

Daphne

1992

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LOTFI MANSOURI, *General Director*

Donald C. Runnicles, *Music Director*

presents

DAPHNE

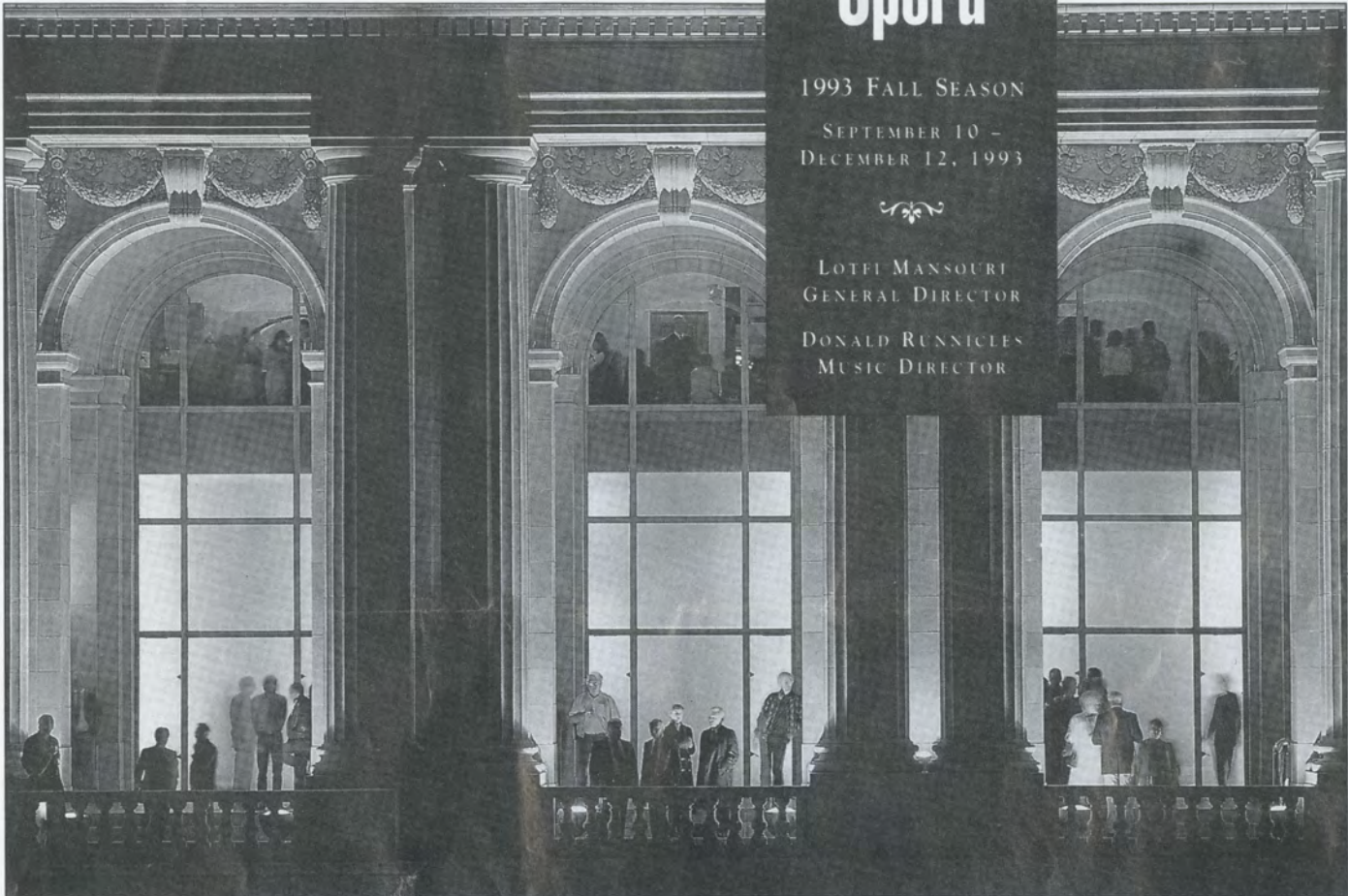
by RICHARD STRAUSS



A CELEBRATION OF STRAUSS

Matthew Epstein, *Artistic Consultant*

WAR MEMORIAL OPERA HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO
JUNE 30, 1993 AT 8 P.M., JULY 2, 1993 AT 8 P.M.



San Francisco Opera

1993 FALL SEASON

SEPTEMBER 10 -
DECEMBER 12, 1993



LOTFI MANSOURI
GENERAL DIRECTOR

DONALD RUNNICES
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Photo: Kit Morris

I VESPRI SICILIANI, Giuseppe Verdi • DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT, Gaetano Donizetti •

LA BOHÈME, Giacomo Puccini • TURANDOT, Giacomo Puccini •

THE MAKROPULOS CASE, Leoš Janáček •

DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG, Richard Wagner •

LA CLEMENZA DI TITO, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart • I PURITANI, Vincenzo Bellini •

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Bucolic tragedy in one act by RICHARD STRAUSS

Libretto by JOSEPH GREGOR

(By arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., publisher and copyright owner)

Daphne

(in German)

Conductor

Andrew Davis*

Stage Director

Sandra Bernhard

Lighting Designer

Joan Arhelger

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Assistant to Maestro Davis

Patrick Summers

Musical Preparation

Joyce Fieldsend

Bryndon Hassman

Ernest Fredric Knell

Philip Eisenberg

Prompter

Philip Eisenberg

Stage Manager

Theresa Ganley

First performance:

Dresden, October 15, 1938

CAST

First shepherd Earle Patriarco+

Second shepherd James Caputo+

Third shepherd Magnus Baldvinsson+

Fourth shepherd Chester Patton+

Daphne Janice Watson**

Leukippos Hong-Shen Li

Gaea Gweneth Bean*

First maid Man-Hua Gao+

Second maid Angela Randell

Peneios Franz Hawlata

Apollo Jon Fredric West

Shepherds, townspeople

**United States opera debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

+1993 Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: Antiquity; Greece, near Mount Olympus

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera.

