaimed set designs for their Mozart cycle—*Così fan tutte* in 1984 and *Idomeneo* last year. Other recent successes include *Madama Butterfly* for the Vancouver Opera, *Carmen* at the Komische Oper, and a new production of Janáček's *Osud* at the Semper Opera in Dresden.



ELEONORE KLEIBER

Eleonore Kleiber, in San Francisco for her first assignment with a U.S. opera company, designed the costumes for the new production of *Così fan tutte*. A set designer and costume director, as well as costume designer, she was born in Germany and received her education at the Weimar Art School, also studying privately with the portrait painter Linsen-Gebhardt and the sculptor Arno Steger. She began her professional career at Weimar's National Theater and was principal costume designer there from 1954-1958. Following an offer from the Leipzig Municipal Theaters, she became costume designer there for five different theaters, creating costumes for drama, ballet, opera and operetta. In 1968, she was invited by Walter Felsenstein, general director of the Komische Oper in Berlin, to join that company as costume director and designer. Still active in those capacities, she also designed the sets for several operas and ballets there, collaborating with acclaimed directors including Joachim Herz, Götz Friedrich and Harry Kupfer, as well as with principal choreographer Thom Schilling. Recent assignments in Berlin include the costumes for Kupfer's new production of *Idomeneo*, as well as for *Carmen* and Prokofiev's *Cinderella* ballet. Her activities outside Berlin include Janáček's *Osud* at the Semper Opera in Dresden, and Gluck's *Orpheus und Eurydike* in Kupfer's staging, which included productions at London's Covent Garden and this year's performances at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Miss Kleiber is currently busy with two ballet premieres in Berlin, for which she is designing both the sets and costumes.



THOMAS J. MUNN

Thomas J. Munn, Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera since 1976, created the lighting for the revival of *Die Zauberflöte* (first seen here in 1987) and for the new production of *Così fan tutte*. He has created the lighting and special effects for over 140 productions for the Company, including the highly acclaimed *Ring* cycle last summer. As scenic adviser, he has designed scenery for SFO productions of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Billy Budd* and *Nabucco*, as well as for next fall's revival of *Don Giovanni*. Munn has designed scenery and lighting for Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theater, ballet, 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*, *La Bohème*, *Orlando Furioso* and *Mefistofele*. This past April, he toured Japan with the Opera Center production of *Carmen* as scenic supervisor and lighting director. Recent credits for other companies include *Madama Butterfly* for the Netherlands Opera, and scenery and lighting for Hartford Ballet's productions of *Coppélia* and *The Nutcracker*. For San Francisco Opera this fall, he will design the lighting for new productions of *Tristan und Isolde*, *Das Verratene Meer*, *Elektra* and *War and Peace*, as well as for revivals of *Carmen* and *La Traviata*. Next year he will light productions of *Andrea Chénier* and *Mefistofele* for the Houston Grand Opera. In addition to his many theatrical endeavors, Munn is often engaged as consultant for architectural projects, the Muziektheater in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, being one of his most notable achievements.



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Putting It Together

Continued from page 32

mentary—"Kupfer's school for lovers," a clever pun on the opera's subtitle—reduces the production team to fits of barely repressible laughter. The on-stage wizardry of a theatrical genius, fusing hundreds of fast-paced expressions and gestures into a convincing scene with overpowering dramatic sweep, inspires little short of slack-jawed awe in a team that must have at times wondered whether a production so detailed and replete with potential pitfalls would ever work. A run-through without stops—eliciting Kupfer's exuberant cries of "YES, YES" at every successful realization of his direction, and a loud groan of "OH HHHH YESSSS" at its peak—brings applause (and sighs) all around.

During the rehearsal break following the scene, an energized McGuire allows that Kupfer's *Così* "... can get a little athletic. But in the end I think it's more beneficial than detrimental for us singers. At first I found the blocking for my big, second-act aria, 'Rivolgete a lui lo sguardo,' rather daunting. In the course of it I'm dancing, boxing, imitating a butterfly and an opera diva—with an

improvised cadenza on the 'Come scoglio' theme—and, at the end, literally holding Don Alfonso down, because I've won the bet. It's a lot of business, but concentrating on it keeps me from being preoccupied with making a beautiful sound. In the end, it's a lot more satisfying to be thinking about my character than to be worrying, 'Here comes the high note.' If a singer can learn how to sing while running around, the singing will be better for it. I've heard my fellow cast members worry about how this staging will affect their singing, but the truth is I haven't heard a single out-of-breath sound. Even though I've sung the role before, I find I'm thinking about it much more completely now, not just memorizing noises. Kupfer's concept requires continual thought."

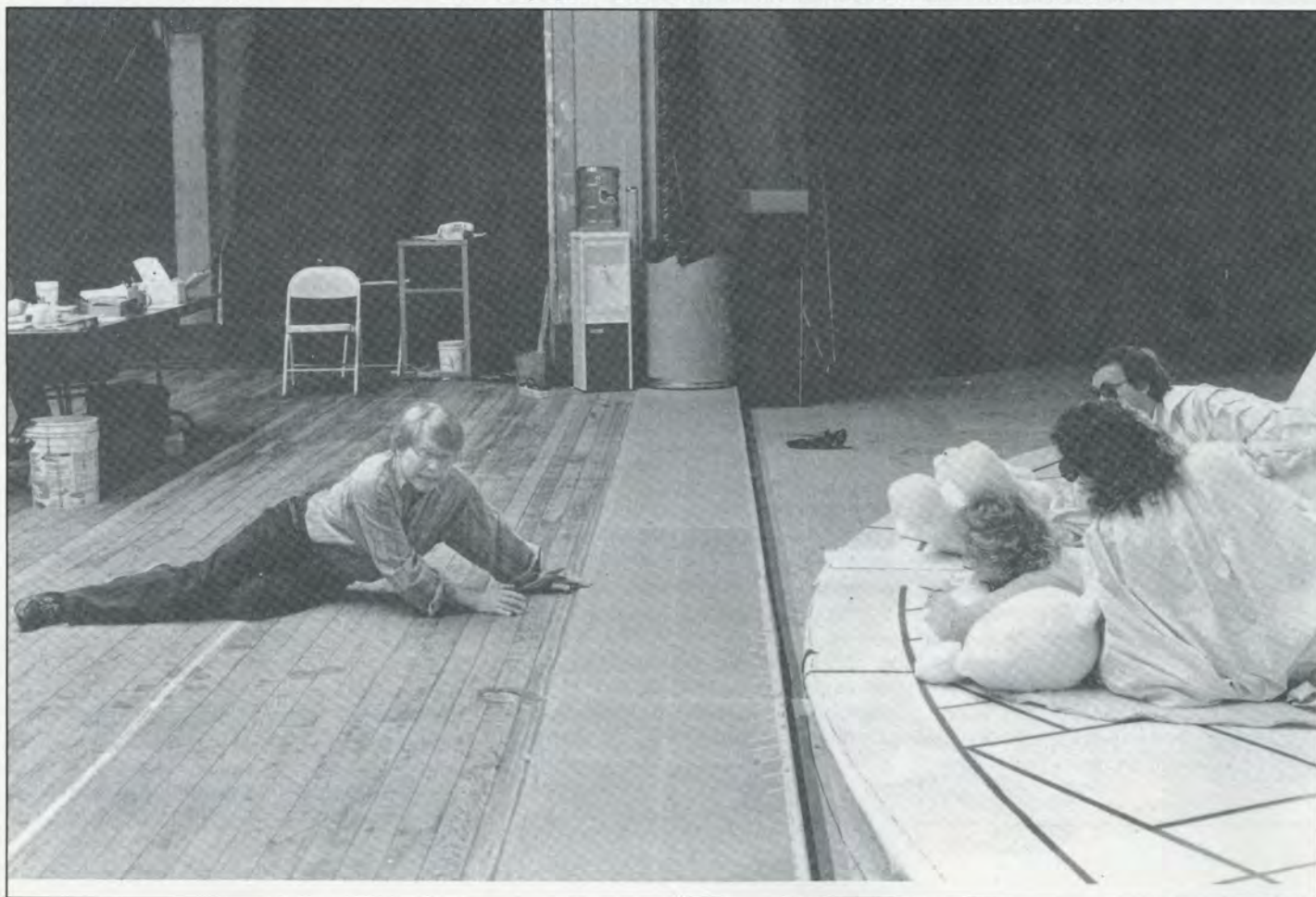
Forst, who has sung Dorabella in more productions than she can count, comments that the acting in *Così* is, in any production, the hardest in Mozart. "I've always done it with demanding directors—Lotfi Mansouri for one—but this *Così* is the most intricate from every standpoint. At the simplest level, there is a lot of business—and since we're playing it on a revolving unit set, we singers are responsible for all of it. The quick cos-

