

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg
(Die Meistersinger)

1993-1994

Thursday, October 28, 1993 6:30 PM
Sunday, October 31, 1993 1:00 PM
Wednesday, November 3, 1993 6:30 PM
Saturday, November 6, 1993 6:30 PM
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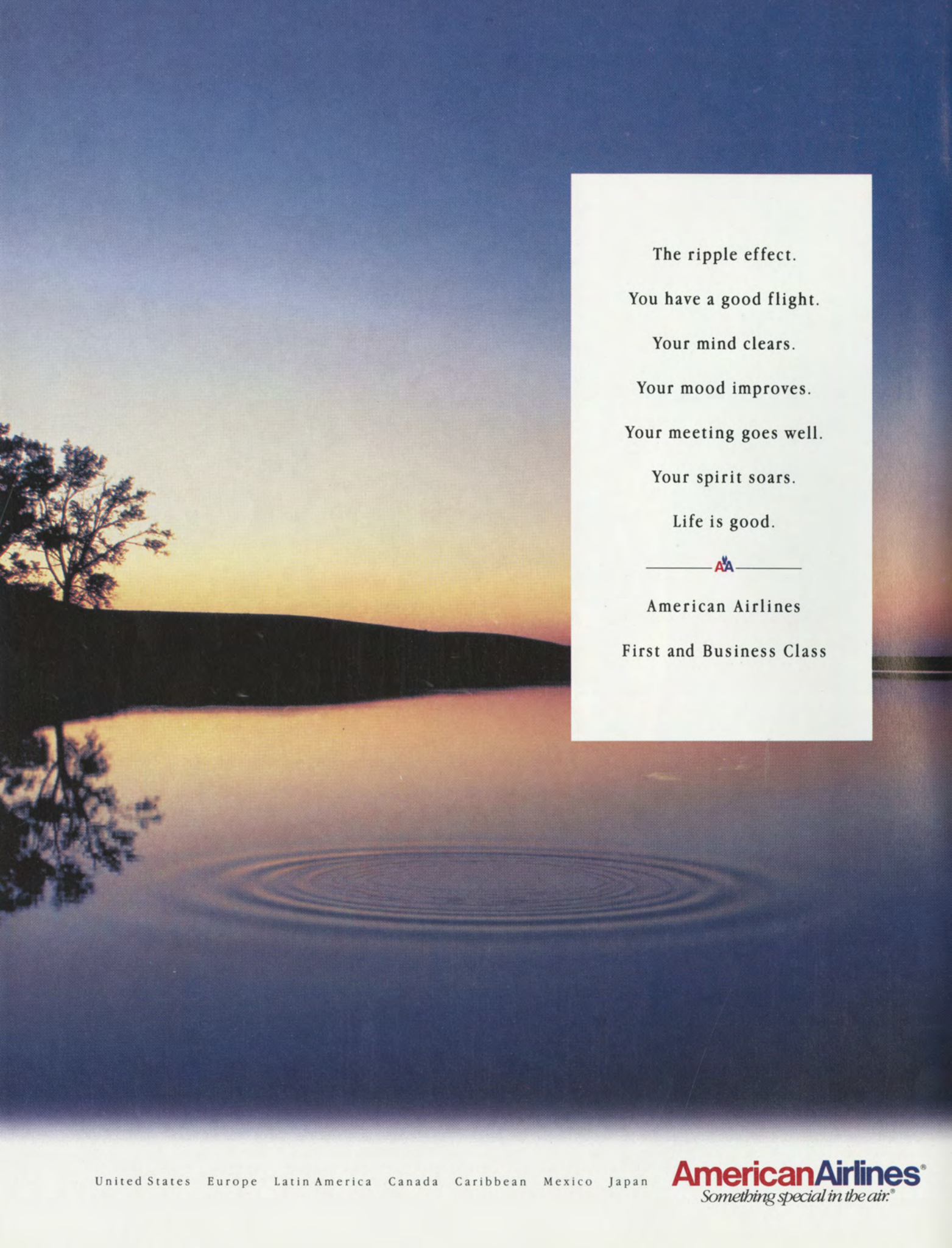
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VON
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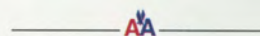
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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

1993 Fall Season
Vol. 71, No. 9

FEATURES

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Wagner's opera is observed by looking closely, and affectionately,
at its main cast of characters.
- 22 *Remembering Cynthia Wood* by John Schauer
Profile of a woman who was for many years one of the opera world's
staunchest friends.

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COVER

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Editor: Koraljka Lockhart
Art Director: Augustus F. Ginnochio
Editorial Assistant: Robert M. Robb
ISSN 0892-7189

Editorial offices: San Francisco Opera,
War Memorial Opera House,
San Francisco, CA 94102
Tel. (415) 861-4008

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE is published by
THEATRE PUBLICATIONS
Michel Pisani, *President*

Advertising Sales Information:
Gail Tepe
Telephone: (408) 985-0276

1444 Franklin Street
Santa Clara, CA 95050

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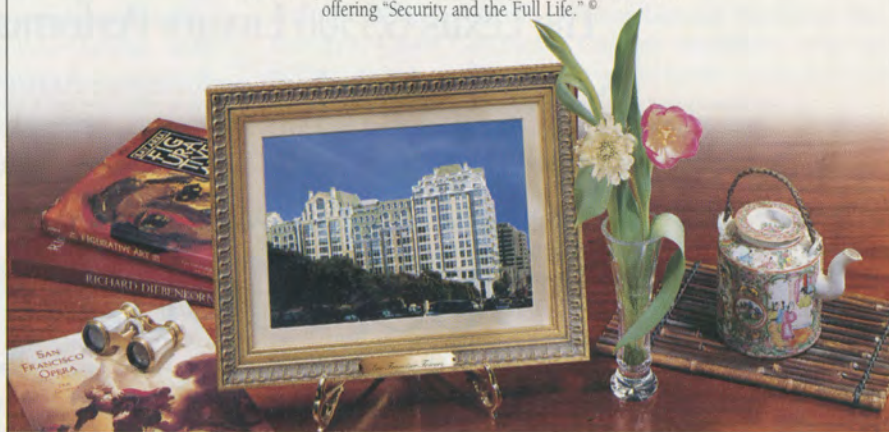
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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

MESSICK



Welcome to San Francisco Opera's 1993 Fall Season!

Preparation for every opera season can be divided roughly into two areas: the artistic plans, along with the myriad negotiations, meetings and highly skilled labor necessary to implement them; and securing the financial resources to bring those plans to life on stage.

This year, both areas are of special interest. As our General Director will elaborate, this fall's lineup is especially interesting and varied. As for financial support, that is a topic that takes on special significance this year, as arts organizations all across the country are facing unprecedented economic challenges.

It is all the more gratifying at such a time to acknowledge the generous benefactors who have helped make this Fall Season possible. Our new *I Vespri Siciliani* has been generously underwritten by The L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, with supertitles made possible by a gift from The Stanley S. Langendorf Foundation; *La Fille du Régiment* is co-sponsored by Sybase, Inc., with supertitles financed by Pacific Gas & Electric Company; *La Bohème* has been made possible in part through a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Alfred S. Wilsey; *Turandot* has been underwritten by Mr. and Mrs. John N. Rosekrans, Jr., with supertitles again made possible by The Stanley S. Langendorf Foundation; *The Makropulos Case* is co-sponsored by the Carol Franc Buck Foundation and The Bernard Osher Foundation; *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis; and *The Queen of Spades* has been made possible by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. John R. Hamilton.

We are always happy to welcome new names to our roster of production sponsors, and we hope that more individuals, corporations and foundations will consider the satisfaction and benefits of joining this very special group.

In addition, we are always happy to 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 sincere gratitude to Mayor Frank Jordan and Chief Administrative Officer Rudolf Nothenberg for their invaluable support; to San Francisco Opera Guild; and to the War Memorial Board of Trustees, for their ongoing support and assistance.

Reid W. Dennis
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MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR

LIEBERMAN



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our 1993 Fall Season, a season that offers so much for opera-lovers, whatever your personal taste and musical preferences.

Our repertoire — which features two works new to San Francisco — includes representative works by many of the most celebrated opera composers of all time, reflecting the incredible diversity of this art form in all its glory. Theatrical genres, languages, musical styles, subject matter, production styles — you'll be treated to a wide variety of them all.

We have also lined up a terrific roster of stellar singers, both local favorites as well as major debuts; and our conducting duties will be carried out by a select list of names headed by Music Director Donald Runnicles and Principal Guest Conductor Charles Mackerras, who together are responsible for helping to hone our wonderful musicians' skills to the highest degree possible.

Our Celebration of Strauss resulted not only in glowing critical accolades, but also the taping of one production (*Capriccio*) for telecast and videocassette release.

This fall we will add yet another San Francisco Opera production to the growing list of videos representing our Company throughout the world: the stunning David Hockney production of *Turandot*.

There is so much to choose from this fall, I would hesitate to single out any one production; every member of our highly knowledgeable and discerning opera audience has his or her own favorites, and I'm sure you won't need me to steer you in the right direction.

It is no secret that arts organizations throughout the country, including San Francisco Opera, are facing financial challenges more daunting than any encountered in the past. In the complicated process of planning for our future, our goal has always been and will remain to present to you the finest opera available anywhere, without endangering the future stability of this great Company. Our ultimate aim has always been the highest quality, and that isn't about to change. You, our loyal audience members, deserve no less.

Lotfi Mansouri
General Director



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 Sept. 11, 15, 18, 21, 24, 26, 30, Oct. 3 (M)
 Gaetano Donizetti

La Bohème

Sept. 19 (M), 22, 25, 28, Oct. 6, 9, 13, 16,
 Dec. 2, 5 (M), 9, 11
 Giacomo Puccini

Turandot

Oct. 7, 10 (M), 12, 15, 18, 20, 23, 26, 29, Nov. 2
 Giacomo Puccini

The Makropulos Case

(*Věc Makropulos*)
 Oct. 14, 17 (M), 22, 27, 30
 Leoš Janáček

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

Oct. 28, 31 (M), Nov. 3, 6, 9, 12, 17
 Richard Wagner

La Clemenza di Tito

Nov. 7 (M), 11, 13, 19, 22, 24, 28 (M)
 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

I Puritani

Nov. 16, 21 (M), 27, 30, Dec. 3, 7, 10
 Vincenzo Bellini

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Sept. 14	7:30 p.m.	Sept. 29	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 17	8:00 p.m.	Oct. 2	8:00 p.m.
Sept. 23	8:00 p.m.		

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Trempont, Sénéchal
Campanella/Donnell/Montresor/
Arhelger

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Sept. 15	8:00 p.m.	Sept. 26	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 18	8:00 p.m.	Sept. 30	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 21	7:30 p.m.	Oct. 3	2:00 p.m.

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6)/Ledbetter, Skinner, Vasquez,
Capecchi, Caputo+, Sumegi+
Dec. performances:
Racette, Fortuna; Lima, Ledbetter,
Milne, Vasquez, Capecchi, Caputo+,
Sumegi+
Mackerras (Sept., Oct. 6, 16)/Summers
Bernhard/Mitchell/Mahoney/Munn

Sept. 19	2:00 p.m.	Oct. 13	8:00 p.m.
Sept. 22	7:30 p.m.	Oct. 16	8:00 p.m.
Sept. 25	8:00 p.m.	Dec. 2	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 28	8:00 p.m.	Dec. 5	2:00 p.m.
Oct. 6	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 9	8:00 p.m.
Oct. 9	8:00 p.m.	Dec. 11	8:00 p.m.

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New Production

Turandot Puccini
Marton/Voss* (Oct. 20; Nov. 2, 5),
Mazzaria*; Sylvester/Popov (Oct. 20,
Nov 5), Langan, Baerg, Petersen, Estep,
Frank, Patton+
Runnicles/Robertson (Nov. 2, 5)/
McClintock/Hockney/Falconer*/
Munn

Oct. 7	7:30 p.m.	Oct. 20	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 10	2:00 p.m.	Oct. 23	8:00 p.m.
Oct. 12	8:00 p.m.	Oct. 26	8:00 p.m.
Oct. 15	8:00 p.m.	Oct. 29	8:00 p.m.
Oct. 18	7:30 p.m.	Nov. 2	7:30 p.m.
		Nov. 5	8:00 p.m.

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Oct. 28	6:30 p.m.	Nov. 9	6:30 p.m.
Oct. 31	1:00 p.m.	Nov. 12	6:30 p.m.
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Nov. 7	2:00 p.m.	Nov. 22	8:00 p.m.
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Nov. 16	8:00 p.m.	Dec. 3	8:00 p.m.
Nov. 21	2:00 p.m.	Dec. 7	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 27	8:00 p.m.	Dec. 10	8:00 p.m.
Nov. 30	7:30 p.m.		

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Nov. 26	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 8	7:30 p.m.
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Meistersinger CLOSE-UPS

By MICHAEL STEINBERG



HOWARD

Theo Adam as Hans Sachs and Arlene Saunders as Eva in San Francisco Opera's 1971 staging of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Die Meistersinger was my parents' favorite opera. Whenever the theater in the German city where they lived and where I was born put it on, they bought tickets to two consecutive performances so as to be able to go to the first two acts on one evening, and then, fresh and unfatigued, to Act III a few nights later. In those days you could do that without going into debt.