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

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

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, JULY 2 AT 8:00

The performance will last approximately one hour and forty minutes without intermission.

*Delta is the official airline of San Francisco Opera • Lexus is the official automotive sponsor of San Francisco Opera
Kawai is the official piano of the San Francisco Opera. Pianos provided and serviced by R. Kassman.*

Daphne / Synopsis

Four shepherds on their return from the pastures discuss the forthcoming feast in honor of Dionysus, which traditionally celebrates the god and fertility of nature. Looking forward to the festivities, they are joined by other shepherds. As they depart, the shepherds sing a hymn to the dying day.

Left alone, Daphne reveals her feeling of kinship with all of nature, but dreads the forthcoming Dionysian abandon as a coarse affair which will interfere with the delicate world of natural beauty. Daphne addresses the tree from which she seeks shelter, sharing with it her love of the sun as the source of life.

Having come upon Daphne unexpectedly, the shepherd Leukippos, Daphne's friend since childhood, reveals his presence, feeling slighted that she shows more affection for the tree than for him. He tells Daphne how much he loves her and tries to embrace her. She frees herself and refuses to accompany him to the festival, confirming that her affection for him will never end but will always remain sisterly. Leukippos leaves.

Daphne's mother, Gaea, has observed their struggle and comes to bid her daughter to dress for the celebration. She explains that it is the will of the gods that Daphne open her heart to love, but Daphne will attend the feast only if she may remain in the clothes she is wearing. As they depart, two maids comment on the jewelry and clothing that Daphne has scorned. Leukippos, overhearing them, feels that they are making fun of him since he too has been rejected by Daphne. Taking pity on him, the maids determine to help Leukippos win Daphne's love by dressing him up in the clothes she has spurned.

Peneios, Daphne's father, appears, accompanied by Gaea and the shepherds. He points to the strange glow around Mount Olympus that gives him a premonition that the gods will return among men. He reminds everyone that he was once a god himself. In spite of protests from the shepherds, who fear the wrath of the gods, Peneios suggests they prepare a great feast to welcome Apollo. He looks forward to sharing a meal with his former brothers, and bursts into laughter.

The sound of his laughter reverberates like an echo as Apollo, disguised as a herdsman, suddenly appears and greets the company. He tells them that the smells of the feast had caused his cattle to run wild, and that he has only now managed to round them up. Gaea and the shepherds tease Peneios that, instead of a god, a mere herdsman has been attracted to the feast. Peneios ignores their taunts and sends Gaea to find Daphne, who is to look after the stranger. All depart in laughter, leaving Apollo alone. He berates himself for his act of deception, but his self-reproach is soon forgotten when Daphne appears.

Amazed at her beauty and her resemblance to Artemis, he calls her "sister" and asks to serve rather than be served. Daphne is taken aback, but charmed by being called sister. She washes his hands and puts a cloak around his shoulders, but is fearful when she sees a strange light emanating from the mantle. To allay her fears, Apollo explains that he heard her paean at sundown. The god alludes to, but does not actually reveal, his true identity, and quotes phrases from Daphne's opening monologue. Daphne is moved that he seems able to read her mind and, sensing that the stranger is a kindred spirit of light and the sun, sinks into his arms with childlike trust and affection. As

Apollo declares his love, Daphne embraces him, ecstatically exclaiming "brother. . . brother." The embrace becomes a kiss to which the chaste Daphne recoils in confusion: her "brother" now talks of love. Apollo once again repeats his vows of love and reminds her of the feast. But Daphne still finds the feast, Leukippos, the world, and especially Apollo, strange and foreign to her.

A procession, led by Peneios and Gaea, approaches. The feast starts as the shepherds praise Dionysus for the gift of wine. As the festivities continue, the women are warned to beware of demons inspired by wine. The coupling begins.

Leukippos, who is in disguise among the women, offers Daphne a drink which Gaea urges her to accept. Daphne, seeing in the disguised Leukippos a sisterly image of herself, joins him in the festivities.

Suddenly, the feast is interrupted by the angry Apollo, who denounces Leukippos's deception. The shepherds are enraged by the disruption of their feast and demand from the stranger a sign of his power. To answer them, Apollo commands the heavens to rumble with thunder. Peneios, Gaea, the shepherds and the maids all run off to tend to the bolting herds.

Apollo again scolds Leukippos for his deception and attempted seduction of Daphne. Leukippos confesses his deceit but, under the influence of Dionysus, passionately pleads for Daphne's love. Daphne, however, is saddened by the deception and hides her face in grief. Leukippos and Daphne demand that the herdsman in turn reveal his true identity.

Apollo reluctantly agrees with their demands and admits that he is the sun god. Daphne is moved to love and fear by this revelation, but Leukippos provokes the god by calling him a liar. Both Apollo and Leukippos plead with Daphne: Apollo asks her to follow him and Leukippos asks for shelter from the god's wrath. As the dispute escalates, Daphne refuses to commit herself to either suitor. Apollo summons his power and slays Leukippos.

Daphne laments his death, blaming herself because she turned away from her childhood friend and embraced an immortal instead. She renounces all that she holds dearest, the things of nature, in order to dedicate them to Leukippos as a death offering. She promises to remain by Leukippos's grave until the gods call for her.