tume changes that are a part of any *Così* take place underneath the stage, which we get to through trap doors in the revolving turntable. I find that I have to keep lists down there, because this show is that complicated. What's harder, of course, is that, on stage, we're frequently playing against the text. That is, we're saying one thing, but thinking something else—and both have to come across. It's a challenge to find your way in this production. What helps is that Kupfer is terrifically involved, very specific, and makes you understand your character as he sees it. That's all that matters, and not whether I agree with everything he does.

"I've always been one to take what I learn from rehearsals home with me, to work on it further," she continues. "With this production I find I have to do more than ever, just to make the direction 'mine.' I had an engagement that almost prevented me from accepting this assignment. When the conductor I was going to sing for found out what I had the opportunity to do, he *asked* me to cancel his concert so I could have the chance to work with Kupfer. I'm glad I took his advice."

Patrick Summers, a member of the Company's musical staff who conducts

Director Harry Kupfer demonstrates a detail of his staging to Judith Forst, James Michael McGuire and Deon van der Walt.



this new *Così*—and who has, at his own insistence, attended every staging as well as musical rehearsal—has become an ardent advocate of Kupfer's "concept." "It may not be right for everyone, and it may particularly disturb that faction of the audience that isn't interested in anything beyond pretty sets and beautiful singing. But there is an audience that comes wanting to see a 'whole' performance, and it's certainly going to get one with this production. Sure, there's a lot going on in it—maybe more than anyone can absorb in a single performance—but to my way of thinking, it brims with the same spontaneity one hears in the music. We're trying to match Mozart's spontaneity in these performances; everything must seem as if we are composing it as we go along.

"The way Harry works," Summers continues, "if there are 50 subtexts, he gives his cast 150—in the interest of getting 50 by the time the show reaches the stage. The challenge for me is to get it all to work together rhythmically. Because the staging is so difficult, it's hard for the singers to do all their business and still stay in rhythm. In that sense, their problem becomes my problem. My experience has been that it is the



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Eleonore Kleiber, our new Così fan tutte's costume designer, during a fitting for San Francisco Opera Chorus member Robert Delany.

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things we've worked on a hundred times or more—and I'm not exaggerating when I say that—that are now just beginning to meld. It sounds exhausting but in fact it's a very exciting way to work."

By his own account, Kupfer's conception of *Così* has been in constant evolution since he first staged the work 23 years ago. Although the San Francisco production closely follows his Berlin staging of 1984, it, too, has inevitably changed in ways both large and small. It is necessarily larger, with both Reinhart Zimmermann's sets and Eleonore Kleiber's costumes completely rebuilt by Company crews, the former to accommodate the larger stage space of the War Memorial Opera House and the latter to fit the San Francisco singers. (In Kupfer's production, the chorus sings its small part off stage.)

Although the San Francisco *Così* is only the second Kupfer production on this side of the Atlantic (following a Komische Oper tour of Gluck's *Orfeo* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music), he has become one of the most prominent, sought-after, and controversial directors in Europe. In addition to his extensive work as chief director of the Berlin Komische Oper over the last decade, his

reputation has taken him to Europe's most prominent festivals. His 1978 Bayreuth debut, directing *Der Fliegende Holländer*, earned him an invitation to direct the current Bayreuth *Ring* (the former is preserved on videodisc, with the latter to be filmed for that format this summer). In 1986 he staged Penderecki's *The Black Mask* for the prestigious Salzburg Festival. Almost universally admired for the visual-dramatic potency of his stagings, he has become equally controversial for the strong political slants of his theatrical interpretations.

His *Così* is no exception on either front. Müller, who has worked closely with Kupfer on all of the latter's Mozart productions in Berlin—in order, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Così*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Idomeneo*—discerns in that sequence Kupfer's struggle to assess Mozart's understanding of the mechanisms of power in human relations at the broadest social and the most intimate personal levels. Both men see the development of Mozart's thought in that arena as deriving from the composer's initial relish at the prospect of contributing to the art form of the German *Singspiel* in the court of the progressive and

putatively enlightened Emperor Franz Joseph II to his growing recognition that that political arena was not as revolutionary as it first appeared. Taking the operas, and Kupfer's interpretations of them, in their compositional sequence, Müller perceives a line from the first fantasy opera, *Die Entführung*, to the last, *Die Zauberflöte*. The former, in its artificially conventional Turkish setting, offers a Franz Joseph figure in the Pasha Selim, whose relinquishing of his captive Constanze represented the hope that mankind could resolve its conflicts through humanitarian, or humanist, means. In *Die Zauberflöte*, a worldly-wiser Mozart transfers his hope for humanity to a new, awakening generation, represented by the three boys.

In an interview during the break between his first San Francisco rehearsals, Kupfer cited *Così* as an artistic locus of a critical shift in Mozart's world view. "Mozart looks more deeply into the political situation, and more and more he sees and feels the conflict between ideals and reality," he commented. "He understands the situation more and more in terms of the individual conflicts of his characters. The great philosophical questions he raises in *Don Giovanni* he raises

(L. to r.) Conductor Patrick Summers, stage director Harry Kupfer, and his assistant Klaus Dieter Müller during a rehearsal.



again in *Così*, but in the most intimate, private spheres. I consider *Così* the greatest of Mozart's pieces, and also the darkest. It is a very serious, black comedy. The fun comes in the contradiction between what his characters are thinking and feeling and what they do, between what they know and what they don't know. This is also an instructional play; its subtitle is 'The School for Lovers.' The young couples do not yet know life in all its contradictions, and they have to learn."

He sees in the character of their would-be teacher, the wily Don Alfonso, Mozart and Da Ponte's representation not just of the "old philosopher" but of the "old-fashioned philosopher." "He represents the beginning of rationalism, and his view is completely cynical. Sure, he represents one facet of the Enlightenment, but his is a cold, mechanistic reality. He confines his thinking about nature to its physical laws, and he can't see beyond that to a humanity that can think and feel for itself. He carries forward the bad experiences he himself has had in life—not the least of which is his relationship with Despina, which has proved so unsatisfactory—and he translates that into the thought that that's how the world is. That's his school for lovers."

Hence the look of Kupfer's physical production, whose glaring, unrelieved white represents the clinical white of a laboratory. In Kupfer's view, Don Alfonso isn't just teaching the young lovers his cynical view of the world, he is conducting a human experiment whose foregone conclusions are "tested" within cold, even cruel, clinical boundaries. Ever the one to perceive the dialectic in a situation, Kupfer further sees the tension between the clinical fable and what he calls the "sand-castle" play. The playing spaces on the rotating unit set—the young men's gymnasium and music room (whose harpsichord doubles as a ship in one remarkable transformation), the young women's studio and bath—suggest a blank, *tabula rasa* white (with some friendly, if infantile, touches, such as the young ladies' cuddly white teddy bears). These characters and their environment are empty pages yet to be written upon.

