

Pikovaya Dama
(The Queen of Spades)

1993-1994

Tuesday, November 23, 1993 7:30 PM
Friday, November 26, 1993 7:30 PM
Wednesday, December 1, 1993 7:30 PM
Saturday, December 4, 1993 7:30 PM
Wednesday, December 8, 1993 7:30 PM
Sunday, December 12, 1993 1:30 PM

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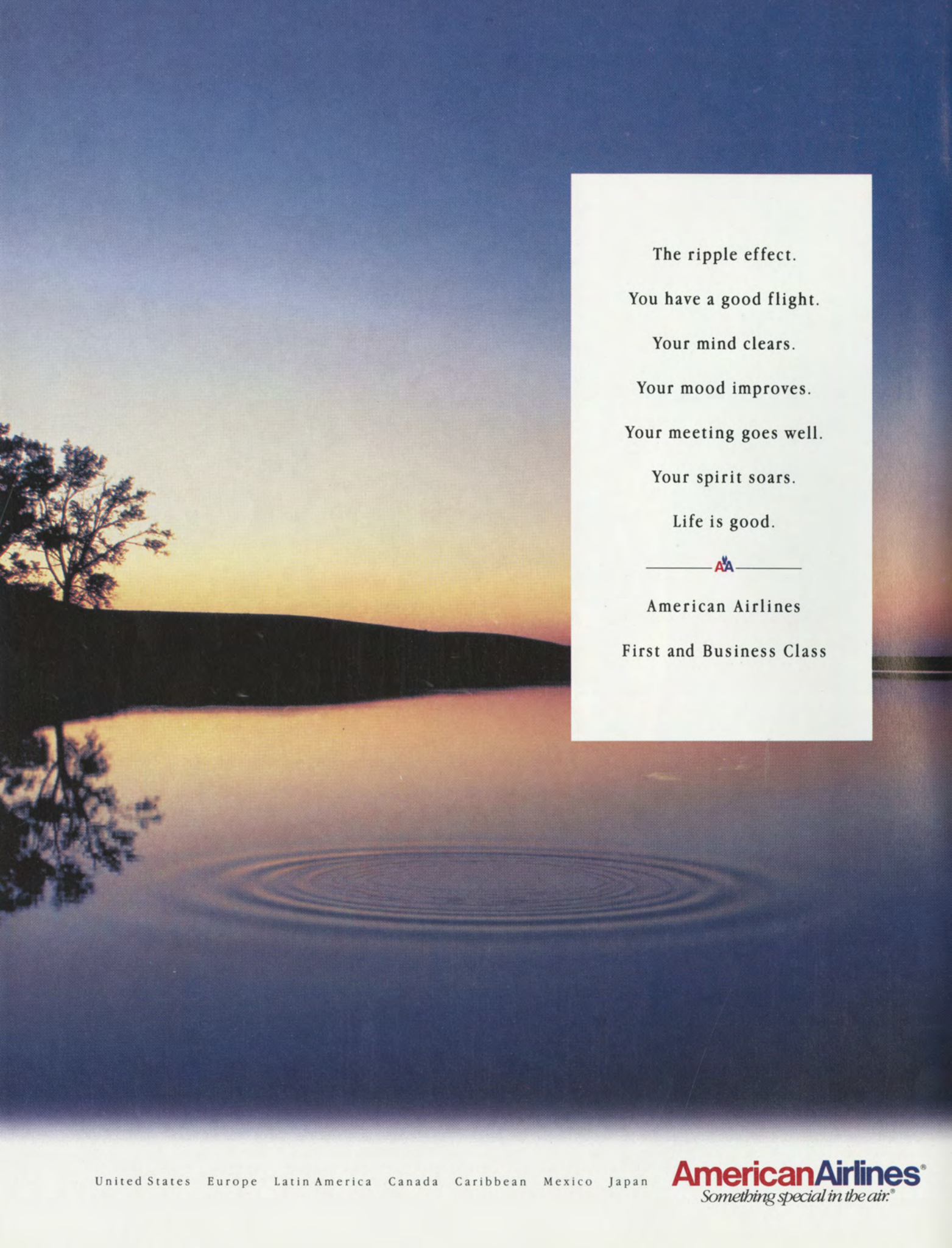
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1993 SEASON



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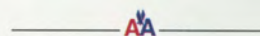
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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

The Queen of Spades

1993 Fall Season
Vol. 71, No. 12

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- 16 **A Masterpiece of Musical Surrealism** by Richard Taruskin
In addition to providing a general background to *The Queen of Spades*, the author finds all manner of hidden treasures in the familiar score.
- 35 **Leonie**. By Timothy Pfaff
By returning to San Francisco Opera as the Countess in *The Queen of Spades*, the phenomenal Leonie Rysanek caps her local career, which began with her Company (and U.S.) debut here in 1956.
- 42 **Celebrating Donna Petersen**
Versatile San Francisco mezzo-soprano marks the fortieth anniversary of her San Francisco Opera debut.

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COVER

The Queen of Spades, 1993

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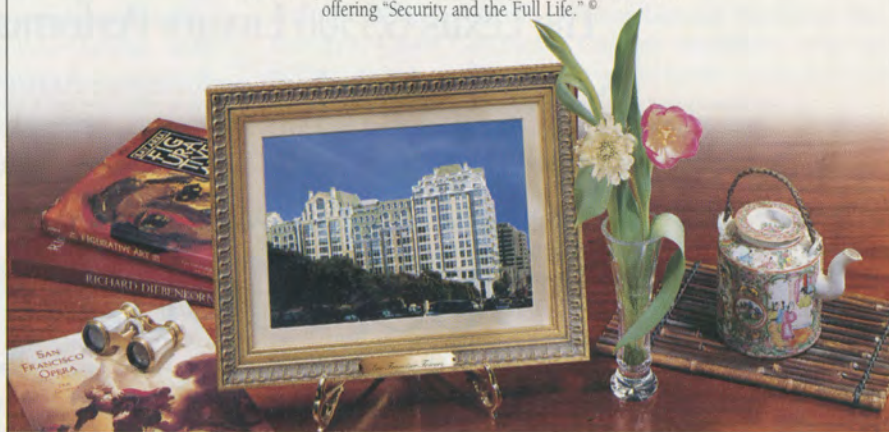
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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

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

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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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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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Fox, Švejda**, Jedlička**, Burden,
Patriarco+, Rideout
Mackerras/Mansouri/Söderström*/
Bauer-Ecsy/Stennett/Munn

Oct. 14	7:30 p.m.	Oct. 27	8:00 p.m.
Oct. 17	2:00 p.m.	Oct. 30	8:00 p.m.
Oct. 22	8:00 p.m.		

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Locke, Sumegi+, Condy, Baldvinsson+
Runnicles/Mansouri/Oswald/
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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.
Nov. 3	6:30 p.m.	Nov. 17	6:30 p.m.
Nov. 6	6:30 p.m.		

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San Francisco Opera Premiere
Production new to San Francisco
La Clemenza di Tito Mozart
Kazarnovskaya*/Lister (Nov. 22, 24,
28), Von Stade, Graham, Parrish;
Heppner (Nov. 7, 11, 19)/TBA, Cox
Runnicles/Takazauckas*/Lynch/
Ramicova/Arhelger

Nov. 7	2:00 p.m.	Nov. 22	8:00 p.m.
Nov. 11	7:30 p.m.	Nov. 24	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 13	8:00 p.m.	Nov. 28	2:00 p.m.
Nov. 19	8:00 p.m.		

Production from Houston Grand Opera
and Scottish National Opera.

Production new to San Francisco
I Puritani Bellini
Anderson, Shigematsu+; Miles**,
Kunde, Frontali*, Patton+, Caputo+
Arena/Serban/Eaton*/Yeargan*/
Munn

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.		

Production from the Welsh National
Opera.

The Queen of Spades Tchaikovsky
Guleghina, Rysanek, Petersen,
Claycomb+, Guo, Plette; Atlantov,
Redkin*/Quilico (Dec. 4, 8, 12),
Alexeiev, Petersen, Baldvinsson+
Guggenheim+, Sumegi+, Locke
De Waart/Copley/O'Hearn/Ray/Munn

Nov. 23	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 4	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 26	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 8	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 1	7:30 p.m.	Dec. 12	1:30 p.m.

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UPCOMING BENEFIT EVENTS

"Celebration of the Seasons" at Gump's

San Francisco Opera Guild presents its 3rd annual holiday benefit party at Gump's on Monday, December 6. This year's theme is "Home for the Holidays," and is a festive celebration of the closing of the 71st San Francisco Opera season while getting into the holiday mood at one of Union Square's foremost retail establishments. Last year's party was a smashing success and sold out early to 500 individuals. Marcia Messmer and Laurie Chase are this year's co-chairmen; telephone the Opera Guild at (415) 565-6432 for tickets.

Opera Guild's Annual Scholarship Luncheon

The final event of the Guild's season is scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 1994, with the Annual Meeting and Scholarship Luncheon. Guild members will have the opportunity to meet and dine with the outstanding singers of the San Francisco Opera Center who have been chosen as this year's scholarship recipients. Location to be announced; telephone (415) 565-6432 for tickets.

MEROLA SPRING GALA SCHEDULED

San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program has announced its plans to hold the annual spring benefit dinner on Tuesday, March 15, 1994, at the San Francisco Marriott Hotel. Co-chairmen Jacquy Piallat and Ann Paras have selected the theme of "Merola Magic: The Court of the Queen," based on Massenet's opera *Manon*, and have planned an extraordinary evening of fine dining, operatic entertainment, splendid costumes and a very special guest star. Last season's benefit sold out early; telephone for tickets and further information: (415) 565-6427.

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Kathleen Brett*	Maria Guleghina	Karita Mattila	Marie Plette*	Carol Vaness
Laura Claycomb+	Yanyu Guo	Lucia Mazzaria*	Patricia Racette	Verónica Villarroel*
Catherine Cook	Ljuba Kazarnovskaya*	Felicity Palmer*	Leonie Rysanek	Frederica von Stade
	Catherine Keen	Ann Panagulis	Mika Shigematsu+	Ealynn Voss*
Valery Alexeiev	Kenneth Cox	Gregory Kunde	James Morris	Michel Sénéchal
Roberto Aronica**	Fernando De La Mora	Kevin J. Langan	Timothy Noble	William Shimell
Vladimir Atlantov	John Del Carlo	Victor Ledbetter	Earle Patriarco+	Philip Skinner
Theodore Baerg	Craig Estep	Luis Lima	Chester D. Patton+	Daniel Sumegi+
Magnus Baldvinsson+	Tom Fox	Randolph Locke*	Dennis Petersen	Miroslav Švejška*
William Burden	Joseph Frank	Frank Lopardo	Vladimir Popov	Michael Sylvester
Renato Capecchi	Roberto Frontali*	Lars Magnusson	Gino Quilico	Michel Trempont
James Caputo+	Stephen Guggenheim+	Chris Merritt	Vladimir Redkin*	Hector Vasquez
Graham Clark*	Ben Heppner	Alastair Miles**	Gary Rideout	Bernd Weikl*
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Roberta Bowman	Marcie Lawer	Virginia Pluth-Rivera	Sue Ellen Scheppeke	Lola Watson
Pamela Dale	Tamaki McCracken			
Daniel Becker	Robert Delany	Jim Meyer	Valery Portnov	Dan Stanley
Richard Brown	Timothy Foster	Raymond Murcell	Tom Reed	Jere Torkelsen
David Burnakus	Cameron Henley	David Oliver	Colby Roberts	Don Tull
Frank Daniels	Ken Johnson	John Owens	Sigmund Seigel	Richard Walker
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Jill Anderson	Ana Duma	Nadja Matisoff	Bonnie Shapiro-	Delia Voitoff
Candida Arias-Duazo	Joy Flynn	Katherine McKee	Haroutunian	Mitzie Weiner
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Theresa Cardinale	Leslie Hassberg	Julia Ronskaya	Shannah Timms	Susan Witt
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At the beginning of the year 1888, a composer named Nikolai Semyonovich Klenovsky (1853-1915), who worked as a staff conductor at the Moscow Bolshoi Theater and had produced several ballets there (of which one, *The Delights of Hashish*, had been sensationally successful), decided it was time to try his hand at an opera. At the recommendation of his boss, Ivan Alexandrovich Vsevolozhsky, the Intendant of the Russian Imperial Theaters, Klenovsky turned to Modest Ilyich Tchaikovsky, the famous composer's brother, who had begun making a name for himself as a dramatist, with a request that Tchaikovsky furnish him with a libretto on the subject of Pushkin's novella *The Queen of Spades*.

