Vec Makropulos
(The Makropulos Case)

1993-1994

Thursday, October 14, 1993 7:30 PM
Sunday, October 17, 1993 2:00 PM
Friday, October 22, 1993 8:00 PM
Wednesday, October 27, 1993 8:00 PM
Saturday, October 30, 1993 8:00 PM

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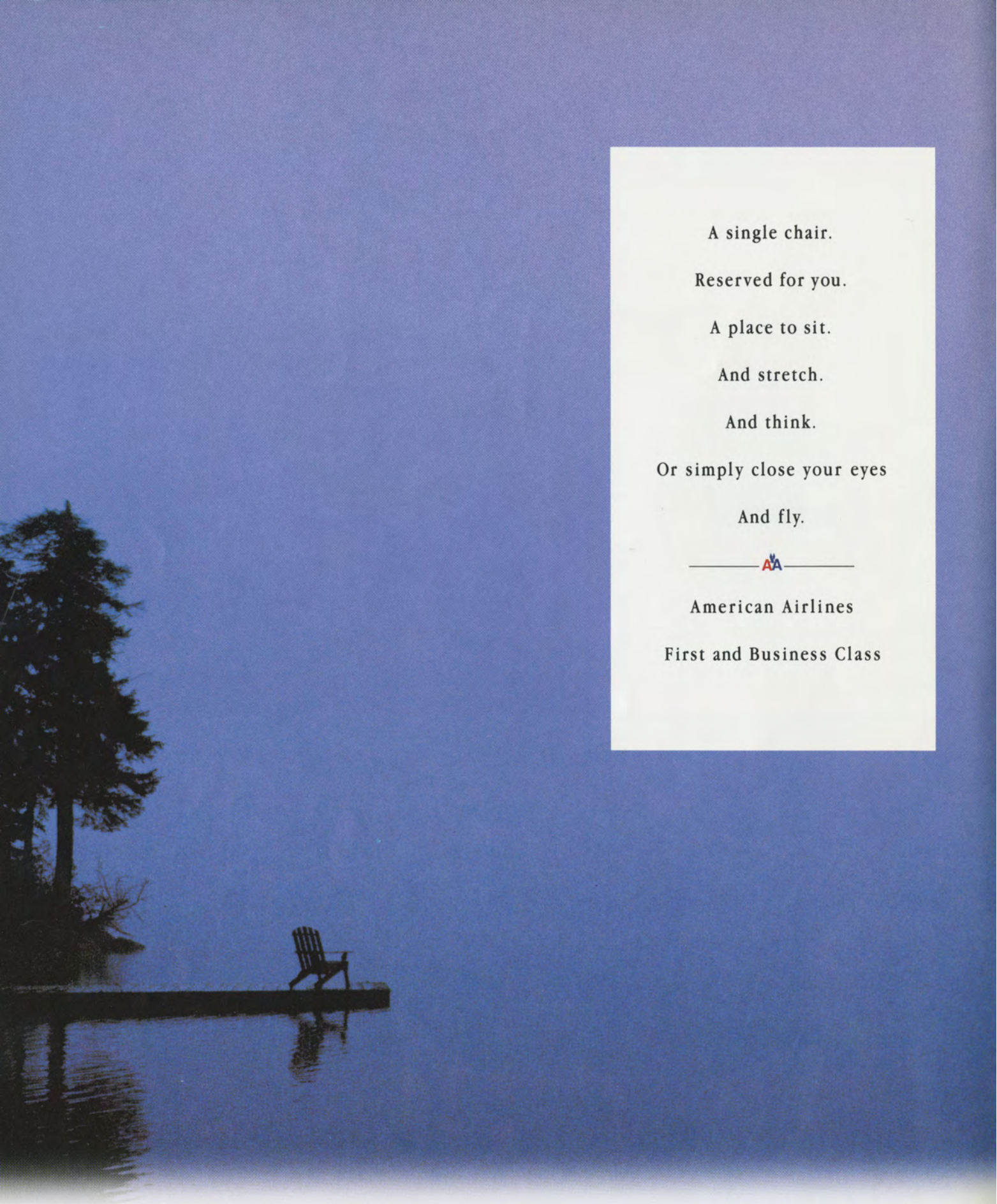
San Francisco Opera

1993 Season

The Makropulos Case



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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

The Makropulos Case

1993 Fall Season
Vol. 71, No. 8

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A wide-ranging introduction to Janáček's intriguing femme fatale.

22 **A Labor of Love** by Arthur Kaplan
Beloved artist Elisabeth Söderström joins director Lotfi Mansouri and conductor Charles Mackerras in this year's revival of *The Makropulos Case.*

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COVER

Rops, Félicien (Belgian, 1833-98)
Death at the Ball, 1865-75
Oil on canvas, $59^{1/2}$ x $33^{1/2}$ in.

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

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

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

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

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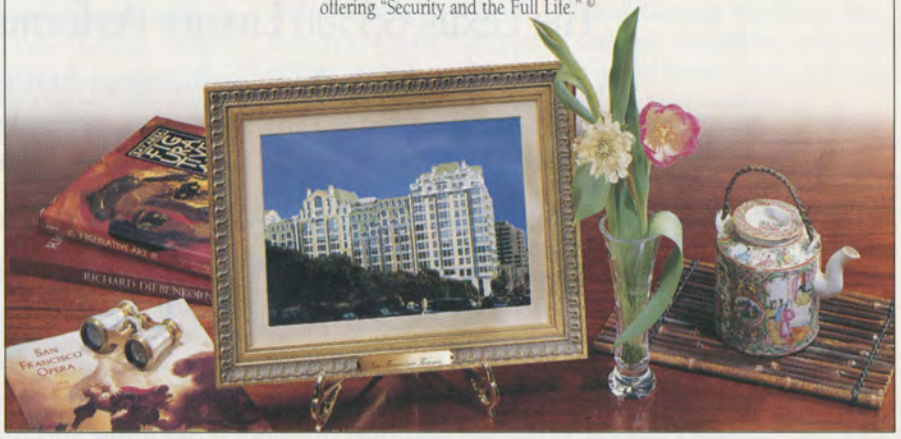

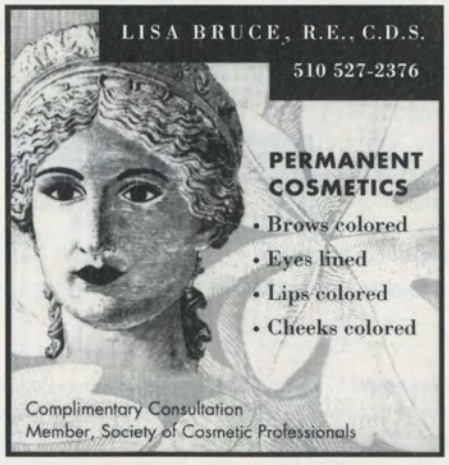

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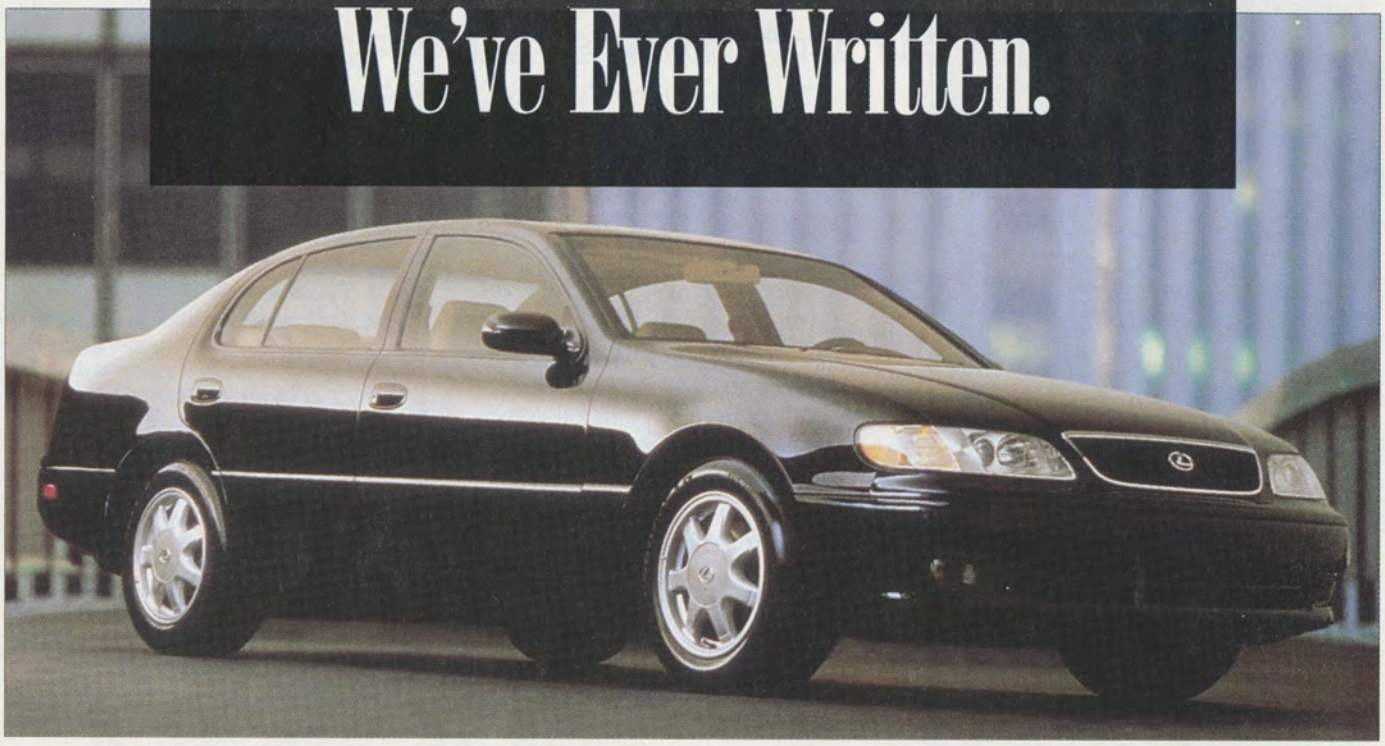

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From the President and the Chairman of the Board

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
Chairman

David M. Chamberlain
President

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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I Vespri Siciliani
Sept. 10, 14, 17, 23, 26 (M), 29, Oct. 2
Giuseppe Verdi

Daughter of the Regiment
(La Fille du Régiment)
Sept. 11, 15, 18, 21, 24, 26, 30, Oct. 3 (M)
Gaetano Donizetti

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Queen of Spades
(ПИКОВАЯ ДАМА)
Nov. 23, 26, Dec. 1, 4, 8, 12 (M)
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

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SEPTEMBER 10 - DECEMBER 12, 1993

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Mackerras/Alden/Steinberg/Munn

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

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Battle, Palmer*, Sugden**; Lopardo, Trempont, Sénéchal
Campanella/Donnell/Montresor/Arhelger

Sept. 11	8:00 p.m.	Sept. 24	8:00 p.m.
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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Sept. and Oct. performances:
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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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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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The Makropulos Case Janáček
Sundine*, Brett*, Cook, Plette*; Clark*, 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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Runnicles/Mansouri/Oswald/Mahoney/Munn