"Since they go to the opera every night, at first the two young ladies act the way they see the characters there performing. As they learn more and more about themselves, staring into the abyss of love and sexuality, they only hope that they will be able to withstand this school for lovers." He dismisses entirely the notion that the morality issues in the

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opera center on the behavior of the women as they are manipulated by Don Alfonso and their boyfriends. "It is not the behavior of the women that is immoral. What is immoral is the bet, the wager between Don Alfonso and the two young men.

"*Così* did not come into its own until the end of the 19th century. It is the product of two very clever men, creators who thought about the times they lived in. Even though they were able to look beyond their time, they were, nevertheless, products of a masculine society. In Da Ponte's title, the 'they' who are all 'like that' are, by the gender of the language, the women. But that is a clever ruse by Da Ponte. The question of the piece, which it asks in both political and societal dimensions, is how the two sexes relate to each other in society. It's not coincidental that in Mozart's music the sympathy is with the two women.

"In this piece, the men aren't really interested in proving that their women are faithful. They're only interested in proving that they are right, and so it becomes a game in which the two men force the 'other' women to go to bed with them—because each wants the other man to be in the same situation he is. But

the men are not painted in black and white either, because Mozart loved all his characters, men and women, and depicted them in all their contradictory variety."

In Kupfer's view, at least as expressed in his first interview, only Don Alfonso emerges from his experiment unchanged. "He learns nothing in his school. At the end he still thinks that he has done something good, something valuable, and he simply doesn't understand that these people have gone off in another direction, that they are beginning to find their own way." Yet he is cautious in his estimation of how much the lovers themselves have learned, beyond this: "They have learned that the clichés, with which they were once completely absorbed, and all of their models of thought, simply no longer apply.

"The finale of the opera, which has always sounded to me more like Beethoven than Mozart, is not an easy ending. While the characters sing what sounds like an optimistic verse, in fact they are screaming about deep doubt and despair. There is only the hope that they can find themselves—and become themselves. The opera is a mirror of life,

reflecting the development of these young people as they come to understand the demonic aspects of sex, of the erotic, and the despair associated with relationships, partnerships—that every day you look into the abyss, finding that you can love one person, and then also another, which brings you into contradiction not only with external morality but with the moral 'laws' within yourself." Suffice it to say that in Kupfer's *Così*, there is no facile reconciliation of the couples as originally configured. While, in our day, it has become the fashion to leave the situation with the couples, old and new, ambiguous, the sense here is that the couples are, in any configuration, done for—though, in fact, even that remains somewhat ambiguous.

Adding yet another layer of complexity to Kupfer's production is the positioning of the turntable set between a painting of theater boxes of Mozart's day (a continuous, striking black-and-white drop, painted in lithograph-like cross-hatches, that covers the walls and back of the stage) and the live, present-day Opera House audience. "The stage represents the theater and the real world," Kupfer says, "so the characters comport themselves in an arena between

(L. to r.) Deon van der Walt, Susan Patterson, Judith Forst and James Michael McGuire in rehearsal for the Act I Finale.



this historical public and today's. We today are not so cultivated that we are not still under the power of the very passions that move these characters. No society yet has succeeded in killing this little piece of nature, the erotic. We still have that piece of nature in us, and we can't control it."

With a seven-week rehearsal period, this new Kupfer *Così* weighs in as one of the most extensively prepared productions in San Francisco Opera history (surpassed in total rehearsal hours only by *The Ring*, which is, of course, four operas). But that simple fact could be easily misconstrued as wanton indulgence of the excesses of opera production or capitulation to the demands of a star director currently in international ascendancy. Everyone involved in the San Francisco production has learned otherwise, namely, that this seemingly luxurious rehearsal period has engendered as much risk as it has provided artistic security.

In his first rehearsal of the second-act finale he had described with such confident eloquence the day before, Kupfer perceived, then implemented a

Continued on page 55

Janet Williams and Dale Travis go through Despina's and Don Alfonso's paces.



A Season of Mozart/June 1991



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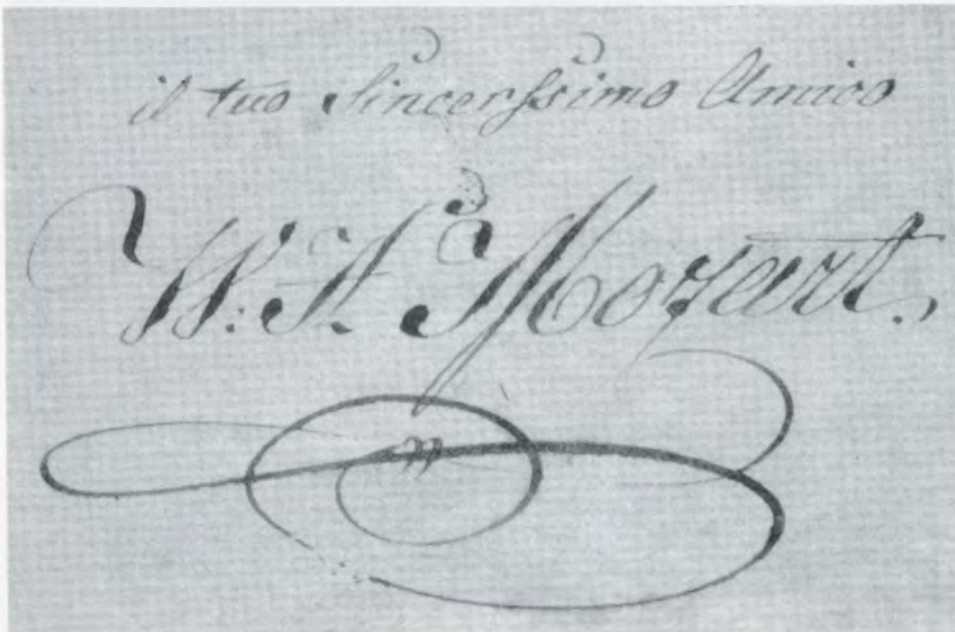


Mozart

AND THE

Romantics

By JOHN SCHAUER



Mozart's signature, with inscription: "your most sincere friend."

Changing tastes and the vicissitudes of fortune affect the classical, as well as popular, arts. Telemann, Meyerbeer, Salieri and Cherubini—the reputations of these once-mighty masters of music have suffered through the re-evaluation brought on by historical perspective. They have earned a spot in the history books, but it is nowhere near the lofty status they once enjoyed.

Even composers who have withstood "the test of time"—Beethoven, say, or more to the point in this bicentennial year, Mozart—have not been entirely immune to that process. Mozart may never have entirely disappeared from the repertoire over the last 200 years, but there were certainly periods when he held a more modest rank than he does today, when he is being lionized as possibly the greatest musical genius of all time.

In *Mozart's Last Year*, H.C. Robbins Landon writes, "I always considered Mozart something quite alone and beyond other music, including Bach, Beethoven and Wagner. I ought to say that this view was then [in 1939] considered not merely eccentric but almost lunatic." In *Conversations with Casals*, Pablo Casals says, "Around the beginning of our century, we find the 'rediscovery' of Mozart ... I can remember when one of his symphonies was used to fill up an empty space in a program where the main dishes were Beethoven, Wagner, etc. He was thought of as a trinket, charming, delicious, yes—but a trinket all the same." Bruno Walter once reported, "When I was a young conductor, musicians all loved Mozart and wanted to play him, but the directors of the Opera were very much against it. It was not box office ... And then through Mahler's efforts in Vienna, Mozart was seen in a new aspect. His dramatic veracity was acknowledged and Mozart became box office." And Sir Thomas Beecham, speaking of the time when he conducted a revival (actually more of an exhumation) of *Così fan tutte* in 1911, said, "Few had ever heard of it, and fewer still seemed acquainted with the music, although it is equal in beauty to anything the composer ever wrote ... it was hard to believe that in our age of vaunted culture and education a work like this, then one hundred and twenty years old,

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was being heard almost for the first time in a great city like London."