When I was quite young, my mother showed me the detail she loved best, the moment in Hans Sachs's monologue on illusion and madness — "Wahn" — when the disorder of Saint John's Eve gives way to the daylight and clarity of St. John's Day. "Johannisnacht" is

in E major, all mystery and *pianissimo*, tenderness and awe, staccato woodwinds and tinkling harp. Then, when Sachs sings "nun aber kam (but then came)," the E-major chord suddenly moves to the doorstep of C major, a huge distance traversed in a single, drastic stride. Against a great crescendo, Sachs finishes his thought — "Johannistag!" As he sings that word, the violins, unmuted at last, come in with an ecstatic phrase that knocks any possibility of clarity and daylight thought clean out of us. It's no wonder someone called Wagner the Puccini of music.

Last season, on a Metropolitan Opera broadcast intermission

Michael Steinberg is program annotator and lecturer for the San Francisco Symphony.

quiz, the guests were asked to name a passage in an opera that always makes them cry. There were no surprises — Puccini, something from Verdi, Mozart (for class), and inevitably *Der Rosenkavalier* (as Strauss preferred to spell it), that gorgeous, frivolous, attar-scented, up-market soap opera that owes so much to *Die Meistersinger*. Were someone to ask me the same question, it is in fact *Die Meistersinger* that I would cite. Not “Johannistag,” which is more for goosebumps than for tears, but the scene some forty-five minutes later when the Prize Song is baptized. Later I’ll say why.

There are surprisingly few places in Wagner that press from my system what that impassioned Wagnerian, Thomas Mann, called “those clear drops, flowing every hour of our day all over the world in such bitter abundance that we have poetically named the vale of our earth after them.” Always “Ruhe, ruhe” in *Götterdämmerung*’s Immolation Scene, Brünnhilde’s prayer that peace may come to her troubled father; perhaps Siegmund’s death in *Die Walküre*. Tristan and Isolde do not invite that intimate a response, even though the desolation of Act III is near to unbearable and Tristan’s “Wie sie selig,” with the four horns, is for me the most beautiful page Wagner ever wrote. It is strange that it is Wagner’s only mature comedy that yields so intense an emotional reaction, but then *Die Meistersinger* is a work full of paradox and contradiction.

It is not always recognized as such. In January of 1945, for example, Virgil Thomson reviewed the Metropolitan Opera’s first performance of *Meistersinger* since the beginning of the war. He called it “the most enchanting of all the fairy-tale operas” and described it as being “about a never-never land where shoemakers give vocal lessons, where presidents of music societies offer their daughters as prizes in musical contests, and where music critics believe in rules of composition and get mobbed for preferring young girls to young composers.”

In assigning *Die Meistersinger* to the fairy-tale genre, Thomson was following a common critical tradition, one amply represented in popular guides to the operatic repertoire, notes that accompany recordings, and the like. Wagner gives us the stock characters — a glamorous hero, a beautiful and innocent heroine, a villain, and a wise man. As Thomson says later in his review: “The hero merely gives a successful debut recital and marries the girl of his heart.”

Had Thomson returned for one of the performances later that season, he would have seen something strange, something that might have invited a more searching look: in the final scene an American flag flew among the banners carried in the procession of guilds and masters. American troops advancing across Bavaria had entered Nürnberg that morning, and Herbert Graf, the director of that production, in an emotional surge understandable in a Jewish refugee from Vienna, had ordered the addition of the Stars and Stripes for this one occasion.

Nürnberg was not just any German city. *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, together with *Lohengrin*, was Hitler’s personal favorite among Wagner’s operas and therefore among all operas — Hubert Lanzinger’s portrait of Hitler in Lohengrin armor is a sight not to be missed — and because of its *Meistersinger* associations, Nürnberg had been chosen as the site of the great congresses of the National Socialist party. It was also the place where the Hitler government’s official anti-Semitic decrees were promulgated. Moreover, these “Parteitage” always included a special performance of *Die Meistersinger*, which had in effect become the national and official opera of Nazi Germany. Graf’s gesture of wresting this wonderful work from the swastika and imprinting it, so to speak, with the Stars and Stripes, was rich in meaning.

To stay with this theme for a moment — for those who love this

opera, one of the strangest and most dismaying documents from Hitler’s Germany is a film in which Wilhelm Furtwängler conducts the Berlin Philharmonic in the *Meistersinger* Overture at the factory of the Allgemeine elektrische Gesellschaft (General Electric Company) in wartime. One sees something of a disturbingly joyless Furtwängler and the orchestra, but the camera lavishes far more attention on the setting, the factory appurtenances, the twenty-foot-high swastika banners, and the audience of tight-lipped older men, ideally blond young women who look as though they had stepped from the canvases of Ziegler, Eber, and the other official painters of that day and place, and handsome young men in uniform, bandaged and, many of them, horrifyingly scarred. This is *Meistersinger* hideously perverted, far removed from its real content.

One of the joys of getting to know *Die Meistersinger* has been the gradual discovery that it is not as simple — and certainly not as simply “German” — as it seems. My central purpose in this essay is to look at some of the less obvious sides of the characters in *Die Meistersinger*. Let me begin by suggesting that there is a way of telling the story that is a little different from what you find in the usual synopsis, that is different as

well from Thomson’s charming summary. *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* is — among other things — the story of three men who desire the same woman, and all of whom are to different degrees both apt and wrong for her. And of course with a story of three suitors we have immediately wandered into a fairy tale cliché.

Sixtus Beckmesser, Nürnberg’s city clerk, wants to marry Eva, the lovely and still teenaged daughter of Veit Pogner, a wealthy goldsmith. Beckmesser and Pogner are members of the Master Singers, a guild of citizens in various walks of life who are skilled at writing verse and setting it to music. When Pogner makes a surprise announcement that he will give Eva in marriage to whichever Master Singer wins a song contest, Beckmesser, immensely learned and versed in the guild’s arcane rules about what constitutes



Sebastian Feiersinger as Walther and Sena Jurinac as Eva in S.F. Opera's 1959 *Meistersinger*.

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acceptable verse and music, sees himself as well placed to win.

Beckmesser's only worry is that Hans Sachs might enter the contest. Sachs, a shoemaker, is admired by his fellow Master Singers as the finest poet among them, but also watched warily by some as an eccentric and a radical. While Beckmesser is a bachelor, Sachs is a widower of mature years. He has known and loved Eva since she was a baby.

The wild card here is Walther von Stolzing, a young knight from Franconia who has decided to settle in Nürnberg and, with Pogner's help, has sold his estates at home. After only the briefest contact, he and Eva have — in the best fairy tale manner — fallen in love. Walther learns that the Master Singer, which he must be to court Eva, is the top rung on a long ladder whose ascent requires years of schooling. Undaunted, which is what a knight should be, he brazens it out, with disastrous results.

What about Eva, the woman whom these three men are, each in his own way, looking at? Young, lively, good-looking, and *available*, she is the erotic and Romantic excitement center in this little knot of people. She is the most interesting personality on stage, the one who offers the most surprises and harbors the most complicated feelings. She is also not the character most attended to in the copious *Meistersinger* literature, nor usually the one most perceptively treated by directors. She is motherless: the only people in her home life appear to be her father and Magdalene, formerly her nurse, now her maid. (It must be from the late Frau Pogner rather than her stuffy and sonorous father that Eva gets her playfulness and humor.) You get the feeling that her father and Magdalene have both sheltered her from the world and that Magdalene sometimes shelters her from her father. It is remarkable that when Walther is ready to elope with her, it turns out she does not know the way out of town.

When we first see Eva, she is flirting with Walther in church and scheming to get a moment alone with him. Meeting Walther has overwhelmed her, and she has not yet even caught a glimpse of the best of him, his poetry and his singing. Sheltered as she has been, she is an emotional tinderbox, ready to explode into flame. Young as she is, she is also totally inexperienced in the world of flame. Except with her father, she does not know her power. With him she knows it well: that is a telling little exchange at the beginning of Act 2 when Pogner marvels that she has nothing to say about her impending betrothal and she replies that an obedient child speaks only when asked. "How wise, how good!" says her gratified daddy. Wagner did not pick her name out of a hat.

There is something wild in her, and she makes me think of the reckless teenagers in *Disorder and Early Sorrow*, Mann's sharply observed, profoundly perceptive study of that mezzanine stage of life. Beckmesser is virtually invisible to her. To the extent that she is aware of him at all, he is mildly tiresome, and when she does get excited about him, it is only because he treated Walther badly when he auditioned for the Master Singers.

Sachs, on the other hand, is the most vividly visible person in her life. She has known him as long as she can remember. It is easy to see



Paul Schoeffler as Hans Sachs in the 1959 *Meistersinger*.

how he might be a more accessible and welcoming father figure than her own father. There is often something appealing about a surrogate or alternative parent outside one's own home, but with his ready warmth, humor, wisdom, and poetic gift, Sachs is by far the more compelling of the two men. Like Eva, he is interesting, attractive, and *available*. We don't know how old he is, but it really doesn't matter whether he is, say, in his late thirties (which already is extremely old to someone who is sixteen) or a robust sixty: girls and young women often find older men intensely attractive, at least momentarily.

And there is the problem: Eva is no longer a child to be dandled on Sachs's knee with impunity. She is a passionate girl-woman whose hormones are raging. (I like to imagine her mysterious mother as having come from some place less starchy than Nürnberg — and we do know that Veit Pogner was a well-traveled man.) She is furious with Sachs because he will not love her as an adult with an intensity equivalent to the way he has loved her as a child, or, to put it

more simply, because he will not love her sexually. Her way with him is teasing, teasing and seductive. And like most people her age, she thinks that "old" people are people who are all done with their sexuality. As she sees it, Sachs is both desirable and beyond eligibility. She wants, but is far from sure that what she wants exists.

Listen to her and watch her in Act 3. She comes to give Sachs a hard time about the shoes she is to wear at the song contest, but with a more complicated agenda in the wind tunnel of her mind. As for the shoes, they are too wide — no, too tight — here across the toes — no, more at the heel. Maybe the trouble is that she had not tried them earlier because — and here is a line that reaches deep — "I trusted too much, but I was mistaken in the Master."

Then, while Sachs pretends to make some adjustment to this shoe that is "too wide yet pinches everywhere," Walther enters, dressed "in shining knightly garb." Eva lets out a cry, then stands transfixed, one stockinged foot still up on Sachs's work stool. "Aha," says Sachs, "now I understand the case." Caught now in his own hurt and anger, he goes on to feel gloriously sorry for himself. Eva can't resist this appeal and declares her love for Sachs: "I was on the right track, for, if it were my choice, I would choose none but you for myself. You would be my husband." What is this girl doing to poor Walther, who, having neither the knowledge nor the imagination to understand the richly complex relationship between Eva and Sachs, is bewildered and silent? It is then that Sachs declares that he does not want the fate of Tristan's uncle and Isolde's husband, King Mark — and that the Wagner of *Meistersinger* so poignantly quotes the Wagner of *Tristan*.

Confused, in turmoil, Eva has been playing with fire. She, too, knows "Wahn" — confusion, folly, distorted vision. Her task is to find clarity, to cross from "Johannisnacht" to "Johannistag." That Sachs will show her how to accomplish this is the indication of his greatness. Another question I have more than once heard asked on the Met quiz is "Which operatic character do you most admire?" Sachs always gets the votes and in the ensuing discussion he is usually presented as a kind of secular saint, a man of limitless,

almost implausible goodness and wisdom.

I can only imagine Sachs, as I read him out of his words and music, being extremely surprised. Surprised and amused. Wise he is, and except in his public address at the end, he wears his wisdom lightly. Sometimes he has to struggle to find wisdom, and the path is not without missteps. He knows himself, and that is the beginning of wisdom and its *sine qua non*. Reflecting on the *Johannisnacht* donnybrook, this lust for violence that drives men and women to the point where, "believing themselves to be the hunters, they no longer hear their own cries of pain," he sees and accepts it as "der alte Wahn — the old, old madness." It is a design defect. We have to live with it, in ourselves and in others, and assuage our distress as best we can through love, friendship, work, music.

He also sees the part he himself played: "Late one evening, to prevent a misfortune caused by young and ardent temperaments, a man is at a loss. And so a shoemaker in his shop pulls at the cords of madness." Madness — Wahn. Beckmesser had come to serenade Eva, who lives across the street from Sachs, and Sachs deliberately provokes him to

rage. That was understandable, but neither wise nor good. He has a short fuse sometimes. He can be rough with his apprentice, David, though we are undoubtedly more sensitive to the idea of physical punishment than even the most soft-hearted employer and mentor in the sixteenth century would have found reasonable. His delight in playing games can get the better of him. Beckmesser is criminal and immoral when he spots Walther's song on the desk in Sachs's empty study and, believing it to be by Sachs because it is in his handwriting, pockets it, but it is also not admirable of Sachs to lead Beckmesser, obviously a man in desperate psychological condition, further into trouble. When Beckmesser in some other context calls Sachs a "Spitzbube," a rascal, he is not altogether wrong.