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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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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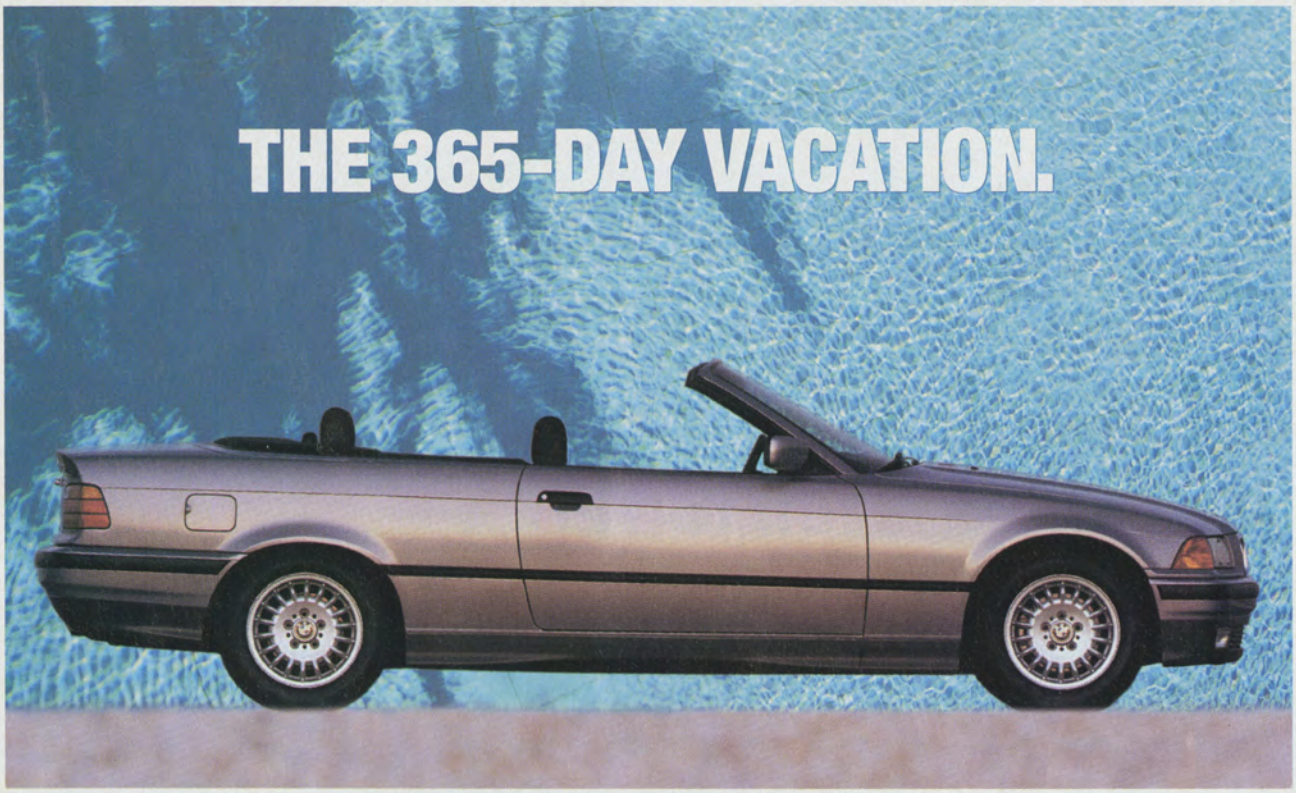

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Makropulos: Science, Women and Fire

By MICHAEL BECKERMAN

"The helicopter gained speed as it headed toward the mainland. It was cold now, and the soldiers muscled the door closed. As they did, Grant looked back just once, and saw the island against a deep purple sky and sea, cloaked in a deep mist that blurred the white-hot explosions that burst rapidly, one after another, until it seemed the entire island was glowing, a diminishing bright spot in the darkening night."

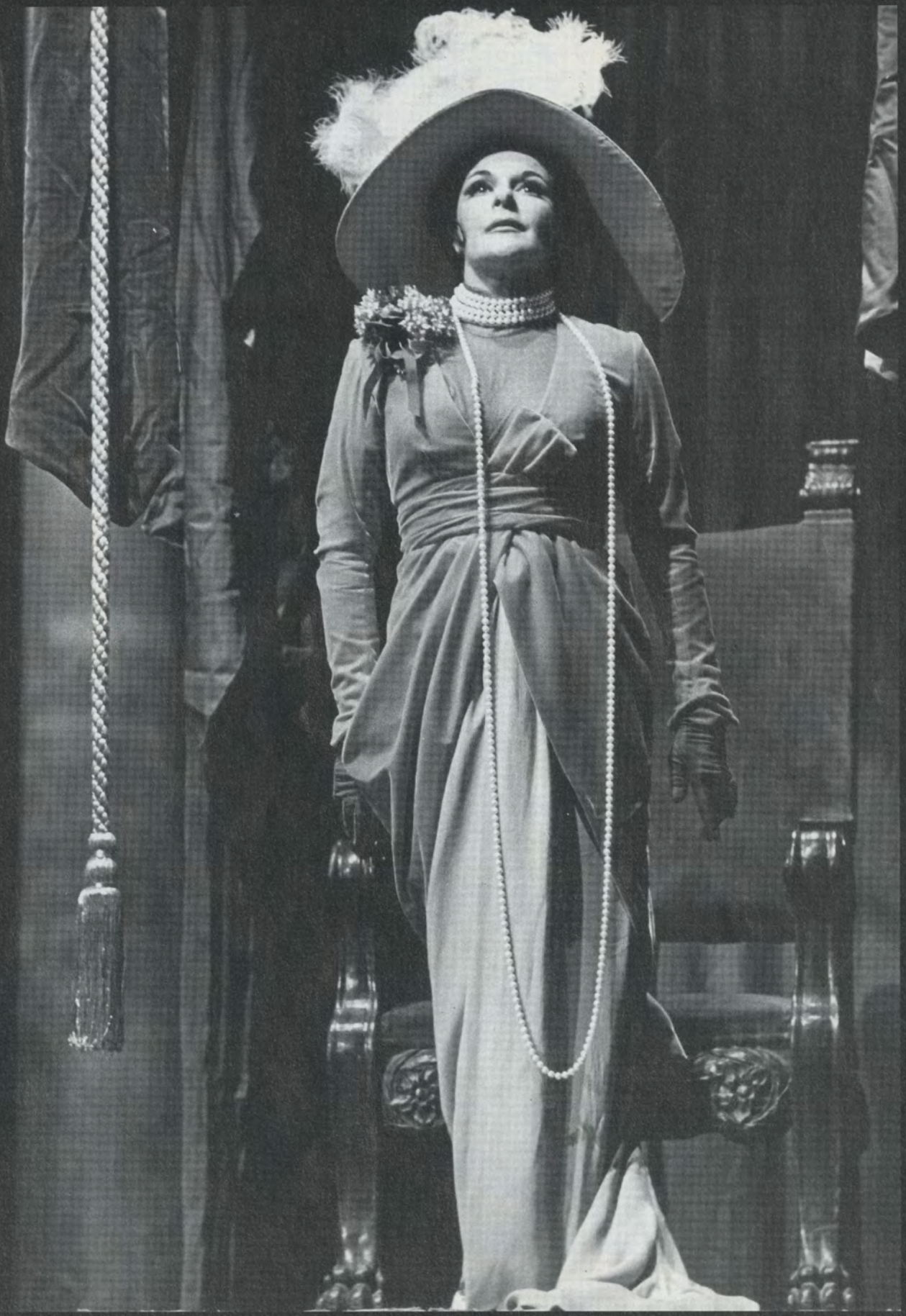
So ends, with the exception of a brief Epilogue, Michael Crichton's wonderful thriller, *Jurassic Park*. After the evils of technology have transformed a tropical island off the coast of Costa Rica into a nightmare theme park filled with cunning predatory dinosaurs gone wild, the all-encompassing conflagration promises a kind of cleansing, a return to the natural order. (In the film — unequal to its source in almost every way — this reestablishment of nature is suggested by standard environmental footage of birds soaring over the waters.)

This portrayal of technology as a dangerous and disruptive force flies in the face of the usual tendency to see science, and scientific method, as the savior of humankind — and there is nothing new about it. Perhaps the modern prototype is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, written in 1818. Fear of science begins to crop up regularly in literary works at the turn of the 20th century. In *The Time Machine*, H.G. Wells created a future where surface of the Earth is populated by apathetic, ineffectual creatures, while technology is a monstrous subterranean mystery under the control of the repulsive Morlocks. As early as 1908, E.M. Forster wrote his chilling story *The Machine Stops*, which depicts a world which has become completely dependent on machinery. When "the machine stops" the populace goes mad.

(Opposite) Marie Collier as Emilia Marty in the U.S. premiere performance of Janáček's* Makropulos Case*, presented by the San Francisco Opera in 1966.

Michael Beckerman teaches at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He has written books on Dvořák and Janáček and is currently completing a volume on the "New World" Symphony.

JONES



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One of the most important, and sometimes neglected writers who sometimes engaged the genre later known as "Science Fiction" was the Czech writer Karel Čapek (1890-1938). He dealt with the relationship between human beings and science in a variety of ways in his plays and novels. *R.U.R.* (Rossum's Universal Robots) shows us a world where humanity has yielded the initiative to machines (incidentally giving the world a new word for a mechanical being); *The War With the Newts* portrays the horror that results from scientific manipulation (a sort of forerunner to *Jurassic Park*); and *The Makropulos Case* is a gerontologist's dream drama of a woman kept alive for over 300 years by a longevity potion, a product of the "scientific method" of the 16th century. (The original Czech title, *Věc Makropulos*, is a wonderful one. "Věc" is simply the Czech word for "thing," so the title refers simultaneously to the court case, the longevity potion, and the entire episode. Translations into English have employed either "Makropulos Case," "Makropulos Affair," or "Makropulos Secret", none of which fully captures the flavor of the original. I continue to advocate the simpler "Makropulos.")

* * *

During the first decades of the 20th century many people believed that science could accomplish anything, and that in a matter of years the human lifespan might be monumentally elongated. In his play *Back to Methuselah* (1922), George Bernard Shaw created a vision of blissful longevity. *Makropulos* may be seen as a kind of dark response to Shaw, since Čapek conclusions are at once bleak and reassuring: it is only the approach of death which makes life meaningful. His play is filled with serious discussions about a range of profound issues related to aging in what might be considered quasi-Shavian tone: wordy and high-toned. Considering this, Čapek was skeptical about the suitability of his drama for a musical setting, as this letter to Janáček reveals:

> "... I have too high an opinion of music — and especially yours — to be able to imagine it united with a *conversational*, fairly unpoetical and over-garrulous play as is my *Makropulos Affair*."