Tchaikovsky wrote two scenes for Klenovsky and then in a letter to his brother expressed his disappointment that he was not writing them for Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. But the timing was poor. The composing Tchaikovsky had just suffered a fiasco with a mammoth opera after a play by Ippolit Shpazhinsky called *The Enchantress*, and wrote back to his brother that from now on he was going to concentrate on symphonic music. "I'll only go back to opera if a subject occurs to me that really heats me up. A subject like *The Queen of Spades* does not excite me and I could only do a mediocre job on it."

As an operatic subject, Pushkin's novella might indeed have seemed unpromising. At barely 10,000 words, it was a masterpiece of what Dostoyevsky called "cold fury," and a study in ironic narrative dispatch that ended with one of Pushkin's trademark anticlimaxes. On the face of it, the tale might have served at best for a brisk one-acter, insofar as a study in ugly monomania suggested musical adaptation at all. Having

A Masterpiece of Musical Surrealism

By RICHARD TARUSKIN

overheard from his cronies that a certain old countess possessed the secret of winning infallibly at cards, an impoverished young officer resolves to wrest it from her. Under the pretext of a rendezvous with his quarry's young ward and poor relation, in whom he has been feigning a romantic interest, he gains entry to the countess's house and hides in her bedroom, where, in Pushkin's unforgettable phrase, he is "witness to the repulsive mysteries of her toilette." He frightens the old woman to death with his entreaties but is later visited by her ghost, who discloses the secret ("Bet on three, then seven, then ace"). When he tries to play the cards, however, he finds he is holding the queen of spades in place of the ace, and loses not only his fortune but his mind.

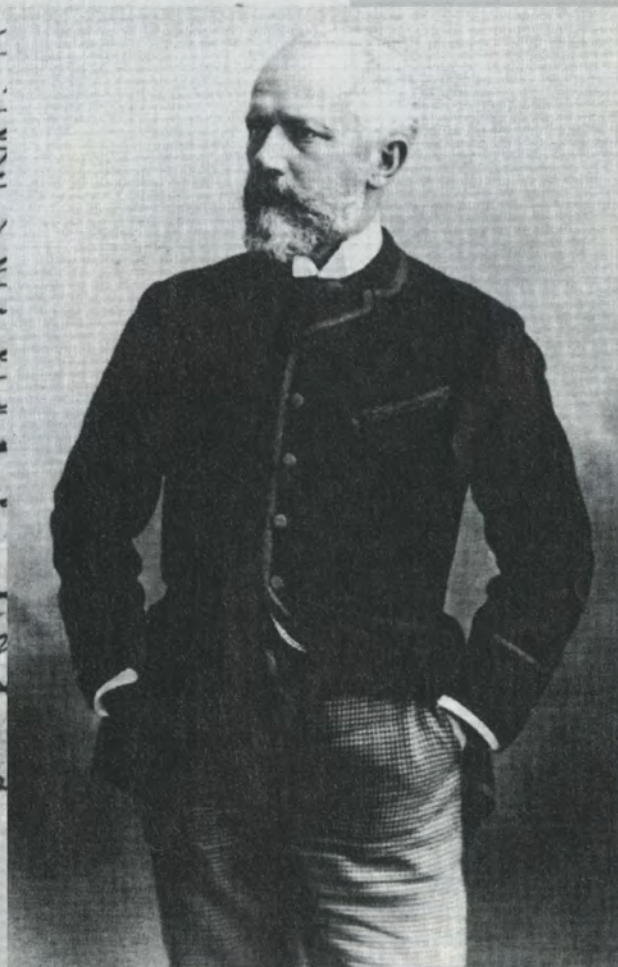
Fortunately for us, Klenovsky evidently failed to see beyond the story's drawbacks, and pulled out of the project. Still, because the libretto was commissioned by the theater, another staff composer, Nikolai Feopemptovich Solovyov (who, doubling as critic, would later write a most uncollegial review of Tchaikovsky's opera), was given right of refusal before Tchaikovsky had another chance at his brother's libretto. (Meanwhile, having got over his dis-Enchantment, the composer had started casting around for subjects and collaborators; one of the most intriguing items in the library at the Tchaikovsky museum in Klin is a copy of Anton Chekhov's second collection of stories with an inscription "To P.I. Tchaikovsky from his future librettist, 26 October 1889.")

Together, the brothers found ample ways of heating up *The Queen of Spades*, some of them suggested (or demanded) by Vsevolozhsky, who thus deserves some credit for the spectacular result. The terse, tense narrative was fitted out with all kinds of leisurely interpolations (ten set pieces out of

Richard Taruskin is Professor of Music at the University of California at Berkeley. He has contributed more than 160 articles on Russian subjects to the New Grove Dictionary of Opera, and his book, Mussorgsky: Eight Essays and an Epilogue, has recently been published by the Princeton University Press.

(Below) Modest Tchaikovsky's manuscript of the libretto to *The Queen of Spades* bears the composer's annotations on the left side.

(Below, right) Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in a photo taken around the time of composition of *The Queen of Spades*.



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twenty four!) that at times appear to dwarf the original plot altogether. The action was transposed into the nineteenth-century fairyland known as "the eighteenth century" so as to provide a pretext for the most sumptuous interpolation of all, the pastoral divertissement (or *intermède*) in the Act II ballroom scene. And Pushkin's ghoulish parody of "horror" was supplemented with an admixture of more typically operatic "tragedy": a genuine romantic intrigue between the officer (Gherman) and the countess's ward (Lisa), now her grand-daughter and his social superior, ending in their double (though not simultaneous) suicide. For the sake of this subplot a new major character was contrived: Prince Yeletsky, Gherman's high-born rival for Lisa's hand, who gets a show-stopping love aria in Act II, and who steps in as Nemesis in the concluding card game to call Gherman's bluff and precipitate his demise.

For these decorative and melodramatic alterations (and also perhaps on account of the opera's luxuriant reliance on virtuoso singing, for which the composer had found a pair of remarkable protagonists in the husband-and-wife team of Nikolai and Medea Figner, who sang the roles of Gherman and Lisa at the St. Petersburg premiere) the Tchaikovsky brothers have been castigated many times over by guardians of literature for whom Pushkin is sacrosanct. *The Queen of Spades* is often second-guessed by producers and adapters, notably a Soviet team under the great director Vsevolod Meyerhold, whose notorious Yeletsky-less "repushkinization" of the opera was shown at the Leningrad Maly Theater in 1935. But the generations of puritanical, unimaginative critics that have rebuked and adjusted the work seem not to have been able to hear the music to which the cannily adulterated libretto gave rise.

That music came pouring out of Tchaikovsky in an unprecedented rush. "I want to pull off an unbelievable trick," he wrote to his publisher, Jurgenson, on February 2, 1890, three days after starting work:

I want to write an opera for the coming season! Such is the wish of the theater directorate, which is extremely benevolent towards me, and I have no reason not to try and avail myself of that benevolence. Besides, I admit that I like work on a deadline; I love it when people are waiting on me, rushing me. And this does not tell in the least on the quality of my works: *The Sleeping Beauty* (ballet) is probably the best thing I've ever done, and I wrote it incredibly fast.

The Queen of Spades broke all records. The whole opera was composed in Florence in 44 days of frenzied inspiration (31 January - 15 March 1890), the composer constantly outrunning his brother's text and supplementing it at the dictate of his hectic muse. By mid-June the orchestration was complete (four

months and twenty days after the composition had begun) and the opera was submitted to the theater and to Tchaikovsky's publisher Jurgenson. The premiere took place on December 7th, just over ten months after the first sketches were put on paper. "All but supernatural speed!" remarked the normally phlegmatic operatic chronicler Vsevolod Cheshikhin.

The inordinate rapidity of composition was matched by an unusually tight construction and (as Tchaikovsky, in his enthusiasm,

other Pushkin opera, which has met with similar resistance from the literary.

Earlier, Tchaikovsky had confided to Modest, "I am so far firmly convinced that *The Queen of Spades* is a good, and mainly, a very original piece, speaking not from the musical point of view but in general." What critics have been slow to recognize is precisely what the composer meant when he wrote with such uncharacteristic confidence about his originality. Tchaikovsky's penultimate opera is the first and possibly the greatest



Medea and Nikolai Figner, 1890 creators of the roles of Lisa and Gherman, pose for the photographer in the same year.

more or less predicted) a quality of imagination unmatched in its way in all of Russian opera. The composer's many letters to his librettist brother abound with expressions of happy amazement at his own powers of disciplined invention. "Well, Modya, if, God willing, I finish the opera, it will come out . . . shik (i.e., chic, choice)!" was typical. (So much for Tchaikovsky the neurotic worrywart.) "Either I am horribly mistaken, Modya, or the opera will be my *chef d'oeuvre*" was the final verdict — one that the international operatic audience has ratified as *The Queen of Spades* has gradually gained on the popularity of *Eugene Onegin*, Tchaikovsky's

masterpiece of musical surrealism. It marks the beginning of a new stage in Tchaikovsky's evolution as musical dramatist, one that, had he lived out a normal span of years, would surely have marked him as one of the guiding geniuses of the Russian "Silver Age."

The music in *The Queen of Spades* performs a miracle similar to the one accomplished by Tchaikovsky's other much-maligned Pushkin opera: it keeps up a running commentary on social milieus and relations, and the emotional ills they beget. But where the music to *Eugene Onegin*, like the celebrated narrative voice in its literary source, recreated "reality" with magnificent precision, the music to *Pikovaya Dama*, while drawing on the same ballroom and salon resonances,



floods the action in an atmosphere of hallucination, corresponding in tone not to the source of its plot but to another work of Pushkin's, the narrative poem *The Bronze Horseman*, which famously portrays the Russian capital as a dream-city, a will-o'-the-wisp on the northern bogs. That poem is often said to be the precocious progenitor of the Russian Symbolist movement. The generalization may be extended to encompass music as well as literature if Tchaikovsky's mastery of the grotesque, and its chilling correlation with aberrant psychology, is given due recognition.

The main hallucinogen in *The Queen of Spades* is not harmony (though there are chromatic leitmotif transformations aplenty, and the whole-tone scale makes its customary spectral appearance, à la russe, with the ghost) but orchestration. Tchaikovsky reveals an unparalleled genius for timbral grotesquerie (much practiced in his little-known orchestral suites), which reaches its height in the overtly hallucinatory scene of ghostly visitation, when the dead countess confronts the deranged protagonist. The prefatory entr'acte is a weirdly feverish montage of church music (the countess's *panikhida*, or burial service) and barracks music (the reveille), both authentic artifacts of "reality," searched out for the composer by his brother. But the distorted treatment they receive juxtaposes divided violas and cellos in the pit, *pianissimo*, against snare drum and trumpet offstage, *fortissimo*, producing a sound balanced as to volume, but, like Gherman's mind, grossly unbalanced in perspective. (Later the *panikhida* will be resumed by an offstage chorus singing in the wind's voice, an indistinct, distant *fortissimo*.) Even the

less obviously illustrative music in this scene offers eerie combinations of timbre seemingly at odds with expression, as when the English horn calls lyrically to the bass clarinet over an accompaniment of staccato bassoons, to accompany Gherman's remorseful recollection of his crimes.

Rimsky-Korsakov, nominally the past master of coloristic orchestration, could not understand Tchaikovsky's psychological grotesques: to him the music of his rival's late period was just "written topsy-turvy: music suitable for strings had been allotted to wind instruments and vice versa, and hence it occasionally sounds downright fantastic, but at altogether unsuitable moments." This remark tellingly parallels the way in which Tolstoy's novels were often misunderstood by contemporaries. Both Tchaikovsky and Tolstoy habitually violated the normal obligations of genre, but with such art-concealing art that their supreme sophistication is often misread as naïveté.