Part of the problem was that Mozart was something of the musical apotheosis of his age. Unlike Beethoven, who was perceived as a musical revolutionary in his own time, Mozart achieved perfection within the confines of what was considered proper form. A music theory teacher who gave a course I took in species counterpoint used to be fond of analyzing a passage of Mozart's music by changing it to how it might have been written by a second-rate talent like Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf, a Viennese composer who was born about 15 years before Mozart and lived eight years longer.

Dittersdorf, however, had a very high regard for Mozart. In his autobiography, he writes, "Mozart is undoubtedly one of the greatest of original geniuses, and I have never known any other composer to possess such an amazing wealth of ideas. I wish he were not so spendthrift with them. He does not give the listener time to catch his breath, for no sooner is one inclined to reflect upon a beautiful inspiration than another appears, even more splendid, which drives away the first, and this continues on and on, so that in the end one is unable to retain any of these beauties in the memory."

When the next great musical period we call "romantic" emerged in the first half of the 19th century, and composers were painting with bolder strokes, the proper sense of scope was lost for works written in the "classical" age, and they acquired a reputation of being what today would be labeled "wimpy." In his *Memoirs*, Hector Berlioz (1803-69) writes: "I have stated that when I went up for my first examination at the Conservatoire I was wholly absorbed in the study of dramatic music of the grand school; I should have said of lyric tragedy, and it was owing to this cause that my admiration for Mozart was so lukewarm. Only Gluck and Spontini could excite me. And this was the reason for my coolness with regard to the composer of *Don Giovanni*. *Don Giovanni* and *Figaro* were the two of Mozart's works played in Paris most often, but they were always given in Italian, by Italians, at the Italian Opera; and that alone was sufficient to prejudice me against them. Their great defect in my eyes was that they seemed to belong to the ultramontane [Italian] school."

Berlioz then goes into a vicious tirade against the coloratura ending to Donna Anna's aria "Non mi dir," concluding, "I found it difficult to forgive Mozart for this enormity. Now I feel that I would shed my blood if I could thereby erase that shameful page and others of the same kind which disfigure some of his work.

"I therefore received his dramatic doctrines with distrust, and my enthusiasm fell to just one degree above freezing point."

Berlioz later softened his harsh evaluation, and said it was Mozart's quartets and quintets that "first converted me to the worship of this angelic genius, whose brightness was slightly dimmed by intercourse with Italians and contrapuntal pedagogues."

Richard Wagner (1813-83) had a similar difficulty with his early exposure to Mozart, and for similar reasons. In his autobiography *Mein Leben*, Wagner writes of his early development as a pianist, saying, "I had attained this much: I was no longer dependent for music on the playing of others; from this time forth I used to try and play, albeit very imperfectly, everything I wanted to know. I also tried Mozart's *Don Juan*, but was unable to get any pleasure out of it, mainly because the Italian text in arrangement for the piano placed the music in a frivolous light in my eyes, and much in it seemed to me trivial and unmanly."

Wagner also eventually came under the spell of the Salzburg *Wunderkind*, crediting the Requiem mass as "the starting-point of my enthusiastic absorption in the works of that master." He even went so far as to begin his famous 1840 "Credo" with the words, "I believe in God, Mozart, and Beethoven, and in their disciples and apostles . . ." It is curious, though, that both Berlioz and Wagner resisted Mozart's charms in their youth. Is an appreciation of Mozart something that is acquired only with age and experience?

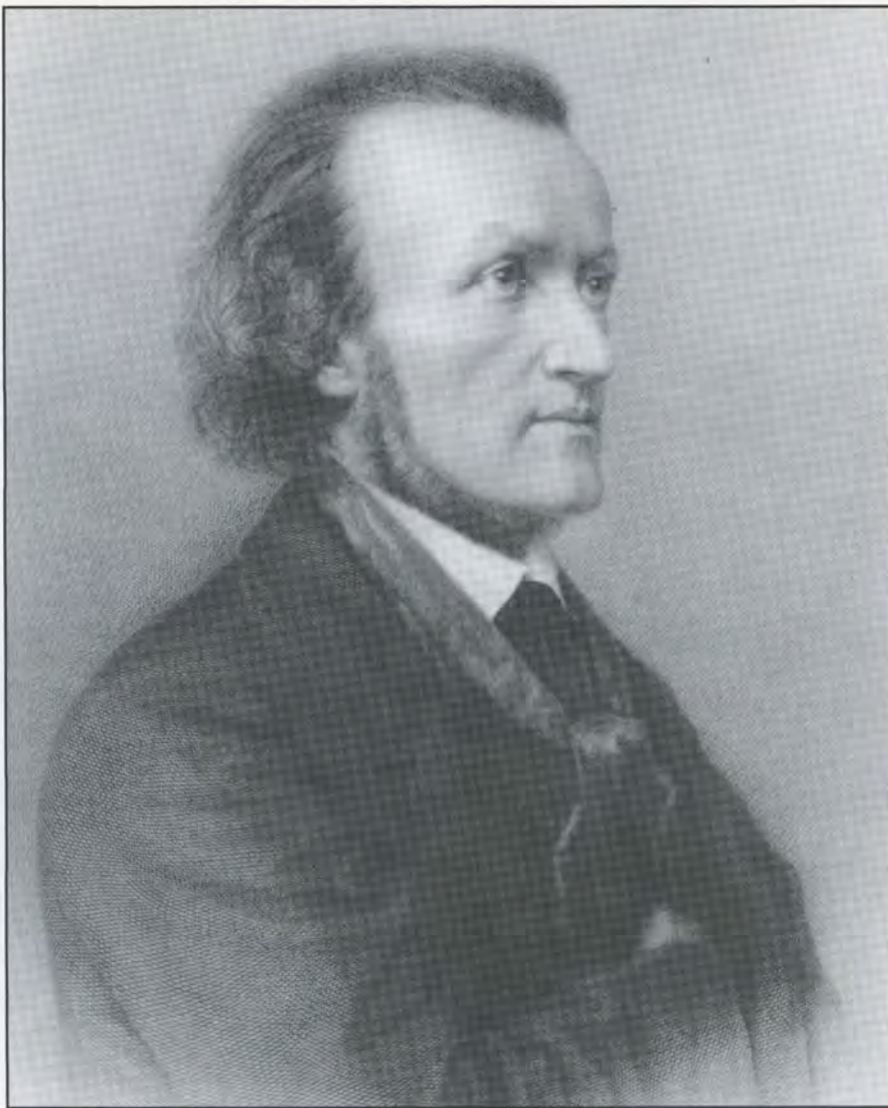
Robert Schumann (1810-56) was of two minds on the subject—which should not surprise us about a composer who, as a music journalist, used to present conflicting opinions under the two pen names Eusebius and Florestan, sometimes moderating them under a third, Raro. Writing in his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1834, he says, "Do not introduce Beethoven to the young too early on! Drench them and strengthen them



Hector Berlioz, 1803-1869.

with the fresh, zestful Mozart." Yet in an 1838 essay he says, "As one grows older and more demanding, the circle of one's favorites tends to contract. Who is the master about whom one's views remain unchanged throughout a lifetime? The proper appreciation of Bach, for instance, requires experience that youth cannot have, and the same is true even of Mozart."