Certainly, there was no artist more appropriate to transform Čapek story of science and aging into an epic allegory than Janáček, whose interest in the material was, at any rate, less loquacious and more passionate. He encountered the play just before his 70th birthday, and began composing his opera a year after, at which time he had spoken prophetically, insisting that his most recent works would be a new departure for him "like those 300-year-old trees in Hukvaldy (the small village where he was born) which all of a sudden grow a new shoot." Increasingly involved with questions of life, death, and aging, his previous opera, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, had explored the relationship between an aging forester who feels "dried out like an old stick," and a beautiful fox, "Sharp Ears," whom he captures. Her escape, return to the woods, marriage, motherhood, and death, form a mighty parable of natural cycles. It is only at the end of the opera, in a magnificent catharsis, that the forester realizes that only by attaching himself to natural cycles of life and especially death can he find peace and harmony in his old age, and be paradoxically reborn.

Janáček, who by this time was his own librettist, altered Čapek *Makropulos Case* substantially, turning it into "the dark side" of this force, since Emilia Marty, née Elena Makropulos, is a perversion of nature created by the scientific method. From the 16th century on, she has been kept alive by artificial means, thus violating the cycles of life, and as such is antithetical to the Vixen. To emulate the Vixen was to create harmony and balance, while the heroine of *The Makropulos Case* can never find peace; indeed, she can only cause disruption in any arena she enters. Because she is an aberration, she wreaks destruction through the world, causing men to kill themselves, go mad, and try to destroy her.

Tom Shippey, in his introduction to *The Oxford Book of Science Fiction* describes the sci-fi genre by using the newly coined word "fabril." He says fabril literature is "over-

JONES

The final moments of* The Makropulos Case *at the San Francisco Opera in 1966. Marie Collier was Emilia Marty; Carol Todd was Christa.

whelmingly urban, disruptive, future-oriented, eager for novelty" and that it claims its identity, in part, in opposition to the pastoral mode. Janáček's *Makropulos Case* might be considered a quintessential model of the fabril anti-pastoral. Though Janáček has the reputation as a "folkloristic" composer, we hear no echoes of bucolic rural scenes in this work, as we did in the pastoral *Vixen*. From the very beginning of the overture it is the pulsing rhythms of the cityscape which claim our attention. The action is set in an office, a hotel room, and backstage at the opera. The dialogue, with the exception of rare outpourings, is terse, even prosaic. For example, the work opens with the dusty details of an old legal battle, declaimed in a desultory manner by old Vítek, who mutters, interrupts himself, and digresses wildly. The entire first part of the opening scene is musically derived from Vítek's "Ach, je, ach bože!" (Oh my, oh God) as he struggles to find the details of the court case. There is no composer who is more of a realist than Janáček. His work seems to combine several realisms. We have the philosophical realism of the Russian school, especially Chekhov as well as tints of verismo. Yet the work also fits in well with the category now referred to as magical realism — a kind of non-tropical, Central European (rather than Central American), magical *urban* realism.

* * *

At the center of all the swirling action is the heroine herself, with her E.M. initials flung through the generations like a string of dark pearls (Elena Makropulos/Ellian MacGregor/Emilia Marty/Ekaterina Myshkin/etc. etc.). Any attempt to interpret the opera must deal with her identity. Who is she and what does she represent?

Answering this question has been complicated by a range of recent approaches to opera which stress the manner in which female characters have been routinely "subjugated" and victimized by male composers. At the outset we must admit that the depiction of women in opera is a two-edged affair. Certainly composers such as Janáček, Puccini, Strauss, and Wagner may have had a certain degree of ambivalence, and even hostility towards women, and this may in part account for the situations in which female characters find themselves in their operas, often as hysterical victims. These are issues that modern opera audiences must think through and resolve on their own terms. But there is also a more abstract musical vision which ties in with this. Composers at the turn of the century and later grew increasingly fond of jagged vocal lines with an enormous range featuring extremes of pitch, dynamics, and tone color. Such things are most readily available in the soprano voice purportedly expressing moments of great emotional dissonance (one can hardly imagine a bass serving this function). Women may have been the subject of operas, but their voices were also a pretext for experiments in purely musical space.

How do we evaluate Elena Makropulos in this context? Is she simply a pawn for Janáček's misogynist mind, another woman to degrade, or an excuse for vocal fireworks? We will have no trouble discovering some strain in the composer's relationships with the important women in his life if we wish to pursue that line of inquiry. His marriage was unhappy and he sometimes treated his wife shabbily, engaging in a series of affairs, most notably with Kamila Stösslová. It is well known that Janáček was in love with Kamila for more than a decade up until his death — for much of that time she either rejected or ignored his fiery advances. Over the years, he created a series of memorable female characters with her in mind, casting her, psychologically, as the Vixen, Katya Kabanova, and of course, Emilia Marty. His letters to her dealing with *Makropulos* show that he is fascinated by E.M., at once involved with her and detached;

> "The 'icy one' had unsuspected success! Such that she sent cold shivers down everyone's spine. They say it's my greatest work.
>
> But it's still possible to go higher.
>
> Have a nice Christmas."
>
> (December 21, 1926)

> "For the first time I've got an empty head, i.e. I'm not working on anything. That 'cold-hot' woman is now in the world —"
>
> (December 27, 1926)

> "I think that for me you'll turn into that 'icy one'. Well now, she's liked in spite of it all, and universally. Those outfits of hers! In Act 1 a sort of greenish fur as a lining. Those pearls and long gold earrings. In Act 2 a white fur, a long train, in Act 3 a dress made out of gold, as if out of gold scales. What a sight! And everyone falls in love with her ... So you'll come and see that 'icy one' in Prague; perhaps you'll see your photograph."
>
> (January 28, 1927)

Beyond the attraction-repulsion of fire and ice, there is something else which distinguishes Janáček's approach to Emilia Marty, an astonishing *sympathy* for his creation. In addition to "photographing" Kamila, it is certain that the composer put something of *himself* into this woman, wounded and lost, in search of peace. In fact, she is such a compelling character that virtually all the men in the drama appear like simple-minded, testosterone-driven puppets. Here is what the composer had to say about his own feelings toward her just after he finished the opera:

> "Poor 300-year-old beauty! People thought she was a thief, a liar, an unfeeling animal. 'Beast', 'canaille' they called her, they wanted to strangle her — and her fault? That she had to live too long.
>
> I was sorry for her. Three years of work at an end. What now?"
>
> (December 5, 1925)

SCHERL

When* The Makropulos Case *returned to San Francisco Opera in 1976, the heroine was portrayed by Anja Silja.

"What now?" was answered by the composition of what is, in most ways, an even darker work, the prison-camp drama *From the House of the Dead*, lacking any substantial female role whatsoever. It is worth mentioning that the most exultant moment in this, Janáček's final opera, occurs when the imprisoned bird is freed. The laws of nature are respected, and even the most degraded prisoners salute the eagle as the "Czar of the Forest" before they are led away in chains.

* * *

Sometimes we are so busy chasing subtexts that we forget the main text itself, which may have little or nothing to do with whatever disturbing symbols we discover in our deep scrutiny. Janáček felt compelled to explore the emotional state of human beings at fever pitch and under extreme psychological pressure. In *The Makropulos Case* the dramatic vitality derives initially from Emilia Marty's search for the formula, and her willingness to mesmerize and manipulate anyone who can help her to get it. A deeper level, though, involves her gradual realization that the frenetic search for eternal life is worse than dying, that life can only have meaning if its opposite is somewhere on the horizon. Audiences will note that from about the middle of the opera the heroine begins to admit that only death will set her free from the torment she has unleashed on herself and others, that even while she seems to be searching for the means to prolong her life, she is really trying to end it.

The *Makropulos Case* is remarkable in several ways. In the opening act Janáček is able to create memorable musical theater with the absence of almost any lyrical melody: the first scene is somewhat like an extended melodrama over a gradually evolving orchestral texture. This ability to invest this music with such immediacy doubtless owes a great deal to the insights the composer gleaned over forty years studying the intonational patterns of human speech. He believed that these "speech melodies" were the key to understanding the human condition, and that any composer who wished to write powerful dramatic works was bound to study them. Another of Janáček's strengths is an astonishing instinct for choosing pithy and indelible musico-dramatic images which convey immense power. Coming at the precise middle of the opera, Marty's scene with the addled old Hauk-Šendorf provides simultaneous evidence of her allure and its ultimate effect, while the throbbing and erotic castanet rhythm seems both to embrace and mock the whole episode.

The greatest glory of the opera, though, is Janáček's ability to create music which, little by little, grows more consonant, paradoxically as the heroine approaches death. One of the most powerful moments in the final act occurs when the heroine says simply "Ježiši Kriste, a nemůže dál!" (Jesus Christ, it cannot go on). Janáček here uses a conventional full cadence, something which has been conspicuously absent from the work up till this time. There are backsliding moments, where Marty tries once again to get the recipe for her longevity potion — indeed, at the very end of the opera she has a lapse when she tries to convince the other characters to keep the formula for the serum. It is the fire and Janáček's own "Magic Fire" music (recalling the overture) which, as in Crichton's novel, destroys all and cleanses all, returning the world to its primal balance.

SCHERL

From the 1976 revival of* The Makropulos Case*: Anja Silja as Emilia Marty; Joshua Hecht as Kolenatý.

* * *

With so many contemporary writers and scholars fascinated with popular culture, one might think that there is hardly any real difference between Crichton's book and Janáček's opera; both feature an artificially created threat destroyed at the end by a conflagration. The parallel between an opera and a best-seller might seem especially apt since here, there, and everywhere, thinkers are "unpacking" the images of popular culture and showing us what subtleties lie beyond the surface, and how they reveal cultural, social, and political attitudes. I have no desire to short-change *Jurassic Park* or popular culture in general, but a work such as *The Makropulos Case*, which reflects a lifetime of deep and uncompromising thought, is a much tougher nut to crack than a pop song or a thriller; it is a bit like the aesthetic equivalent of a prime number. The impossibility, in fact, of glibly interpreting such works, (by Freudians, Marxists, Feminists, or Post-Modernists of any stripe), is the very thing which lends them their eternal flame, and distinguishes them from more ephemeral creations. At the end of *Makropulos* we have not simply experienced the denouement of a professionally-paced adventure, we have encountered both a tragedy and a resolution of mythic proportions, challenging us with an endless series of potent but paradoxical questions about science, aging, gender, and music itself. ❑

Further Reading:

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Ewans, Michael. *Janáček's Tragic Operas*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1987. (An important interpretive study from a dramaturgical point of view)

Susskind, Charles. *Janáček and Brod*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985. (A fine study of the relationship between these two amazingly different men.)

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——*Janáček's Operas*. London and Boston. Faber and Faber 1992. (Documentary sources for all of Janáček's operas. Beautifully annotated and arranged)

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(The standard biography. Never been topped for general musical insight. First published in 1958. Still going after all these years ...)

A Labor of Love

By ARTHUR KAPLAN

The San Francisco Opera, which presented the American premiere of Leoš Janáček's *The Makropulos Case* in 1966, revives the work after a 17-year hiatus. The prime mover in the revival is Company general director Lotfi Mansouri, seconded, most significantly, by two of the world's leading Janáček exponents, conductor Charles Mackerras and soprano Elisabeth Söderström, who is serving as co-director for the 1993 production.