We don't know why Sachs renounces Eva. Is it only his misgivings about the age difference? For all of his energy, humor, and public bonhomie, he is a man with deep pits of sadness. Nearly every word he sings in Act 3 conveys that, and he describes himself to Walther as "needy (bedürftig)." Though letting go is hard for him and the cost of it tremendous, he helps Walther turn the raw material of his dream into a Master Song — one, to be sure, with some risky departures from the rules, and when Eva, mincing no words, has told him that, were it her choice, she would choose none but him, he firmly points her in Walther's direction.

In the letting go is Hans Sachs's most beautiful moment. He speaks his words about King Mark and — this is his reward for his



Jess Thomas as Walther and Pilar Lorengar as Eva
at the San Francisco Opera in 1965.

honesty — immediately, Magdalene's arrival rescues him from being mired in pathos. He declares that Walther's song must be baptized and in music of a lovely and ancient flavor, he performs the ceremony. The tune is the hymn about John the Baptist that we heard when the curtain first went up; the style is a softening, a beautiful redemption, of Kothner's reading of the Master Singers' rules in the first scene. Sachs appoints Eva godmother. David and Magdalene are to be the witnesses, but since an apprentice cannot be a witness, Sachs, with the traditional box on the ear, promotes David to journeyman. He and Magdalene can now plan their wedding. There is another act of generosity, another creation of a happiness that leaves him out.

But the important thing here is Sachs's simple closing line: "Die jüngste Gevatterin spricht den Spruch — Let the youngest godparent speak the word." Or: "Go, Eva. From this moment, though still young in years, you are no longer a child. Your life will no longer be with your real father or with me, your elective father, but with your husband. You are one of us now, adult and grown enough to be a responsible godparent." Eva gathers her thoughts. The twenty seconds

it takes the orchestra to build the bridge from Sachs's baptismal rite to Eva's launching of the radiant Quintet should feel like a lifetime. Nothing now will be the same. Eva has found at last the beginning of clarity. She has crossed from "Johannisnacht" to "Johannistag."

And Beckmesser? No operatic villain has ever had the deck so stacked against him by his composer as this earnest, learned, sexually unattractive bureaucrat. Well, perhaps the whining Mime, but all the others you can think of — Don Giovanni, Lady Macbeth, Iago, Wagner's own superb Alberich and Hagen — are figures of immense vitality and purpose, at least at the beginnings of their careers.

We know that Wagner poured into the creation of Beckmesser all of his contempt for music critics in general and Eduard Hanslick of the *Wiener Zeitung* and *Wiener Presse* in particular. (Hanslick had written positively about *Tannhäuser* but then turned apostate; moreover and unforgivably, he had a Jewish mother.) In an early draft the Beckmesser character was actually called Hans Lick. Even the name Wagner finally gave him, Sixtus Beckmesser, with all those hissing sibilants, bears witness against him: when he introduces himself to Walther, it is as though a snake pit had been opened. Whenever we see him, it is in the worst possible light — as the "Marker" keeping track of Walther's infraction of the Master Singers' rules when we have already been cued to perceive Walther as a free-spirited genius; as the absurd singer of a serenade to a woman he believes to

be Eva, first harassed and mocked by Sachs, then beaten up by David; as the thief of Walther's song; as the brutally failed candidate in the song contest.

He is out-and-out bad only when he tried to make off with the manuscript of Walther's song. Elsewhere, more than anything, he is pitiful. As the Marker, he is doing his job for an extraordinarily rigid arts organization, and he himself remarks that the post is a "sour" one. We know nothing of his history. Nor do we know his age, though he is certainly a bit younger than Sachs, for when the latter lumps the two of them into the same age group it is done with intent to twit. We do know that he has occupied an important position in the city government and with great competence, perhaps even with distinction. Clearly he enjoys the respect of the other Master Singers, who are among Nürnberg's most eminent citizens. This is evident from their comportment toward him in Act 1 and even in the Act 3 finale up to the point where he begins to sing; besides, their having elected him Marker is indication of high professional and intellectual regard. How much they enjoyed him as a dinner guest is another matter.

Probably he has long cherished a shy wish to be married and has quietly carried a torch for Eva. Pogner's announcement, which is a surprise to all, of his intentions concerning Eva's marriage throws Beckmesser into a panic. The Germans have an eloquent word, "Torschlusspanik," which means literally panic at the prospect of the door closing. In other words, Beckmesser's situation vis-à-vis Eva has suddenly turned from velleity or fantasy into supercharged "tomorrow morning or never!"

Thomas Mann wrote about *Death in Venice* that "passion as confusion and as a stripping of dignity was really the subject of my tale." This is Beckmesser's story as well as von Aschenbach's: his sudden "Torschlusspanik," together with the accumulated effect of Eva's growing allure and sexual radiance, drives Beckmesser round the bend. It gives rise to the folly of the attempted theft of Walther's poem and the worse folly of attempting to sing, in public and on so crucial an occasion, a song he has not learned properly or even understood. Something else he has not learned is that a critic cannot expect to be loved. The result of his decision to go through with the contest is that he invents Dadaism nearly fifty years ahead of Tristan Tzara, and it's too bad he is not in a position to enjoy that serendipitous aesthetic triumph. As for his serenade to Eva in Act 2, its clumsiness of text declamation, weirder than Stravinsky at his most distanced, are totally out of character for him. Were he in the Marker's box, he would note with his chalk exactly the faults that Sachs marks with hammer blows on his cobbler's last. This song has nothing to do with Beckmesser's character, personality, or skill as



Gottfried Hornik as Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger*, presented during the 1981 Summer Season.

poet and composer, but everything with Wagner's boundless malice and Schadenfreude.

Beckmesser has also suffered from a performance tradition that makes Beckmesser into a buffoon in a fright wig. Hermann Prey, for example, has shown that regardless of the inherent absurdities of his serenade to Eva and the contest song, it is important to sing both as beautifully as possible. Too many baritones substitute a kind of Schoenbergian "Sprechgesang" for Wagner's precise — and superior — pitches in much of the role. These cheap reductions rob the character of three-dimensionality. That in turn makes the drama less interesting: Sachs and Walther need Beckmesser to play against. In the same way, the entrenched traditions of the grey-bearded, post-sexual, tediously noble Sachs and the at-all-costs pure-voiced and virginal Eva narrow and dull those characters.

Of Walther there is not much to be said. He shares with Sachs the burden of portraying some part of Wagner himself, Wagner the tempestuously creative, misunderstood, romantically irresistible innovator. He invents a fervent song and gets to sing it four times. At the end, Eva succumbs to him the way Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* cannot resist her lover Alfred's high A's. He reminds me of those singers whose entire intelligence is channeled into their

art, but he is ardent, determined, talented, and rich. His marriage to Eva is the correct fairy tale solution.

What happens after the final curtain? Any academic worth his salt will tell you the question is trivial and frivolous. Even so it fascinates. Beckmesser has hit bottom. Will his furious exit from the Festival Meadow be a turning point for him the way Sachs's renunciation of Eva and Eva's symbolic entry into adulthood are turning points for them, or will he sink further into bitterness, frustration, and resentment? He is not a dry or passionless man, and that could be his salvation. He had nothing to offer Eva, and one cannot regret the failure of his suit; just the same, with his learning, skill, and intelligence, I would wish him better than the last we see of him. I would also wish Eva a richer human broth than the one the still callow Walther can provide. She is much more of a mensch than her knight, even though he has accumulated mileage.

Sachs will recede from Eva's dreams; perhaps she will from his. At any rate, he knows how to live. He will continue wryly to observe this crazy world and to nurse his personal and deep sadness. The latter he will turn into beautiful verse and song. When last we see him, he summons the crowd to their better selves. Moved, genuinely moved, they cheer him. The next day, like the fishes to whom Saint Anthony of Padua preached so eloquently, they will have forgotten and will revert to their quotidian selves. But that is another story. □

NOWINSKI

Remembering Cynthia Wood

By JOHN SCHAUER

For this production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, director Lotfi Mansouri had originally chosen for his assistant a woman named Cynthia Wood, who had previously assisted him on productions of *Wozzeck* (1990) and *Tristan und Isolde* (1991). Fate intervened, unfortunately, on January 23 of this year, when Cynthia died of cancer at her home in Santa Barbara at the relatively young age of 55.

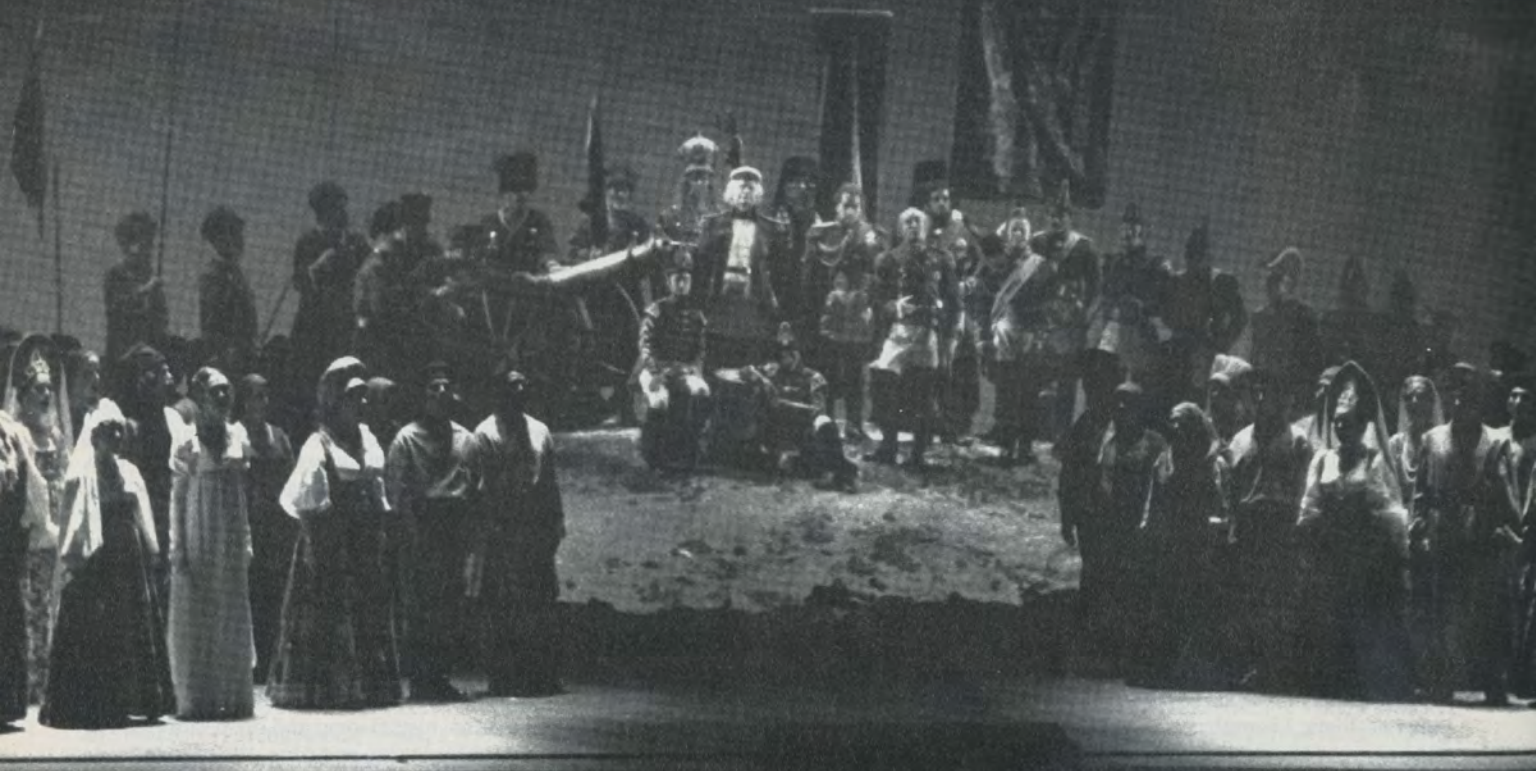
Cynthia's passing did not go unnoticed in several major newspapers across the country; she was a wealthy woman who had served on the

boards of and generously underwritten productions for San Francisco Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Yet if ever the shortcomings of journalism were apparent, it was in the brief accounts of her life that appeared in obituaries. For those who had the privilege of knowing and working with her, the simple facts of her generosity and accomplishments did little justice to a unique individual.

Talking with some of the people most closely associated with her work in the world of opera, however, re-

veals a figure whose drive and dedication greatly outweigh her financial contributions, as significant as those have been. This was confirmed in conversations with Lotfi Mansouri, general director of San Francisco Opera; Ardis Krainik, general director of the Lyric Opera of Chicago; Joseph Volpe, general manager of the Metropolitan Opera; Nancy Adler, widow of former San Francisco Opera general director Kurt Herbert Adler; and Merrilee Ford, Cynthia's long-time business associate and close personal friend.

The picture that emerges is of a



A scene from San Francisco Opera's 1991 presentation of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, one of the operas that benefitted from Cynthia Wood's generosity.