The "Mozart" idiom of the neoclassical interlude in *The Queen of Spades* is an excellent case in point. It is a critical commonplace to take note of how ineptly it imitates the Viennese master: the instrumentation is all wrong, tell-tale harmonic anachronisms peep through everywhere, the overly "sensitive" dynamics and articulations are those of the late nineteenth century. The composer could hardly have been less aware of these "solecisms" than his critics (just as he knew as well as they that a sarabande has three, not four, beats to a measure—the one at the end of *The Sleeping Beauty*, written the year before, is perfectly "correct"); they are precisely the means through which he conjures up the necessary aura of unreality, as if to say (with Gherman) "What is our life? A game! Good and evil — only dreams!"

The reason why Tchaikovsky's phantasmal romanticism can seem to presage the incipient Russian Symbolist movement has to do with a network of sinister doubles that haunt the opera on every level, drawing subtle, chilling correspondences (to use Baudelaire's word) between the surface action and its occult underpinnings. Pushkin himself had written (mock-superstitiously) of chance or coincidence as the "powerful, instantaneous tool of providence." Just so, Tchaikovsky contrives all kinds of "chance" recurrences and transformation of musical motives that link (seemingly) random events and, in particular, bind the wealth of decorative and genre interpolations to the main plot line in unexpected, spine-tingling ways.

Thus to inspect Tchaikovsky's ballad from scene 1, in which the legend (or joke) of the three cards is first related, as a source of leitmotives, is to penetrate in jarringly abrupt and ironic fashion from the surface of the plot to the occult level, and to see the fatal net begin to draw around the fascinated Gherman. What on the surface is just a jovial set piece characterized by a seemingly routine "classical" symmetry yields up, on the



Before this season, San Francisco Opera presented *The Queen of Spades* in 1963, 1975, 1982 and 1987. Our first Gherman was James McCracken (top); our most recent was Wieslaw Ochman, shown in a 1987 photo with Stefka Evstatieva, who portrayed Lisa.

one hand, an opening phrase that, tortured and skewed beyond belief (but not beyond recognition), governs all those moments in which Gherman makes contact, through the countess, with the world beyond (or it, through her, with him), until, in the last scene, it crushes him with the full weight of the orchestra. On the other hand, the ballad's refrain ("three cards, three cards, three cards") resonates as a sinister double with Gherman's just-completed cavatina ("I don't even know her name"), in which he confides his hopeless love for Lisa, linking that irresistible attraction with the fatal imperative that will doom them both.

The music that opens the first scene, accompanying innocent children's games and the banter of nannies, governesses and wet nurses, is a subtle embroidery of the climactic phrase of the orchestral introduction, which later will carry all of Gherman's most fervent confessions to Lisa and is last heard at the other end of the opera as he thinks of her one last time before falling dead. Thus, he is stalked by malign destiny from the very outset. Lisa is stalked as well. Pauline's unaccountably gruesome romance in the second scene (to a period text by Konstantin Batyushkov, Pushkin's older contemporary) is uncannily — and, of course, "unwittingly" — echoed in Gherman's amorous entreaties, thus ineluctably identifying the opera's heroine with the dead maiden in the song: fate has left another calling card. And yet another, when the opening phrase recurs, in ghostly muted strings accompanied by a feverish ostinato that has its own history in the opera, to set the scene for the fatal episode in the countess's boudoir.

Such linkages go far toward explaining both the sheer abundance of apparent musical digression in the work and its uncanny equiponderance with the terse main line of action. They are not digressions at all — or only digressions at first hearing. The more familiar one becomes with the score, the more correspondences of this kind one (perhaps unconsciously) discovers, the more one is seized with terror at the sound of outwardly trifling musical confections. One begins to hear with paranoiac ears — Gherman's ears. Only the greatest dramatic composers can inspire this sort of intense and unaccountable empathy — what Freud would later call "cathexis."

Some of the fatal correspondences in Tchaikovsky's score reach outside the immediate context of the work into the realm of quotation and allusion, just as the libretto is evocatively enriched with verses by such other period poets as Karabanov, Derzhavin and Zhukovsky. The very first music the audience hears, at the outset of the orchestra introduction, is an adaptation of Tomsy's ballad to the rhythm of the main theme in the first movement of Tchaikovsky's recently

completed Fifth Symphony in E minor (1888), whose portentous motto theme clearly echoes as well through the E-minor orchestral music at the beginning and the end of the opera's penultimate scene, at the river embankment, which ends in Lisa's martyrdom.

The new (that is, archaic) temporal setting of the opera gave Tchaikovsky the pretext for a whole slew of stylistic allusions and actual quotations. The Finale of the rococo *intermède* in Act II, marked "tempo di minuetto" but actually a polonaise, adapts to its meter a choral refrain from *Le fils-rival*, an opera comique composed in 1787 by Dmitri Stepanovich Bortnyansky (later famous for his church music) for the court of the crown Prince Paul, who became tsar on the death of his mother, Catherine the Great. The ballroom scene reaches its climax with acclamations to Catherine herself, sung to the melody of a panegyric polonaise composed in 1791 by Osip (or Jozef) Kozłowski, a naturalized Pole who began his career in Russia as the protégé of Prince Potyomkin (Potemkin), Catherine's favorite. (The *intermède* also contains more or less identifiable allusions to the peasant chorus from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and the canzonetta "Plaisir d'amour," popularly attributed to Padre Giovanni Battista Martini, the famous Bolognese pedagogue with whom Bortnyansky, among other Russians abroad, had taken lessons.)

The Bortnyansky and Kozłowski tunes — both of them cast in Tchaikovsky's adaptation as polonaises, the most elevated of ballroom genres — are quite similar, especially in their cadences (descents from the fourth scale degree to the tonic incorporating a dotted polonaise rhythm). It is altogether characteristic of Tchaikovsky's dramaturgy that he would abstract and extend that cadence as a motif for use as an obsessional ostinato to frame the suspenseful preparation for Gherman's horror episode with the countess in the next scene. (What it frames is another quotation, sung by the countess herself as she falls asleep recollecting the balls of her youth, from the opera *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* by André Grétry; I will not repeat the literalistic objection, so uncomprehending of what artists understand as "truth," that Grétry's opera was contemporaneous with the "present" in Tchaikovsky's opera, not the past.) Not characteristic at all, but a unique stroke of genius, is the way the same motif is worked into the "weather" chorus in the opera's first scene (another unadvertised polonaise), and then into Gherman's storm aria, thus taking its place as a strand in the net of correspondences that dooms our poor hero from the start. It is another one of the many touches that a listener can only discover on repeated exposure to this magical minefield of a score that administers new shocks on every encounter.

The role of Gherman is a notorious killer. He must sing in every one of the opera's seven scenes, and the emotional pressure of the part sends the singer repeatedly up to the top of his range (a B natural). Tchaikovsky only dared give full rein to the dictates of the role because Nikolai Figner was there to sing it; but even so, the latter was forced to protest that by the last scene of this tiring work no tenor could risk the maniacal *brindisi* ("What is our life?") at the written pitch, so Tchaikovsky allowed a downward transposition by a whole tone to be appended to the published score. (Figner recorded the piece in the original key, however, a dozen years later; amazingly, both he and his wife may still be heard in the roles they created in a recent set of compact discs, "Singers of Imperial Russia," Pearl CDS 9997-9).

The transposition, however practical, is unfortunate. This is one role that should not be diluted in any way. Precisely thanks to his creators' departures from the Pushkinian straight-and-narrow, the Tchaikovsky brothers' Gherman sounded a new note in Russian art, bringing it, however belatedly, into the post-Pushkinian Romantic mainstream. In his *Philosophie de l'art* (1865), Hyppolite Taine, Pyotr Tchaikovsky's almost exact contemporary, wrote that "the reigning personality, that is to say the main character, to whom the audience attends with the greatest interest in the art of the nineteenth century, is the pensive, melancholy seeker (like Faust, like Werther, like Manfred), a heart constantly athirst, darkly apprehensive, curelessly afflicted," and added that "it is nothing to be wondered at that music, that newest of arts, has developed so extraordinarily during the selfsame century: that development corresponds exactly to the appearance of this new spirit, this direly ardent sufferer. It is to his exaggerated and exquisite sensitivity, to his undefined yet limitless inspiration that music now aspires." Until Tchaikovsky there was no Russian composer who aimed to fill that bill, and no Russian character to add to Taine's list until the operatic, not the literary, Gherman.

And yet, as Gherman says, it's all a game, a dream. That final drinking song (Modest Tchaikovsky's idea!) is the shrewdest stroke of all, endowing Gherman with a detachment and a self-irony that leaves romanticism behind and enters the psychological domain of the modern anti-hero. Pyotr Tchaikovsky was at first skeptical of the idea, but it is prefigured at the very heart of the drama, when the hidden Gherman, awaiting the countess's return from the ball, questions the reality of his obsessions (What if there's no secret? What if it's just the ravings of my sickened soul?) but cannot shake them. In the end he shows himself to be no Faust, no Manfred, but the helpless, hounded, yet knowing plaything of fate. He has finally heard the music. □

1993 San Francisco Opera Company (Continued)

Although our program magazines regularly list members of the Administration and Company (please see pages 9 and 11), we know that those lists are by necessity incomplete. In order to give recognition to the many skilled professionals whose work has contributed so greatly to the quality of San Francisco Opera productions, we provide, once a year, a list of everyone involved with our season. In this issue, department heads are listed in front of the magazine, as usual; the many others, upon whom so much depends, are listed below.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

COSTUME SHOP

Cutter

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Tailors Assistant

Eddie Cheung

Seamstresses/Seamsters

Gladys Campbell

Adela Cantor

Viria Castro

Shuk Chi Chan

Nvard Douvalian

Catherine Eberle

Wanda Echterling

Guillermina Flores

Cherie Granger

Ligia Libreros

Xing-Fong Luo

Sonia Olivares

Margaret Quan

Lourdes Ruiz

Pacita Sabaten

Stephanie Sulser

Lylliam Whitford

Lauri Whitting

Olga Yakovleva

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Richard Peterson

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Leo Borja

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Dressers

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Pamela Calvert

Cynthia Fusco

Claudia Holaday

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Janice Stephenson

Muzette Trace

Mary Vargas

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Valerie White

Donna Whitfield

WARDROBE

DEPARTMENT/Men

Brent Alden Karels

Kelly Hill

Wardrobe Assistants

Dressers

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Thomas B. Carter

Douglas J. Couture

Burton F. Covel

David Croker

Ernest L. Dale

Michael Gagarine

Joseph Harris

Clifford Hestdalen

Charles Hoffman

Larry Hunnicutt

Andrew "Drew" Lambert

Paul Layton

Alfred Lorente

Leland Moffatt

Clive V. Phillips

William Plath

George Adam Renz

David Sovereign

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DEPARTMENT

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Rex Rogers

Journeymen

Terrell Balieil

Richard Battle

Judith Disbrow

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Linda Magarian

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Melanie Birch

Raymond Burns

Pamela Harris

Howard Kronard

Lisa Lorente

Monica Maka

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Margarita Pidgeon

Timothy Santry

Susan Stone

Connie Strayer

Makeup Helper

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Lawrence Beard, *Layout Man*

Gregory Barker

Lawrence Lefcourt

Daniel Munzar

Miles Puccinelli

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Tracy Boyko

E. Janell Cornforth

Robert D. Cook

Beth Edwards

Joan Frenkel

Charles Y. Granich

Edward Heimendinger

Loren H. Hillman

Sandra Howell

Nancy Lacer

Stephani Lesh

Juith Moman

Tom Mueller

Robert L. Peden

Karen L. Sorum

Melanie J. Strapper

Gwen Thoele

Susan A. Tuohy

William G. Wareham

Diane Weinkauff

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STAGE CARPENTERS (Grips)

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Kenneth Ryan, *Key Man*

Mark A. Urban, *Key Man*

Robert J. Urban, *Key Fly Man*

Michael A. Accurso

Matthew D. Ashe

Robert A. Corso, *Key Man Out-of-House*

Dennis M. Criswell

J. Christopher Davis

Christopher J. Denny

Boris DeWaart

Joseph G. Emanuele, *Asst. Key Man*

Kenneth D. Emanuele

William K. Freeman, Jr.