Söderström, currently artistic director of the Drottningholm Court Theater Summer Festival in her native Sweden, following a distinguished singing career that spanned well over 40 years, first came to Janáček via *The Makropulos Case*. "I was offered the part of Emilia Marty after four other Swedish sopranos had turned it down," she confides. "It was more or less an order from Set Svanholm [The noted Swedish tenor was then head of the Royal Opera in Stockholm] who wanted to do it. That was in 1964 in a production staged by Göran Gentele. It was very successful. We took it to Munich and Edinburgh, and toured with it later.

"I remember having heard chamber music by Janáček before that," Söderström adds, "beautiful chamber music, and I'd looked through the score of *Katya* [*Kabanova*] and liked it very much. When I took a look at *The Makropulos Case*, I immediately fell in love with the title role from the dramatic point of view — it's a fantastic acting part. So I said to myself, 'Even if I'm going to lose my voice singing this role, I'll be happy to lose it in that way.' "

Since then, Söderström has portrayed not only Emilia Marty, but the title roles in Janáček's two most popular operas, *Jenůfa* and *Katya Kabanova*, in opera houses in Europe and the United States, and has recorded these roles for Decca/London with Charles Mackerras and the Vienna Philharmonic and an otherwise almost exclusively Czech cast of singers.

After performing *Katya* in Geneva ("It was the first time I sang an opera in Czech in a very interesting production staged by Kašlik and Svoboda, with Krombholc conducting. I studied very hard to get the Czech right."), she returned to *The Makropulos Case* for French-language productions in Paris and Marseilles. She subsequently sang the role of Emilia Marty in English for Welsh National Opera in 1978, a performance that was captured on film. The soprano, a superb linguist, firmly believes in performing opera in the language of the audience, provided the translations are good. She has personally helped rework the translations for foreign language productions of Janáček operas in which she has appeared.

Those Bay Area operagoers who were fortunate to witness this incomparable artist at the San Francisco Opera as Katya in the 1977 premiere production directed by Günther Rennert, designed by Günther Schneider-Siemssen and conducted by Rafael Kubelík, and as Jenůfa in the 1980 production that co-starred Sena Jurinac as Kostelnička, will not soon forget the incredible poignancy and honesty of her interpretations. For example, Söderström's impetuous run upstage as the pregnant teenage Jenůfa greeting her lover Števa who has just been freed from military service, or her impassioned farewell to life as an overwhelmed Katya Kabanova, who jumps to her death in the icy waters of the Volga (She would return to the stage for her bows, wringing out her kerchief, her hair wet and disheveled, completing the illusion of drowning).

Emilia Marty is arguably Janáček's richest character study. The role makes great demands on the interpreter and, in turn, offers great satisfactions. "I enjoyed playing the diva," says Söderström. "She's always beautifully dressed and everyone falls in love with her. There should be something around Emilia — a special aura — which you cannot describe, a kind of mystery.... I hate to put

MESSICK

Elisabeth Söderström in rehearsal (above) and performance (opposite) of Janáček's* Katya Kabanova *at the San Francisco Opera in 1977.

Arthur Kaplan, former co-editor of the San Francisco Opera magazine, currently directs opera tours for Dailey-Thorp Travel.

a character into a single mold. She's not a type. There should be flexibility in the characterization so that you're never quite sure what she's going to do. What's wonderful about her is that she's so natural all the time. She's a diva, but she's very outspoken and does not have the time to behave politely."

The Makropulos Case occupies a special place in Söderström's career. "Since Emilia Marty was my first contact with Janáček," she explains, "it was the thing that attracted me to his kind of operatic writing. Also, it was the first time I was allowed to play a not-so-good girl. As a lyric soprano, I was always portraying very nice girls who die in the last act," she says with a laugh.

"This part is so different from any other operatic role because it goes so deeply into studying the meaning of life. The big question in the opera — whether a person would want to live more or less forever — is something which every human being thinks about sooner or later. Emilia's answer is that eternal life is not worthwhile. She reaches that realization after she is interrogated in the last act and is allowed to talk about her life. Suddenly it becomes clear to her, and she makes it clear to the others, that prolonging one's life is not desirable. It's only if you're allowed a short life that you can really appreciate it. That's a very important question and one which you have to think about very deeply in order to be able to portray it convincingly.

"I became fascinated with the character of Emilia Marty," she continues, "which is what makes the opera so fantastic. With Emilia you can behave cynically and abominably for nearly two and a half hours, and then in the last ten minutes you're allowed to reveal all. I think it's very dangerous to play her as hard and heartless all the way through. She should often be quite charming, and fun, too.

"In the scenes with Hauk, for example, you come to understand that she has been a charming person who really enjoyed life. You can see that part of her past was happy and fulfilled and joyful. It's very moving for her to meet up again with someone she used to be very fond of. She shows great compassion for Hauk because she realizes what she might have become if she hadn't had the formula.

"She has become cynical because life has become repetitive for her. I try to make people understand her problems; I try to make her sympathetic. People should pity her ... I hesitate to speak too much about the lady because there are so many things you should

Continued on page 35

POWERS

STEPHANIE SUNDINE

KATHLEEN BRETT

CATHERINE COOK

MARIE PLETTE

Stephanie Sundine makes her San Francisco Opera debut as Emilia Marty in *The Makropulos Case*, a role in which she won great acclaim in a 1989 Canadian Opera Company production which is now available on videocassette. The native of Illinois has been applauded on three continents for her portrayals in the dramatic soprano repertory, from the late-romantic protagonists of Wagner, Richard Strauss, Janáček and Korngold, to the verismo heroines of Puccini, Mascagni, Boito and Catalani. The part with which she has been most closely associated in recent years is the title role of *Salome*, the vehicle of her debuts at the Metropolitan Opera, Welsh National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Cologne Opera. The artist has also been praised as Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde* at the Opéra de Nice and Opéra de Nantes. Miss Sundine has created leading roles in a number of contemporary works including the U.S. premieres of Sallinen's *The King Goes Forth To France* and Matthus's *Judith*, both at Santa Fe Opera. Recent successes include Chysothemis in *Elektra* in Toronto and Oslo, the title role of *Tosca* in Minneapolis, Marietta/Marie in Korngold's *Die Tote Stadt* for the New York City Opera, a series of *Salomes* for her debuts with the Norwegian National Opera and the Dresden Staatsoper, and her first Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West* for Sarasota Opera. Future plans include her first Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* with the Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra.

Soprano **Kathleen Brett** appears for the first time with San Francisco Opera as Kristina in *The Makropulos Case*. A top prizewinner and recipient of a special award as Best Canadian Singer at the 1991 International Glory of Mozart Competition, she was a member of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble for two seasons. Roles portrayed for the COC include the Governess in *The Turn of the Screw*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, as well as Kristina. Her most recent performances include Constance in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* with Vancouver Opera, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with Calgary Opera, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* with Edmonton Opera, and her Dallas Opera debut in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Other notable appearances have been Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* with Manitoba Opera, and Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* with Pacific Opera Victoria. Equally at home in concert, she has performed with every major Canadian orchestra and with many U.S. symphonies including those of Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia. She has also appeared at the festivals of Ravinia, Riverbend and Meadowbrook. Miss Brett is featured on a recent Cincinnati Pops recording of *The Music Man*, in which she sings the role of Marian the Librarian opposite the Professor Harold Hill of Timothy Noble. Future engagements include Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* for Dallas Opera, Leila in *The Pearl Fishers* with Manitoba Opera, and Nannetta in *Falstaff* with L'Opéra de Montréal.

Catherine Cook appears as a Cleaning Woman in *The Makropulos Case*, the Governess in *The Queen of Spades*, as well as the Marquise of Berkenfeld in the student matinee presentation of *La Fille du Régiment*. The soprano (formerly a mezzo), who was a 1991-92 Adler Fellow, made her Company debut in 1992 in *War and Peace* and *Elektra*, and was seen last fall in *Boris Godunov* and *Christophe Colomb*. She was a 1990 Merola Opera Program participant, singing the role of Meg Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and was chosen by the Opera Center to perform on the Micronesian Islands of Guam, Saipan and Pohnpei. The Chicago native's recent engagements include the title role of *Ariodante* for the Opera Center's Showcase series, the title role of *Rinaldo* with the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, Ottavia in *The Coronation of Poppea* at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, an appearance at the 1993 Hong Kong Festival in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and Jane Seymour in *Anna Bolena* at the Israeli Vocal Arts Academy. She can be heard as the alto soloist in the first recorded version of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in the Mahler orchestration, conducted by Gerhard Samuel. In addition to her opera and concert performances throughout the U.S., she also has extensive experience in musical theater. Miss Cook won the 1990-91 Norman Treigle Award in Opera from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she completed an Artist Diploma in opera. Future engagements include a Schwabacher Debut Recital and the role of the Confidante in the first San Francisco presentation of *The Phantom of the Opera*.

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*. The soprano made an immediate impact on the operatic world last year by winning 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 Gutrune 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*.

In his San Francisco Opera debut, tenor **Graham Clark** portrays Albert Gregor in *The Makropulos Case*. A native of Lancashire, England, he worked as Director of Physical Education and was a Senior Regional Officer with the English Sports Council before he made his professional operatic debut with Scottish Opera in 1975. He was a member of the

Continued on page 31

This production is made possible by generous grants from the Carol Franc Buck Foundation and the Bernard Osher Foundation.

Opera in three acts by LEOŠ JANÁČEK

Libretto by the composer

Based on the play by KAREL ČAPEK

(By arrangement with European American Music Distributors Corporation, sole U.S. and Canadian agent for Universal Edition Vienna, publisher and copyright owner.)

Věc Makropulos

(The Makropulos Case)

(in Czech)

Conductor
Charles Mackerras

Stage Directors
Lotfi Mansouri
Elisabeth Söderström*

Set Designer
Leni Bauer-Ecsy

Costume Designer
Michael Stennett

Lighting Designer
Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson

Assistant to Maestro Mackerras
Michel Singher

Musical Preparation
Robert Morrison
Joyce Fieldsend
Peter Grunberg

Czech transliteration for San Francisco Opera
Yveta Synek Graff

Prompter
Jonathan Khuner

Assistant Stage Directors
Paula Williams
Sandra Bernhard

Stage Manager
Jerry Sherk

Scenery constructed in
San Francisco Opera Scenic Studios

Costumes from the
Canadian Opera Company

First performance:
Brno, December 18, 1926

First San Francisco Opera performance:
November 19, 1966 (U.S. premiere)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14 AT **7:30**
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17 AT 2:00
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22 AT 8:00
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27 AT 8:00
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30 AT 8:00

CAST
(in order of appearance)

Vítek, a clerk	Miroslav Švejda**
Albert Gregor	Graham Clark*
Kristina, Vítek's daughter	Kathleen Brett*
Dr. Kolenatý, a lawyer	Dalibor Jedlička**
Emilia Marty	Stephanie Sundine*
Baron Jaroslav Prus	Tom Fox
A cleaning woman	Catherine Cook
A stagehand	Earle Patriarco+
Janek, Prus's son	William Burden
Count Hauk-Šendorf, an aged aristocrat	Gary Rideout
A chambermaid	Marie Plette*

Gentlemen admirers, a doctor, an attendant

**United States opera debut
*San Francisco Opera debut
+ 1993 Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: Early 20th-century Prague

ACT I The office of Dr. Kolenatý

INTERMISSION

ACT II The stage of a theater

INTERMISSION

ACT III Emilia Marty's hotel room

Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera.