John Schauer is staff writer for San Francisco Opera.



selflessly dedicated woman who could have bought an entree into the world of opera, but chose instead to work her way into it. Her love of the art form began at an early age. "She learned to play the piano as a quite young child," Ford said, "and her mother brought her to San Francisco to see *Carmen* when she was 9 or 10. Her mother felt that growing up in a more rural area [Santa Barbara], Cynthia should be exposed to these things, and in those days San Francisco was the place to go — there was nothing anywhere else [on the West Coast], and they would spend the entire season up there, going to different things.

"She went to school at the University of Siena [Italy] after she graduated from Marymount High School in Santa Barbara. Through people she met there, she got an entry into La Scala, and she worked there until Buddy [Adrien "Buddy" Wood, her stepfather] became sick and she really needed to come home to continue the family interests."

In 1963, two special people made their San Francisco Opera debuts: Lotfi Mansouri, who directed six productions that year; and Cynthia Wood, who worked in the Rehearsal Department. The two of them had met while studying with Lotte Lehmann at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara; their association was to continue until her death. "She was a great, great force in the Music Academy," Mansouri relates, "bringing important people to give master classes. She used to do so much for so many people. For

example, Grace Bumbry was the student of Lotte Lehmann, and when Grace made her debut as *Carmen* at the Paris Opera, Cynthia flew Madame Lehmann from California to be at the opening."

Although Cynthia had an ample fortune at her disposal, she never considered herself above performing the most menial tasks. Mansouri recalls, "She used to go out and get lunches for people when she was in the Rehearsal Department. She'd go out and bring coffee or tea. This was a very special woman who wanted to be accepted for her own work. Of course everybody was interested in her money, but she wanted to be accepted for herself."

"Cynthia would give of herself 100 percent on a project," Volpe concurs. "I can recall when one of our singers' baby sitter was ill, and Cynthia ended up baby sitting for the children, so that the singer could perform. There isn't anything that she wouldn't do. No matter what it took to make it easier for me to do my job, I always knew she was there.

"The most impressive thing was her dedication," Volpe continues. "She was a personal assistant to Sonja Frisell when Sonja did our new production of *Aida*. I'll never forget the first time she was in the house. Somehow, without realizing it, she dropped a piece of paper, and one of our people said to her, 'By the way, let's not drop any paper on the floor; we need to keep the stage clean.' She went and picked it up, but the interesting thing is, she then became very friendly with

Cynthia Wood (left) at a Metropolitan Opera function, shown with the Met's general manager Joseph Volpe and Mrs. Volpe.

Continued on page 35



KARITA MATTILA



CATHERINE KEEN



BERND WEIGL



BEN HEPPNER



ROBERT ORTH

JAN-HENDRIK
ROOTERING

Acclaimed in her 1989 San Francisco Opera debut as Ilia in *Idomeneo*, **Karita Mattila** returns to portray Eva in *Die Meistersinger*. Winner of the 1983 "Singer of the World" competition in Cardiff, the Finnish soprano now regularly performs at the major operatic centers of the world, as well as in concert with many prominent orchestras. She made her Royal Opera at Covent Garden debut in 1986 as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, returning there as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Agathe in *Der Freischütz*, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*. Operatic performances elsewhere have included Donna Elvira and Eva at the Metropolitan Opera; Pamina and Donna Elvira at the Lyric Opera of Chicago; Donna Elvira and Schubert's *Fierrabras* at the Vienna State Opera; Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* in Geneva; Eva and Fiordiligi at the Munich Festival; Donna Elvira in Cologne; Fiordiligi and her first Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* in Houston; the Countess, Eva as well as Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* in Brussels; Donna Elvira in Washington, D.C. (U.S. debut); in addition to Fiordiligi and Donna Elvira in Tel Aviv. Her growing discography includes recordings of *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, Bruckner's *Te Deum* and Mass in F, Schumann's *Faust Scenes*, Schubert's *Fierrabras* and Mass in E, as well as a solo aria album. Miss Mattila has also been acclaimed as a recitalist in Scandinavia, Vienna, Barcelona, London, Brussels and Geneva.

Mezzo-soprano **Catherine Keen**, who portrays Magdalene in *Die Meistersinger*, was a 1989-90 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center and a Merola Opera Program participant in 1987 and 1988. She has sung numerous roles at the War Memorial since her 1989 Company debut in *Satyagraha*. They include Mistress Quickly in the family performance of *Falstaff*, Schwertleite in *Die Walküre*, Maddalena in *Rigoletto*, Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, the Third Lady in *The Magic Flute*, Sonya in *War and Peace*, Zulma in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Annina in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Opera Center credits include a Schwabacher Debut Recital, Leocasta in Handel's *Giustino*, and Suzuki in *Madame Butterfly* for Western Opera Theater. Miss Keen made her European debut in 1989 with the Deutsche Oper Berlin as Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* and appeared for the first time with the Netherlands Opera last year as the Duchess in *Luisa Miller*. Additional recent performances include *La Traviata* at the Orange Festival, *Samson et Dalila* in Amsterdam, *Luisa Miller* in Geneva, Mahler's Eighth Symphony with the Orchestre de Lyon, and a recording of *La Vida Breve* with the Cincinnati Symphony. Future concert plans include appearances with the San Francisco Symphony and Cincinnati Symphony, as well as recitals throughout North America. The young artist is the recipient of a George London/William Sullivan Study Grant, a Puccini Foundation Award, and a grant from the Wagner Society of Northern California.

Bernd Weigl makes his first San Francisco Opera appearance as Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger*, one of the Viennese artist's signature roles which he has performed with great success at the Bayreuth Festival, La Scala in Milan, Covent Garden in London, and in Munich, Hamburg, Vienna, etc. Regarded as one of the most prominent opera and concert singers in the world today, Weigl regularly appears at numerous major opera houses and festivals. (He has sung over 200 performances at the Bayreuth Festival alone.) With a repertoire that encompasses the baritone roles of Wagner, Verdi, Mozart and Richard Strauss, as well as the music of French, Russian and contemporary composers, he has performed over 120 roles in five languages under the world's foremost conductors. His numerous recordings, television appearances, and opera and concert films reflect his diverse talents and great popularity. Weigl has been awarded the title of "Kammersänger" from the Vienna, Hamburg and Munich state operas, was named an honorary "Professor" by the German government, and

recently earned a doctorate in Economic Sciences. Future engagements are scheduled for Berlin, Bayreuth, Vienna, Hamburg, Munich, Florence, New York and Tokyo, among others.

Tenor **Ben Heppner**, who sang the title role in a performance of *Lohengrin* for his highly praised 1989 Company debut, portrays Walther von Stolzing in *Die Meistersinger*, as well as the title part of Tito in *La Clemenza di Tito*. Walther is the role in which he made acclaimed debuts at Milan's La Scala, Munich's Bavarian State Opera, the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Seattle Opera, L'Opéra de Marseilles, and which he has sung at the Metropolitan Opera, and L'Opéra de Nice. A native of British Columbia, he began his musical studies at the University of B.C. School of Music, and continued his training at the University of Toronto Opera School. A 1988 Metropolitan Opera Auditions finalist, and winner of the first Birgit Nilsson Prize (awarded by New Sweden '88), Heppner has by now appeared with most of the major opera companies and orchestras of the world. Among numerous acclaimed performances, he has been heard in the title role of *Idomeneo* at the Met (1991 debut) and the Netherlands Opera; as Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Frankfurt, Vienna, Melbourne and Santa Fe; as Walther in *Tannhäuser* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago (1988 U.S. opera debut); in Dvořák's *Dimitri* in Munich; in addition to the title role of *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Salzburg Festival. Recent highlights include the title role in the world premiere of *McTeague* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Laca in *Jenůfa* and a new staging of *Die Meistersinger* at the Met, Huon in *Oberon* at La Scala, and Florestan in *Fidelio* at the Vienna State Opera. His first recording, *Turandot*, opposite Eva Marton in the title role, has just been issued, as have new releases of *Oberon* and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. A new recording of *Die Meistersinger* under the baton of Wolfgang Sawallisch will soon be available.

Baritone **Robert Orth** sings the role of Sixtus Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger* for his San Francisco Opera debut. The native of Chicago is well established in opera, concert and recital throughout the U.S., and has often performed with the major opera companies of North America. His repertoire ranges from world premieres and revivals of rarely performed works (such as *Rosina* and *A Waterbird Talk*), to the standard repertory, including *La Bohème*, *Faust*, *Don Pasquale*, and one of his signature roles, Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. His portrayal of John Buchanan, Jr. in Hoiby's *Summer and Smoke* won him national attention and acclaim when the opera was telecast on PBS. Also praised for his appearances in operetta and musical theater, he has performed Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Danilo in *The Merry Widow*, Captain Corcoran in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and Don Quixote in *Man of La Mancha*. Recent successes include Eisenstein and Rossini's Figaro for New York City Opera, Henry Higgins in *My Fair Lady* with Opera Memphis, Harlequin in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Houston Grand Opera, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* at Cleveland Opera, and his Seattle Opera debut as *The Merry Widow's* Danilo, a portrayal for which he was named Artist of the Year.

Bass **Jan-Hendrik Rootering** makes his S.F. Opera debut as Pogner in *Die Meistersinger*. The German-born artist began his career in the corporate business world of air cargo and was in his late 20s when he began to study voice with his father (tenor Hendrikus Rootering) and at the Hamburg Music School. Since his 1980 professional debut as Colline in Göran Järvefelt's acclaimed new production of *La Bohème*, he has been sought by opera houses in Munich, Vienna, Berlin, Amsterdam, Geneva, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, London's Covent Garden, New York's Metropolitan Opera (debut, *Tannhäuser*), Chicago's Lyric Opera (debut, *Tannhäuser* directed by Peter Sellers), and Milan's

Continued on page 31

These performances are made possible by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis.

Production dedicated to the memory of Cynthia Wood.

Opera in three acts by RICHARD WAGNER

Text by the composer

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

(in German)

Conductor

Donald Runnicles

Stage Director

Lotfi Mansouri

Set Designer

Roberto Oswald

Costume Designer

Walter Mahoney

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Assistant to Maestro Runnicles

Patrick Summers

Musical Preparation

Peter Grunberg

Bryndon Hassman

Susanna Lemberskaya

Kathleen Kelly

Philip Eisenberg

Prompter

Philip Eisenberg

Assistant Stage Directors

Laurie Feldman

Paula Suozzi

Peter McClintock

Fight Coordinator

Richard Lane

Movement Assistant

Victoria Morgan

Stage Manager

Theresa Ganley

Scenery constructed in

San Francisco Opera Scenic Studios

Costumes executed by

San Francisco Opera Costume Shop

First performance:

Munich, June 21, 1868

First San Francisco Opera performance:

September 28, 1931

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28 AT 6:30

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31 AT 1:00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3 AT 6:30

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6 AT 6:30

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9 AT 6:30

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12 AT 6:30

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17 AT 6:30

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Eva, Pogner's daughter Karita Mattila

Magdalene, Eva's companion Catherine Keen

Walther von Stolzing,
a Franconian knight Ben Heppner

David, apprentice to Hans Sachs Lars Magnusson

Veit Pogner, goldsmith Jan-Hendrik Rootering*

Sixtus Beckmesser, town clerk Robert Orth*

Kunz Vogelgesang, furrier Dennis Petersen

Konrad Nachtigall, tinsmith Hector Vasquez

Augustin Moser, tailor Randolph Locke

Hans Schwarz, stocking-weaver Steven Condy

Ulrich Eisslinger, grocer Stephen Guggenheim+
Richard Walker (Nov. 12)

Hans Foltz, coppersmith Magnus Baldvinsson+

Balthazar Zorn, pewterer Gary Rideout

Fritz Kothner, baker John Del Carlo

Hermann Ortel, soap-maker Daniel Sumegi+

Hans Sachs, shoemaker Bernd Weikl*

A night watchman Victor Ledbetter

Kenneth Cox (Nov. 3, 6)

Guild members, journeymen, apprentices and townspeople

Corps de ballet

Members of the Oakland Symphony Chorus, Magen Solomon, Director

*San Francisco Opera debut +1993 Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: 16th-century Nürnberg

ACT I St. Catherine's church

INTERMISSION

ACT II A street

INTERMISSION

ACT III Scene 1: The workshop of Hans Sachs

Scene 2: The festival site

The performance of October 31st is
dedicated to the memory of Jess Thomas.

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera.

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

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

The performance will last approximately five hours.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg / Synopsis

ACT I

Walther von Stolzing, a nobleman, has recently arrived in Nürnberg. He has fallen in love with Eva, the daughter of the goldsmith Veit Pagner. As the curtain rises, the congregation in St. Catherine's church sings a chorale. Walther learns that Eva is to be the bride of the winner of a singing contest that will be held the next day by the Guild of the Mastersingers. Eva and her companion Magdalene leave Walther in the care of David, Hans Sachs's apprentice, who explains the complex rules of the contest to Walther. The mastersingers gradually arrive, led by Pagner and Beckmesser, the small-minded town clerk who himself hopes to win Eva's hand. Hans Sachs, the shoemaker, finally arrives, and the baker Kothner calls the roll. Pagner addresses the masters, telling them of the contest and the winner's prize: marriage to Eva, who can approve or reject him, but in any case he must be a mastersinger. Walther is introduced as a candidate for the guild; he is asked to tell of his background and training and is then invited to sing a trial song. Beckmesser, the official marker, is asked to take his position in the voting booth. Walther improvises a song about spring and love, violating a number of the mastersingers' rules, and soon Beckmesser's slate is full of the mistakes he has made. The meeting breaks up in disorder. Only Hans Sachs has heard something new and attractive in Walther's song.