David B. Hatch, *Asst. Fly Man*

Philip S. Hoobyar

Peter D. Hudson

Kenneth E. Kirkland

Stephane J. P. Mayrand

Dan L. Molnar

Harry Niedzwetski

Miguel Ongpin

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Roger Ross

Chris Sanders

Gregory W. Shaff

Mark T. Smith

John Taylor

Keith Urban

Sean Wright

Jonathan Young

PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

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Charles Randy DelValle,

Key Man

Matthew Craig Witting,

Key Man

Lori A. Harrison, *Asst. Key*

Mike Ward Helbig,

Asst. Key

Jane Elizabeth Henderson-Shea

James Holden, *Shop Mechanic*

David Lynn Kinney

Harri Olavi Kouvonen

Robert Clay Lemon, *Key Man*

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Monte R. Norman

Steven Gerard O'Reilly

William Irving Tomskey, Jr.

Sabrine Marie Rodems

Timothy Michael Wilson

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Jim Caudle, *Key Man*

Joseph Catalano, *Key Man*

Darryl Kinne, *Electric Shop*

Foreman

Lawrence Poggetti, *Shop*

Mechanic

James A. Aiken, *Asst. Board*

Operator

Michael G. Anderson

Maria T.M. Bennes, *Asst. Key*

John Boatwright

Jason S. Brownell, *Sound Dept.*

Norris Fong

John Kilpack

Frank Krumenaker

Chung Mei Kuo

Susi Levi

Scott Newell

Charles Scott Padden

Leon P. Parsons, *Asst. Key.*

Lee A. Pochapin

Guss Pollek, *Sound Dept.*

Jim O. Quinn, *Sound Dept.*

Donald A. Rowell, *Bench Hand*

Loren Sly

Karl Wolfersperger

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Anthony Herrera

Christian Lester

Lena P. Oliveira

Raymond Salazar

Robert Strati

Majken Talbot

Brian Tanio

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(Van Ness Ave.)

Harold Parker, *Door Personnel*

(Grove Street)

William Repp, *Door Personnel*

Taxi Coordinator (Taxi

Entrance)

Joseph Savin, *Door Personnel*

(Carriage Entrance)

Susan Weiss, *Door Personnel*

(Van Ness Ave.)

Manuela Galindo, *Green Room*

Attendant

Martin Dias, *Head Usher*

(Balcony/Balcony Circle)

Henry Watson, *Head Usher,*

Evenings (Grand Tier)

Dress Circle)

Trilby James, *Head Usher,*

Matinees (Grand Tier)

Dress Circle)

Jess Mabon, *Head Usher (Boxes)*

George Weiss, *Head Usher*

(Orchestra)

Thomas Galindo, *South Stage*

Door Attendant

Nathan Segal, *Nurse*

Richard Jarrett, *South Elevator*

Attendant

Jan Padover, *North Elevator*

Attendant

Susi Zador, *Arthur Kaye, Usher*

Coordinators

Helen Manougian, *Coatcheck*

Attendant

Wing Yee Yan, *Show Maid*



MARIA GULEGHINA



LEONIE RYSANEK



YANYU GUO



DONNA PETERSEN



LAURA CLAYCOMB

Maria Guleghina portrays Lisa in *The Queen of Spades*, a role she has sung at St. Petersburg's Kirov Opera, La Scala in Milan, the Vienna State Opera, and in the Kirov production at the Metropolitan Opera. Last fall, she made her Company debut in the title role of *Tosca*. Born in Odessa, she was the leading soprano of the State Opera of Minsk for several seasons. She made her debut at La Scala in 1987 as Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and has subsequently appeared there in *I Due Foscari*, *Tosca*, and most recently in a new staging of *Manon Lescaut*. She made her debut with the Zurich Opera in 1989 in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and made her Royal Opera Covent Garden debut that same year in a Gala Concert for Armenia. She also appeared in Frankfurt in concert performances of *Andrea Chénier* which were broadcast on live television throughout Germany and recorded. Miss Guleghina made her Metropolitan Opera debut during the 1990-91 season as Maddalena in *Andrea Chénier* and returned to the Met later that season in the title role of *Tosca*. She made her Hamburg State Opera debut that season as Tosca as well as her Bavarian State Opera debut as Amelia in *Ballo*. Additional engagements that season included *Tosca* at the Teatro Massimo in Palermo and at the Maggio Musicale in Florence. She was also heard in Tokyo in concert performances of *Otello* and *Il Trovatore* which were recorded live. Recent appearances include Amelia in a new production of *Simon Boccanegra* at the Hamburg State Opera, *Tosca*, *The Queen of Spades* and *Andrea Chénier* at the Vienna State Opera, Odabella in *Attila* with the Flemish Opera, the title role of *Aida* in Hamburg and Israel, as well as highly praised concert performances of Verdi's *Oberto* at the 1993 Edinburgh Festival. Future engagements include her Chicago Lyric Opera debut as Tosca, her first Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Met, Amelia in *Ballo* in Munich, and a revival of *Tosca* in Hamburg.

Leonie Rysanek, a legendary artist who holds a special place in the hearts of San Francisco Opera audiences, portrays the Countess in *The Queen of Spades*. Miss Rysanek has sung in all of the world's major houses ever since she was selected to open the first post-war Bayreuth Festival in 1951 as Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. Her eagerly anticipated U.S. debut was with the Company in 1956 as Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, followed by *Aida* and Sieglinde later in the season. She bowed at the Lyric Opera of Chicago shortly thereafter as *Aida* and made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* in 1959, becoming the first artist to sing that role with the Met. Since then, she has received the highest public and critical acclaim for her performances with the world's leading opera companies and festivals. She has sung more than 50 leading roles in Vienna, Berlin, Milan, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, London, Munich, Paris, Hamburg, Moscow, Barcelona, etc., and at the festivals of Bayreuth, Salzburg, Aix-en-Provence, Edinburgh, Athens, Arles and Orange. Her repertoire is wide and varied, embracing Beethoven, Wagner, Strauss, Puccini, Verdi, Janáček, Tchaikovsky and many others. Miss Rysanek has made a number of roles uniquely her own, such as Senta, Sieglinde, the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Elsa and Ortrud in *Lohengrin*, Salome and Herodias in *Salome*, Kostelnicka in *Jentifa*, and the title role of *Tosca*, all of which San Francisco Opera audiences have been privileged to see. Applauded earlier in her career as Chrysothemis, and currently singing the part of Klytemnestra, her interpretation of the title role of *Elektra* has been recorded in a film conducted by the late Karl Böhm which was critically acclaimed world-

wide. The recipient of many honors and awards, she is a Kammersängerin of both Austria and Bavaria; was awarded the Silver Rose of the Vienna Philharmonic; is an honorable member of the Vienna State Opera and holder of the Lotte Lehmann Ring and the San Francisco Opera Medal; a French Commandeur des Arts et Lettres; and was elected to the Order of the Knights of Malta in Paris. Miss Rysanek's most recent engagements include *Katya Kabanova* in Paris, Los Angeles, New York, Berlin and Cologne, *Elektra* in New York, Paris, Berlin and Houston, and *The Queen of Spades* in Barcelona.

Yanyu Guo sings the roles of Ninetta in *I Vespri Siciliani* and Paulina in *The Queen of Spades*. The mezzo-soprano, a 1990 Merola Opera Program participant and a 1991-92 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, made her Company debut in 1990 in *Suor Angelica* and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and received critical acclaim that year as Penelope in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. Since then, she has performed with San Francisco Opera and its affiliates in *Die Zauberflöte*, *La Finta Giardiniera*, *La Traviata*, *War and Peace*, *Carmen*, *Elektra*, *Ermione*, *Ariodante* and *Andrea Chénier*. A native of Beijing, China, she studied at the Beijing Central Conservatory and continued her studies in the U.S. at the Eastman School of Music and at the Juilliard School. The recipient of numerous prizes and awards, she has appeared with many U.S. orchestras and opera companies. Roles she has performed include Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, the title role of *La Cenerentola*, Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, and Nicklausse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*.

Currently celebrating 25 seasons with San Francisco Opera, mezzo-soprano **Donna Petersen** appears as the Governess in *The Queen of Spades*. Among her more than 30 roles with the Company are the Innkeeper in *Boris Godunov*, Sister Mathilde in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mrs. Sedley in *Peter Grimes*, Grimgerde in *Die Walküre* (a role she has performed in seven different San Francisco Opera stagings), Mary in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, Filipyevna in *Eugene Onegin*, the Sister Monitor in *Suor Angelica*, Giovanna in *Rigoletto*, as well as the Governess. Miss Petersen has toured extensively with Western Opera Theater, has sung numerous seasons with Spring Opera Theater and appeared with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Diego Opera and the Guild Opera of Los Angeles. Concert engagements include performances with the San Francisco Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Honolulu Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico City, and at Carnegie Hall (N.Y. premiere of Alfred Schnittke's Requiem). Miss Petersen, who has been head of the Voice Department at Mills College for 23 years, is a Knight of the Royal Order of Dannebrog, presented to her by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark in 1976.

In her third year as an Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, **Laura Claycomb** performs the roles of Marie in the student matinee presentation of *La Fille du Régiment* and Masha in *The Queen of Spades*. The native of Dallas attended Southern Methodist University, where she received her bachelor's degree in vocal performance and foreign languages. A winner of numerous awards and competitions, she was a member of the 1989 Merola Opera Program, and appeared as



MARIE PLETTE



VLADIMIR ATLANTOV



VLADIMIR REDKIN



GINO QUILICO

Frasquita in *Carmen*. As a Merola participant the following year, she sang the role of Ann Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. She made her Company debut in 1990 as The Novice in *Suor Angelica*, and has subsequently appeared here as Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*, Frasquita, Xenia in *Boris Godunov*, Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Duchess Medina Sidonia in *Christophe Colomb*, and a Milliner in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Miss Claycomb toured Japan in 1991 as Frasquita in the Opera Center's production of *Carmen*, and received critical acclaim as Dalinda in the Opera Center's 1992 Showcase production of *Ariodante*. She was also featured in the Schwabacher Debut Recital series last year. The soprano recently made her New York City Opera debut as Kathie in *The Student Prince*.

In her debut season with San Francisco Opera, **Marie Plette** sings the roles of a Chambermaid in *The Makropulos Case* and Chloe in *The Queen of Spades*. Last year, the soprano won several prestigious awards: The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a Robert M. Jacobson Study Grant awarded by the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, the Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition, a grant from the William Matheus Sullivan Musical Foundation, and the Cenacolo Award from the Company's Merola Opera Program. Those honors were immediately followed by: Her Metropolitan Opera debut during the 1992-93 season as the First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* and Guttrune in *Götterdämmerung*; Mimì in *La Bohème* for the Opera Company of Philadelphia; a debut with the San Francisco Symphony in an all-Viennese program for the orchestra's New Year's concert; Ghita in the North American premiere of Zemlinsky's *Die Geburtstag der Infantin* at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston; as well as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito* at Wolf Trap. A native of Massachusetts, Miss Plette graduated from the University of Hartford's Hartt School of Music, and received further professional education at the Juilliard Opera Center, Sarasota Opera, Chautauqua Opera, and the Merola Opera Program. As a 1992 MOP participant, she sang the role of Mimì on Western Opera Theater's national tour of *La Bohème*.

Dramatic tenor **Vladimir Atlantov**, who made his U.S. opera debut as Canio in San Francisco Opera's 1990 presentation of *Pagliacci*, sings one of his signature roles, Gherman in *The Queen of Spades*. A member of Moscow's Bolshoi Opera, he came to international attention in 1970 when that company toured throughout France and Austria and in 1975 when the Bolshoi toured the U.S. He was praised for his portrayals of Gherman, Dimitri in *Boris Godunov*, and Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*. Since then, he has appeared in virtually every major opera house throughout the world, where he has often portrayed Canio, Gherman, Don José in *Carmen*, Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Samson in *Samson et Dalila*, Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, as well as the title roles of *Don Carlo* and *Otello*. The roles of Otello, Gherman and Canio have been documented on audio and/or video recordings: his Otello, partnered by Kiri Te Kanawa, appears on video with the forces of the Verona Arena, and both *Pagliacci* and *The Queen of Spades* are available on compact disc. During the 1991-92 season, Atlantov appeared in concert performances of *The Queen of Spades* with Mirella Freni under the baton of Seiji Ozawa with the Boston Symphony, both in Boston and at Carnegie Hall. This was followed by performances in Vienna, Munich and Hamburg in *Otello*, *Pagliacci*, *The Queen of Spades* and *Khovanshchina*. His most recent assignments include *Samson et Dalila* with Opera Pacific, a new staging of *The Queen of Spades*

and *Khovanshchina* at the Vienna State Opera (where he is a permanent guest member and the recipient of the title of Kammersänger), as well as a new production of *The Queen of Spades* with Miss Freni at the Kirov Opera in St. Petersburg. Atlantov was born in Leningrad and studied there at the State Choir School and the Leningrad Conservatory Opera Studio. Study at Milan's La Scala and membership in the Kirov Opera preceded the contract he won in 1967 as a leading artist with the Bolshoi Opera.