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

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

The performance will last approximately two and one-half hours.

The Makropulos Case / *Synopsis*

Three hundred years ago, an alchemist by the name of Makropulos, employed by the Hapsburg Emperor, discovered the elixir of life and was forced by the Emperor to administer it to his own daughter, Elina. During the 300 years that she has lived, she has had many identities, many names (always with the initials E.M.) and many affairs. One of her more passionate affairs was with Baron Josef Ferdinand Prus by whom she had a son. She also gave the Baron the formula for the elixir, but the potion killed him and on his deathbed he left his estate to their illegitimate son. Those in attendance around the deathbed, however, misunderstood the name he spoke, and unable to find such an heir, the estate went to a distant branch of the family. The illegitimate branch has contested this for nearly a century.

ACT I

At Dr. Kolenatý's law office in Prague, the clerk Vítek is filing papers concerning the long standing case of Gregor vs. Prus, in which an inheritance has been in dispute for almost 100 years. Gregor, the plaintiff in the case, enters to inquire as to its progress, followed shortly by Kristina, Vítek's daughter. She is a student of singing and she speaks enthusiastically about the great prima donna, Emilia Marty. Gregor asks Kristina how old Marty is, and she replies that her age is a mystery to everyone.

Dr. Kolenatý enters his office with none other than Emilia Marty herself. She says that she has come to learn about the Gregor vs. Prus case, and displays a remarkable knowledge of it, claiming that Baron "Pepi" Prus, who died apparently childless in 1827, was in fact the father of Ferdinand Gregor, whose mother was the famous singer Ellian MacGregor. (As this could not be proven at the time of the death of Pepi Prus, the Prus estate passed to a cousin.) Marty claims to know of documents in the vaults of the current Baron Prus that will settle the matter conclusively. Dr. Kolenatý does not believe her, and cannot imagine how she could know this information, but Gregor insists upon sending him to look into the matter.

After Kolenatý has left, Gregor offers Marty a reward if this information helps him to win his case. She scorns his offer of money, but says that she would like a certain document, written in Greek, and that her desire for this document is the reason for her interest in the Gregor vs. Prus case. Kolenatý then returns, along with Baron Prus, having found Pepi's will, his love letters to Ellian MacGregor, and a document in Greek. Prus points out that it is still necessary to produce written proof that Ferdinand Gregor was the son of Pepi Prus, before Gregor can legally claim the disputed property.

ACT II

Prus arrives at the opera house, looking for Emilia Marty. Also present in the theater are Kristina, Janek (Kristina's sweetheart and the son of Prus), as well as Gregor and the old, half-senile Count Hauk-Šendorf. Marty insults Janek and Gregor, and when Hauk-Šendorf remarks on how much she reminds him of his old love of 50 years past, the Spanish singer Eugenia Montez, she speaks to him in Spanish, leaving him in a confused daze. She turns to Prus, who informs her that he has discovered that Ferdinand Gregor's mother gave her name as Elina Makropulos at Ferdinand's baptism. He concludes that, since the love letters to Pepi Prus are only signed with the initials E.M., it cannot be proven that Ellian MacGregor was indeed Ferdinand Gregor's mother. Marty, desperate for the Greek document in his possession, asks him to name his price for it, but he only laughs and departs.

Gregor makes protestations of love to Marty, but in boredom, she falls asleep. Gregor leaves, and Marty awakens to find Janek staring at her in fascination. She charmingly asks him to steal the Greek document from his father, to which he agrees. Prus then returns and agrees to give her the document in exchange for a rendezvous.

ACT III

Marty and Prus are dressing in a hotel room. Marty demands the Greek document from Prus, who throws it on the table. A maid enters and tells Prus that a servant of his is downstairs with a message. Prus hurries out, but quickly returns looking stunned. He tells Marty that his son, Janek, has just killed himself out of love for her. Marty coldly remarks that lots of people kill themselves. Hauk-Šendorf enters and, convinced that Marty is his former lover, begs her to go to Spain with him. Marty agrees, but they are interrupted by the arrival of Dr. Kolenatý, Gregor, Kristina and Vítek. As Marty is dressing in another room, they search her personal belongings, and discover old letters and mementos bearing various names: Emilia Marty, Ellian MacGregor, Eugenia Montez and Elina Makropulos.

Marty returns in a slightly drunken state, and claims that her real name is Elina Makropulos, and that she was born in Crete in 1575. To the disbelief of everyone in the room, she explains that her father, Hieronymus Makropulos, an alchemist to the court of Emperor Rudolf II, devised a longevity potion and administered it to his 16-year-old daughter, Elina. She has lived ever since then, in different countries and under different names, but now feels her strength failing, and requires the formula (the Greek document) if she is to rejuvenate herself. She collapses and is carried to her bed. She revives, but appears greatly changed, asking why she ever feared death, as it is death that gives life its meaning. She offers the formula to Kristina, and Kristina burns the document. Marty sinks happily into death.

The performance of October 22nd is sponsored by Meyer Sound Laboratories.

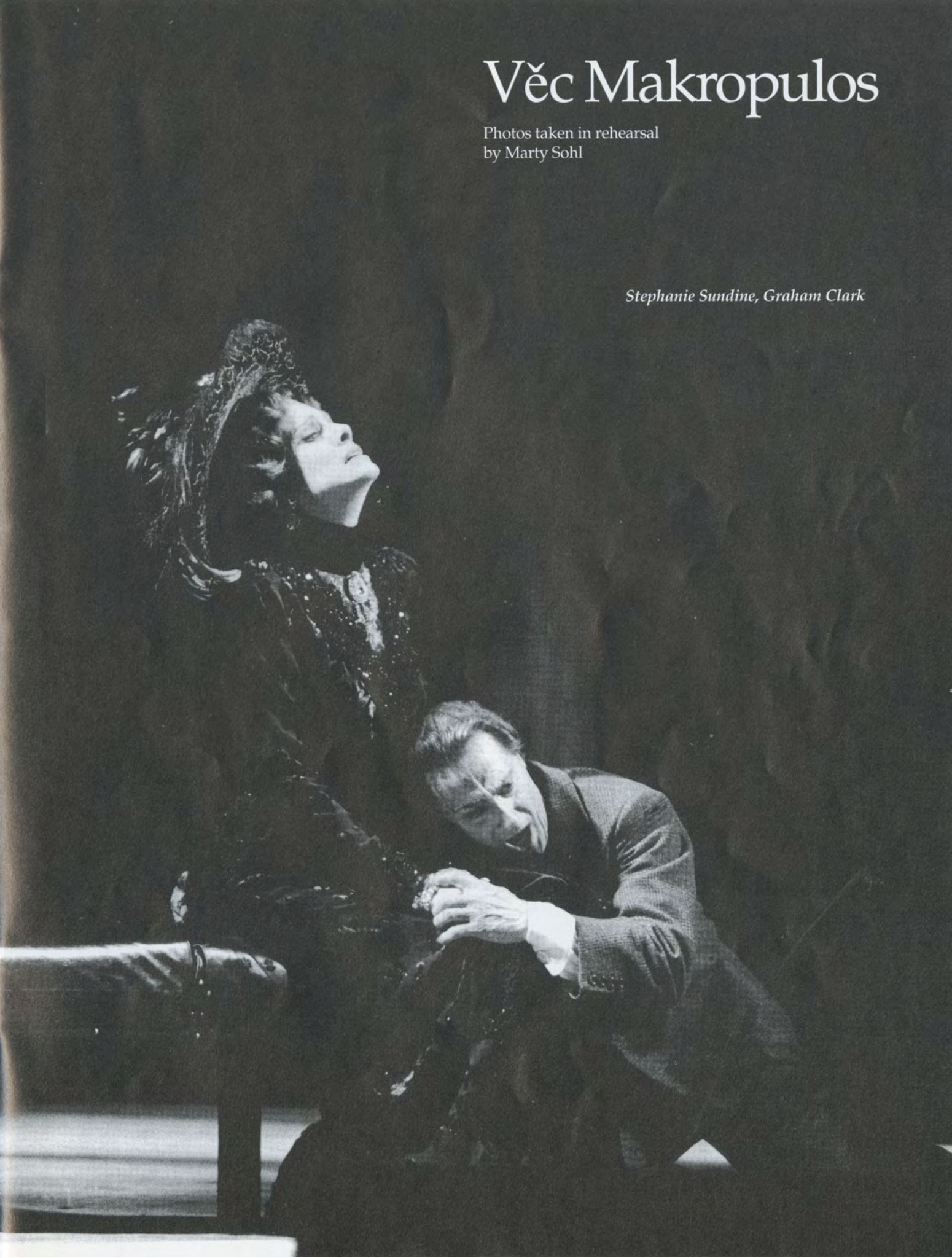
The performance of October 27th is designated in honor of
Mr. and Mrs. David M. Chamberlain's membership in the Triple Gold Circle.

SUPERNUMERARIES

David J. Clark
David Clover
David Dahlstrand
Ted Foster
James Lesko
Matt Miller
Oliver Pollard