ACT II

It is Midsummer Eve, and the apprentices are preparing for the feast day of St. John. Hans Sachs sits at his workbench, reflecting on the events of the morning and his feelings for Eva. Eva comes from her father's house and questions him about the results of the trial. Sachs, a widower, is himself very fond of Eva, but realizes that he is too old for her. He purposely criticizes Walther in order to test Eva's feeling for him. Realizing that Eva and Walther are in love, Sachs decides to help the young couple. He discovers that they are planning to elope, and prevents it by opening his door and letting light shine brightly across the road. Beckmesser now arrives to serenade Eva, and while he is tuning his lute, Sachs sings his own song. They agree that Sachs will "mark" Beckmesser's song by hammering on the new shoes he is making. The figure being serenaded, however, is actually

Magdalene. The serenade and the hammering wake the neighbors and apprentices, Beckmesser is attacked by the jealous David, and in the ensuing brawl Sachs stops Eva and Walther from running away, taking Walther into his own house. Everybody leaves and the night watchman calls out 11 o'clock.

ACT III

Scene 1—Sachs is in his study and does not hear apologies offered by David for his part in the melee. David then recites a song of his own. Left alone, Sachs reflects on the madness and delusions of the world, and then on the love of Eva and Walther. Walther, who has spent the night in Sachs's house, tells him about a beautiful dream he had. Sachs writes it down, realizing that it is a prize song — only the final stanza is missing. While Sachs and Walther change into their festive robes, Beckmesser enters and finds the song. Thinking it was written by Sachs, he at first intends to steal it, but when Sachs comes back, is allowed to keep it. Eva enters, complaining that her shoes hurt, but really hoping to see Walther. While Sachs is attending to her shoe, Walther returns, and the sight of Eva inspires him to create the final stanza to his song. Calling in David and Magdalene, Sachs christens the new song and elevates David to the rank of journeyman. Everybody leaves for the festival site, where the final contest will take place.

Scene 2—The apprentices and guild members are assembling for the contest. Apprentices dance with some girls and are interrupted by the entrance of the masters, who take their places on the stand. Sachs is lovingly greeted by the people, and he thanks them. The contest begins and Beckmesser tries to fit Walther's poetry to his own melody with disastrous results. Upon hearing the crowd's laughter, he accuses Sachs of having written the song. Sachs disclaims authorship, but invites Walther to show how it should be sung. Walther sings his Prize Song beautifully, wins the prize and Eva's hand, but when Pagner proposes to invest him with the insignia of the Mastersingers Guild, he refuses the honor. Sachs comes forward and persuades him to accept it, explaining that the purpose of the mastersingers is to preserve culture. Eva places Walther's wreath on the head of Hans Sachs while the people of Nürnberg acclaim him.

The performance of November 6th is sponsored by Renaissance Vineyard & Winery.

The performance of November 9th is designated in honor of Mr. and Mrs. William R. Hewlett's membership in the Triple Gold Circle.

The performance of November 12th is sponsored by Meyer Sound Laboratories.

SUPERNUMERARIES

Megan Alexander

Thomas Abels
Steve Bauman
Dave Black
Jim Bowes
Mark Burstein

CHILDREN

Linda Gamino

CORPS DE BALLET

Nora Heiber
Lee Bell

Sarah Alexander

Peter Clark
David Clover
Joshua Contreras
Thomas E. Curran
Cary Davis

Peter Gamino

Marina Hotchkiss
Brian Chung

Kristina Kling

Thomas Ferriole
Mark Fons
Eugenio Gamez
Bill Higgins
Bruce Jewett

Bryn McAfee

Debra Rose
Danny Furlong

Caper Whitfield

Todd Jones
Frank Jorgensen
Bill Klaproth
A. Philip Knoll
Ivan R. Munoz
William Perasso

Peter McAfee

Katherine Warner
John Konetski

Brian Pori
Brian Rawlinson
Bruce Sharlow
Frank Sommers
Michael Strickland
Robert Wicks

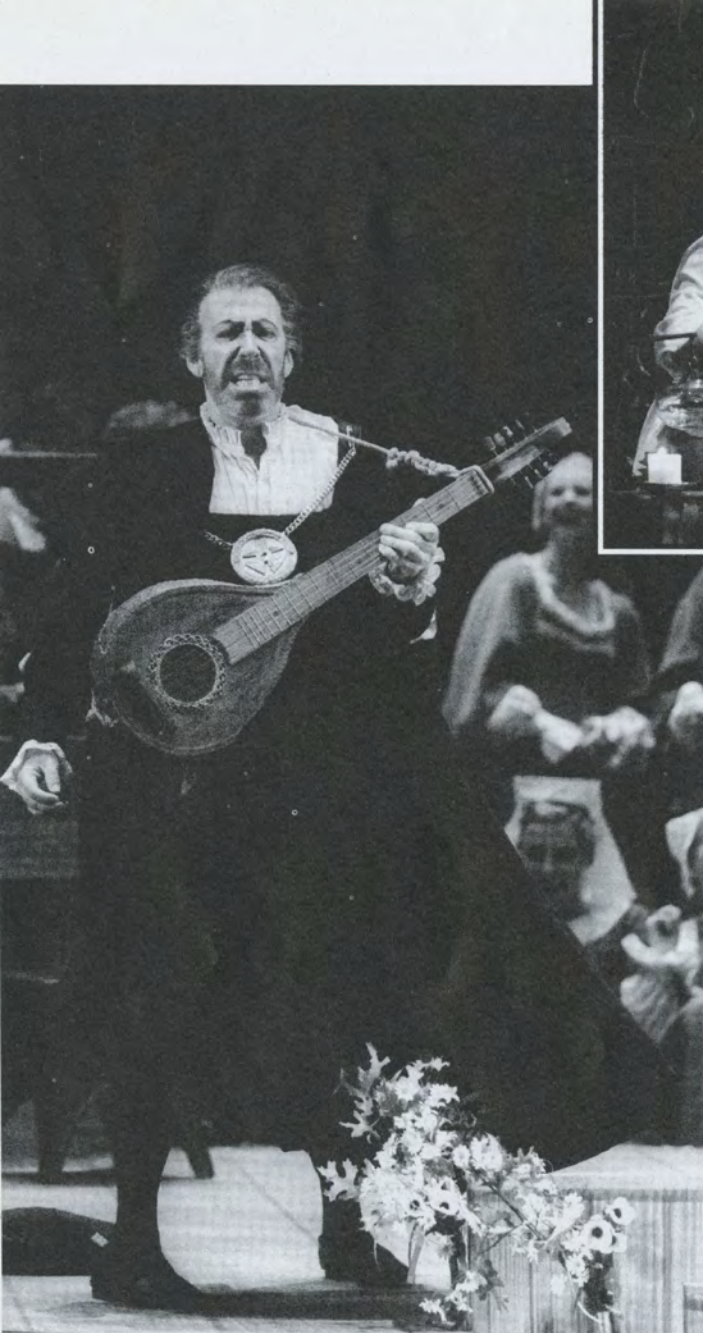
Tyler McAfee

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

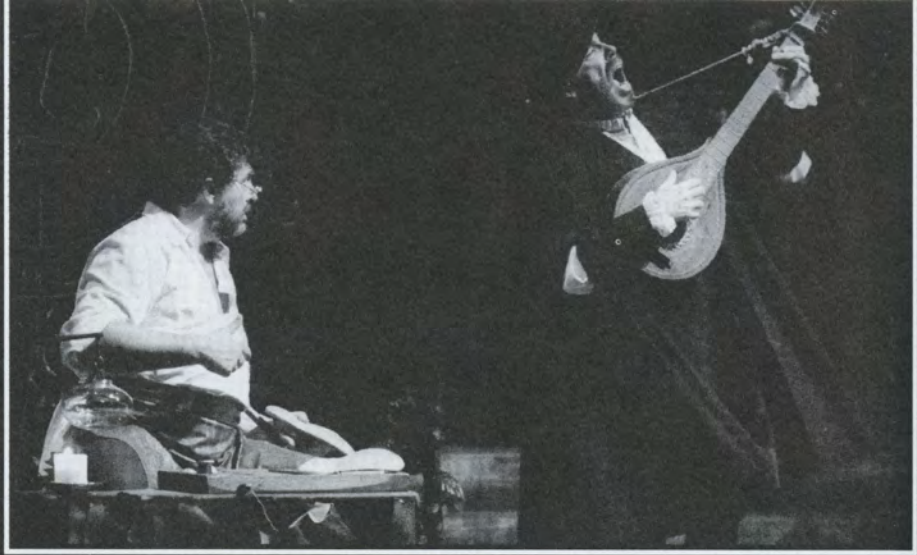
Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

Bernd Weigl





Robert Orth, members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus



Bernd Weikl, Robert Orth

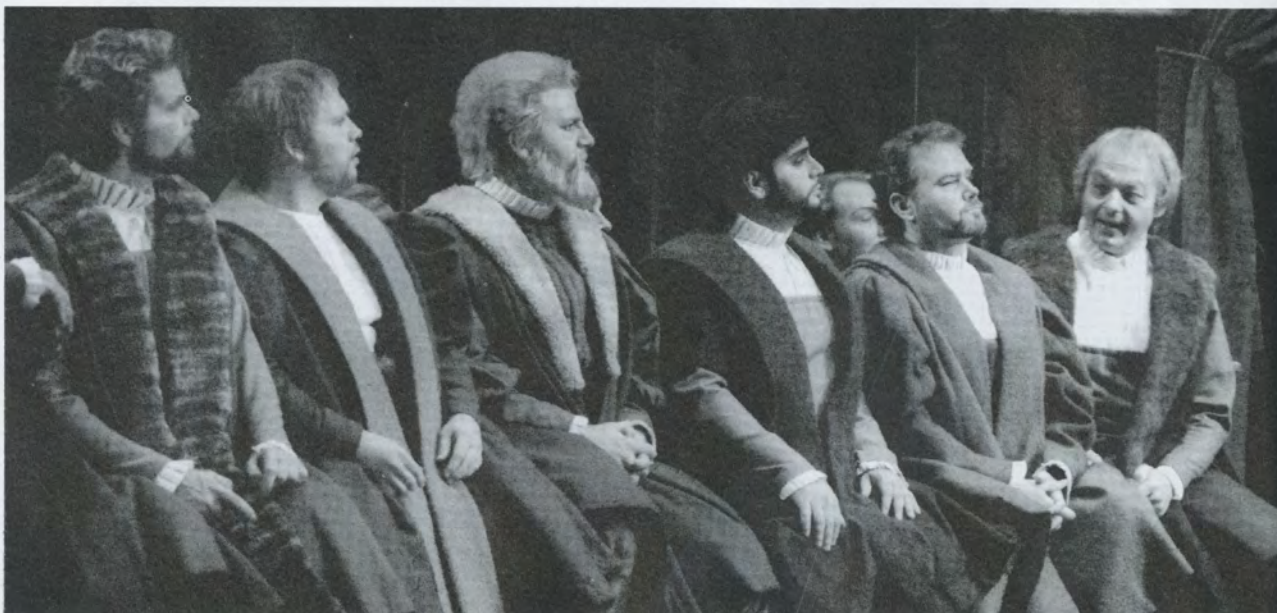


Lars Magnusson

Catherine Keen



(L. to r.) Magnus Baldwinsson, Steven Condy, Daniel Sumegi, Stephen Guggenheim, Randolph Locke, Dennis Petersen





Ben Heppner



Karita Mattila

(L. to r.) Bernd Weikl, Karita Mattila, Ben Heppner



(L. to r.) Jan-Hendrik Rootering, Gary Rideout

(L. to r.) Hector Vasquez, John Del Carlo



Bernd Weikl



Final Scene

Karita Mattila



Bernd Weikl, Jan-Hendrik Rootering

Karita Mattila



La Scala (Pogner in *Die Meistersinger*). Other roles for which he has been acclaimed include Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, King Philip in *Don Carlo*, Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, John Claggart in *Billy Budd*, and King Henry in *Lohengrin*. In addition to his operatic appearances, Rootering has been praised for his performances in concert and recital. Recordings include *Luisa Miller* conducted by James Levine, *Don Giovanni* led by Riccardo Muti, the award-winning Met *Rheingold*, as well as albums of lieder by Strauss, Schubert, Wolf, Schumann and Loewe. Holder of the prestigious title of Bavarian Kammersänger, Rootering was a featured soloist in Leonard Bernstein's internationally televised performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony on the occasion of the removal of the Berlin Wall.