Apollo is moved by Daphne's sorrow and her sincerity of emotion. Calling the gods of Olympus to witness, he proclaims himself guilty for the death of Leukippos and the suffering of Daphne, and asks Dionysus to take Leukippos to Olympus. In his final plea, Apollo asks his father Zeus to grant Daphne immortality by changing her into a laurel tree so that she may forever live among her beloved companions in the world of nature. He asks that he be given Daphne as a priestess, and proclaims that her laurel branches will henceforth serve as a crown for the most noble of mortals.

As Apollo vanishes, Daphne tries to run away but is suddenly held still, rooted to the spot as if by magic. She cries out to nature and to Apollo as her brothers and asks to be made a symbol of undying love. Slowly, she is transformed, and in her place stands a laurel tree. Daphne's voice is heard, wordlessly sounding from its branches.

ARTIST PROFILES

Acclaimed for her performances in opera and on the concert and recital stage, **Janice Watson** makes her United States opera debut in the title role of *Daphne*. Since her 1990 bow at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Musetta in *La Bohème* (a role she sang again for them last year), the British soprano's operatic career has flourished. Roles performed include Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Adèle in *Count Ory*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* and Musetta for the Welsh National Opera; Rosalinde for the English National Opera; Magda in *La Rondine* and the title role of *Manon Lescaut* for The Chelsea Opera Group; and The Woman in *Erwartung*, a performance which was filmed for Canadian television. Miss Watson's concert repertoire, performed with the major orchestras of Great Britain, Canada, Israel, the Netherlands and the U.S., includes the Bach *Passions*, *Christmas Oratorio* and *Magnificat*; Handel's *Messiah* and *Solomon*; Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* and *The Seasons*; Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and *Ninth Symphony*; Berlioz's *Les Nuits D'été*; Brahms's *Requiem*; Britten's *Les Illuminations*; Strauss's *Four Last Songs*; and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. In recital, she has been heard with The Songmakers' Almanac, and at the Purcell Room, St. John's Smith Square, Wigmore Hall, the Wexford Festival, the Royal Opera, and the Edinburgh International Festival, where she received awards for the "most outstanding musical performance." Future engagements include the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Arminda in *La Finta Giardiniera*, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Pamina for the Welsh National Opera, Opéra Bastille in Paris, and the Opéra de Lyon.

Contralto **Gweneth Bean** makes her San Francisco Opera debut singing the role of Gaea in *Daphne*. She made her Metropolitan Opera debut during the 1987-88 season as Dryade in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, repeating this role for a "Live from Lincoln Center" performance that was telecast in the U.S. and Europe. She has also appeared at the Met as Erda in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*, Mamma Lucia in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, as well as in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Parsifal*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Faust*, and *Götterdämmerung*. Additional engagements include *Roméo et Juliette* with the Washington Opera, *Faust* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for Dallas Opera, *Falstaff* at the Greater Miami Opera, *Suor Angelica* and *Violanta* with the Santa Fe Opera, in addition to *Eugene Onegin*, *Parsifal* and *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. A popular concert artist, she has sung with the symphonies of Chicago, Boston, and Philadelphia, among others, performing such works as Bruckner's *Te Deum*, Mahler's *Third Symphony*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, *Alexander Nevsky*, and Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*. She toured throughout Europe and the U.S. as a soloist with Leonard Bernstein conducting his own "Songfest" cycle, which was later telecast live from the White House. A native of Michigan, Miss Bean is an alumna of the Chicago Lyric Opera Center, and the recipient of grants from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation and the William Matheus Sullivan Foundation.

A 1992-93 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, soprano **Man-Hua Gao** sings the roles of a Slave in *Salome*, a Noble Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the First Maid in *Daphne*. Last year, she made her Company debut as Cleone in *Ermione*, appeared

as Ginevra in the Showcase production of *Ariodante*, and was seen as Adina in the student matinee performances of *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Born in China, she received her training at the Shanghai Conservatory and at the Boston University School of Music. In 1984, she won first place in the Beijing National Voice Competition, competing against singers from all 29 provinces. She was also a prizewinner at the International Belvedere Competition in Vienna, which led to performances with the Shanghai Symphony, Shanghai Philharmonic, Beijing Central Opera Orchestra, Budapest Philharmonic, and extensive tours to Canada, Japan, Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong. A winner of the New England Metropolitan Auditions, she has been a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center and a guest soloist at Carnegie Hall. As a participant in the 1990 Merola Opera Program, Miss Gao sang the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, repeating the role on Western Opera Theater's national tour. She returned to the Merola Program in 1991, winning the prestigious Schwabacher Family Award at the Grand Finals, and sang Violetta in Western Opera's national tour of *La Traviata*.

Soprano **Angela Randell** portrays a Noble Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier* and the Second Maid in *Daphne*. As a member of the 1987 Merola Opera Program, she performed the title role of *Suor Angelica*, and returned to the Program in 1989, appearing as Micaëla in *Carmen* for MOP as well as on Western Opera Theater's national tour. She made her Company debut in 1990 as Sister Dolcina in *Suor Angelica* and returned here in 1991 to sing the Fourth Maidservant in *Elektra*. Other roles performed include Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* at Wolf Trap

DAPHNE



JANICE WATSON



GWENETH BEAN



MAN-HUA GAO



ANGELA RANDELL



HONG-SHEN LI



JON FREDRIC WEST



FRANZHAWLATA

and Marguerite in *Faust* at the Mercury Theatre in New Zealand. Miss Randell sang in Ned Rorem's *Women's Voices* for the composer's 65th birthday celebration at Alice Tully Hall, where she also sang in the world premiere of David Baker's *Le Chat qui pêche*. Recent engagements include Micaëla in the New York City Opera's national tour of *Carmen*, Enrichetta in *I Puritani* for the Washington Concert Opera, her debut at the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. as a Flowermaiden in *Parsifal*, and a return to Wolf Trap as Corinna in *Il Viaggio a Reims* and Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*. A native of Cedar Falls, Iowa, she received her bachelor's degree in music from Northwestern University, and a Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School, where she was a member of the Juilliard Opera Center. She is the recipient of numerous awards including a Robert Jacobson Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation, a Richard F. Gold Career Grant from the Shoshana Foundation, and three Metropolitan Opera Study Grants.