Věc Makropulos

Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

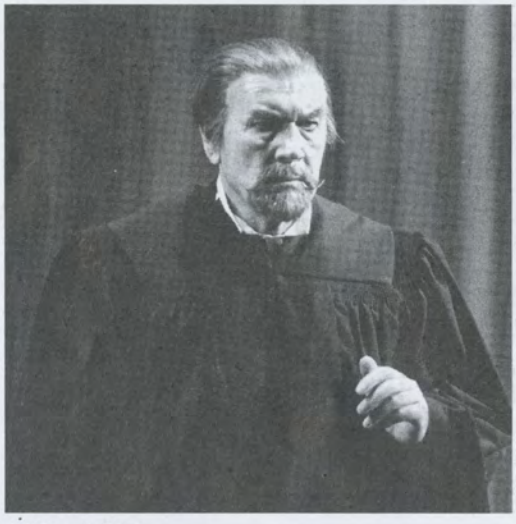


Stephanie Sundine, Graham Clark

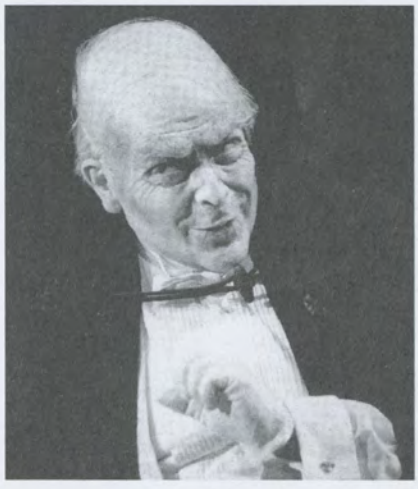
Stephanie Sundine

Earle Patriarco, Catherine Cook

Stephanie Sundine



Dalibor Jedlička



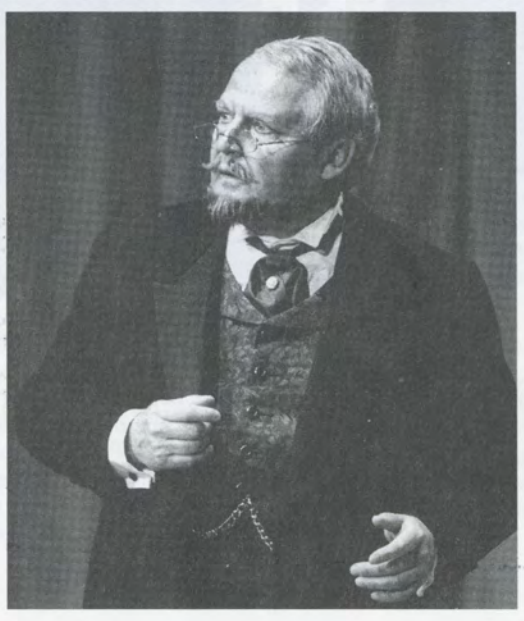
Gary Rideout

Graham Clark

William Burden, Kathleen Brett

Tom Fox

Stephanie Sundine, Marie Plette



Miroslav Švejda

Stephanie Sundine

Graham Clark

Stephanie Sundine

Tom Fox

English National Opera from 1978 to 1985, and also performed with the Welsh National Opera and Opera North. He has since had an extensive international career, appearing at the Metropolitan Opera every season since 1985 (Loge and Mime in the *Ring* cycle, Herod in *Salome*, Captain Vere in *Billy Budd*, The Captain in *Wozzeck*, Števa in *Jenůfa*, and Bégearss in the world premiere of Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*); at the Bayreuth Festival each season from 1981 to 1992 (over 100 performances including Loge and Mime, David in *Die Meistersinger*, the Steersman in *Der Fliegende Holländer*); as well as appearances in Paris, Chicago, Vienna, Zurich, Munich, Berlin, Toronto, Rome, Turin, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Vancouver, Stockholm and Tel Aviv, among other cities. Clark has also sung in concert with many of the world's leading orchestras and at the festivals of Lucerne, Brussels, Edinburgh, and the London Proms. He appears on videos of the Emmy-nominated *The Ghosts of Versailles*, *The Makropulos Case*, and the soon-to-be released 1992 *Ring* from Bayreuth. The artist won Britain's coveted Sir Laurence Olivier Award for outstanding achievement in opera for his portrayal of Mephistopheles in the ENO's 1986 production of Busoni's *Doctor Faust*.

American baritone **Tom Fox** returns to San Francisco Opera as Jaroslav Prus in *The Makropulos Case*. He made his acclaimed Company debut in 1990 as Alberich in *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and has since been applauded here as Ryuji Tsukazaki in the U.S. premiere of *Das Verratene Meer* and Orest in *Elektra* (1991), and as Jokanaan in *Salome* this summer. After early musical training at the Cincinnati Opera's College Conservatory of Music, he became a resident member of the parent company, singing such roles as Doctor Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, and Escamillo in *Carmen*. In 1981, he was engaged as principal guest artist at the Frankfurt Opera, where his roles included Amonasro in *Aida*, Pizarro in *Fidelio*, Klingsor in *Parsifal*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, as well as Alberich, Escamillo and Orest. His first appearance with the Canadian Opera Company was in 1983 as Orest, and he has since returned to Toronto as Jokanaan, the four villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, and Escamillo. Fox has also been praised for his performances in the opera houses of Munich, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Nice, Bari, Turin, Palermo, Cardiff, Vancouver, Pittsburgh and San Diego, among others. His most recent successes include a debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Alberich, Barnaba in *La Gioconda* in Rome, Scarpia in Munich and at Spain's Oviedo Festival, Iago at Washington Opera, as well as the Bishop of Blois in Massenet's *Esclarmonde*, Gérard in *Andrea Chénier*, and Amonasro in Palermo. Future assignments include *The Makropulos Case* in Turin and Bologna, *Tosca* in Chicago, and *Tristan und Isolde* in Brussels.

Bass **Dalibor Jedlička** makes his first operatic appearance in the United States as Kolenatý in *The Makropulos Case*. After studies at the Brno Conservatory in his native Czechoslovakia, he sang in the chorus of Brno's State Theater and began his career at the theaters of Olomouc, Opava and Ostrava. It was in these opera houses that he mastered the Czech repertoire, as well as several roles in the standard repertory. A renowned member of Prague's illustrious National Theater since 1960, his career also included regular appearances in Italy, Austria, France, Germany and Yugoslavia. The versatile artist has performed comic roles (Don Pasquale, Don Basilio, Mozart's Figaro), dramatic parts (Pizarro in *Fidelio*, the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlos*, Boris Godunov), in addition to featured bass roles in the operas of Dvořák, Smetana, Martinê and, especially, Leoš Janáček. Jedlička has participated in five complete Janáček opera recordings under the baton of Charles Mackerras: *Jenůfa*, *Kaťa Kabanová*, *From the House of the Dead*, *The Makropulos Case*, and *The Cunning Little Vixen*. The last named, in which Jedlička sings the role of the Forester, was named "Best Record of the Year" in 1983. The bass was deemed "Artist of Merit" by the Czech government in 1981.

Tenor **Miroslav Švejda**, acclaimed as one of Czechoslovakia's leading singers, makes his United States opera debut as Vítek in *The Makropulos Case*. A member of Prague's famed National Theater for two decades, his wide repertoire comprises well over 50 roles in both the Czech and standard repertoire. His artistry encompasses operas by Smetana (*Two Widows*, *The Secret*, *The Devil's Wall*, *Viola*), Dvořák (*The Jacobin*, *Armida*), Tchaikovsky (*Eugene Onegin*), Rossini (*The Barber of Seville*), Donizetti (*Don Pasquale*), Verdi (*La Traviata*), Puccini (*Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème*), Martinů (*The Greek Passion*), Mozart (*Don Giovanni*), as well as the works of Janáček. He is a regular performer, either in opera or on the concert stage, in France, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Spain, Italy, Austria, Canada and the United States. Švejda was awarded the title "Artist of Merit" by the Czech government in 1983.

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

After making his first San Francisco Opera appearance last fall as Count Lerma in *Don Carlo*, tenor **William Burden** returns to portray Janek in *The Makropulos Case*. The native of Florida completed his master of music degree in vocal performance at Indiana University, after having received his bachelor's degree in Spanish literature from Middlebury

GRAHAM CLARK

TOM FOX

DALIBOR JEDLIČKA

MIROSLAV ŠVEJDA

GARY RIDEOUT

WILLIAM BURDEN

EARLE PATRIARCO

CHARLES MACKERRAS

LOTFI MANSOURI

ELISABETH SÖDERSTRÖM

College in Vermont. He spent two summers with Santa Fe Opera as a member of their Apprentice Artist Program. As a 1991 Merola Opera Program participant, he appeared as Jeník in *The Bartered Bride* and performed the role of Alfredo on Western Opera Theater's national tour of *La Traviata*. Additional appearances include Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* and Tamino in *The Magic Flute* with the Tacoma Opera, Belmonte in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and the title role of *Candide* with Skylight Opera, and Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with Madison Opera, Podestà in *La Finta Giardiniera* and Narciso in *The Turk in Italy* with Wolf Trap Opera, as well as his European debut at Opera North as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*. Burden continues to study with Margaret Harshaw, his mentor and teacher at Indiana University.

Baritone **Earle Patriarco** portrays a Stagehand in *The Makropulos Case*. The 1993 Adler Fellow made his Company debut last fall in *Boris Godunov*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Andrea Chénier* and *Christophe Colomb*, and appeared here this summer in *Salome* and *Capriccio*. A native of Southern California, he earned his bachelor of music degree from Biola University and his master of music degree from the University of Southern California. In 1991, he was awarded the Grand Prize in the Glory of Mozart Competition in Toronto. He has performed with West Coast Opera as Silvio in *Pagliacci*, with the Los Angeles Concert Opera in *The Gypsy Baron*, with Marin Opera as Danilo in *The Merry Widow*, and has appeared at the Mozart Festival in Lugano, Switzerland. As a 1991 Merola Opera Program participant, he sang the role of Giorgio Germont in *La Traviata*, a part he also sang on Western Opera Theater's national tour. Returning to the Merola Program last year, he appeared as Marcello in *La Bohème* and was awarded the Florence Bruce Award at the Grand Finals Concert. Patriarco recently traveled to Japan to portray Marcello in the Opera Center's production of *La Bohème*, and was also acclaimed in a "Rodgers and Hammerstein Evening" with the San Francisco Symphony Pops series.

Charles Mackerras, principal guest conductor with San Francisco Opera, is on the podium for *I Vespri Siciliani*, *La Bohème* and *The Makropulos Case*. Born in Schenectady, New York, he was raised in Australia, where he received his musical education and first professional experience as oboist and conductor. After winning a British Council Scholarship, he studied conducting in Prague, an experience from which arose his interest in Czech music, especially that of Janáček. As Principal Conductor for the Hamburg State Opera for three years, he led that company's 1967 performances at the Metropolitan Opera in New York as his U.S. conducting debut. In 1969 he undertook his first conducting assignment for a U.S. opera company, leading performances of *The Magic Flute* and *La Cenerentola* at San Francisco Opera. He has since returned here for productions of *Eugene Onegin* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* in 1971, Handel's *Julius Caesar* (in his own edition) for the 1982 Summer Festival, Handel's *Orlando* (again in his own edition) in 1985, *Jenůfa* in 1986, *Lohengrin* in 1989, and *Der Rosenkavalier* this summer. Music director of the English National Opera from 1970 to 1978, Maestro Mackerras was also, until last year, musical director of the Welsh National Opera, where he is now conductor emeritus. Other past positions include chief guest conductor of the BBC Symphony and chief conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. He is currently principal guest conductor for both the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic. In demand at the world's major opera houses and concert halls, Mackerras has produced a lengthy discography — including a complete cycle of Janáček operas — which has earned him a number of prestigious awards. He was honored with the title Commander of the British Empire in 1974, the Janáček Medal from the Czech government in 1979, a knighthood in 1979, and in 1987 was appointed a Fellow of the Royal College of Music.