Making his Company debut as Prince Yeletsky at the first three performances of *The Queen of Spades* is Bolshoi Opera baritone **Vladimir Redkin**, who made his 1990 debut at Milan's La Scala in the same role. Born and trained in Moscow, he also studied at La Scala's School for Young Artists. His many roles with the Bolshoi have included the title role of *Eugene Onegin*, Valentin in *Faust*, Silvio in *Pagliacci*, Germont in *La Traviata*, and Yeletsky. In 1991, he sang the title role in the Bolshoi's new production of *Eugene Onegin*, which received its premiere on opening night of the company's tour to the U.S. at the Metropolitan Opera House. He also appeared with the Bolshoi that season on their tours to Washington, D.C., Edinburgh and Cologne, performing in *Onegin* and *The Maid of Orleans*. Recent engagements include his first performances of the role of Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera* with the Dublin Grand Opera, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore* with Scottish Opera and in Malaga (Spanish debut), as well as Yeletsky in Santiago, Chile. Future dates include a new staging of *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Malaga, the title role of *Macbeth* with Hamilton Opera, and a new production of *La Forza del Destino* with Scottish Opera.

Baritone **Gino Quilico** sings the role of Prince Yeletsky in the final three performances of *The Queen of Spades*. Since his 1986 San Francisco Opera debut as Lescaut in *Manon*, he has appeared here as Marcello in *La Bohème* ('88), Silvio in *Pagliacci* ('90), in the title role of *Don Giovanni* ('91), and as Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* ('92). Quilico's international career began with his Paris Opera debut in 1980. He has since sung a number of roles with that company, including Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, and Orestes in Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*. In recent seasons, Quilico has appeared at the Salzburg Festival as Dandini in *La Cenerentola*; at the Metropolitan Opera as Mozart's Figaro, Valentin in *Faust*, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Belcore (both in New York on their recent tour of Japan), and as Figaro in the world premiere of *The Ghosts of Versailles*; at La Scala in Milan as Marcello in *La Bohème* and Lescaut in *Manon Lescaut*; and at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden as Posa in *Don Carlo*, Valentin, Belcore, and Escamillo in *Carmen*. He has also been applauded in Munich, Vienna, Berlin, Florence, Hamburg, Toronto, Montreal, Dallas, Buenos Aires and Bologna, among other cities, and at the festivals of Edinburgh, Schwetzingen, Orange and Aix-en-Provence. The Canadian singer has appeared in two feature films, *La Bohème* and Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, numerous operatic videos, and has recorded 16 operas as well as a recent disc of Christmas carols. Quilico was named "Artist of the Year" by the Canadian Music Council, was appointed Canada's first Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and was recently named an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Baritone **Valery Alexeiev**, who made his 1991 U.S. opera debut as Napoleon in San Francisco Opera's

Continued on page 27

These performances are made possible by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. John R. Hamilton

Opera in three acts by PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Text by MODEST TCHAIKOVSKY

Based on a story by ALEXANDER SERGEYEVICH PUSHKIN

Пиковая Дама

The Queen of Spades

(in Russian)

Conductor

Edo de Waart

Stage Director

John Copley

Designer

Robert O'Hearn

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Sound Designer

Roger Gans

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Choreographer

Robert Ray

Musical Preparation

Susanna Lemberskaya

Robert Morrison

Ernest Fredric Knell

Prompter

Alexander Ryvkin*

Assistant Stage Directors

Laurie Feldman

Yefim Maizel*

Stage Manager

Jerry Sherk

Scenery constructed in

San Francisco Opera Scenic Studios

Costumes executed by

San Francisco Opera Costume Shop,

Center Theater Group,

and Jean Lamprell

First performance:

St. Petersburg, December 19, 1890

First San Francisco Opera performance:

October 1, 1963

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, AT 7:30

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26, AT 7:30

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, AT 7:30

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, AT 7:30

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, AT 7:30

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, AT 1:30

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Chekalinsky Dennis Petersen

Surin Magnus Baldvinsson+

Gherman Vladimir Atlantov

Count Tomsky Valery Alexeiev

Prince Yeletsky Vladimir Redkin*
Gino Quilico (Dec. 4, 8, 12)

Lisa Maria Guleghina

The Countess Leonie Rysanek

Paulina Yanyu Guo

Governess Donna Petersen

Masha Laura Claycomb+

Master of Ceremonies John Owens

Marie Plette

Yanyu Guo

Valery Alexeiev

Debra Rose

Lee Bell

Chaplitsky Randolph Locke

Narumoff Daniel Sumegi+

Chloe
Daphnis
Plutus
Cupid
Hymen } *Performers in the*
pastorale

Citizens, officers of the Imperial Army, Lisa's friends, attendants of the Countess

Boys and girls chorus

Corps de ballet

*San Francisco Opera debut

+1993 Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: Late 18th century; St. Petersburg

ACT I *Scene 1:* The summer garden

Scene 2: Lisa's room

INTERMISSION

ACT II *Scene 1:* An aristocrat's ballroom

Scene 2: The boudoir of the Countess

INTERMISSION

ACT III *Scene 1:* Gherman's quarters in the barracks

Scene 2: A canal by the Winter Palace

Scene 3: A private gambling salon

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera

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

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

The performance will last approximately three hours and forty-five minutes.

The Queen of Spades / Synopsis

ACT I—Scene 1—The summer garden in St. Petersburg fills with nursemaids and children who are enjoying the first days of spring. Gherman, a poor, young officer whose fascination with gambling is noted by his friends Surin and Chekalinsky, admits to Count Tomsy that he is in love with a young aristocrat but because of his humble origin he does not dare to approach her. Prince Yeletsky is congratulated on his engagement to Lisa, granddaughter of the Countess. The two women then enter and are startled at seeing the mysterious stranger whom they have noticed lingering by their house. Together, Lisa and her grandmother express their fear of Gherman while he broods over the Countess's portentous stare. Tomsy and the Prince at the same moment reflect on the startling effect this meeting has had on Gherman and Lisa. As Lisa and the Prince walk away, Gherman mutters that disaster will soon destroy the Prince's happiness.

Tomsy tells the story of the Countess, who had been a famous beauty, "the Venus of Moscow," at the court of Louis XV at Versailles and, infatuated with gambling, had lost her fortune. Taking advantage of her desperate circumstances, the Count St. Germain, thought by some to be the devil in disguise, had offered her, in exchange for one rendezvous, the secret of three winning cards. She later passed the secret to her husband and to a young lover. The ghost of St. Germain appeared to the Countess to warn her that she would die when approached a third time by "one burning with passion" who would force her to tell her secret. Gherman, left alone in the gathering storm, gives way to anger and jealousy. Shouting to the elements, he swears he will have Lisa.

Scene 2—Lisa's room, in the evening. The melancholy Lisa does not respond to the efforts of her friends, including Paulina, to cheer her. The governess bustles in to scold the girls and to order them to bed. Lisa dismisses her maid Masha and, left alone, addresses to the night her love for the mysterious stranger. She is startled by Gherman, who appears on her balcony, passionately describing his love. Hearing a knock at the door, Lisa quickly hides Gherman as the Countess enters. She reprimands Lisa for not being asleep, then leaves. Gherman renews his entreaties to Lisa and threatens suicide if she will not return his love. Overcome by her emotions, she falls into his embrace.

ACT II—Scene 1—At a ball for Lisa and Prince Yeletsky, Gherman receives a note from Lisa asking him to meet her. Count Tomsy, Surin and Chekalinsky observe Gherman's obsessed behavior and decide to bait him. Fearing that he has heard the ghostly voice of fate, Gherman rushes away. As the ballroom is prepared for an entertainment, Yeletsky expresses his love to Lisa but also his realization that she will never return his feelings. Although he is

tormented by her remoteness, he vows to be her friend. Several officers, led by Surin and Chekalinsky, taunt Gherman with his obsession for the secret of the three cards. The Major-domo announces an intermezzo on the theme of Daphnis and Chloe. Afterwards, Lisa slips Gherman a key to a secret door that leads through the Countess's apartment to her own room. Exulting over the fact that he will at last be able to confront the Countess for the secret of the cards, he leaves. The Major-domo announces the imminent arrival of the Tsarina.

Scene 2—In the Countess's boudoir, Gherman stares at a large portrait of her as "the Venus of Moscow." He hides when he hears the Countess returning from the ball with her entourage. After she is prepared for bed, her servants are dismissed. She gradually drifts off to sleep while reminiscing about her past. Gherman reappears and stands before her. She wakes and stares at him in terror. He implores her to reveal her secret. She remains silent and he commands her at pistol point to speak. When she continues to be silent, he realizes with horror that she is dead. Lisa suddenly enters as Gherman cries out that the secret of the three cards is lost forever. Lisa reviles him, adding that it was not love but desire for the Countess's secret that brought him to her house. Sending him away, the girl falls weeping beside the body of her grandmother.

ACT III—Scene 1—Gherman's quarters in the barracks. He reads a letter from Lisa in which she writes that she is certain he did not intentionally kill the Countess, begging forgiveness and asking that he meet her by the river canal at midnight. Gherman bemoans his misery. In a half-dream he sees the funeral of the Countess. Suddenly the ghost of the Countess appears and identifies to Gherman the three cards: Three! Seven! Ace!

Scene 2—Lisa anxiously waits for Gherman on the river embankment. At last he appears and tells her about the visit by the ghost of the Countess. He raves that nothing matters now—he knows the three cards and destiny will have its way. Lisa tries to calm him but the deranged Gherman no longer recognizes her. After he runs away, Lisa hurls herself into the river and drowns.

Scene 3—In a private gambling salon, guests and officers are drinking and playing faro. Yeletsky tells Tomsy that his engagement has been broken off and that he is "unlucky in love but lucky at cards." Tomsy then sings a bawdy drinking song which leads into a drunken revel. Gherman enters and, betting on the three and seven, twice wins. The other gamblers withdraw from the game, leaving only Prince Yeletsky to challenge the winner. Gherman stakes all he has won on one card and, instead of an ace, turns up the queen of spades. The ghost of the Countess appears to remind Gherman of his date with destiny. Mad with fear and rage, he takes his own life.

The performance of November 26th is sponsored by Sybase.

The performance of December 1st is designated in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Myron Du Bain's membership in the Triple Gold Circle.

The performance of December 4th is sponsored by Meyer Sound Laboratories.

The performance of December 12th is sponsored by Potlatch Corporation.