Lars Magnusson portrays David in *Die Meistersinger*, a role which he first sang in 1987 at the Royal Opera House, Stockholm, and has subsequently performed with great success in Paris, Trieste, Marseilles, and in a recent new staging at the Metropolitan Opera. The Swedish tenor began his career as soprano soloist in the cathedral boys choir in his native Göteborg. After studies at the University of Göteborg and the National Opera School in Stockholm, he became principal tenor in 1984 at Stockholm's Royal Opera, where he performed such roles as David, Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, the Duke in *Rigoletto*, as well as Arbace in *Idomeneo* and Pedrillo in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Drottningholm Festival. His international career began in 1987, when he sang Pedrillo at the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, a role he has since performed in Monte Carlo, Nice, Strasbourg, Brussels, Vienna, at the Met, and with San Francisco Opera (1990 debut). Recent highlights include Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* in Stockholm, Carlo di Nolli in Manfred Trojahn's *Enrico* at the Schwetzingen Festival and Munich's Bayerische Staatsoper, and the Steersman in *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Geneva. In addition to concerts in New York, Washington, D.C., Drottningholm and Stockholm, Magnusson has recorded a disc of Swedish and Italian songs with pianist Jan Eyrön.

Bass-baritone **John Del Carlo**, who portrays Fritz Kothner in *Die Meistersinger*, has appeared with the Company in over 20 productions since his 1978 debut. Notable roles he has sung here include Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* ('82), Donner in *Das Rheingold* ('83, '85), Abimélech in *Samson et Dalila* and Rangoni in *Boris Godunov* ('83), Dr. Dulcamara in *L'Elisir d'Amore* ('84), as well as Benoit in *La Bohème* ('86) and Kothner ('81, '86). A native San Franciscan and a graduate of the S.F. Conservatory of Music, he was a member of the S.F. Opera Chorus from 1973 to 1976 and participated in the 1977 Merola Opera Program. He bowed with Spring Opera Theater in 1978 as Achilles in *Julius Caesar*, returning for SPOT productions of *La Périchole*, *Good Soldier Schweik*, and *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*. Also well known at other leading companies in North America and Europe, recent successes include his Metropolitan Opera debut as Kothner, Sulpice in *La Fille du Régiment* and Baron Zeta in *The Merry Widow* with San Diego Opera, several major roles (including Mustafà in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Wotan and the Wanderer in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*, as well as Dr. Dulcamara) for the Cologne Opera, Dr. Bartolo in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for Seattle Opera, and the title part of *Falstaff* (role debut) at Antwerp's Vlaamse Opera. Del Carlo is also praised for his numerous concert performances with leading orchestras both in this country and abroad.

In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, tenor **Randolph Locke** performs the roles of Danieli in *I Vespri Siciliani* and Augustus Moser in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. His most recent appearances include a debut with the Hong Kong Opera singing the title role of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for the first time; his first Don José in

Carmen at Sarasota Opera; his first Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Opera de Bellas Artes in Mexico City; his first Cavaradossi in *Tosca* for Virginia Opera; Hagenbach in Catalani's *La Wally* in Amsterdam; as well as *The Bartered Bride*, *Pelléas et Mélisande* and Prokofiev's *The Gambler* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. During the 1991-92 season, the young tenor scored successes in his debut with Chicago Opera Theater as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* and as Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* with the Flint Symphony. Following his performances as Lukas in the U.S. premiere of Smetana's *Hubička* with the Sarasota Opera, he was invited to perform this role with the National Theater in Prague. Other past appearances have included the title role of *Faust* for Chautauqua Opera, Rodolfo in *La Bohème* for the Virginia Opera, Alfredo in *La Traviata* at the Boston Lyric Opera, and Hagenbach in *La Wally* at Sarasota Opera. Locke, a native of Texas, is a graduate of Southwest Texas State University and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Steven Condry sings the roles of Hans Schwarz in *Die Meistersinger* as well as Sulpice in the student matinee performances of *La Fille du Régiment*. The bass-baritone appeared here last fall as Mityukha in *Boris Godunov*, and was seen in *Salome* and *Capriccio* this summer. As a participant in the 1990 Merola Opera Program, as well as on Western Opera Theater's national tour, he appeared as Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Returning to the Merola Program in 1991, he was seen as Krušina in *The Bartered Bride* and as Baron Douphol in *La Traviata*, repeating the latter role for his Company debut in the student matinee presentation of the opera. Condry received his bachelor of music degree at the University of Hartford's Hartt School of Music, and his master's degree from Yale. He has participated in the Banff Festival of the Arts and the Pittsburgh Opera Young Artists Program. While in Pittsburgh, he made his professional debut as the Jailer in *Tosca*. The young artist won the 1991 Robert M. Jacobson Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, was a winner in the 1993 Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition, and was a finalist in the 1993 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Tenor **Dennis Petersen** sings the roles of Pang in *Turandot*, Kunz Vogelgesang in *Die Meistersinger*, and Chekalinsky in *The Queen of Spades*. Since his 1985 San Francisco Opera debut, he has appeared here for eight consecutive years in over 15 productions. Roles sung on the stage of the War Memorial include Vogelgesang, Don Basilio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the Dancing Master in *Manon Lescaut*, the Marquis in *Lulu*, Pisandro in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, Spoletta in *Tosca*, L'Incredibile in *Andrea Chénier*, as well as parts in *Salome* and *Der Rosenkavalier* this summer. A member of the 1984 Merola Opera Program, he was featured by the Opera Center as a Schwabacher Debut Recitalist in 1988. Recent appearances elsewhere include his debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Mime in *Das Rheingold*, *Der Fliegende Holländer* with the Minnesota Opera, concert performances of *The Queen of Spades* with the Boston Symphony under Seiji Ozawa in Boston and New York's Carnegie Hall, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Magnificat* and Mozart's Requiem with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Donizetti's *Il Duca d'Alba* at the Spoleto Festivals in the U.S. and Italy, *Le Nozze di Figaro* with New Orleans Opera, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Charleston's Spoleto Festival, and performances with the New York Choral Society, New Jersey Symphony, Baltimore Symphony and the Calgary Philharmonic.

Baritone **Victor Ledbetter** appears in two roles this fall: Marcello in *La Bohème* and the Night Watchman in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. In his seventh consecutive season with San Francisco Opera, he has sung over 15 roles with the Company, most recently last fall when he portrayed Shchelkalov in *Boris Godunov*, Roucher in *Andrea Chénier*, and Christophe Colomb II in *Christophe Colomb*. A participant in the 1986 Merola Opera Program and a 1988-89 Adler Fellow, his Opera Center credits include Count



LARS MAGNUSSON



JOHN DEL CARLO



RANDOLPH LOCKE



STEVEN CONDY



DENNIS PETERSEN



VICTOR LEDBETTER



KENNETH COX



GARY RIDEOUT

MAGNUS
BALDVINSSONSTEPHEN
GUGGENHEIM

HECTOR VASQUEZ



DANIEL SUMEGI

Almaviva in Hiram Titus's *Rosina*, Marcello for Western Opera Theater's 1986-87 tour which included performances in China, Scarpia in China's first presentation of *Tosca*, and a Schwabacher Debut Recital in 1989. Ledbetter's recent engagements include the Count in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* for Dublin Grand Opera, Valentin in *Faust* and Sharpless for Cincinnati Opera, Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* for San Diego Opera, Giorgio Germont in *La Traviata* for the New York City Opera, and Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* with Washington Opera. The Georgia native studied at Indiana University with the late Nicola Rossi Lemeni.

In his third season with San Francisco Opera, **Kenneth Cox** appears as the Night Watchman in two performances of *Die Meistersinger* (Nov. 3, 6) and as Publius in *La Clemenza di Tito*. The American bass made his Company debut in 1989 as the Voice of the Oracle in *Idomeneo*, and returned the following year as Antinoo and Il Tempo in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. Cox has quickly gained international attention in recent seasons with several important debuts: With the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Orbazzano in *Tancredi*, with Scottish Opera (European debut) as Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and with the Netherlands Opera as the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*. Additional highlights include Melisso in Handel's *Alcina*, the title role of *The Mikado*, Narbal in *Les Troyens* and Orbazzano with the Los Angeles Music Center Opera; King Philip in *Don Carlo* in Memphis and Indianapolis; Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with Washington Opera; as well as Colline in *La Bohème* and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* with numerous opera companies throughout North America. The artist (who is also in demand on the concert stage) has a string of recent successes which include Osmin at the Netherlands Opera, Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, and a highly acclaimed Arkel in a new staging of *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the Welsh National Opera and in Paris at the Châtelet. Cox can be heard as bass soloist in a recording of Mahler's Eighth Symphony with Robert Shaw and the Atlanta Symphony.

In his third season with the Company, **Gary Rideout** portrays Count Hauk-Sendorf in *The Makropulos Case* and Balthazar Zorn in *Die Meistersinger*. After his San Francisco Opera debut in 1989 in *Lulu* and the family performance of *Falstaff*, the Canadian-born tenor last appeared here in 1990 as Borsa in *Rigoletto* and Dr. Blind in *Die Fledermaus*. Formerly a Resident Artist with Toronto's Canadian Opera Company, he has appeared with that company in numerous productions including *The Return of Ulysses*, *Andrea Chénier*, *The Queen of Spades*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Boris Godunov*, *La Bohème*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *The Turn of the Screw* and *The Makropulos Case*. Elsewhere, he has sung the roles of Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Opera East, and Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* for Calgary Opera. His concert engagements throughout Canada include performances with the Toronto Symphony, Victoria Symphony, Symphony Nova Scotia, and the Ukrainian Millennium Choir. The versatile artist, who received degrees from Michigan State University, York University in Toronto, and the University of Toronto, also performs in musicals, cabaret, film, and legitimate theater.

A 1992-93 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, bass **Magnus Baldvinsson** portrays Count Vaudemont in *I Vespri Siciliani*, Hans Foltz in *Die Meistersinger*, and Surin in *The Queen of Spades*. He appeared with the Company for the first time last fall in *Tosca*, *Boris Godunov*, *Fidelio* and *Andrea Chénier*, and returned for this summer's Celebration of Strauss in *Salome*, *Capriccio* and *Daphne*. A native of Iceland, he studied at the Reykjavik School of Singing, receiving his bachelor of education degree from Teachers University of Iceland and his master of music degree at Indiana University. He made his professional debut at Kentucky Opera in *Salome*. In addition to his operatic work, Baldvinsson has appeared as

soloist with the Icelandic Symphony, Icelandic Chamber Orchestra and 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 second year as an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, tenor **Stephen Guggenheim** sings the roles of Manfredo in *I Vespri Siciliani*, Ulrich Eisslinger in *Die Meistersinger*, and Chaplitsky in *The Queen of Spades*. After making his debut in the Company's Rossini Festival production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, he appeared here last fall in *Boris Godunov*, *Fidelio*, *Don Carlo* and *Christophe Colomb*, and performed in the Celebration of Strauss presentations of *Salome*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Capriccio*. A native of Saratoga, California, he received his bachelor's degree in voice from San Jose State University, and continued his studies at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. A 1991 Merola Opera Program participant, his Opera Center credits include Alfredo in *La Traviata* at Villa Montalvo and on Western Opera Theater's 1991-92 national tour; Don José in *Carmen* which was presented in Guam and Japan; Odoardo in the Showcase production of *Ariodante*; Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* at Grace Cathedral; and a recent tour to Japan in *La Bohème*. Guggenheim has also performed with West Bay Opera, Marin Opera, Pocket Opera, Opera San Jose (where he was Artist in Residence), and the Berkeley Symphony.

Baritone **Hector Vasquez**, who sings the roles of Schaunard in *La Bohème* and Konrad Nachtigall in *Die Meistersinger*, first performed with San Francisco Opera in 1991 in *War and Peace*, *Carmen*, and the student matinee performances of *La Traviata*. He was seen as a Huntsman in *Guillaume Tell* and Fiorello in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* last summer, returned for the 1992 Fall Season as Sciarrone in *Tosca*, Fléville in *Andrea Chénier*, and Belcore in the student matinee presentation of *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and appeared in *Capriccio* this summer. A 1991-92 Adler Fellow, his Opera Center credits include Bengtsson in Reimann's *The Ghost Sonata*, Escamillo in *Carmen* (which toured to Guam and Japan), Nardo in *La Finta Giardiniera*, and Schaunard in *La Bohème* (which toured to Japan earlier this year). As a member of the Merola Opera Program in 1989 and 1990, he portrayed Escamillo in *Carmen* and Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, roles he subsequently sang for Western Opera Theater's national tours. The native of California, who studied at Fullerton College and the University of Southern California, has also performed at the Berliner Festwochen, the Bach festivals of Los Angeles, Carmel and Long Beach, the music festivals of Aspen, Ojai, Lake Arrowhead and Long Beach, as well as with the Long Beach Opera, Marin Opera, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Daniel Sumegi appears as the Customhouse Sergeant in *La Bohème*, Hermann Ortel in *Die Meistersinger*, and Narumoff in *The Queen of Spades*. A 1993 Adler Fellow, he made his Company debut in 1991 as Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier* and Snug in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and returned this summer for *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Capriccio*. The Australian-born bass has performed with the Lyric Opera of Queensland, State Opera of South Australia, Victoria State Opera and the Australian Opera. In 1988, he sang the role of Ramfis in the Sydney season of the International Opera Festival's production of *Aida*, subsequently singing the role of the King for their season in Tokyo. He was a Merola Opera Program participant in 1991, making his U.S. debut as Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata*. Sumegi made his first European appearance last year at Vienna's Konzerthaus in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* (released on CD), and made his British debut in recital for the London Opera Festival at the Southbank Centre. He also took part in the Barcelona Olympic Games Arts Festival in the world premiere of the opera *Asdrubala* for the Gran Teatre del Liceu.