San Francisco Opera General Director **Lotfi Mansouri** shares the staging duties of *The Makropulos Case* with Elisabeth Söderström and directs the revival of *Die Meistersinger*. Born in Iran, he attended college at UCLA and received American citizenship before serving as resident stage director at the Zurich Opera from 1960 to 1966. In 1965 he started working simultaneously at the Geneva Opera, where he became head stage director in 1966 and stayed until 1976. During his years in Switzerland, Mansouri began fulfilling engagements as guest director at various houses throughout Italy (including Milan's La Scala and the companies of Naples, Palermo, Genoa, Turin and Perugia) and North America: Chicago, Houston, Santa Fe, Philadelphia, Tulsa, San Diego, Dallas, and both the Metropolitan and New York City Opera companies. In 1976 he was named general director of the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, a position he held until his appointment as general director of San Francisco Opera in 1988. His Toronto credits include 30 new productions, 12 of them Canadian premieres. His many S.F. Opera credits (nearly 50 productions since 1963) include the 1979 presentation of *La Gioconda* which was telecast live throughout the U.S. and to Europe via satellite; seven operas featuring Joan Sutherland; 1988's opening night production of *L'Africaine*; the highly acclaimed new production of *Lulu* in 1989; *Wozzeck* and *Die Fledermaus* in 1990; *Tristan und Isolde* and *Attila* in 1991; the Company premiere of *Guillaume Tell* last summer; *Christophe Colomb* last fall; and the recent new staging of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Recent successes elsewhere have been *Anna Bolena* for Seattle Opera, *Andrea Chénier* at Houston Grand Opera, *The Merry Widow* for the Australian Opera, *Turandot* at the Washington Opera, and the S.F. Opera Center's production of *La Bohème* which was presented in Japan. His film credits include opera sequences in *Yes, Giorgio* and the critically praised 1987 film *Moonstruck*. Mansouri recently received the Chevalier of the Order of Arts & Letters, one of the highest honors the French government can bestow upon a civilian.

The internationally renowned Swedish soprano **Elisabeth Söderström**, who co-directs *The Makropulos Case*, has enjoyed a distinguished career as one of the world's most versatile singers, with equal success on the opera stage, concert platform, in recital and on record. She has demonstrated her artistry with composers as diverse as Mozart and

Debussy, Gluck and Berg, and has long been recognized as one of the world's supreme interpreters of Richard Strauss. She made her professional debut at the Drottningholm Court Theatre (where she was recently appointed Artistic Director), and in 1950 became a member of the Royal Opera at Stockholm. Her international career quickly developed with debuts at the Metropolitan Opera (as Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*) and the Glyndebourne Festival (as the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*), two theaters with which she developed close artistic ties. The Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* is one of her signature roles which she has sung in virtually every major opera house in the world. Additional specialties in the repertoire of this beloved artist are the heroines of Janáček's *Katya Kabanova*, *Jenůfa*, and *The Makropulos Case*, which she has portrayed in San Francisco (1977 debut as Katya, 1980 as Jenůfa), Houston, Geneva and Britain, and recorded with Charles Mackerras and the Vienna Philharmonic. Mozart is another favorite, with performances of Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* and the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in numerous operatic capitals. Her repertoire encompassed over 60 roles which she has performed in France, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, Eastern Europe, and throughout North America. Appointed a Court Singer by the Swedish government in 1959, she was further honored as a member of Sweden's Royal Academy of Music in 1965. More recently, Miss Söderström was named a Commander of the British Empire, and was also honored by the government of France as a Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres.

The late Austrian designer **Leni Bauer-Ecsy** created the costumes for *The Makropulos Case*, a production first mounted by San Francisco Opera in 1966 (U.S. premiere) and repeated here in 1976. Her long association with the Company includes credits for *Wozzeck* (1960, reprised in 1981), *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1961), *La Forza del Destino* and *Capriccio* (1963), *Der Rosenkavalier* (1964), *Lulu* (1965), and *Jenůfa* (1969, 1986). Many of her San Francisco Opera designs have since been seen in other opera houses throughout the world, and her list of engagements included assignments at all of the major German opera houses: Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Stuttgart, and the festivals of Salzburg, Edinburgh and Vienna. In recent seasons her designs have been seen in Stuttgart (*Albert Herring* and *Elektra*), Munich (*The Bartered Bride*), Buenos Aires (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Dallas (*Der Rosenkavalier*), and Seattle (*Jenůfa*).

Michael Stennett designed the costumes for *The Makropulos Case*, as well as Kathleen Battle's costumes for *La Fille du Régiment*. His work was first seen by San Francisco Opera audiences in the 1982 Summer Season staging of Handel's *Julius Caesar*. Additional Company assignments have been the costume designs for *Anna Bolena* (1984), *Orlando* (1985), *Eugene Onegin* (1986), *Idomeneo* (1989), as well as *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1992). Since his first production in 1968, *Anne of Green Gables* in London's West End, the English designer has worked for various leading opera, ballet and theatrical companies. In addition to numerous costume credits for the Australian Opera, his costumes in Britain have been seen in productions of *Werther* for the English National Opera; *La Bohème*, *Peter Grimes* and *Tosca* for the Welsh National Opera; and, for the Royal Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Werther*, *Alceste*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Lucrezia Borgia*. Other credits include *Kismet* and *The Makropulos Case* for the Canadian Opera, *Platée* for the Stockholm Opera, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* for Palermo, and *Adriana Lecouvreur* in Munich. In this country, his work was also seen in the Los Angeles Philharmonic production of *Falstaff*, as well as in Handel's *Ariodante* for Santa Fe Opera, *Tancredi* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Los Angeles Music Center Opera, and *Julius Caesar* and *Semiramide* at the Met.

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*.

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1993 Opera Previews

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES
Previews of the operas of the 1993 season will be given by Michael Barclay, director of Opera Education International. Lectures will be presented on the following dates from 7:15 - 9:30 p.m. at OEI, 400 Yale Ave. (at Vassar), in the Kensington section of the Berkeley Hills. Admission to the full series is $95; individual admission at the door is $15. For further information, please call (510) 526-5244.

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

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DAVID NICASTRO *Acting Associate Principal*
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A LABOR OF LOVE
Continued from page 23

leave to the audience to discover."

Someone who doesn't hesitate to speak about the lady — and the artist who so tellingly portrayed her — is San Francisco Opera general director Lotfi Mansouri. He had originally asked Söderström to be Emilia Marty in the Canadian Opera Company production he directed in Toronto in 1989. When she told him she didn't sing the role any more, he offered her the co-directing assignment. "I said to her, 'This is *your* role and this is *your* opera,' explains Mansouri. 'We'll co-direct it; we'll do it together. I can concentrate a lot more on the technical stuff — the lighting and so on — and you can bring your conceptions and perceptions. You and I will discuss the staging and interpretation. If we have to argue we'll argue outside the theater.' At the first rehearsal she was a little wary and very careful. Then she opened up and was absolutely wonderful. We actually *did* discuss things and really did it together. For me, it was a very rich experience of give and take. It was a very constructive atmosphere."

Söderström prefers to use the words "supervisor" and "polisher" in defining her role. "I'm helping Lotfi with the details of the singers' interpretations. I don't think I could do a whole, complete staging. I think too highly of what staging an opera means to do it without studying all the elements of a production like lighting, etc. For one thing, I don't have the time. The job at Drottningholm takes all my efforts. Also, to stage a performance from the auditorium is so different from being in one. You cannot simply reconstruct an opera you've performed in, even the things you've done yourself."

"In order to co-direct," Mansouri elucidates, "you have to have respect for your partner. You have to have ego under control. There were times when Elisabeth and I came to a problem from different points of view. It's possible to analyze and discuss different ideas and different approaches, as long as you eventually come up with a single solution. It's the piece and the artists who benefit. It's the piece that counts; the object is to enrich the piece and the audience's understanding and appreciation of it.

"The reason I asked Elisabeth to co-direct in the first place," adds Mansouri, "stems from a previous experience in Toronto. When she performed *The Merry Widow* there with me, I had her do some master classes with our Opera Center Ensemble. She watched a run-through of *Butterfly* and took notes. It was one of the most perceptive reactions to a performance that I have ever seen from anyone. From a single run-through she had perceived the strengths and weaknesses of our cast. She offered the most penetrating perceptions and the most constructive comments. She didn't know she really had this in her. [Söderström subsequently did a series of master classes for our Merola Opera Program].

"You would imagine that Elisabeth would be good working with the soprano who performs Emilia Marty because she's done it and knows it backwards and forwards. But she is wonderful with the men too. Richard Margison, who is now a major tenor [He sang the title role of *Don Carlo* during the 1992 San Francisco Opera season], was doing the role of Vítek. Here was this young artist playing an older man, and rather awkwardly at first. Elisabeth took him aside, talked to him and gave him ideas. In a couple of days she got an excellent characterization out of him. A lot of singers, when they attempt to direct, want other singers to copy them. I had that experience studying with Lotte Lehmann. Elisabeth never asks that of a singer. She discusses ideas, reasons, motivations and moods with them. She never just says, 'Watch me. Do this; do that.' "

Both Mansouri and Söderström express delight in once again working with soprano Stephanie Sundine, our Emilia Marty. "She's an excellent musician and, like Elisabeth, is

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Elisabeth Söderström as Emilia Marty in **The Makropulos Case** *at the Royal Opera in Stockholm.*

extremely intelligent," says Mansouri. "When Elisabeth and I would ask her for two different things in rehearsal, she would smile very sweetly and say, 'Now you two make up your minds about what you want, and then I'll do it.' " Söderström also has high praise for Sundine. "She's a wonderful artist. We had a very nice rapport. I remember sitting at the dress rehearsal and thinking, 'Strange. She's doing so many of the things I used to do.' But I taught her my tricks. It was similar to my singing the Marschallin when Elisabeth Schwarzkopf was the director [Brussels, 1981]. She offered me all her tricks and I said to her, 'I'm not quite sure I can do this. These are things that were good for you, and I have a very different personality.' It's a very dangerous thing to try to hand over something which was good for you. It's very, very important not to pass something on to an artist without giving them the whole psychological background for the solution of a particular scene."

Mansouri, who has directed Söderström on several occasions — Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* and, most recently, Hanna in *The Merry Widow* — speaks admiringly of her honesty as an artist. "I'll never forget one of the big arguments we had when I was directing her as the Marschallin. I was doing something with the three orphans in the levée scene that upset her because it didn't seem real. She got really angry. 'They're not puppets, Lotfi,' she objected, 'They're real people.' I recall another incident during rehearsals for *The Merry Widow*. Alan Titus, who had done the piece a lot with Beverly Sills and others, had a habit of going out and just doing his thing. Elisabeth kept saying to him, 'Look at me,' in

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Lotfi Mansouri
GENERAL DIRECTOR,
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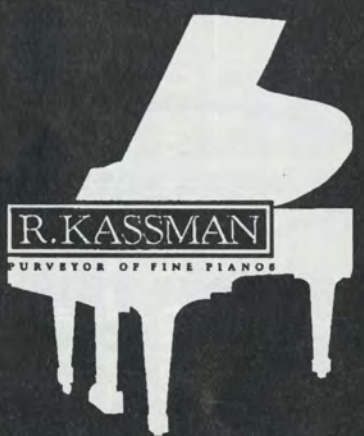

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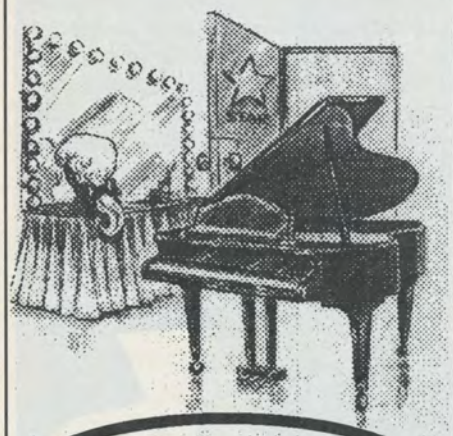