SUPERNUMERARIES

Elayne Ashman, Madeline Chase, Brenda Czernysz, Beverly Terry

David Black, Peter Clark, David J. Clark, Daniel Daniloff, Brian Devine, Eddy J. Gordillo, Dan Kyte, Greg Lawrance, Matt Miller

Ian Mishkin, Brian Rawlinson, Michael Strickland, Alvin Taylor, Tony Welch

CHILDREN'S CHORUS

Elliot Baer, Jordan Davis, Daniel Denebeim, Blane Egan, Laura Epstein, Caroline Estrada, Sophie Estrada, Conrad Frank, Damian Hites, Brian Kennelly, Warren Lain, James Locke, Andrew McComas, Trevor McNeil, Michael Meisenbach, Nicholas Pleasure, Jeffrey Power, Brandon Sherman, Alden Sliter, Erik Sparks, Andrew Stokes, Cole Thomason-Redus, Ian Turner, Catie Unkovic, Amanda Watts, Maria Zagatsky

CORPS DE BALLET

Jill Cassimatis, Celia Fushille, Nora Heiber, Marina Hotchkiss, Summer Lee Rhatigan, Debra Rose, Katherine Warner

Lee Bell, Brian Chung, Danny Furlong, John Konetski, Wal Moraes

premiere production of *War and Peace*, returns to portray Count Tomsy in *The Queen of Spades*. A soloist at St. Petersburg's Kirov Theater since 1984, he graduated from the Conservatory in Novosibirsk in 1977, subsequently appearing at the opera theaters of Krasnoyarsk and Voronezh. He is a winner of numerous prizes which include the National Glinka Competition (1981), Ots Competition (1985), and the International Sofia Competition (1984). Alexeiev's repertoire encompasses Shaklovity in *Boris Godunov*, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*, Iago in *Otello* (which he has performed with Plácido Domingo in St. Petersburg and Madrid), as well as the title roles of *Rigoletto*, *Macbeth*, *Mazeppa*, *Don Giovanni* and *Prince Igor*. In Europe, he has appeared as a guest artist at the Arena di Verona, Madrid's Teatro de la Zarzuela, in Sofia and Wiesbaden, and with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam. Recent engagements with the Kirov Opera have been Ruprecht in *The Fiery Angel* and Count Tomsy in New York, in addition to the title role of *Prince Igor* in Caesarea. Alexeiev holds the title of "Artist of Merit" conferred by the Russian Republic.

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.

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 Kecai in *The Bartered Bride*, the King in Handel's *Ariodante* and Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata* on Western Opera Theater's 1991-92 national tour. He was awarded the Florence Bruce Award at the 1991 Merola Opera Program Grand Finals.

In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, 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 *Hubicka* with the Sarasota Opera, he was invited to perform this role with the National Theater in Prague. Other past appearances have included the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* with the Eugene Opera, 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 Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* at Knoxville Opera. Locke, a native of Texas, is a graduate of Southwest Texas State University and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

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 to the War Memorial 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 *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Turandot*, *Aida*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Faust*, *La Bohème* and *Salome*. 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. He also took part in the Barcelona Olympic Games Arts Festival in the world premiere of the opera *Asdrubala*. 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 mounting of *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.

Edo de Waart, who led San Francisco Opera's highly regarded 1985 *Ring* cycle for his Company debut, returns to conduct *The Queen of Spades*. Currently in his eighth season as music director of the Minnesota Orchestra, highlights of his tenure have included regular performances of Mahler and Beethoven symphonies, and world, U.S. and regional premieres of works by Paul Hindemith, Roger Sessions, William Schuman, Leonard Bernstein, John Adams and Charles Wuorinen. De Waart has also led the Minnesota Orchestra in complete concert performances of *Das Rheingold*, *Boris Godunov* and *Falstaff*. He began his professional career as a performer, joining the Concertgebouw Orchestra



VALERY ALEXEIEV



DENNIS PETERSEN



MAGNUS BALDVINSSON



RANDOLPH LOCKE



DANIEL SUMEGI

Six hours that could save your life.

In the past, a stroke was seen as an inevitable medical condition; a fact of life that seemed practically unavoidable. Even today, strokes are the third-largest killer in the U.S. Very often, those who do suffer from a stroke only recover after a long and difficult rehabilitation period. Now, though, after years of research, we can finally shed some positive light on the subject.

Today, there are a number of new treatments that have the potential to limit the damage a stroke can do.

Perhaps the most

The worst headache of your life? Sudden loss of strength? Slurred speech? Numbness, or loss of vision? If you think you might have suffered a stroke, you should immediately seek medical attention.

innovative concept is the "six hour window"; the period of time just after a stroke first

in Northern California, The Stanford Stroke Center has become a national pioneer in

stroke treatment, with a new and unique approach to teamwork and a medical staff respected for its remarkably high degree of expertise. Led by neurologist Dr. Greg Albers, neurosurgeon Dr. Gary Steinberg, and neuroradiologist Dr. Michael Marks, the Stroke Center's doctors offer a wide range of treatments and all work closely together in order to provide the best

available options to every patient.

But in order for any new stroke treatments to work, we all have to start thinking about strokes in a completely different way. Not just doctors, but all of us. Probably the best way to think about a stroke is as a kind



A fundamentally new concept in stroke treatment is the so-called "six hour window," the time after a stroke hits in which treatment may make all the difference in the world.

hits in which treatment has an opportunity to make a difference. We now know that if people react quickly enough to the signs of stroke, we have a chance to substantially reduce the risk of long-term damage.

As the only stroke center



Our Life Flight helicopter can get to people 150 miles away within an hour, putting most of Northern California within reach of our Stroke Center.

of brain attack. The blood and oxygen flowing through the brain have just been cut off. Perhaps it's as simple as a blood vessel being stopped up, or as extreme as an aneurysm bursting. But even if an area of the brain is not receiving all the blood it needs, we know now that the brain cells do not actually perish immediately. There is time. About six hours.



In 1919, Woodrow Wilson suffered a severe stroke, crippling his left side. With today's treatments, his health could have possibly been restored within hours.

restore the blood flow as soon as is humanly possible. This is why we have so strongly emphasized the importance of immediate treatment. Because, if you can get proper medical attention quickly enough, the threatened brain cells stand a chance of being rescued, greatly reducing the stroke's impact. In some cases, as if it never happened.

Fast treatment should be the reaction to any kind of stroke attack, even if it only seems to be a mild

one. Frequently, these very mild strokes act as a warning sign for a much larger stroke

to come. (Just the same way Mount St. Helens set off its warning tremors before the big one.) Also, by uncovering what caused the original stroke, it is oftentimes even possible to prevent the second one from occurring altogether.



But, ultimately, the most important thing to remember is this: If you have a stroke, or even if you think you might be having one, get help right away. Immediately call either your local doctor or the Stanford Emergency Department at 415-723-5111. Because those first six hours might just make a difference in how a stroke could affect the rest of your life.

<i>The</i> STROKE
CENTER <i>a t</i>
STANFORD

The Stroke Center is just one of the patient centers at Stanford Medical Center. And one of the reasons you'll want to be sure Stanford is part of your health plan. For more information on strokes, their symptoms, and their warning signs, please contact your local doctor or just phone us at 1-800-756-9000 (TT Number for the Hearing and Speech Impaired: 415-723-5136).



EDO DE WAART



JOHN COPLEY



ROBERT O'HEARN



ROBERT RAY



THOMAS J. MUNN

in his native Amsterdam as associate principal oboe after graduating from that city's Music Lyceum. Two years later, at age 23, he took first place in the Dimitri Mitropoulos Conductors Competition and was awarded the position of assistant to Leonard Bernstein with the New York Philharmonic. On his return to Holland, he was appointed assistant conductor of the Concertgebouw Orchestra, and then in 1967, conductor of both the Rotterdam Philharmonic and of the Netherlands Winds Ensemble, which he founded. Maestro de Waart has since appeared regularly with all of the leading orchestras in Europe and the U.S. As a conductor of opera, he has enjoyed success in a large and varied repertoire in many of the great houses of the world (Bayreuth, Covent Garden, Metropolitan Opera, Geneva Opera, Netherlands Opera and, especially, Santa Fe Opera, where he has conducted for many seasons and where he is principal guest conductor). His discography is very large, encompassing numerous recordings with several of the world's leading orchestras. Currently, in addition to his position with the Minnesota Orchestra, de Waart serves as artistic director of the Music Center of the Dutch Radio and as music director of the Dutch Radio Philharmonic. He was also recently appointed chief conductor and artistic director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Previous posts have included that of music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic (1973-79) and the San Francisco Symphony (1975-1983).

Internationally celebrated director **John Copley** stages *The Queen of Spades*. Long associated with San Francisco Opera, he made his Company debut during the 1982 Summer Season with Handel's *Julius Caesar*. Subsequent Company assignments have been Tippet's *The Midsummer Marriage* ('83, U.S. premiere), *Don Giovanni* ('84), Handel's *Orlando* ('85), *Eugene Onegin* ('86), *Le Nozze di Figaro* ('86, '91), *La Traviata* ('87, '91), *Idomeneo* ('89), *Suor Angelica* ('90), as well as *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* ('92). This summer, he directed *Die Fledermaus* at Villa Montalvo for the Merola Opera Program, a production which is currently being performed nationwide by Western Opera Theater. Copley spent several years early in his career as a stage manager for musicals in London's West End before becoming assistant and then principal resident director of the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, where his many productions included *La Bohème*, *Werther*, *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and Handel's *Semele*, as well as the three largest royal galas mounted at Covent Garden, marking the occasions of England's entry into the Common Market, Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee and 60th birthday celebration. Copley's work has also been seen at the Australian Opera (over 30 productions), English National Opera, Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, La Fenice in Venice, the Geneva Opera, the Munich Staatsoper, Deutsche Oper Berlin, La Scala in Milan, the Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Netherlands Opera, the Greek National Opera and festivals at Drottningholm, Aix-en-Provence, Ottawa, Munich, Athens, Wexford and Wiesbaden. In North America, his directing credits include productions for the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dallas Opera, Los Angeles Music Center Opera, Washington Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Vancouver Opera, and the New York City Opera.

Robert O'Hearn created the designs for *The Queen of Spades*, a production which was first presented by San Francisco Opera in 1982 and reprised in 1987. An Indiana native, he made his theater debut during his four-

year tenure as designer with the Brattle Theatre in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Since his first operatic project (set design for a production of *The Rake's Progress* at Boston University), his designs have been seen at the Metropolitan Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Central City Opera, Greater Miami Opera, New York City Opera, Hamburg Opera, Vienna State Opera, and the Vienna Volksoper, among others. His credits for the Met alone include productions of *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Aida*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Parsifal*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and *Porgy and Bess*. Last season's assignments included *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Miami, Detroit, and Washington, D.C., as well as *La Traviata* for Michigan Opera Theater. O'Hearn's work has also been seen at American Ballet Theatre, Ballet West, New York City Ballet, Seattle Ballet, Los Angeles Ballet, and the San Francisco Ballet.

Robert Ray created the dances for *The Queen of Spades*. The Australian choreographer made his 1988 San Francisco Opera debut with *L'Africaine* and returned for the 1992 *Guillaume Tell*. He received his early training at the Australian Ballet School before joining the London Festival Ballet. With that company he performed throughout Great Britain, Europe and Asia, dancing in the standard repertoire. He has also danced with the Australian Opera Ballet, Sydney Dance Company (where he began to choreograph), and the West Australian Ballet. His successful choreography was rewarded with a WA Arts Council Grant and a Myer Foundation Award to study modern dance with Merce Cunningham and composition at Juilliard. He also continued his choreography with the Dance Collective, the Joffrey Performing Group, and with his own ensemble of dancers. His first professional choreographic project was his 1981 *Poems*, which was performed by the Australian Ballet and The Dancers Company. Other projects for the Australian Ballet included *City Dances* (1982), *The Sentimental Bloke* (1985), *The Romantics* (1989) and, for the Australian Ballet School, *The Nutcracker* (1985). For the Victorian Arts Centre, he choreographed the dances in *The Soldier's Tale*, and created the modern works *Orfeo* and *Metamorphoses* for their Open Mind series. His operatic choreography credits include *Hamlet*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *The Merry Widow* and *La Belle Hélène* for the Australian Opera and the Victoria State Opera, as well as productions for the Canadian Opera Company, Dallas Opera and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

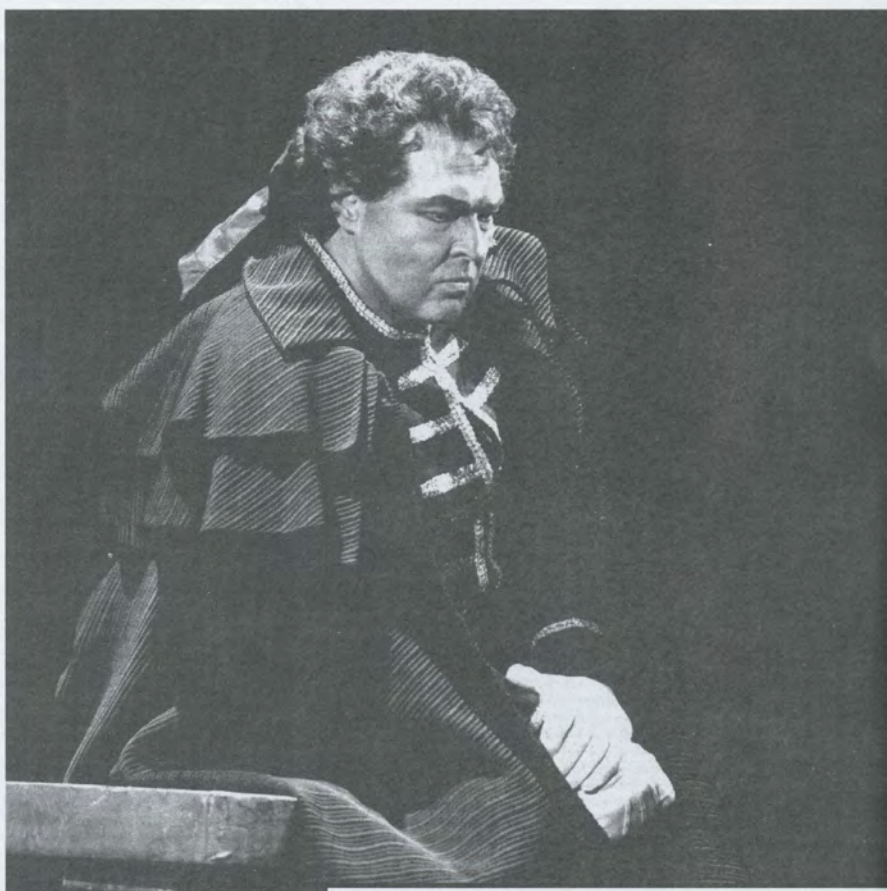
Thomas J. Munn, Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera since 1976, designed the lighting for *I Vespri Siciliani*, *La Bohème*, *Turandot*, *The Makropulos Case*, *Die Meistersinger*, *I Puritani*, and *The Queen of Spades*. He has created the lighting and special effects for 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 television 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*.