A finalist in the 1992 Luciano Pavarotti/Philadelphia Opera Company International Voice Competition, the artist is the recipient of numerous scholarships and awards. Sumegi recently toured the U.S. in Western Opera Theater's *La Bohème* and traveled with that production to Japan. He makes his Italian debut next year in *Der Freischütz* at the Teatro Comunale in Trieste.

Donald Runnicles is on the podium for *Turandot*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *La Clemenza di Tito*. Music Director of the San Francisco Opera, he inaugurated his tenure in the post with last summer's acclaimed new production of *Guillaume Tell*, returned here last fall for *Boris Godunov*, *Fidelio* and *Don Carlo*, and led this summer's presentations of *Salome* and *Capriccio*. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, he studied music at Edinburgh University, St. John's College, Cambridge, and the London Opera Centre. His professional engagements began in Germany, where he rose from répétiteur in Mannheim in 1980 to General Music Director of the Städtische Bühnen in Freiburg in 1989. During this period he also assisted at Bayreuth, working on the Wagner *Ring* and the centenary production of *Parsifal*. In the process, Maestro Runnicles gained wide experience, conducting more than 50 operas and a symphonic repertoire ranging from early music to contemporary compositions. On the continent, his credits include highly praised engagements with the Vienna State Opera (where he recently led an enthusiastically acclaimed *Ring* cycle as well as performances of *Salome*), Hamburg State Opera, Zurich Opera, Netherlands Opera, Royal Opera Copenhagen, and the Vienna Volksoper. In Great Britain, his acclaimed opera debut was at the 1991 Glyndebourne Festival, where he led Peter Hall's production of *Don Giovanni*. Last fall, he made his native city debut conducting the Scottish Chamber Orchestra during the Edinburgh Festival, where he will lead the opening concert in 1994. His North American debut was in 1988, stepping in for an indisposed conductor on five hours' notice at a Metropolitan Opera performance of *Lulu*. He made a highly acclaimed San Francisco Opera debut with two complete performances of Wagner's *Ring* cycle during the summer of 1990. Recent highlights include *Don Giovanni* at Munich's Bavarian State Opera, *Die Zauberflöte* at the Met, *Tannhäuser* in Bayreuth, and symphonic debuts with the Seattle Symphony, Vienna Symphony and Rotterdam Philharmonic. Future dates include concerts with the Israel Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Orchestre de Paris and Chicago Symphony.

San Francisco Opera General Director **Lotfi Mansouri** shares the staging duties of *The Makropulos Case* with Elisabeth Söderström and directs the revival of *Die Meistersinger*. Born in Iran, he attended college at UCLA and received American citizenship before serving as resident stage director at the Zurich Opera from 1960 to 1966. In 1965 he started working simultaneously at the Geneva Opera, where he became head stage director in 1966 and stayed until 1976. During his years in Switzerland, Mansouri began fulfilling engagements as guest director at various houses throughout Italy (including Milan's La Scala and the companies of Naples, Palermo, Genoa, Turin and Perugia) and North America: Chicago, Houston, Santa Fe, Philadelphia, Tulsa, San Diego, Dallas, and both the Metropolitan and New York City Opera companies. In 1976 he was named general director of the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, a position he held until his appointment as general director of San Francisco Opera in 1988. His Toronto credits include 30 new productions, 12 of them Canadian premieres. His many S.F. Opera credits (nearly 50 productions since 1963) include the 1979 presentation of *La Gioconda* which was telecast live throughout the U.S. and to Europe via satellite; seven operas featuring Joan Sutherland; 1988's opening night production of *L'Africaine*; the highly acclaimed new production of *Lulu* in 1989; *Wozzeck* and *Die Fledermaus* in 1990; *Tristan und Isolde* and *Attila* in 1991; the Company premiere of *Guillaume Tell* last summer; *Christophe Colomb* last fall; and

the new staging of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Recent successes elsewhere have been *Anna Bolena* for Seattle Opera, *Andrea Chénier* at Houston Grand Opera, *The Merry Widow* for the Australian Opera, *Turandot* at the Washington Opera, and the S.F. Opera Center's production of *La Bohème* which was presented in Japan. His film credits include opera sequences in *Yes, Giorgio* and the critically praised 1987 film *Moonstruck*. Mansouri recently received the Chevalier of the Order of Arts & Letters, one of the highest honors the French government can bestow upon a civilian.

Argentine-born director/designer **Roberto Oswald** created the sets for the San Francisco Opera production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, originally seen here in 1971 in his U.S. debut, and revived by the Company in '81 and '86. After studies in his native Buenos Aires, his first professional assignment was with the Teatro Colón where he designed the sets for *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Shortly thereafter he was appointed technical director of that theater, a position he held from 1964 to 1972 and from 1977 to 1980. He began work in the dual capacity of designer and director in 1977, when he mounted a production of *Tristan und Isolde* in Buenos Aires, which led to other directing assignments including *Die Walküre* in Santiago, *Lohengrin* at the Teatro Colón and the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and *Salome* in Caracas. Recent highlights of his career as director/designer include acclaimed productions of *Faust* and a new staging of *Tosca* in Buenos Aires, *Boris Godunov* and *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Santiago, as well as Franchetti's *Cristoforo Colombo* for Greater Miami Opera.

Walter Mahoney designed the costumes for *La Bohème* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Resident Costume Shop Manager for the San Francisco Opera, (and currently celebrating 50 years with the Company), his designs were most recently seen here last fall in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Additional SFO design credits have been *Manon Lescaut* (1988), the same year he interpreted the late Nicola Benois's costume designs for *Maometto II*; the costumes for Ruth Ann Swenson in *Roméo et Juliette* and for Hoffmann's three loves (Olympia, Antonia and Giulietta) in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (1987); as well as the designs for Mirella Freni in *Manon Lescaut* (1983) and for Frederica von Stade in *La Sonnambula* (1984). He also designed the original costumes for Marilyn Horne in *Samson et Dalila* (1983); Katia Ricciarelli in *La Traviata* (1984); Renata Scotto and Cheryl Parrish in *Werther* (1985); and Ghena Dimitrova in *Il Trovatore* (1986). The native San Franciscan began his local association in 1943 in the Wardrobe Department, and worked with Goldstein & Company, the then-supplier of costumes for San Francisco Opera, until 1971. Since then, he has been devoting all of his time to the San Francisco Opera Costume Shop. In addition to his operatic designs, Mahoney's creations have also been seen at numerous Bay Area theater companies, including the Actor's Workshop.

Thomas J. Munn, Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera since 1976, designed the lighting for *I Vespi Siciliani*, *La Bohème*, *Turandot*, *The Makropulos Case*, *Die Meistersinger*, *I Puritani*, and *The Queen of Spades*. He has created the lighting and special effects for over 145 productions for the Company, including the highly acclaimed *Ring* cycle. As scenic adviser, he has designed scenery for SFO productions of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Billy Budd*, *Nabucco*, *Don Giovanni* and *Christophe Colomb*. Munn has designed scenery and lighting for Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theater, ballet, and films. His TV credits include S.F. Opera productions of *La Gioconda* (for which he received an Emmy Award), *Samson et Dalila*, *Aida*, *L'Africaine*, *La Bohème*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Mefistofele*, and *Capriccio*. Credits for other companies include *Andrea Chénier* and *Mefistofele* for the Houston Grand Opera, *Madama Butterfly* for the Netherlands Opera, and scenery and lighting for Hartford Ballet's productions of *Coppélia* and *The Nutcracker*.



DONALD RUNNICLES



LOTFI MANSOURI



ROBERTO OSWALD



WALTER MAHONEY



THOMAS J. MUNN

1993 OPERA PREVIEWS

Due to space restrictions, we can publish only a part of the Bay Area opera previews this year. For details on San Francisco Opera Guild Previews and Insights, please consult the Opera Guild 1993 Fall Season Guide, or call (415) 565-6432.

JUNIOR LEAGUE OPERA PREVIEWS

Previews held in Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, at 12 noon. For further information, please call (415) 923-9056 or (510) 820-6113.

<i>The Makropulos Case</i>	10/13
<i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>	10/27
<i>La Clemenza di Tito</i>	11/3
<i>I Puritani</i>	11/10
<i>The Queen of Spades</i>	11/18

ROBERT GOODHUE'S

FALL OPERA COURSE

Previews begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Crystal Ballroom, Marines' Memorial Building, 609 Sutter, San Francisco. Individual tickets are \$15 at the door. For further information, please call (415) 291-9126.

<i>The Makropulos Case</i>	10/11
<i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>	10/25
<i>La Clemenza di Tito</i>	11/1
<i>I Puritani</i>	11/8
<i>The Queen of Spades</i>	11/15

SAN FRANCISCO CITY COLLEGE OPERA PREVIEWS

City College of San Francisco offers a music course in Opera Previews for the Fall 1993 semester. The course will concern all the operas being performed in the San Francisco Opera fall season. It is taught by Marvin Tartak on Friday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the College, 50 Phelan Ave., Creative Arts Building, Room A-135, in San Francisco. For further information, please call (415) 239-3641.

FRIENDS OF THE KENSINGTON LIBRARY

A free lecture on *La Clemenza di Tito* will be given by Michael Barclay on Monday, November 1 at 7 p.m. at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Ave., Kensington. For further information, please call (510) 524-3043.

MERRITT COLLEGE OPERA LECTURE SERIES

Merritt College is offering an opera preview class, *Introduction to Opera* (Music 13A), with emphasis on the operas of the 1993 fall season, on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 - 10:00 p.m., beginning August 31 and ending in December. Classes will be held at the College, 12500 Campus Drive (off Redwood Road in the Oakland Hills), Building R, Room 100. For further information, please call (510) 436-2430.

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Previews of the operas of the 1993 season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International. Lectures will be presented on the following dates from 7:15 - 9:30 p.m. at OEI, 400 Yale Ave. (at Vassar), in the Kensington section of the Berkeley Hills. Admission to the full series is \$95; individual admission at the door is \$15. For further information, please call (510) 526-2444.

<i>La Clemenza di Tito</i>	10/18
<i>I Puritani</i>	10/25
<i>The Queen of Spades</i>	11/8
<i>The Season in Review</i>	12/13

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA

TRACY DAVIS, Orchestra Manager

1ST VIOLIN

ZAVEN MELIKIAN *Concertmaster*
ADOLF BRUK *Associate Concertmaster**
HEIDI WILCOX *Assistant Concertmaster*
WILLIAM PYNCHON *Assistant Principal*
WILLIAM RUSCONI
AGNES VADAS
LEV RANKOV
BARBARA RICCARDI
ROBERT GALBRAITH
JANICE McINTOSH
LEONID IGUESMAN
JULIA SKIFF

2ND VIOLIN

VIRGINIA PRICE-KVISTAD *Principal*
MARTHA SIMONDS *Associate Principal*
BENI SHINOHARA *Assistant Principal*
EVA KARASIK
GERARD SVAZLIAN
LINDA DEUTSCH
MAKI ISHII
CRAIG REISS
SARAH USHER

VIOLA

KAY STERN *Acting Principal*
DAVID NICASTRO *Acting Associate Principal*
SERGEI RAKITCHENKOV *Assistant Principal*
PATRICIA HELLER
JONNA HERVIG
NATALIA IGUESMAN
THOMAS HEIMBERG

CELLO

DAVID KADARAUCH *Principal*
THALIA MOORE *Associate Principal*
DAVID BUDD *Assistant Principal*
NORA PIRQUET
EMIL MILAND
VICTORIA EHRLICH
RUTH STEINON

BASS

JOSEPH LESCHER *Principal*
JON LANCELE *Associate Principal*
STEVEN D'AMICO *Assistant Principal*
SHINJI ESHIMA
MARK DRURY

FLUTE

JULIE MCKENZIE *Principal*
PATRICIA FARRELL*
JAMES WALKER

PICCOLO

JAMES WALKER

* Principal for one or more operas of the season.

OBOE

JAMES MATHESON *Principal*
DEBORAH HENRY *Assistant Principal**
JANET POPESCO

ENGLISH HORN

JANET POPESCO

CLARINET

PHILIP FATH *Principal*
JOANNE BURKE EISLER
GREGORY DUFFORD

E-FLAT CLARINET

JOANNE BURKE EISLER

BASS CLARINET/BASSET HORN

GREGORY DUFFORD

BASSOON

RUFUS OLIVIER *Principal*
JERRY DAGG
ROBIN ELLIOTT

CONTRABASSOON

ROBIN ELLIOTT

HORN

WILLIAM KLINGELHOFFER *Co-Principal*
DAVID SPRUNG *Co-Principal*
KEITH GREEN
BRIAN MCCARTY
LAWRENCE RAGENT

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REMEMBERING CYNTHIA WOOD

Continued from page 23

that person because he cared about the way things were done at the Met. She had a wonderful relationship with so very many people because if they were interested and cared and dedicated to doing their work, that's what was important to her."