Tenor **Hong-Shen Li** appears as an Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Leukippos in *Daphne*. A 1990 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, he made his Company debut in 1989 as Goro in *Madama Butterfly*. Since then, he has performed numerous times on the stage of the War Memorial, most notably as the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, Aufidio in *Lucio Silla*, Alfredo in the student matinee performances of *La Traviata*, Tebaldo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, and Pirro in *Ermione*. A native of the People's Republic of China, he received his initial training while studying under a five-year Highest Fellowship Scholarship at the Central Conservatory of Beijing. After studies at the Juilliard School, he became a member of the 1987 Merola Opera Program, performing the role of

Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, and returned to the Merola Program in 1988 to sing Lindoro in *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. During Western Opera Theater's 1988-89 tour he portrayed Goro in *Madama Butterfly* and, with the Opera Center Singers, sang Count Almaviva in the 1989 *Barber of Seville*. Recent engagements include his Metropolitan Opera debut in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Idreno in *Semiramide* and Nemorino in the student performances of *L'Elisir d'Amore* for the Dallas Opera, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* for the Washington Opera and the Stockton Symphony, and Elisero in *Mosè in Egitto* with the Israel Philharmonic. Li is a recipient of a 1990 George London/William Matheus Sullivan grant, and was a winner in the 1991 Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition.

Tenor **Jon Fredric West**, who made his 1990 San Francisco Opera debut as Giove in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, returns to portray another god, Apollo in the Company premiere of *Daphne*. His successes in the German, French and Italian repertoire have brought him to many of the world's great opera houses and orchestras. His appearances have included Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with the Michigan Opera Theatre, Vancouver Opera, Long Beach Opera and Washington Concert Opera; Apollo in *Daphne* at Carnegie Hall and with the Toronto Symphony; the Shepherd in the U.S. premiere of Szymanowski's *King Roger* at the Long Beach Opera; Waldemar in Schönberg's *Gurrelieder* in New York, Florence, Edinburgh and Munich; as well as Calaf in *Turandot*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Don José in *Carmen*, and Canio in *Pagliacci* with the New York City Opera. Operatic highlights from recent seasons include his debut at Milan's La Scala as Canio; a bow at the Metropolitan Opera as Luigi

in *Il Tabarro* (also broadcast nationally) with subsequent appearances at the Met as Samson in *Samson et Dalila*, Tikhon in *Katya Kabanova*, Erik in *Der Fliegende Holländer* and, last April, Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos*; his first Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* and his first performances of the title role of *Otello* at the Arizona Opera; Luigi in *Il Tabarro* at the Opéra de Nice; as well as Dimitri in *Boris Godunov* at the Teatro Municipal in Santiago, Chile. In concert, he has performed with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Boston Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony, London Symphony, Milan's RAI Symphony, and the Bavarian Radio Orchestra of Munich. He has recorded Beethoven's Ninth with the Milwaukee Symphony led by Zdenek Macal, and his appearance with the London Symphony as Jaromir in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Mlada* was videotaped and featured in the BBC Symphony's series *The Flight of the Firebird*. Originally from Dayton, Ohio, West was educated on full scholarship at the Bowling Green State University of Music, the Manhattan School of Music, and the Juilliard School's American Opera Center.

In his United States staged opera debut, **Franz Hawlata** sings the roles of the First Nazarene in *Salome* and Peneios in *Daphne*. The German bass-baritone received his musical training in Eichstätt and at the music academy in Munich where he studied under the direction of Hans Hotter, Ernst Haefliger and Erik Werba. After his 1986 operatic debut at Munich's Gärtnerplatztheater, he was a finalist in the 1987 Belvedere Competition in Vienna and was a soloist at the Bayreuth junior festival. He has been a member of the ensemble of the Komische Oper Berlin and

Gärtnerplatztheater since 1989. Hawlata's most recent appearances include Busoni's *Turandot* for the Opéra de Lyon, *Don Giovanni* in Munich, *Der Freischütz* at Washington Concert Opera (American debut), *Der Rosenkavalier* in Würzburg, *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Pretoria, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Dortmund, *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Toulouse, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Amsterdam. Future dates include *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Welsh National Opera and *Anna Bolena* for the Washington Opera. Beginning in 1994, Hawlata will be a principal artist at the Vienna State Opera, where he is scheduled to perform Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Kaspar in *Der Freischütz*, and Colline in *La Bohème*. He can be heard on a recent recording of *La Fanciulla del West* with the Munich Radio Orchestra led by Leonard Slatkin.

A 1993 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, baritone **Earle Patriarco** sings the roles of the Second Nazarene in *Salome*, a Servant in *Capriccio*, and the First Shepherd in *Daphne*. In his debut season with the Company last fall, he sang Lavitsky in *Boris Godunov*, the Alcalde in *La Forza del Destino*, Fouquier-Tinville in *Andrea Chénier*, and portrayed several roles in *Christophe Colomb*. The Southern California native earned his bachelor of music degree from Biola University and his master of music degree from the University of Southern California. In 1991, he was awarded the Grand Prize in the Glory of Mozart Competition in Toronto. He has performed with West Coast Opera as Silvio in *Pagliacci*, with the Los Angeles Concert Opera in *The Gypsy Baron*, with Marin Opera as Danilo in *The Merry Widow*, and has appeared at the 1991 Mozart Festival in Lugano, Switzerland. As a 1991 Merola Opera Pro-

gram participant, he sang the role of Giorgio Germont in *La Traviata*, a part he also sang on Western Opera Theater's national tour. Returning to the Merola Program last year, he appeared as Marcello in *La Bohème* and was awarded the Florence Bruce Award at the Grand Finals Concert. Earlier this year, Patriarco traveled to Japan to portray Marcello in the Opera Center's production of *La Bohème*.