The Queen of Spades

Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

Leonie Rysanek





Vladimir Atlantov

Maria Guleghina



Donna Petersen



Maria Guleghina

Vladimir Redkin



Valery Alexeiev



Magnus Baldevinsson, Dennis Petersen



Act I, Boys Chorus

Yanyu Guo



Laura Claycomb

Marie Plette



Tableau, Act II Divertissement



LEONIE.

By TIMOTHY PFAFF

Life's uncanny knack of imitating art seems to get a particular charge out of operatic situations. Seldom has there been a more potent example at San Francisco Opera than the celebrated return of soprano Leonie Rysanek to the War Memorial Opera House in 1973. Absent for 13 years from the stage upon which she made her 1956 American debut (as Senta, Sieglinde, and Aida), Rysanek made her entrance — as Elisabeth, in Act II of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* — with an exultant "Dich, teure Halle, grüss ich wieder" ("Dear hall, I greet you again"). The hall, which resonated with the sound of a voice uniquely equipped to convey ecstasy, shivered again at the end of the "aria," when the hall greeted in return one of its favorite singers with a roar of approval and welcome.

In the two decades since that triumphant return, the beloved soprano has treated her San Francisco public to nearly all of the roles for which she has garnered international renown: Salome, Sieglinde, Tosca, Chrysothemis, the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, the Marschallin, Ortrud (a career "first") and, with a shift into mezzo-soprano parts, Kostelnicka and Herodias. Indeed, of her signature roles, the only ones she regrets not having essayed here are Kundry and the *Fidelio* Leonore. [Prior to 1973, her roles with the San Francisco Opera included Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Leonora in *La Forza del Destino*, Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth*, and the title roles of *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Turandot*.] Now, a remarkable 20 years later, Rysanek is giving her San Francisco stage farewell as the Countess in Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* — the very role with which she will make her farewell to the operatic stage at the Metropolitan Opera on January 4, 1996. ("The people in Vienna will kill me," confides the soprano, who was born in that city, had many of her great successes at the State Opera, and maintains her home there today.) Although she will turn 67 during the *Queen of Spades* run here, anyone who saw and heard her larger-than-life Herodias in last summer's

Salome knows that the core of Rysanek's artistry — a voice with the power to ride an orchestra at full cry and the craft to make a *sotto voce* whisper carry eerily to the last row of the balcony, a capacity to hold the stage that can make her the center of a scene in which she sings barely a note, and complete investment in whatever character she sings — is not only intact but as uncompromising as ever.

Rysanek first sang Tchaikovsky's titular Queen of Spades in Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu two seasons ago. "When I was looking for new parts," the soprano recalled in an interview between last summer's *Salomes*, "someone said, 'You have to do the Countess.' I had seen it maybe 30 years ago, but it hadn't made that big an impression on me. In those days I wanted to sing Lisa, of course, but no one offered it to me. I looked at the part and thought it was ridiculous: the Countess has nothing to sing, just this little aria at the end. Then I saw another performance, with Martha Mödl in the part. She had almost no voice left, but she made such an impression. This was deep. I thought, My God, this is an acting part.

"I immediately bought the Pushkin novel and read it, and, by the time I reached Barcelona, I already had the Countess in my head. Pushkin describes how the woman is undressing herself while Gherman hides in her bedroom. She is 90, and gruesome — and fragile, in the way old people are. She is *ugly* — and how he hates her! Pushkin describes how she takes off her big wig — and that is exactly the way I played her in Barcelona. She was bald, with maybe five white hairs," the soprano confided in an almost conspiratorial hush, clearly relishing her image. "I looked 200!



Leonie Rysanek as Elisabeth in San Francisco Opera's 1973 presentation of Wagner's *Tannhäuser*.

SCHERL

Timothy Pfaff is editor of *Piano & Keyboard*, West Coast correspondent for London's *Financial Times*, and a freelance writer on the arts.

"She had a huge, elegant bedroom, like in a movie. I didn't stay in the chair the whole time. At the first words of this little French song, I moved to the bed, where I sang the second verse and fell asleep. Gherman came over to her, she woke up, and then, when she tried to escape, he took out the pistol. He didn't shoot her, but she died of a heart attack.

"And there was another thing I loved. The Countess's funeral was on stage — gorgeously done. I walked behind my own coffin, as a beautiful young bride. When Gherman saw me, I went to him, opened my veil, and gave him a kiss like the kiss of death. It was so great. Tchaikovsky deliberately brought out more of the romantic elements of the story, but if you read the novel, the story is all around the Countess. I think it is right that Barcelona built the production entirely around the Countess, too. It's the title part." Only San Francisco Opera and the Met will be able to savor Rysanek's horrid (her description) Countess. Otherwise, she will round out her four-and-a-half decade career (which began with Agathe in *Der Freischütz* in Innsbruck in 1949) with the three other roles she retains in her repertoire: Herodias, Klytemnestra in *Elektra*, and Kabanicha in *Katya Kabanova*. But such is Rysanek's esteem in the eyes of the operatic world, her trimmed repertoire has not trans-

lated into a reduced schedule. She and her husband (and manager), Ernst Ludwig ("Elu") Gausmann, are quick to point out that they have not been home to Vienna to do more than change clothes in three seasons — and don't anticipate a slackening of that pace until Rysanek has taken her final bow.

Between her San Francisco Herodias of last summer and this *Queen of Spades*, she will have performed Kabanicha in Cologne, Herodias in a new production of *Salome* in Bonn, and Klytemnestra in Houston. And between this production and her Met farewell, she will perform all three parts several more times over, participate in new productions of *Salome* in Paris and Florence — and, interspersed with the Countess in her final Met season, a block of 11 performances of Herodias and Klytemnestra in Munich. "Don't you think that's enough for an old lady?" she asks not at all rhetorically.

Asked about her longevity, she replies — a beat before the question mark — "I think it is because I never oversang. I recently had a long talk with Jimmy [James] Levine [Artistic Director of the Metropolitan Opera], and he said to me, 'You have a big voice; you have your top, you have your low register; why don't you have a wobble?' I said, maybe it was Birgit [Nilsson]. Most of my career I had this enormous, gorgeous voice around me, and I thought, as long as she is going to



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Leonie Rysanek as the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in 1960 (opposite page); in the same role in 1980 (top); and at the 1976 performance of the same opera (above), receiving the San Francisco Opera Medal from then general director Kurt Herbert Adler.

sing those big, dramatic parts, I will not. Wieland Wagner was always saying to me, 'Now you do your Isolde. Now you sing for me Brünnhilde.' I said, why should I? My parts were difficult, too, just not as dramatic. The most dramatic thing I sang was Kundry — and I kept away from that for a long time because I thought it was too low, too dramatic. The second act is quite hard if you sing it honestly, as it is written. Jimmy persuaded me to sing it for the centennial *Parsifal* in Bayreuth, and I was happy to do it. After that I sang it three years more, and then said, No."

"Just say no" has long been Rysanek's advice to fellow singers. Roles she put down early in her career — despite successes with them — were Verdi's Abigaille in *Nabucco* ("Absolutely a killer, although I recently heard a pirate recording of my performance, and I thought it was not so bad") and *Turandot*. Things you do to your voice do not go unpunished. There are things you can do when you are young, and for a certain amount of time — I got an ovation after the riddle scene in *Turandot* — but then you get the bill and you have to pay for it, and you are heartbroken."

Although Nilsson may have spared her Brünnhilde and Isolde, Rysanek sang major roles from the very start. Among the most famous of Rysanek stories is that of her audition for the 1951 Bayreuth Festival, featuring the first postwar *Ring*. A young Leonie Rysanek, already with something of a name in central Europe but hoping for little more than a Rhinemaiden or Norn ("maybe

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Gutrune"), found herself seated next to none other than Wieland Wagner at a post-audition dinner. When she nervously reached to light a cigarette, the "Neu Bayreuth" Meister took it from her hand, informing her, "My Sieglinde doesn't smoke." (She hasn't since.)

Her signal success with that Sieglinde inaugurated an association with the Bayreuth Festival that spanned three decades, a recording career that began with Sieglinde under no less than Wilhelm Furtwängler, and an international career of the first magnitude. Listeners who have become acquainted with her art only in the last quarter century are frequently surprised to learn that the first *Elektra* she sang was not Strauss's *Elektra* but Mozart's *Elettra* (in *Idomeneo*), and that she was a ranking Donna Anna and Donna Elvira. Even people familiar with the whole of her distinguished career may be surprised to learn the list of her most-sung roles: *Tosca*, *Senta*, *Sieglinde*, *Empress*, *Chrysothemis*, *Leonore* — "and a lot of *Marshallin* too."

Because Rysanek has shown uncommon wisdom in taking parts that suit her, she has attained equal success in her roles, whether they be by Wagner, Verdi, or Janáček. Be that as it may, she has long been considered the foremost Strauss soprano of the postwar period — the voice many people have in their minds' ears when they think of the title roles in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Die Aegyptische Helena*, *Die Liebe der Danae*, and *Salome*, the *Marshallin* in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and perhaps, preeminently, the *Empress* in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Strauss's predilection for establishing a feeling of intensity by taking his singers to the extremes of their ranges seemed tailor-made for the Rysanek voice, freest and most potent in its glorious, radiant top. And few other singers have seemed as well equipped to negotiate Strauss's long-breathed phrases and treacherous, if dramatically apt, intervals.

Yet, in no other Strauss opera has Rysanek so ably demonstrated the versatility of her talents than in *Elektra*, in which she has scored triumphs in all three of the main women's roles. Her *Chrysothemis* virtually defines the vocal *Fach*, or type, the Germans call the "Jugendlich" soprano, lyrical yet strong but irrefutably feminine. And her *Klytemnestra* joins the ranks of the greatest exponents of the role, who have managed to find something identifiably human in this otherwise unsympathetic role.

"I do this on purpose," Rysanek explained. "I read the *Oresteia* when I was a girl, and if you know her story, you know that she was only a teenager when she was forced to marry Agamemnon, who took away their first child! She didn't know this child was saved by the gods and not sacrificed. There was a lot she had to suffer. Of course she's not nice, but she's hurt, and frightened. In a way it's understandable. *Astrid* [Varnay], *Martha* [Mödl], and *Regina* [Resnik] were all great *Klytemnestras* — but



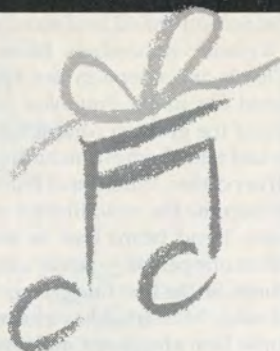
Leonie Rysanek's San Francisco Opera (and U.S.) debut took place in 1956, at which time she portrayed *Senta* in Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer*.