"She was a perfectionist," Ms. Ford says, using a term echoed by virtually everyone associated with Cynthia Wood. "She believed in doing things for the sake of doing them rather than for her own glory. If she pursued anything, she pursued it to the best of her ability. When she had horses, she really was one of the top five people in the world for raising that type of saddlebred horses."

"She didn't fool around in the simple form of anything," Nancy Adler recalls of the woman who became a close personal friend and the godmother of her daughter Sabrina. "She always went to the most complex level. She wasn't content just to own horses; she knew everything there was to know about a horse. She would study extensively, to the point that she was out there with the vets in the middle of the night dealing with sick horses or horses giving birth. She even taught some courses."

"She gave up the horses mainly because

she could no longer ride; her back just wasn't strong enough, and she had to give up horseback riding. She said to me once, 'If I can't actually be a participant in it anymore, then I don't want to do it.' She wasn't interested in just owning these horses and raising them as a pastime; she either wanted to be involved, or forget it."

Her devotion to horses had been no mere idle interest — at the Kentucky State Fair alone, she won an astonishing five classes in five attempts — and her decision was felt throughout the business. As the editor of *The Pacific Saddlebred* put it, "The horse world really missed the boat when we let this remarkable woman escape from our little slice of the world."

Their loss, however, was opera's gain. Even before the closing of her fabled Stalloreggi stable in Montecito in 1982, Cynthia Wood entered a new phase of involvement in opera through her generous donations. "Her interest started with her hands-on involvement with the art form," Mrs. Adler explains, "and then only after that did she become interested in donating. I think Cynthia's biggest motivation was her interest in funding the best there is in music."

The first example of this was San Fran-

cisco Opera's 1976 revival of Richard Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Asked whether she first approached Kurt Herbert Adler about the project, or he first went to her, Mrs. Adler replies, "It was a two-way street. He said, 'Well, I have this idea of something I'd like to do. I've talked to Karl Böhm about it over the years and have wanted to put it together for a long time.' Her kind of reaction would be, 'If you can do it, I'll support it.' In this *Frau* production, she would be aware that it needed a particular size orchestra and posed a lot of technical demands, all those very difficult, musical/technical tricks that need to be accomplished in this opera, and she would then say to Kurt, 'I want to make sure you do this the right way. If you do it, it should be done the way the composer intended it, and if that means you have to open the orchestra pit so that you don't have a reduced orchestra, I would like to pay for that.' That's why it was a nice, complementary relationship, because they each understood that they both aspired to a similar kind of ideal."

Cynthia would go on to sponsor the 1989 revival of *Frau*, as well as co-sponsoring the 1990 *Ring* and the 1991 production of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*. At the same time,

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A snapshot taken in San Francisco in 1965 captured Cynthia Wood (right), about to go for a drive with Mr. and Mrs. Lotfi Mansouri.

she threw herself with renewed intensity into her work as an assistant director. "She was probably one of the most conscientious assistants I've ever had," Mansouri says. "She always thought she never did enough preparation. When I asked her to be my assistant on *Wozzeck*, she learned to play the score on the piano; she worked like hell to learn that. She had such an unbelievably high standard for herself, and she always said, 'Oh Lotfi, I'm not good enough, I'm not doing enough,' and she would come before anybody else and just sit there and work like a dog.

"I think one of the reasons she liked working here was because she was treated professionally. I never put her [as an assistant director] on anything that she had sponsored. I always had her work on productions that she had nothing to do with [financially], because I never wanted her to feel she was on a production because she had given money for it. I wanted to show her my respect for her knowledge and her real sense of dedication."

Volpe seconds that respect. "I think what impressed everyone at the Met about Cynthia was that she understood the art form as a professional. She would spend more time in studying an opera that she was funding than probably we would. She would hire a musical coach, and she would play the score on

the piano to get a thorough understanding of the opera that she was funding at the time. She was a supportive colleague rather than a patron, which was the wonderful thing about her. I must say that as I got to know her, I could see how much she loved the art form and loved music."

Cynthia's love for opera — as well as her fondness for New York, which she fell in love with when she attended high school for one year there — naturally brought her into eventual contact with the Metropolitan Opera and, later, the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Always, the extent and casual style of her largesse amazed those involved. "Cynthia very much wanted to do one project a year at the Met," according to Volpe, "and what I found rather interesting was that she was always concerned that many of these productions were being funded so quickly, and she said to me, 'Now Joe, I hope there's something left for me to do!' Which, of course, was never a problem as far as I was concerned."

Ardis Krainik has similar recollections: "I met Cynthia Wood early in 1987, when she agreed to become the donor of our new production of *Don Carlo* (scheduled for a 1989 revival). During the months that followed our initial meeting, we were in regular communication. We became warm friends, and she became more and more a part of our

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Chicago Lyric Opera's production of *Don Carlo*, which was underwritten by Cynthia Wood.

ROMANO

opera company, joining the board of directors in 1988.

"While I was grateful for Cynthia's considerable generosity, I was soon to have occasion for even greater gratitude. One day at a technical rehearsal of that Verdi work, she asked me why we then had no plans for producing a new *Ring* cycle. I explained that the huge costs involved made such an expensive four-opera project impossible for us to attempt at that time. She asked how much money would be required to make it happen, and I gave her a 'ballpark' figure. Two weeks later, even before the premiere of *Don Carlo* here, she phoned, astonishing me with a simple statement: 'My mother and I will give you your new *Ring*.'"

Cynthia would go on to underwrite a new production of *Parsifal* — her favorite opera — at the Met, as well as the telecast of that work and of the Met's own *Ring* cycle; yet her incredible generosity is not what her friends remember most about her. "I never saw her as an 'arts patron,'" Nancy Adler says; "I saw her as a friend. She was acutely sensitive to beauty of all kinds. It was always a real joy to be with Cynthia, because she saw past what most of us see. I mean, she'd drive along the street and see a dog hanging out of the window of a car, and she always saw the uniqueness of that dog. She'd say, 'Oh my gosh, look at that dog's eyes,' or 'Look at that dog's ears.' Same thing with her horses. She

could relate to beauty in its natural form. It was fascinating; and that was always the motivation in her life: seeking out beauty. She could delight in some of the simplest things of beauty.

"Cynthia could find enormous pleasure just in sitting in a rehearsal. On that particular day, the orchestra may have played brilliantly, and for the first time she discovered that some notation at this point in the score means this or that, and she would derive enormous pleasure from discovering how something was meant to be. It's a world that most people don't enter.

"She really chose to do things that enhanced her environment because they were beautiful, and she wanted to share that. Always, her motivation was to help improve our general lot. I know that's what got her involved in opera telecasts."

"She considered the money she had a wonderful opportunity for her to do things to help people," Ms. Ford says. "She felt that the arts were somewhat neglected by a lot of people, and she donated primarily to the world of art, because she felt that by making possible productions and broadcasts, she could help other people."

Cynthia Wood's efforts to help other people are continuing even beyond her death. "She died on the very day of the premiere of her *Das Rheingold*," Ardis Krainik recalls, "but in true Cynthia Wood fashion, all

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through her final illness, she was thinking of her friends and providing for them in her own inimitable way. She most generously set up a trust to provide the funds that would enable us to present the complete four-year Wagner cycle, carried out by the creative team of conductor Zubin Mehta, stage director August Everding, lighting designer Duane Schuler and set designer John Conklin — the biggest, most ambitious long-range project in our company's history, all made possible by one of its dearest friends — the incomparable Cynthia Wood." Chicago's Ring cycle will continue with *Die Walküre* during the current season, *Siegfried* for next year, *Götterdämmerung* the following year, and the complete, four-opera cycle in March of 1996.

This year the Met will open with a new production of Verdi's *Stiffelio* made possible by Cynthia Wood; "She did make a commit-

ment to the Met to underwrite our new production of *Pelléas et Mélisande* in '94-95," explains Volpe. "As a matter of fact, we did not have that in writing, but her mother and stepfather, Pierre Claeysens, have agreed to honor that commitment. They and Merrillee and the attorney have just been wonderful to the Metropolitan Opera in trying to continue to support the Met in a way that Cynthia wanted.

"I think that as much of a loss as Cynthia's death is on the professional side, for the Metropolitan Opera," Volpe confides, "the greater loss in my mind was the friend."

"She was a very close friend of Jimmy Levine's," Nancy Adler adds, "and they used to spend a lot of time discussing music. She could discuss it on a level that Jimmy — or Karl Böhm or Herbert von Karajan — could discuss musical scores and their intricacy. It was also self-taught. That, I think, perhaps most clearly identifies who she was." □

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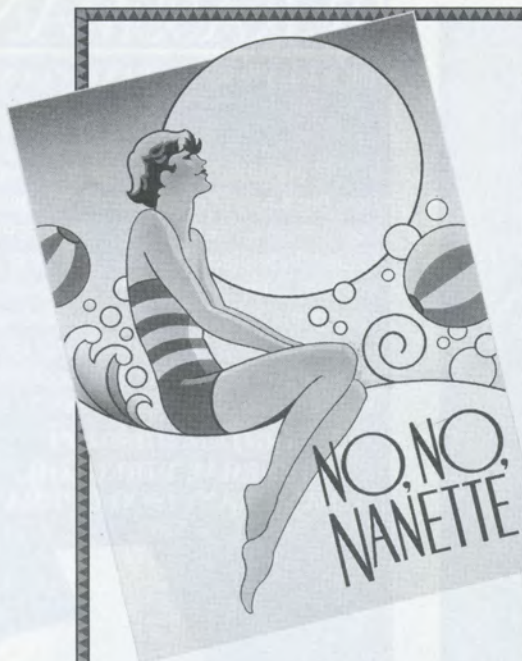
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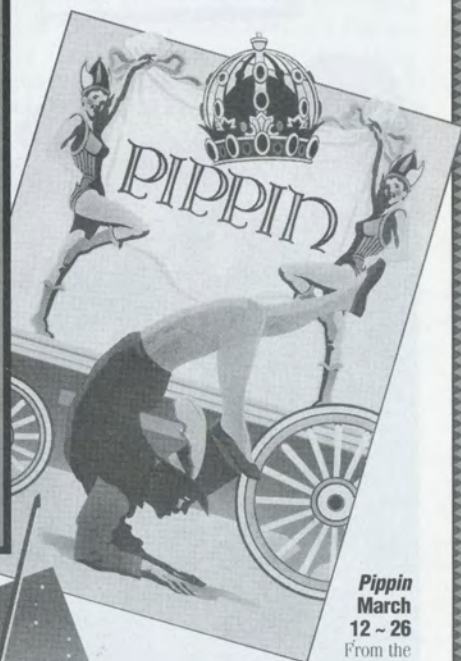
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In order to increase the enjoyment of opera for hearing-impaired members of the audience, the War Memorial Opera House is equipped with a Sennheiser Listening System. Wireless headphones and induction devices (adaptable to hearing aids) are available 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.

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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 on Wednesday and Saturday, and from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Sunday on the following dates:

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Wednesday, November 17
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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 - 2:00 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.

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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, American Express and MasterCard). Tickets are also available on a limited basis through BASS and STBS outlets.

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Wheelchair accessible restrooms are located in the lower lounge. Wheelchair accessible public telephones including "TDD" are located in the northeast corner of the lobby.

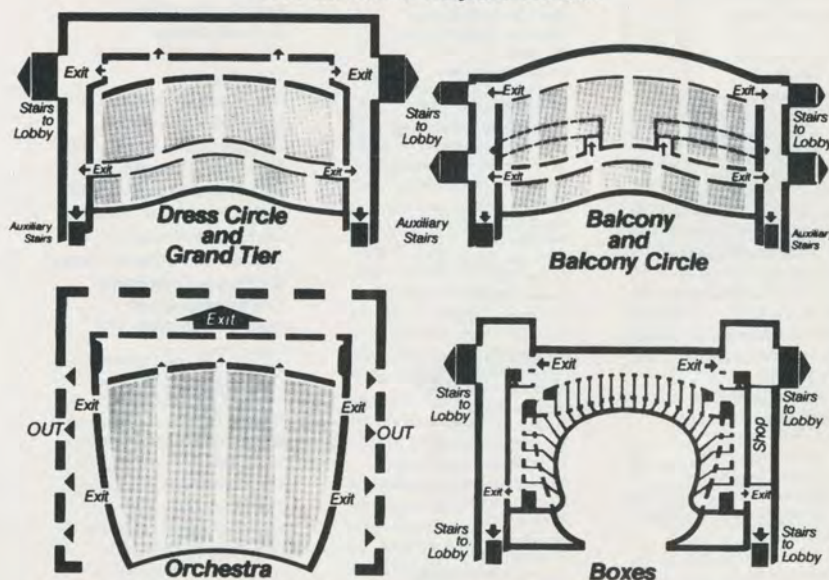
For the safety and comfort of our audience all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at the Opera House cloakrooms.

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



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