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) also addressed the question of changing taste over the course of a lifetime: ". . . whence comes this lack of reverence for Mozart in so many talented young musicians? Here is the heart of the matter. Many of us have in our early youth loved—nay, worshipped—Mozart, but afterward we ate of the modern fruit of knowledge, an indulgence which, like that in the garden of Eden, drove us from our paradise. Some of us, luckily, avoided a complete surfeit, and found the way back. I frankly



Richard Wagner, 1813-1883.

confess that I too suffered this change: I loved Mozart, then for a time lost him, but found him again, nevermore to lose him . . .

"Diverse composers of our time have attempted, by subjecting Mozart to a modernizing process, to make him more palatable to a public jaded by strong spices. A dangerous undertaking! Thus the Russian master Tchaikovsky has, with admirable discretion and refined taste, united into an orchestral suite, in a modern instrumental garb, a group of Mozart's piano and choral pieces, some of them comparatively unfamiliar . . ."

The suite, of course was "Mozartiana," and Tchaikovsky (1840-93) was one of the few great romantic composers who began his love of Mozart early in life and never lost it. As a child, he had learned tunes from *Don Giovanni* from an orchestrion, a type of music-box, in the Tchaikovsky household, and his admiration for Mozart grew into full-

blown adulation. It always bothered him that he was never able to share this passion with his great friend and patroness, Nadezhda von Meck. In 1878 he wrote to her, "Why do you not care for Mozart? In this respect our opinions differ, dear friend. I not only like Mozart, I idolize him. To me the most beautiful opera ever written is *Don Juan*. You, who possess such a fine musical taste, must surely love this pure and ideal artist . . ." At this point, Tchaikovsky—almost as if to refute Berlioz—goes into a detailed description of Donna Anna as "the most superb and wonderful human presentation ever depicted in music."

Von Meck responded, "I am astounded, Peter Ilyich, that the man who wrote such an amazingly beautiful thing as the first movement of the Fourth Symphony, could admire that epicurean, Mozart. Tell me, would the soul of a criminal shudder in listening to Mozart's music? Not a bit; on the con-

trary, in it he would find himself justified. But hearing yours, he would break down. Do you realize what that means? My God, it is not something to be explained in words. Indeed, how can one compare you with Mozart?"

Tchaikovsky replied, "You say that my worship for Mozart is quite contrary to my musical nature. But perhaps it is just because—being a child of my day—I feel broken and spiritually out of joint, that I find consolation and rest in Mozart's music, wherein he gives expression to that joy of life which was part of his sane and wholesome temperament, not yet undermined by reflection."

Two years later, Tchaikovsky wrote to von Meck after attending a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*, "How thankful I am that the circumstances of my musical career have not changed by a hair's breadth the charm Mozart exercises for me! You would not believe, dear friend, what wonderful feelings come over me when I give myself up to his music. It is something quite different from the stressful delight awakened in me by Beethoven, Schumann, or Chopin."

Ultimately, however, Tchaikovsky had to resign himself to the fact that his "beloved friend" would never appreciate the music that meant so much to him. At one point he wrote to her, "Perhaps it is foolish of me to expect those who are dear to me to feel towards Mozart as I do. But if I could do anything to change your opinion—it would make me very happy." Perhaps he was merely trying to massage her ego when he wrote, "When we discuss music, for God's sake, dear friend, don't think I set myself upon the artist's pedestal and enjoy only my own opinions! . . . Often, you and I do not agree, for example, about Mozart. But what does it matter? Many authoritative musicians share your opinion there."

In reality, Tchaikovsky was not so willing to abandon the cause of Mozart. Writing in his diary on September 20, 1886, he confides, "Probably after my death it will not be uninteresting to know what were my musical predilections and prejudices, especially since I seldom gave opinions in verbal conversation . . . I shall start with Beethoven, whom it is usual to praise unconditionally and whom it is commanded to worship as though he were a god. And so what is Beethoven to me?"

"I bow before the greatness of some of his works—but I do not love Bee-

thoven. My attitude toward him reminds me of what I experienced in childhood toward the god Jehovah . . . And if Beethoven occupies a place in my heart analogous to the God Jehovah, then Mozart I love as the musical Christ. Incidentally, he lived almost as long as Christ. I think that there is nothing sacrilegious in this comparison. Mozart was a being so angelic, so childlike, so pure; his music is so full of unapproachable, divine beauty, that if anyone could be named with Christ, then it is he.

"Speaking of Beethoven, I come to Mozart. According to my deep conviction, Mozart is the highest, the culminating point that *beauty* has attained in the sphere of music. No one has made me weep, has made me tremble with rapture, from the consciousness of my nearness to *that something* which we call the *ideal*, as he has done . . . In Mozart I love *everything*, for we love *everything* in a person, whom we love truly . . . Of course, loving everything in Mozart, I shall not start asserting that every insignificant work of his is a *chef-d'oeuvre*. Yes! I know that none of his sonatas, for example, is a great work, and *still* I love every one of his sonatas because it is *his*, because this musical Christ imprinted it with his serene touch."

It is somewhat surprising to find Tchaikovsky deifying Mozart to such an extent, while simultaneously denigrating a significant portion of his output—the piano sonatas. Yet here Tchaikovsky was far from alone. Canadian pianist Glenn Gould, who recorded all of the Mozart sonatas, expressed actual contempt for them: "I simply couldn't understand how my teachers, and other presumably sane adults of my acquaintance, could count these pieces among the great musical treasures of Western man . . . One never gets the feeling that any two [of Haydn's sonatas] are cut from the same cookie stamp. I do get that feeling in Mozart, I'm afraid. I get the feeling that once he hit his stride, they're *all* cut from the same cookie stamp."

Gould, a bona fide eccentric, seemed to take special delight in shocking his auditors with damning evaluations of Mozart—one of the worst was, "Mozart was a bad composer who died too late rather than too early"—so we can easily dismiss what he described as his "century-long blind spot approximately demarcated by *The Art of the Fugue* on one side and *Tristan* on the other." What is



Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, 1840-1893. The photo was dedicated to his patroness, Mme. Nadezhda Filaretovna von Meck.

surprising is to find that his low appraisal of the sonatas was shared by the composers Edward MacDowell (1861-1908) and Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953). The latter commented, "The Mozart, Schubert and Chopin she [his piano teacher] insisted on my playing didn't seem to appeal to me. I was too preoccupied by the search for a new harmonic idiom to understand how anyone could waste his time over Mozart . . . Nothing but I, IV and V!" [a reference to what Prokofiev considered Mozart's limited harmonic palette]. His earlier colleague was less specific about what he didn't like about them: "It is time to cast aside this shibboleth of printer's ink and paper and look the thing itself straight in the face. It is a fact that Mozart's sonatas are compositions entirely unworthy of the author of *The Magic Flute*, or of any composer with pretensions to anything beyond mediocrity."

The operas were not without their detractors, too, although more often it was the libretto, not the music, that was criticized. Even the devout Tchaikovsky said of *Die Zauberflöte*, "Never was so senselessly stupid a subject set to such captivating music." Grieg came to the work's defense: "When I hear people exclaim, 'Yes, but the wretched text!' I answer, 'Very true; but do you not understand that the text is recomposed by the music, ennobled by it, and raised high above triviality?' If music did not possess this capacity, many of its greatest masterworks would be entirely unpalatable . . . he who attends an operatic performance with a predominating literary interest runs the risk of losing the most inspired moments."

Wagner seems to have had no problems with Mozart's fairy tale *Singspiel*, which he said "stands solitary and assignable to no particular age whatsoever."



Edvard Grieg, 1843-1907. The photo was dedicated to Tchaikovsky.



Robert Schumann, 1810-1856.