I have my own view of the character. And when I sing her, I don't want to be Rysanek, either; I want to show another side of this woman."

Ironically, the *Elektra* role with which, thanks to a Götz Friedrich film, history may associate her is the title part, which she sang only once, for that recording, at the request of her great mentor, the conductor Karl Böhm. When Böhm approached her with the idea of the project, his *Chrysothemis* of three decades replied, "Of course I will sing *Chrysothemis* for you." But when she learned that the man who convinced her to forego heavier parts for the sake of the ones she could sing supremely well wanted her for *Elektra*, she was at first dumbfounded. Her compliance was, among other things, an enormous labor of love for the man who himself had put down the opera more than a decade earlier because, he said, he got too excited conducting it. There was an unspoken understanding of what it meant that he took his baton to it one more time — and in fact he suffered a stroke to which he finally succumbed in the final sessions with his chosen cast and the Vienna Philharmonic. There would be worse notes on which to depart than Rysanek's in this magisterial *Elektra*: defiant, tormented, raging, deranged — and unutterably beautiful. Lavishing unprecedented amounts of beautiful tone and sumptuous legato on the familiar music, Rysanek paid it the final tribute of singing with equal care, even affection, all the part's "little notes," so frequently overlooked in other performances lost in its dramatic sweep. Her opening monologue alone (make that

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Rysanek remembers Böhm — who in 1976, his one season in San Francisco, conducted her in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* — as "one of the greatest conductors, and I have worked with them all, including Karajan, for half my career. When I met Böhm, in 1953, he had become the new director of the Vienna Opera. I had heard that he would always pick on one person — never a star — and yell at them. So the first thing, I went to his room and said, 'Maestro, I have heard you yell at people. I am a beginner, and if you yell at me, I will leave the stage.' I'll never forget how he looked at me, like 'How dare you?' But he loved my voice, so he said, 'Those stupid people. I don't yell.' But later, when I made mistakes — and he wanted to yell at me — I would just give him that look and he would swallow. I don't know how I had the guts to say that to him, but I did."

With Böhm she sang the two roles she says have been the hardest to put down, the Empress and Sieglinde. "Now others can sing the Kaiserin," she says. "But I think what I did with her was to make her believable, lifelike. Vocally, I was pretty good in the part, yes. But I think my achievement was to make a good part out of it. She is a torn woman. And she has the title part. I even had to tell this to Karajan. When I saw the curtain-call list he had prepared in 1964, I noticed that I was before Christa [Ludwig]. When I told him the singer of the title part went last, he said, 'I know.' I said, 'No, that is me.' I had to show him a letter Hofmannsthal wrote to Strauss, making clear that the Empress is the 'Woman Without a Shadow.' As for Sieglinde, when I sang my last, in Vienna, I was in tears."

What about sharing the stage with sopranos now singing the roles that once were hers? "They're not my roles any more. I'll never forget when I sang my first Herodias five years ago, in Stuttgart with Götz

Friedrich. Karan Armstrong was the Salome, and I thought how wonderful it was that I didn't have to sing and dance — that I could do this opera without fear. Salome is a murderous part. But it was harder when I went to Vienna, where it had been 'my' production. The beauty of the set was still breathtaking, and when I saw those famous steps, I thought, 'I have to go down there. That is my place.' It was strange. But now I love it when I sing with a great Salome. I say, 'Fine. Be careful.' "

Many have heard Rysanek's concerns about the climate in the opera world today. "It goes too fast today" is one of its formulations. But she's hardly without hope. While in San Francisco last summer, she had the experience of watching Laura Ramirez, a 12-year-old Costa Rican girl, walk onstage during one of Blanche Thebom's classes to deliver a knockout "Voi che sapete." "That child," she exclaimed. "Charismatic. A beautiful voice. A talent you die over. She owned the stage. You are born with that talent. She was not arrogant, just very secure and natural. It was a little like seeing myself in the mirror."

"My mother told me that when I was six or seven, I would knock on the neighbors' doors and say, 'Have I sung for you already today?' I was always producing myself, showing myself off. I would wrap myself in a piece of linen and act. Please don't misunderstand, I think I am the exception. I was born with my voice, and my talent, and my abilities. That, one cannot learn. You can learn to move, you can learn to act, you can learn to sing if you have a voice. You can even have an instinct. But you can never learn this thing called charisma."

Rysanek disavows any interest in teaching or directing after she puts down her last role. "I will have worked for 45 years. I want a little privacy." But there's good news for operagoers. Before her retirement, there is her Countess in *The Queen of Spades*. □



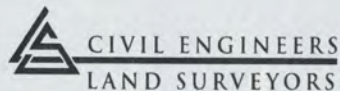
Two more Rysanek interpretations of Wagner roles at the San Francisco Opera: (left) Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*, with James King's Siegmund in 1981; (above) Ortrud in *Lohengrin*, in 1982.

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This year marks the 40th anniversary of the San Francisco Opera debut of one of the most beloved (and most reliable) artists on the Company's roster: Donna Petersen. Through the years, the versatile mezzo-soprano has offered our audiences a long list of portrayals, both on the main stage and at Spring Opera, as well as on tour with Western Opera Theater. The list of the roles she assayed on the stage of the War Memorial is a testimonial to a remarkable career. Happy fortieth, Donna!

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1953 <i>Die Walküre</i> (Grimgerde) | 1969 (L.A.) <i>Die Walküre</i> (Grimgerde)
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<i>Götterdämmerung</i> (Norn)
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| 1966 <i>Elektra</i> (Maid)
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<i>Pikovaya Dama</i> (Governess)
<i>Il Trovatore</i> (Inez) | 1987 <i>La Traviata</i> (Annina)
<i>Roméo et Juliette</i> (Gertrude)
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| 1967 <i>The Magic Flute</i> (Third Lady)
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| 1968 <i>Die Walküre</i> (Grimgerde) | | 1991 <i>La Traviata</i> (Annina) |
| | | 1993 <i>Pikovaya Dama</i> (Governess) |



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JONES



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Four of Donna Petersen's roles at the San Francisco Opera: (far left) Mother Goose, with Gregory Dempsey's Tom Rakewell, in the 1970 staging of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*; (left) Alfred Ill's Wife in the 1972 U.S. premiere performance of Gottfried von Einem's *The Visit of the Old Lady*; (top) in full cry as Grimgerde in the 1972 *Walküre*, a role which also served as her Company debut; (above) as Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, likewise in 1972.

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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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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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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.

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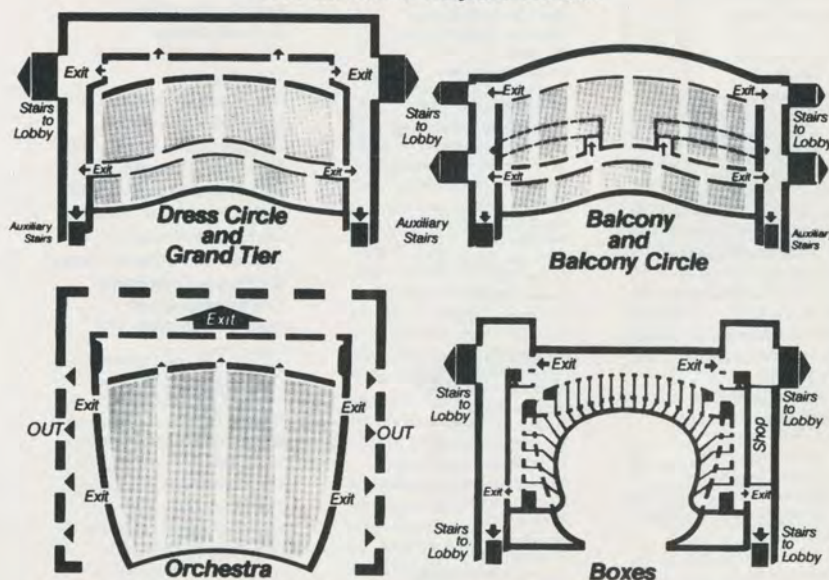
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(THE QUEEN OF SPADES)
Fact Sheet

Timings: Act I - 64 minutes
 Act II - 58 minutes
 Act III - 50 minutes

Total running time: Three hours, 40 minutes

First performance: St. Petersburg, Maryinski Theater, December 19, 1890, Eduard Napravnik conducting.

First performance in the U.S.: New York, Metropolitan Opera, March 5, 1910, Gustav Mahler conducting. The opera was performed in German.

First performance in San Francisco: January 2, 1922, at the Columbia Theater, presented by the Russian Grand Opera Company. The group consisted of Russian emigrés who toured the Orient and the U.S. with a handful of fully-staged productions. The cast included Ina Bourskaya (who was to appear with the S.F. Opera in 1927 as Carmen, Amneris and Dame Quickly) as the Countess, Maria Mashir as Lisa, Vladimir Daniloff as Gherman, and Vladimir Redoeff as "baritone" — didn't say which. Redfern Mason, writing in the *San Francisco Examiner* on January 3, 1922, reported that there was no prompter and that every man and woman on stage was note perfect. He also reported on the Italianate quality of this opera "new to San Francisco," adding that the "ditty" the Countess sings hinted strongly of the folk idiom...

First San Francisco Opera performance: October 1, 1963.

All San Francisco Opera casts:

	Gherman	Lisa	Countess	Tomsky	Yeletsky	Paulina	Director	Conductor
1963	McCracken	Kirsten	Resnik	Shaw	Stewart	Martin	P. Hager	Ludwig
1975	Gougaloff	Vishnevskaya	Resnik	Monk	Edwards	Terzian	Hadjimishev	Rostropovich
1982	Svetlev	Zylis-Gara	Resnik	Krause	Dickson	Quittmeyer	Merrill	Agler
1987	Ochman	Evstatieva	Crespin	Noble	Rafty	Cowdrick	Coleman	Tchakarov

In 1963, we performed *The Queen of Spades* in English. In all remaining seasons, including the current one, the opera was staged in its original Russian. The 1963 staging did not include several scenes: the Act I Children's Chorus, the entire Mozartean pastorella and ballet, and the paeon to Catherine the Great at the end of the act. The roles of Masha and the Governess were collapsed into one. The main idea behind the 1963 staging was to

concentrate on the human story, without too many other distractions. The choreography was by Lew Christensen (1963), Daniel Lordon (1975), and Vassili Sulich (1982 and 1987).

Orchestra: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes plus 1 English horn, 3 clarinets (1 doubles bass clarinet), 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 tuba, 1 timpanist, 2 percussion, 1 harp; Regular (40) strings.

Backstage: 1 piano for the Lisa/Paulina scene; chime for the scene in the Countess's boudoir; 1 trumpet and 1 snare drum for the Barracks Scene plus wind (recorded); church bell for the midnight toll in the Canal Scene.

The appearance of the ghost of the Countess is provided with some enhancement (reverberation) needed for the eerie effect.

Cuts: None.

Role debuts: None among the major principals.

Note: *The Queen of Spades* was the first opera we ever had to cancel due to an extraordinary event. On November 22, 1963, thirty years ago, while on tour to Los Angeles, *The Queen of Spades* was not performed because of the assassination of President Kennedy.

Kori Lockhart

Year	Countess	Lisa	Countess	Paulina	Yelena	Paulina	Countess	Paulina
1963	McClintock	Winton	Paula	Paula	Paula	Paula	Paula	Paula
1975	Gouldoff	Vladimirov	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik
1982	Svetlov	Zylo-Gara	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik
1987	Orman	Evstafiev	Corbin	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik	Reinik

In 1963, we performed *The Queen of Spades* in English. In all remaining seasons, including the current one, the opera was staged in its original Russian. The 1963 staging did not include several scenes: the Act I Children's Chorus, the entire Mozartean pastiche and ballet, and the pas de deux to Catherine the Great at the end of the act. The roles of Maria and the Governor were collapsed into one. The main idea behind the 1963 staging was to

Immediately following this afternoon's

performance of

The Queen of Spades

the audience is requested to remain

seated for a brief presentation to

Leonie Rysanek.

Sunday, December 12, 1993.