A 1993 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, tenor **James Caputo** makes his Company debut singing three roles: an Innkeeper in *Der Rosenkavalier*, a Servant in *Capriccio*, and the Second Shepherd in *Daphne*. He began studying voice at age 13 and was accepted into the Manhattan School of Music four years later. Since then, he has sung in concert throughout his native Connecticut and made his professional operatic debut with the Schubert Opera Company as Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. He has also appeared with the Philadelphia Opera, and in 1991 was a winner in the Pavarotti Voice Competition. Caputo was a 1992 Merola Opera Program participant who most recently traveled to Japan to sing Rodolfo in the Opera Center's production of *Bohème*, and sang in concerts in Guam, Saipan and Pohnpei.

A 1992-93 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, bass **Magnus Baldwinsson** appears as the Second Soldier in *Salome*, a Servant in *Capriccio*, and the Third Shepherd in *Daphne*. He appeared with the Company for the first time last fall as the Jailer in *Tosca*, Chernikovsky and a Border Guard in *Boris Godunov*, Second Prisoner in *Fidelio*, and Dumas in *Andrea Chénier*. A native of Iceland, he studied at the Reykjavik School of Singing, and received his bachelor of education degree from Teachers University of Ice-

land. He completed his master of music degree at Indiana University, where his roles included Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*, Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Pluto in *Orfeo*, Bluebeard in *Bluebeard's Castle*, and Osmin in *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. He made his professional debut at Kentucky Opera as the First Nazarene in *Salome*. In addition to his operatic work, Baldwinsson has appeared as soloist with the Icelandic Symphony, Icelandic Chamber Orchestra and, as part of the Company's Rossini Celebration last summer, with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra in the *Petite Messe Solennelle*. A 1991 Merola Opera Program participant, his Opera Center credits include Kecal in *The Bartered Bride*, the King in Handel's *Ariodante* and Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata* on Western Opera Theater's 1991-92 national tour. He was awarded the Florence Bruce Award at the 1991 Merola Opera Program Grand Finals.

In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, bass-baritone **Chester Patton** performs the First Soldier in *Salome* and the Fourth Shepherd in *Daphne*. A 1993 Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, the native of Mississippi received his bachelor's degree from Jackson State University and was awarded a master's degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. He has appeared with West Bay Opera, Opera San Jose and Berkeley Contemporary Opera, and has performed such roles as Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Oroveso in *Norma*, and Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*. As a member of the 1992 Merola Opera Program, he sang the role of Colline in *La Bohème*, a part he repeated for Western Opera Theater's 1992-93 national tour. The young artist will be seen in several roles with the Company this fall.



EARLE PATRIARCO



JAMES CAPUTO



MAGNUS BALDVINSSON



CHESTER PATTON



ANDREW DAVIS



SANDRA BERNHARD



JOAN ARHELGER

Conductor **Andrew Davis** makes his San Francisco Opera debut with the dramatized concert performances of *Daphne* and the final performance of *Capriccio*. Conductor Laureate of the Toronto Symphony, he is also Music Director of the Glyndebourne Festival and Music Director of the BBC Symphony in London. Born in England, he studied at King's College Cambridge where he was an organ scholar from 1963 to 1967 and where his talent for conducting first became apparent. His international career began in 1973 with a tour of the Far East with the English Chamber Orchestra and the first of many engagements with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Since that time, Maestro Davis's conducting career has spanned several continents and has included engagements with the world's major orchestras. He has appeared at many of the leading international festivals including Edinburgh, Flanders and Berlin, and has been a regular visitor to the Glyndebourne Festival where he first conducted in 1973. Upon assuming the role of Music Director of the Toronto Symphony in 1975, he took the orchestra on annual visits to Carnegie Hall as well as on tours to Europe, Japan, China, the U.S. and throughout Canada. Particularly well known for his interpretations of the operas of Richard Strauss, Davis has led *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Paris Opera and at Covent Garden, *Salome* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Metropolitan Opera, and *Capriccio*, *Die Schweigsame Frau* and *Arabella* at Glyndebourne. Davis has numerous recordings to his credit including the award-winning *The Planets* and Handel's *Messiah* with the Toronto Symphony, Duruflé's *Requiem* (two Grand Prix du Disque awards), and Tippett's *The Mask of Time* with the BBC Symphony which received *Gramophone's* award for Best Contemporary Record of 1987. Four new discs featuring

the music of Elgar, Britten and Vaughan Williams are forthcoming. Recent guest conducting engagements include performances with the symphonies of Los Angeles, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dallas, Vienna, Frankfurt, Bamberg, Stockholm and Toronto.

Sandra Bernhard is the director of the staged concert performances of *Daphne*. Her previous mainstage assignments for San Francisco Opera have been the staged concert presentations of *Lucio Silla* and *Ermione*, as well as last year's student matinee performances of *L'Elisir d'Amore*. A member of the Company since 1990, she has served as Assistant Director for over 12 productions here, and is currently a coach and instructor of acting for the Merola Opera Program. In addition to her San Francisco Opera credits, she has directed productions for the Greater Miami Opera (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Virginia Opera (*The Medium*), and Opera Memphis (*Roméo et Juliette*), as well as her own works (*A Point of Departure*, *A Night in Berlin*, *Postage Due* and *Buffa Bus Stop*) in Chautauqua, Norfolk and Miami. A graduate of the University of Illinois, she has had additional teaching assignments at Utah Opera, Greater Miami Opera, Virginia Opera, Chautauqua Opera and Louisiana State University. Miss Bernhard will direct *La Bohème* for the Company this fall.