Here the eternal and temporary meet for every age and people." Beethoven, curiously, praised *Zauberflöte* at the expense of another Mozart masterpiece: "*The Magic Flute* remains Mozart's greatest work, for only in this did he show himself to be a German master. *Don Giovanni* is still cut to the Italian pattern, entirely so, and besides, Art, which is sacred, should never be debased in the service of so scandalous a subject!" This is highly reminiscent of Wagner's and Berlioz's early antipathy, with the same anti-Italian bias.

A good part of the obstacle to enjoying Mozart's works in the 19th century was due to poor performances, often in severely distorted arrangements. Berlioz wrote in his *Memoirs*, "I felt the warmest admiration for the religious grandeur of *The Magic Flute*, though I had only heard it in its travestied form as *The Mysteries of Isis*, and it was not until afterwards that I was able to compare the original score in the Conservatoire library with the wretched French *pot-pourri* played at the Opera. As I first heard the works of this great composer under such disadvantageous circumstances, it was only many years later that I was able to appreciate their charm and suave perfection."

Grieg confirmed that performances

of Mozart's operas tended to be short-changed at most opera houses, particularly those that emphasized the German romantic repertoire: "... the messieurs Wagnerites would do well to whisper softly when they talk about ignoring Mozart. This ignoring would be too ridiculous to consider, were it not that so many of the best operatic conductors of our time are one-sided Wagnerians. How often have I heard in Germany perfect performances of Wagner's music-dramas under the direction of the same conductors who huddle a Mozart opera in a workaday manner! Nay, here and there these operas are even entrusted to second-rate conductors, the chief being reserved for Wagner. Under such circumstances it is asking too much to expect to come away from a Mozart performance with an impression corresponding even approximately to the value of the opera ... If our generation acts as if it had outgrown Mozart, we find here the main secret of that attitude. If a Wagner opera were done as negligently as Mozart's often are, not only musically but scenically, we should see strange things ..."

On the subject of romantic composers' notions of Mozart, Grieg brings us full circle by actually comparing

Mozart and Wagner: "Both of these masters won immortality with their operas. Both threw themselves with all the enthusiasm of youth into this branch of art. Wagner's experience, acquired by early activity as a conductor, has its counterpart in the strict training Mozart received through his travels, begun in childhood as a musician. The result in each case is clearness. Both these musicians are from the outset complete masters of the complicated apparatus required for the writing of an opera—an apparatus most composers learn to control only by long and laborious effort, with hard struggles and disappointments ..."

We can wonder what Mozart's reputation will be in another 200 years. Would he have cared? Grieg gives us a clue, putting his opinion into the mouth of the master: "Mozart stands before us like an embodiment of childish joy in life, amiable benevolence, and unpretentiousness ... Could he look down to us, he would surely say: 'Ye modern masters, why all this commotion? Why clothe yourselves with this mail of outward dignity? It does nothing for your art; it merely kills genuine human feeling, which is the real salt of art.'" ■

Putting It Together

Continued from page 49

significant departure from his concept as he had worked it out in Berlin. There was news, bad news, for Don Alfonso. As the others—first Despina, realizing that she too had been taken in, then the couples (now individuals)—began breaking free from Don Alfonso's previously unchallenged control, Kupfer, in the heat of the moment, reconceived Alfonso's response. "You are more and more nervous," he shouted, addressing an alert (and agog) Dale Travis. "The whole conception of your life is breaking down in this moment." At that moment, "V'ingannai," the passage in which Alfonso admits to his deceit and attempts to get the others to laugh it off with him, the deeply uneasy laughter is Alfonso's alone.

The attention of one and all riveted on him, Kupfer plunged into a spontaneous meditation on the tiny interlude in the music, when its color shifts from frenzied furor to a deceptively upbeat concluding tutti. "It is a bitter moment," Kupfer reported in an all-points bulletin from the land of artistic discovery. "We want our dreams *and* the truth."

In a final retake, again without stops, echoes of Molly Bloom's reverie on the demon of the erotic filled Nourse Auditorium as Kupfer shouted, "YES," and again "YES." ■



Fiordiligi and Dorabella (Susan Patterson, Judith Forst) work on their reactions to "poisoned" "strangers" (Deon van der Walt, James Michael McGuire).

James Michael McGuire and Judith Forst enact Guglielmo and Dorabella's confrontation.



California Sparkling Wines: *They've Come of Age*

By ROBERT FINIGAN

Ever since Dom Perignon's discoveries in the 17th century, Champagne has rightfully enjoyed its unique image as the world's most elegant wine. The mind boggles at the numbers of romances (and ships) launched, weddings and anniversaries celebrated, New Years welcomed in over glasses and bottles of French bubbly.

Naturally, a product with the romance and magic associated with Champagne would be expected to spawn imitators, and there have been and are many. Despite the worthiness of some of these efforts, they are not *Champagne* for the simplest of reasons: they weren't made in the Champagne district of France, a comparatively small wine-growing district north of Paris. Beyond its precise geographical definition, Champagne imposes on its vintners some of the strictest grape-growing and wine-making regulations to be found in France or anywhere else. These governmental rules cover all aspects of production, from vineyard sites to allowed grape varieties to yields to winemaking procedure specified in the most exquisite detail, the sum total being known as the *méthode champenoise*.

California vintners, historically inspired by European models, until recently favored European names for

their American wines, as if to give them an extra boost of prestige. We have seen innumerable examples of "claret," "burgundy" and "chablis" with nothing but their color to associate them even vaguely with the French wines whose names they co-opted. The 1980s saw most producers with an orientation toward quality drop these so-called generic descriptors in favor of terminology such as "white table wine," a choice not only more appropriate but also reflective of a growing sense of confidence that the California product didn't need reliance on a European name to prove its excellence.

The same phenomenon became evident in California sparkling wines. Breezily called "champagne" both before and after Prohibition, such products were and are made from any grapes the producer chooses, the bubbles created by anything from quick-method bulk fermentation in huge tanks to careful, extended *méthode champenoise* secondary fermentation in the very bottle in which the wine is eventually sold. As one would expect, the bulk process saves a tremendous amount of labor and therefore money, and the wines can be sold at low prices. But they are by no means Champagne with that all-important capital "C," despite the label language the govern-

ment permissively has long allowed.

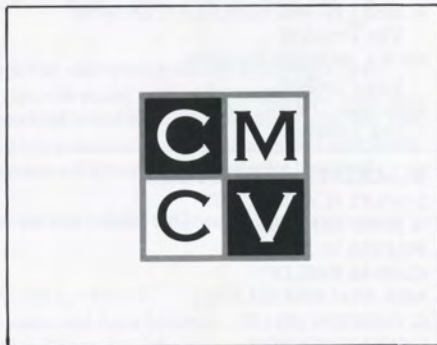
And for that matter, neither are their distant cousins made according to strict adherence to the *méthode champenoise*. They too are California sparkling wines, but most of them choose to call themselves just that, since they are proud of their individuality and opt away from the specific term "Champagne" in the same way that a producer of top-flight California Cabernet Sauvignon would never think of labeling his wine "California Bordeaux."

The trouble is that consumers tend to gravitate toward the term "champagne," whatever the California product may offer in terms of composition and method of production, because its cachet is more immediate than that of the more correct term "sparkling wine." What the consumer doesn't realize, and what governmental regulation doesn't address, is that buying a domestic product labeled "champagne" represents the classic pig in a poke: the choice might be satisfying if the producer is serious, disappointing if not, with price not always a reliable guide.

With this reality in mind, a group of California's best sparkling-wine producers decided to make 1990 their year to make the situation more clear. Banding together to form the CM/VC ("classic

method, classic varieties") Society, these nine wineries (none of which use "champagne" on the label) established their own standards, which go well beyond those imposed by governmental edict and are closer in spirit to those operative in Champagne. Member wineries Culbertson, Domaine Carneros, Domaine Chandon, Maison Deutz, Mumm Napa Valley, Piper Sonoma, Roederer Estate, Scharffenberger and Shadow Creek huddled for months in determination of what their mutually agreed-on criteria would be.

CM/CV members must, first of all, use only the classic grapes of Champagne—Pinot Noir, chardonnay, Pinot Meunier and Pinot Blanc (in a minor role). The fruit must come from the coolest growing regions as defined in the time-honored UC-Davis climate map-



ping scheme, principally from Regions I and II, with no more than 20% from Region III, still temperate indeed by table-wine standards. Yields per ton and even the types of gentle presses allowed are all specified, as is a year's minimum aging "on the yeast" during secondary fermentation, a standard routinely

exceeded in most CM/CV wines. The Society has also adopted definitions for *dosage*, or sugar content, in finished wines, so that the consumer will know accurately the nature of, say, a "Brut" versus an "Extra Dry" when purchasing a CM/CV product.

CM/CV members span California, from Roederer Estate and Scharffenberger in Mendocino County to Culbertson in southern but cool Temecula. It wouldn't be fair to say that CM/CV wines are the only well made *méthode champenoise* sparkling wines in the state. But just as the founders of "Gallo Nero" in the 1920s achieved for Chianti Classico the recognition the best of its wines deserved, so has the CM/CV Society committed itself to crafting sparkling wines at parity with the finest *méthode champenoise* bottlings in the world. ■



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San Francisco Opera is honored to acknowledge those individuals who, with special generosity and foresight, have included San Francisco Opera in their estate plans. By arranging to provide support to the endowment through bequests, charitable remainder trusts, the San Francisco Opera Pooled Income Fund, named funds and other planned gifts, Bel Canto Society members enable the Company to plan far into the future. At the same time, these gifts allow the Bel Canto Society member, during his or her lifetime, to make a statement of support that will ultimately become a lasting legacy to the Company.

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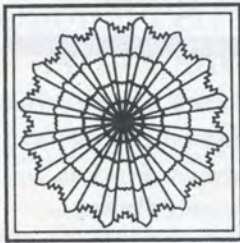
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If you would like to learn more about the Pooled Income Fund, please contact:

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OPERA



Corporate Council

Benefits & Privileges

The Corporate Council is an exclusive group of corporate supporters who invest in San Francisco Opera—and receive the many wonderful benefits associated with this support. Through their generosity, companies have enjoyed numerous benefits for their employees, distinguished customers and other corporate V.I.P.s.

Leadership Circle (\$50,000 and above)

- V.I.P. Ticket Privileges with highest priority seating for all opera performances and special events
- Recognition in all publicity and advertising of your sponsored production*
- Exclusive invitation to post-performance Cast Party with Opera artists*
- Special recognition and unique season memento at Annual Awards Event
- Invitation from the General Director for an evening of opera in his private box
- Exclusive box seating for twenty of your corporation's most valued customers and employees at the Leadership Circle Working Rehearsal
- *All privileges and benefits which follow:*

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- V.I.P. Ticket Privileges with priority seating for all opera performances and special events
- Feature article with photographs highlighting your corporation's support in the *San Francisco Opera News*, sent to over 15,000 patrons
- Private luncheon with Opera Association Board officers
- *All privileges and benefits which follow:*

Silver Circle (\$10,000 to \$24,999)

- Opportunity to participate in Corporate Employee Discount Ticket Program for reduced single ticket prices to selected opera performances
- Four complimentary tickets to an opera in priority seating area
- Opportunity for a private concert featuring acclaimed Opera Center singers for your Board meeting, party, or special event
- *All privileges and benefits which follow:*

Corporate Benefactor (\$5,000 to \$9,999)

- Invitation to a special donor event with the General Director and Opera artists in an exclusive location
- Recognition in all publicity and advertising prior to your sponsored opera performance or event*
- As a production or performance sponsor, your corporation's name on recognition signage displays in the War Memorial Opera House Lobby*

- Your corporate name on handbills of sponsored performances*
- Framed Opera Season Program Magazine cover and program page of your sponsored opera signed by a renowned singer or conductor*
- *All privileges and benefits which follow:*

Corporate Sponsor (\$3,000 to \$4,999)

- Free reserved parking at the Performing Arts Garage for any opera performance or subscription series
- *All privileges and benefits which follow:*

Corporate Founder (\$2,000 to \$2,999)

- Use of Corporate Council Ticket Service, which includes a private phone line for special assistance in purchasing tickets to upcoming operas
- Use of Corporate Council Membership Services private phone line
- Opportunity to participate in Corporate Employee Subscription Discount Program
- Personalized backstage tours upon request for your employees and special guests
- Invitation to exclusive special events with Opera artists, Board members and management
- Listing in the Corporate Council section of Season Book and every Season Program Magazine, reaching more than 150,000 patrons
- Invitation to the Annual Awards Event
- Preferred seating for all open rehearsals
- Invitation to Corporate Council Members' Working Rehearsal and Reception
- Opportunity to purchase reserved parking at the Performing Arts Garage for any opera performance or your subscription series
- Invitation to two V.I.P. tours of the War Memorial Opera House stage, Scenery Shop, Costume Shop, or Wig and Make-Up Department for corporate employees and special guests

**denotes exclusive benefits for corporate sponsors of productions, performances or events*

Corporate Council



San Francisco Opera appreciates the generous support of the following businesses whose leadership contributions made for Performance Years 1990 and 1991 (recorded February 1, 1990 through April 15, 1991) 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.

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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) 565-6416.

GUILD MEMBER \$30-\$59

- Invitation to Opera Insights
- San Francisco Opera Newsletter
- San Francisco Opera Guild Season Book
- San Francisco Opera Magazine (preview issue)
- Reservation priority and discount tickets to Opera House backstage group tours
- Advance notice of special events and ticket availability

PATRON \$60-\$99

All of the above, plus

- Invitation to observe a technical demonstration

SUPPORTING PATRON \$100-\$199

All of the above, plus

- Invitation to a working rehearsal

SUSTAINING PATRON \$200-\$299

All of the above, plus

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



Medallion Society

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

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

Further privileges:

- Personalized ticket service using the Medallion Society phone number
- Opportunity to purchase reserved parking at the Performing Arts Center Garage for your subscription series
- Invitation to Medallion Society Awards Luncheon
- Invitation to the Medallion Society Members' Working Rehearsal and Reception
- Invitations to two guided tours to places such as Opera Scene Shop, Costume Shop, Wig and Make-up Department, etc.
- Personalized backstage tours upon request
- Listing of your name in special Medallion Society section of all Opera performance magazines
- Preferred seating for all open rehearsals

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

Further privileges:

- Free reserved parking at the Performing Arts Center Garage for your subscription series
- Increased ticket priority, subject to availability

VOTING MEMBER \$300-\$499

All of the above, plus

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

SUPPORTING MEMBER \$500-\$999

All of the above, plus

- Invitation to a third working rehearsal
- Listing of your name in performance magazines

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

All of the above, plus

- Invitation to a fourth working rehearsal
- Invitation to a lecture and an additional working rehearsal with supper

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Further privileges:

- Invitation to a special donor event with the General Director and Opera artists
- Increased ticket priority, subject to availability

SILVER CIRCLE \$10,000-\$24,999

Further privileges:

- Facilitation of operatic recital for a business or private function (upon request)
- Increased ticket priority, subject to availability

GOLD CIRCLE \$25,000-\$49,999

Further privileges:

- Private discussion meeting with the General Director, Board Chairman and President
- Opportunity to follow the stages of the production of an opera
- Increased ticket priority, subject to availability

MEDICI CIRCLE \$50,000 and above

Further privileges:

- Individualized benefits as appropriate
- Highest priority in all patron privileges and benefits, subject to availability

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



Medallion Society

San Francisco Opera gratefully acknowledges members of the Medallion Society who have made contributions for Performance Years 1990 and 1991 (recorded February 1, 1990 through April 15, 1991).