San Francisco Opera Associate Lighting Designer **Joan Arhelger** created the lighting schemes for *Daphne*. Since joining the Company in 1983, she has been responsible for lighting nearly 20 productions here, many of them SFO premieres. Last fall, she designed the lighting for the mainstage and student matinee production of *L'Elisir d'Amore*, as well as for *Fidelio* and *La Forza del Destino*. Her opera credits in lighting design include pro-

ductions for the San Diego Opera, Spoleto Festival U.S.A., Wolf Trap, and the opera companies of Louisville, Fort Worth, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Omaha, Seattle, Costa Mesa, Anchorage, and repertory seasons with the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Central City Opera. Her work has been seen locally in Bill Irwin's *In Regard of Flight* (featured on the PBS Great Performances series), and with numerous dance companies, including the Bay Area Dance Coalition's "Dance-makers '82" Festival in Herbst Theatre. A student of Gilbert Hemsley, Miss Arhelger served as assistant lighting designer for American presentations by the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, the Stuttgart Ballet, the Bolshoi Opera and the Berlin Opera. For five seasons she was the resident lighting assistant for Washington Opera at the Kennedy Center.

Daphne — An Introduction

By WILLIAM MANN

Hugo von Hofmannsthal's death in 1929, just after completing *Arabella* to Strauss's satisfaction, left the composer in despair of ever again finding a worthwhile librettist; some two years later this was miraculously alleviated by an introduction to Stefan Zweig, who wrote *Die Schweigsame Frau* for him (composed in 1932-35), and looked set to continue the collaboration with a series of attractive ideas for future operas. A poet of distinction, literary scholar and vivid biographer, less successful as a dramatist, but a ready learner with a fertile mind and, above all, a most sympathetic personality, Zweig seemed the perfect collaborator for Strauss, who counted himself lucky in finding such a librettist. For the Third Reich, however, Zweig was an impossible collaborator for Germany's greatest composer, being Jewish, and Strauss was told by the Ministry of Culture to look elsewhere. None of Zweig's suggested substitutes wakened any interest in Strauss, but eventually he accepted Joseph Gregor, a close friend of Zweig's (and earlier of Hofmannsthal's), a historian and cultural savant of great erudition, the archivist of the Austrian National Library and author of several important books, one of them on the history of opera.

Gregor was a reverential, malleable and infinitely industrious collaborator to Strauss, but not an inspired poet: he did not easily strike a happy middle ground between the high-flown and the bland in his verses. For the moment he was the best available substitute for Zweig, since the two friends were still in close, constant touch, though Zweig was now living in London. Gregor could and did take over responsibility for the text of *Friedenstag*, the one-act opera on which Zweig had been working with Strauss. Having completed it (in 1936), they needed a curtain-raiser, and Strauss accepted a scenario on the legend of Daphne who was loved by Apollo and transformed by him into a laurel-tree. Gregor's draft libretto of this had been read, corrected and approved by Zweig before it was sent to Strauss in September of 1935. Strauss was far from satisfied, and made Gregor revise at least twice, after consulting two trusted advisers, the director Lothar Wallenstein and the conductor Clemens Krauss. He persevered with Gregor as his collaborator in three operas — after *Friedenstag* and *Daphne* came *Die Liebe der Danae* — because he found him congenial company for cultural chitchat, and sincerely admired his knowledge. Of his literary ability Strauss always had doubts, and when he began work on his last opera, *Capriccio*, for a subject so close to his heart, he dropped Gregor and wrote the text himself with Krauss's assistance.

Gregor doubtless chose the Daphne story as an operatic subject because it had such a prominent place in the early history of opera — versions by Peri (1597/98), Marco da Gagliano (1608), Cavalli (1640) and Alessandro Scarlatti (1700) are perhaps the most famous — and he doubtless knew Hofmannsthal's dictum: "Let us compose mythological operas; they are ultimately the truest." He also may have sensed that the Daphne myth, with its resonances of mankind at one with nature, would appeal to Strauss, the Hellenophile and pantheist, though Gregor can hardly have realized that *Daphne* would turn out as the beginning of Strauss's last, most classical period. The young iconoclast of *Don Juan*, *Don Quixote*, *Salome* and *Elektra* had been moving towards a regenerated classicism since *Der Rosenkavalier* and, more particularly,



Richard Strauss frequently drew on classical themes for his inspiration. For *Daphne*, he was particularly influenced by Bernini's statue, Apollo and Daphne, which is located in Rome's Borghese Gallery.

Ariadne auf Naxos. *Die Ägyptische Helena* involved too many conflicting side-issues to give Strauss's neo-Hellenism free rein, though some scenes, animated as well as serene, do prefigure important passages in *Daphne*. Gregor's version of *Daphne* took him back to the very beginnings of Greek civilization as Strauss and his generation of classically educated humanists understood and venerated it. Strauss found the subject matter inspiring and liberating; out of it came the relaxed classicism of his late instrumental works and, sublimely, his *Four Last Songs* for soprano and orchestra, as well as two last operas, *Die Liebe der Danae* and *Capriccio*, each of them different in tone. Strauss's capacity for creative self-renewal remained extraordinary to his last day's work; the mixture was never dispensed "as before."