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1991 Summer Schedule

Showcase

Sunday, June 30 2 p.m.
 Mozart, *La Finta Giardiniera*
 (in English)
 William Vendice, conductor
 Albert Takazauckas, stage director
 John Wilson, set designer
 Sigmund Stern Grove,
 San Francisco
 19th Avenue at Sloat Boulevard
 (Free admission)
 Presented as part of
 "Mozart & His Time,"
 a San Francisco Festival, 1991.

Merola Opera Program

Sunday, July 14 2 p.m.
 Smetana, *The Bartered Bride*
 (in English)
 Patrick Summers, conductor
 Frans Boerlage, stage director
 Jay Kotcher, set designer
 Sigmund Stern Grove,
 San Francisco
 19th Avenue at Sloat Boulevard
 (Free admission)

Friday, August 9 7 p.m.

(preview)
Saturday, August 10 3:30 p.m.
Sunday, August 11 3:30 p.m.
 Verdi, *La Traviata*
 (in Italian)
 William Vendice, conductor
 Linda Browsky, stage director
 Villa Montalvo, Saratoga
 Ticket information: (415) 565-6492

Sunday, August 18 7 p.m.

1991 Grand Finals
 Willie A. Waters, conductor
 War Memorial Opera House
 Ticket information: (415) 565-6492

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Sennheiser Listening Devices

In order to increase the enjoyment of opera for hearing-impaired members of the audience, the War Memorial Opera House has installed a Sennheiser Listening System. Wireless headphones and induction devices (adaptable to hearing aids) are available in the coat check room at the south end of the main lobby. There is no charge, but an ID deposit, such as a driver's license or major credit card, is required.

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, and from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Sundays on the following dates:

- Thursday, June 13
- Wednesday, June 19
- Sunday, June 23
- Sunday, June 30

Tickets are \$5. Advance reservations required. For further information, please call (415) 565-6433.

If You Drive To The Opera . . .

. . . and park in the Performing Arts Garage, remember that you can avoid some of the traffic congestion by using the Gough Street entrance to the facility (between Fulton and Grove).

Special service for SFO patrons! Many operagoers who live in the northern section of San Francisco are regular patrons of the Municipal Railway special "Opera Bus." This bus is added to Muni's north-bound 47 line following all evening performances of the Opera and all Sunday matinees. Look for the "47 Special," after each performance in the bus zone at Van Ness Avenue and Grove Street—across Van Ness from the Opera House. Its route is: North on Van Ness to Chestnut, left to Divisadero and left to Union. It continues on Union over Russian Hill to Columbus, then left to Powell—then right to the end of the line at North Point.

Food Service The lower lounge in the Opera House is open one and one-half hours prior to curtain time for hot buffet service. Patrons arriving before the front doors open will be admitted at the carriage entrance.

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

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

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

Ticket Information San Francisco Opera Box Office, Lobby, War Memorial Opera House, Van Ness at Grove; open 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. Monday through Saturday. 10 A.M. through first intermission on all performance days. Phone charge (415) 864-3330 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. Monday through Saturday (VISA and MasterCard). Tickets are also available on a limited basis through BASS and STBS outlets.

Unused Tickets Subscribers who find they cannot use their tickets may make a worthwhile contribution to the San Francisco Opera by returning the tickets they will be unable to use to the Opera Box Office or by telephoning (415) 864-3330, 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. or (415) 565-6485, 6 P.M. to ten minutes before curtain. The value of the returned tickets is tax deductible for the subscriber. If the tickets are re-sold by the Box Office, the proceeds will be used to benefit the San Francisco Opera. However, donated tickets are not considered a fund drive contribution and are not applied toward member benefits.

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

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

For **Lost and Found** information, inquire at check room No. 3 or call (415) 621-6600, 8:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. Monday through Friday.

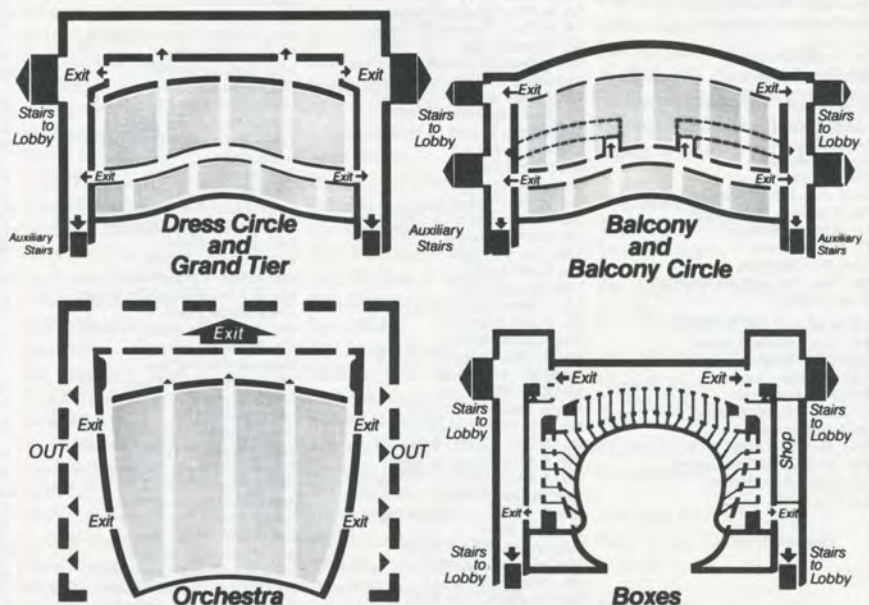
For the safety and comfort of our audience all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at the Opera House cloakrooms.

Opera glasses and Sennheiser listening devices are available in the lobby.

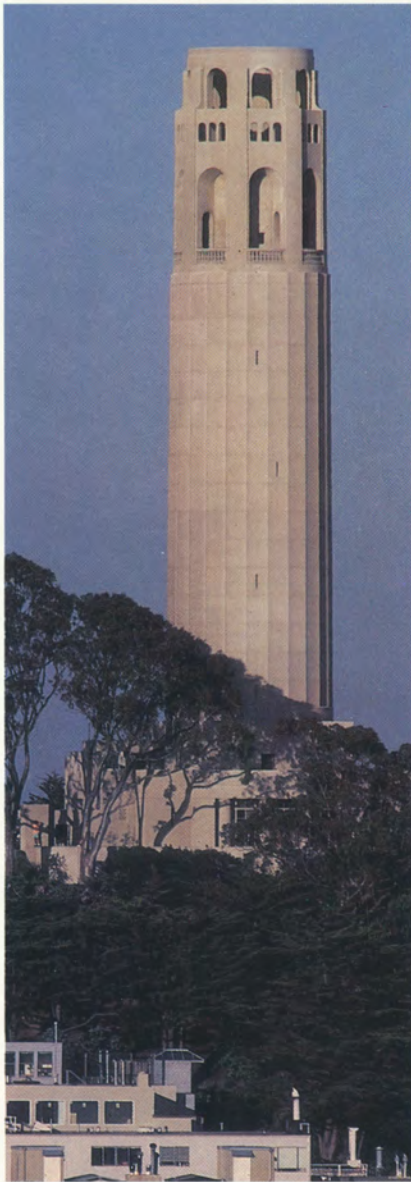
No cameras or tape recorders are permitted in the Opera House. Children of any age attending a performance must have a ticket.

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

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



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



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