Gregor depicted a primitive civilization where gods repre-

sented the aspects of nature most important to mankind's chief needs. The gods were not yet so removed from their devotees that they did not walk among men; here indeed the earth-mother Gaea is married to the fisherman Peneios (often spelled Peneus or Peneius), tutelary god of the river which waters the lands of Thessaly. Their daughter Daphne is even closer to nature, feeling affinities with natural objects but none with men or women, unless as her sisters or brothers. She is a tree become woman by mischance. The opera is entitled a "bucolic tragedy," but it is rather a rescue opera, in the tradition of *Fidelio*, since the happy outcome is that Daphne, an outsider among her community, is fulfilled by metamorphosis into the laurel tree that she should always have been. Her rescuer is the sun, to which all growing things aspire, personified by Phoebus Apollo, and incarnated here temporarily as a herdsman, like many of those already assembled to celebrate Midsummer and the blooming of the grapes. The fruit of the vine is personified by the god Dionysus, who does not appear in this opera (as Bacchus, he made a late arrival in *Ariadne auf Naxos*). His presence is felt, during *Daphne*, by everyone on stage, except Daphne who, being sexless, would not be roused even if she did drink the fermented grape juice worshipped in Dionysus's name.

The festival of Dionysus celebrated in the opera's central scene is a mating ritual which took place (also in Western Europe more recently) on Midsummer's Eve, as portrayed in Strauss's second opera *Feuersnot* (1901). Gregor's "Fest der blühenden Rebe" [Feast of the Blossoming Vineyards] is not generally celebrated at Midsummer, but at harvest-time, or in the depth of winter, as at the French feast of St. Vincent, who is entreated to preside over the fertility of the vines during the forthcoming months. Gregor simply ran the two together, theatrically to fine effect. Daphne's mortal suitor in Gregor's version, Leukippos (Leucippus), is well attested in mythology as a young prince of the house of Pelops, who dressed as a woman in order to enjoy Daphne's company, until his jealous rival Apollo recommended naked bathing for her and her retinue, whereupon Leukippos's deception was discovered and he was torn apart by the women-folk. Gregor made him an ordinary shepherd, Daphne's childhood playmate, whose rival, divine Apollo, shot and killed him, under provocation, with an arrow. Gregor's manipulation of mythology was born of knowledge, and Strauss made sure that the details would be dramatically credible: he was a decent classical scholar himself.

From Gregor's first libretto draft Strauss quickly banished the appearance of Zeus disguised as a swineherd — "this infelicitous Wotan," he declared, though the role pleased him well enough in *Die Liebe der Danae* shortly afterwards. Daphne's metamorphosis, effected in legend by her mother Gaea to save her from ravishment by Apollo, or granted by Zeus to whom she called for help, is here Zeus's work at the request of Apollo, moved by her lament for Leukippos to accept her as his tree-bride, the laurel sacred to him, fit to adorn only the heads of the greatest champions and heroes. The cowherd Apollo leaves, and Daphne, who is pursuing him, is turned into a tree before our eyes. Gregor at first wanted Peneios to pray for this miracle, begging Zeus to return mankind to its earlier state of nature. Gregor also determined that the transformation should be watched by all the others who solemnly approach and sing a hymn to the laurel, sign of mankind's union with nature and the gods; this would parallel the great hymn of thanksgiving which ends *Friedenstag*, the other half of the intended double bill.

In the case of *Daphne* this would have expanded the part of Peneios, a sort of Sarastro rather than Wotan-figure who, like his wife Gaea (a part written for a *contralto profondo* such as does not come two-a-penny anywhere), deserves a larger singing part than either of them eventually got. As a scholar of Greek classical drama Gregor had given a prominent place to the chorus, involving the crowd in the action as commenting participants in the

sacred feast and the drama which grows out of it. The central mating-dance in particular gave Strauss the occasion to use an operatic chorus histrionically as well as vocally, as he had done before only in *Die Ägyptische Helena* (the choruses in his operas, even *Friedenstag*, are oratorically statuesque). The final choral hymn, Gregor must have supposed, would crown this noble pastoral drama. Strauss, equally, must have known that the choral finale to *Daphne* would act counter-dramatically, for he found inspiration lacking. Clemens Krauss rescued him by suggesting that the finale of the opera should be orchestral, the voice of Daphne turning from words to melisma, as the woman becomes a plant. Gregor agreed, and Strauss composed this magical finale, surely an innovation for operatic music, which few since have dared to copy, though Strauss of course was copying Isolde's *Liebestod*. Strauss, after treating Gregor as a collaborator to an unsympathetic extent *de haut en bas* (not least because he respected Gregor's learning), eventually paid the debt he knew he owed, and set Gregor's choral finale in 1943 for nine-part chorus unaccompanied, as a concert piece, and one that does credit to poor, maligned, hard-working, loyal Gregor and his eager poetic aspiration. His high-flown, banal words have become musical poetry through Strauss's agency, as they do in the *Daphne* opera when they are allied to his music. Strauss's *An den Baum Daphne*, first performed in 1947, remains a relevant, toothsome appendix to his *Daphne* opera.

The opera's premiere had been promised to Dresden, whose new chief conductor Karl Böhm was the dedicatee of the score. It took place on October 15, 1938, as curtain-raiser to *Friedenstag* which was found less entertaining (it was a rebuke to Hitler's Germany, a piece essentially pacifist in its content). Strauss at once realized that the two operas were better performed separately; he suggested ballets to fill the evening, but nowadays such a one-act opera as *Daphne* is demanding enough for most operagoers by itself.

The musical design of Strauss's *Daphne* is both lucid and dramatically gripping; this is no watercress pastoral vision. It begins with an orchestral prelude whose woodwind solos presuppose an idyllic calm and satisfaction such as we imagine in the name of Arcadia. The texture contrasts exquisitely with the string sextet prelude to *Capriccio*; in both, the elegant, sensuous counterpoint holds the listener quite intent. Should not drama also be felt? Yes, and just as we thought of it, a shepherd's horn resounds — Strauss specified a Swiss alphorn, perhaps a memento of Alpine holidays, but was later content with a trombone. Storm clouds rise in the orchestra, and Strauss clearly enjoys evoking them, as he will the blooming grapes on the vine, the butterflies that dally upon them, twittering birds, bellowing beasts, rustling trees, claps of thunder and flashes of lightning. Shepherds, gathering for the festival of fertility, greet the close of day, but Daphne as she enters during their hymn, a moment of touching musical eloquence, wishes that daylight might remain, the time when she is happiest among her fellow-creatures of nature. This solo, generously allusive in its accompaniment, is one of the opera's most endearing moments. It begins in G major, like the opera, and ends with an apostrophe of her favorite tree, in the F sharp major which will end the opera as she herself becomes a tree.

Leukippos jumps from behind the tree and begins a duet of frustrated wooing. As befits a good shepherd, his instrument is the flute, and this section abounds in delicate woodwind counterpoint as well as fizzing strings. In frustration at her rejection of his wooing, he breaks his flute and, anticipating the fertility feast, tries to embrace her, but unsuccessfully. The feast does not interest her, and she turns to answer her mother's call. Gaea's solemn, hymnal solo, accompanied by richly divided lower strings, is answered now and then by Daphne and her woodwind polyphony, a happy

contrast. The mood changes again when Daphne's festive garments are brought in by two maidens, though Gaea continues her solemn song against the jeweled orchestral texture, and when Daphne refuses to change clothes, the noble sonority of the opening is resumed. This was a foretaste of the maidens' scherzando duet which follows on Gaea's departure, and is sufficiently fantastic in atmosphere to coax Leukippos into dressing up in Daphne's rejected feastwear; the duet does not quite become a trio, since his comments remain independent of their song. Strauss, perhaps Gregor before him, seemed to remember Siegfried and the Rhinemaidens at the start of *Götterdämmerung* Act III, though Wagner made them all sing together in the end.

The central part of the opera now begins with the grave, harmonious C major of Peneios's entrance, accompanied by Gaea and the shepherd chorus. The music gathers weight and tension, with his prophecies of godly presence at the feast, until it is dispelled at the arrival of Apollo as a cowherd, at which time the air miraculously clears. Apollo's first solo begins in a pastoral vein, quite solemnly, then becomes more weighty for the stampede of his cattle, and ends in a contemplative, rueful fashion, after the others have left to fetch Daphne to wait on the guest. Her arrival continues this solo as a musical conversation (by now a Strauss specialty — he had labored long to create a compositional bridge between speech or recitative and the aria), at quite a dramatic level. There is a spectacular musical effect when she lays her blue cloak over his shoulder and he visibly grows to godlike stature (after the words, "Nur dieser Mantel — schwesterlich hülle er dich!"). For the first time, Daphne feels a strong attraction, for her brother who admits that he is the Sun. In a wonderful intertwining of themes, they embrace. She breaks away, feeling the tabu of an unnatural relationship, and just then the chorus begins to invoke Dionysus, the bringer of love and fertility. All this is alien to Daphne; the others return, Daphne joins Gaea, Apollo the men. Peneios and the men invoke Dionysus, and the ritual dance begins.

The men dance first, then the women, among them Leukippos who persuades Daphne to drink and dance with him, though neither appeals to her. Apollo is enraged by the deception, exposes Leukippos's fraud, and is in turn accused of disguise. He answers in a grand aria, "Jeden heiligen Morgen," about the glorious course of the sun. Daphne rejects him, Leukippos curses him and is killed by an arrow from Apollo's bow. Now follows the *Liebestod* which Strauss demanded from Gregor as the climax of their opera, Daphne's funeral oration for Leukippos, a noble and



Joseph Gregor originally sketched the Daphne scenario under the momentary inspiration of a lithograph by Théodore Chassériau (1819 - 56) titled *Apollon et Daphné*.

symphonic summary of Strauss's musical exposition. Apollo answers with his prayer to Zeus, and invitation to Daphne to serve him forever as his sacred tree. The metamorphosis begins.... □



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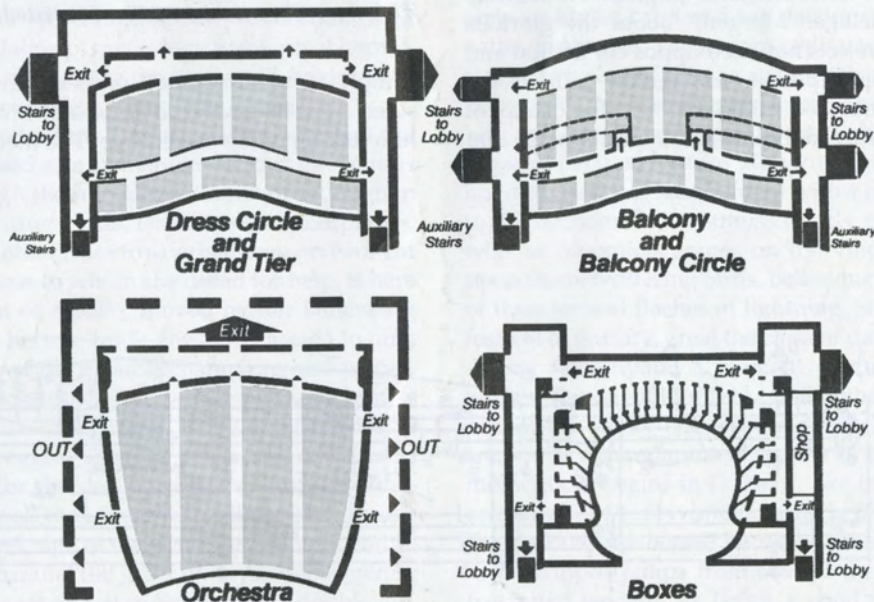
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