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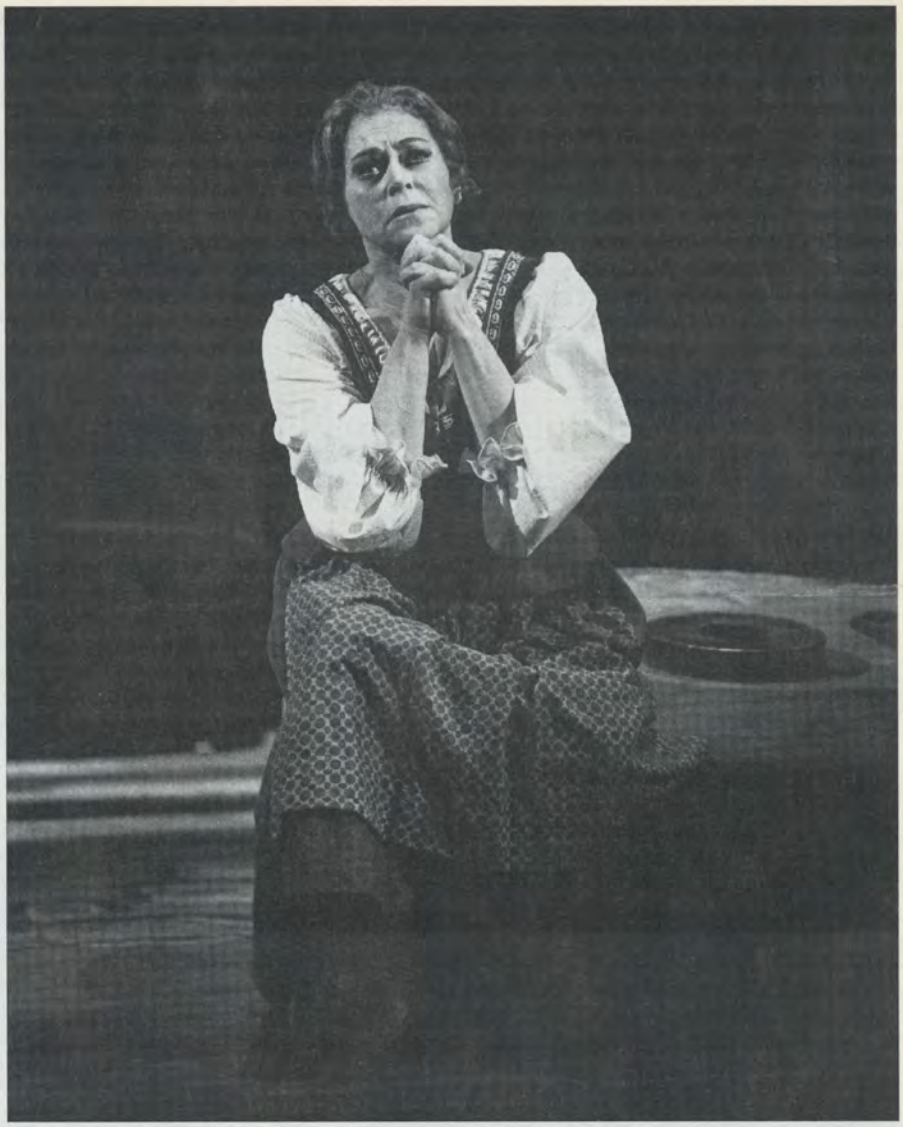

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In 1980, Elisabeth Söderström gave San Francisco Opera audiences a searing portrayal of another Janáček heroine: Jenůfa.

very sultry tones. After two or three days of this, Alan turned to her and said, 'Elisabeth, I was told that you were deep. But, my God, I didn't know you were *that* deep!' You know, she couldn't just waltz without knowing *why* she was waltzing. She can never do anything just for effect." As Söderström herself says, with undue modesty, "I belong to a generation of singers who were taught to act on stage. The Janáček operas were waiting for artists with that kind of training."

Both co-directors acknowledge that *The Makropulos Case* is a more difficult and less immediately accessible work for audiences than either *Jenůfa* or *Katya*. Söderström, speaking from the singer's perspective, allows that the role of Emilia Marty is vocally more taxing, whereas Jenůfa and Katya are much easier, even grateful for the voice. Mansouri, who began his career in opera as a tenor and sang the role of Laca in the West Coast premiere of *Jenůfa* in Los Angeles under Czech conductor Jan Popper, admits to an early love for Janáček. "I find the musical fabric of *The Makropulos Case* fascinating, even though it's harder than *Jenůfa* or *Katya*. It's not a number opera; it's all recitative, dialogue. It's a play, really, with the melodies in the orchestra. It's very profound in its motivical associations. In a way, the music is Wagnerian. It's what is called *'durchgehen'* with a completely flowing line and a subtle undercurrent of tension that fits the situation.

"*Jenůfa* has a wonderfully understandable love triangle," continues Mansouri. "It's a morality play, really, and it's more universal. *The Makropulos Case* is a very intellectual piece and requires an intellectual absorption which audiences are not always ready for."

"It takes a lot more out of the audience," concurs Söderström. "You can't just sit back and listen to the arias. There are not as many wonderful tunes as in Janáček's more popular operas. You have to partake in the action. So much that is necessary for the remainder

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of the opera is being told to the audience in the first act. In Stockholm we warned the audience beforehand, 'Don't give up because the first act is tough. It gets progressively easier as you go along!' This summer in Drottningholm we performed *Una Cosa Rara* [an 18th-century comic opera by Martín y Soler that Mozart quotes in the supper scene of *Don Giovanni*] and with the aid of my son, who is an engineer, we constructed a flow chart to show the relationships between the characters on the stage. Perhaps we could do that with the facts of the Prus-Gregor case. It's very important to know what transpired before the opera begins. On the other hand, if you know too much, it spoils the surprise."

Mansouri, too, stresses the importance of understanding the action. "It's a mystery story, and that's part of what I love about it. It's like a Hitchcock film. There are subtle little indications from the beginning that all is not what it seems to be. Emilia is very careful at first when she questions Kolenatý and when she talks to Prus. It's a cat-and-mouse game with subtle innuendos. I'm hoping the audience will catch this. There's a moment when Emilia panics and takes out her compact to look at herself. You wonder, 'Why is she doing that?' If you don't know the plot, it's confusing. If you can't understand the text, then the piece is really a puzzle. You have to do some advance work on it. I think the supertitles will help enormously.

"It's a science fiction story, basically," he continues, "but science fiction with its feet firmly planted on the ground. It has a tremendous logic, and the motivations of every character are very clear and very human right down to the cleaning lady and the stagehand. It's so perceptive and so very real. It's 'verismo' really."

The Makropulos Case also has another dimension which makes it a very special piece for Mansouri. "The whole idea of longevity is a fascinating one. The notion of a limited lifespan is absolutely correct. There is a *'Bogen'* — an arch of life. The fact that you are born, you grow up and mature, you grow old and die — the whole cycle is purposeful. God knew what he was doing. Everything He created was done with such incredible precision. There's a reason for it to be that way, and tampering with His creation and logic doesn't mean happiness. Emilia has had so many repetitions of the human experience that she is benumbed. In the last act, she realizes that death is a resolution of life. There is a kind of deliverance, a kind of peace. The minute she goes into the Lord's Prayer in Greek, I just get the chills. There's a religious aspect of the work to me — religion in the large sense: the logic of a superior power, the presence of God, the reason for a life span."

The co-directors of *The Makropulos Case* agree that conductor Mackerras bring a special inner quality to Janáček's music that makes him the ideal interpreter of his operas. Despite their long careers in lyric theater, the 1993 San Francisco Opera Strauss Festival production of *Der Rosenkavalier* marked the first time that Mackerras and Mansouri had actually worked together. "I found that Charles is instinctively a very human conductor," says the General Director. "He brings a warmth and a humanity to a piece like *The Makropulos Case* which is perfect, since the opera has that religious quality for me. It can't be done in a cold and cerebral way."

Söderström, who has collaborated with Mackerras on all three of the Janáček operas in her repertory, is unstinting in her admiration for the Australian conductor. "He's such a wonderful person, and we've had so many marvelous experiences and so many laughs together. What he's done for Janáček is impossible to measure. His knowledge and his love for Janáček's music is tremendous. I'll never forget from our recordings how he taught these operas bar by bar to the Vienna Philharmonic, especially *The Makropulos Case*, which they'd never played before. With such a short and hectic recording schedule, anybody else would have lost his temper, but he was fantastic. I think his great understanding for the music comes from the warmth and compassion of his own personality."

Given the Mackerras, Mansouri, Söderström triumvirate, the 1993 production of Janáček's *The Makropulos Case* promises to be a true labor of love. ❑

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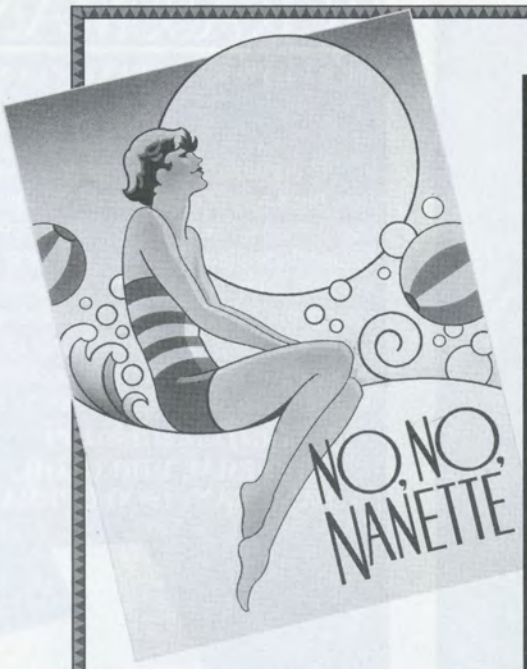

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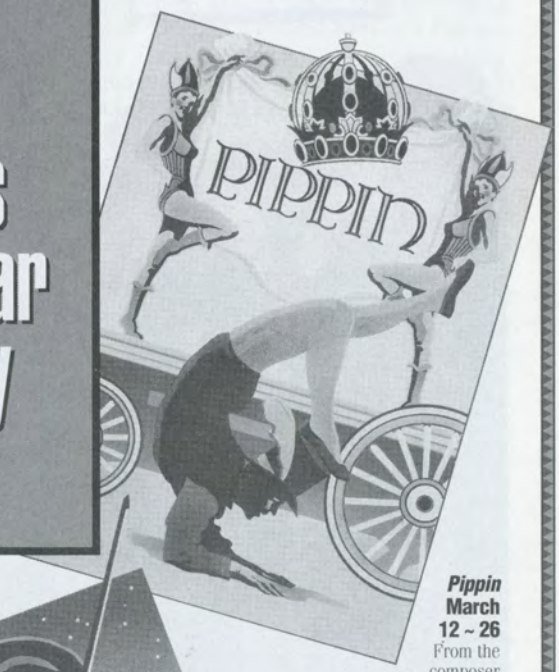

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Sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild, tours of the War Memorial Opera House will be conducted every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on Wednesday and Saturday, and from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Sunday on the following dates:

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Saturday, November 6
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Wednesday, November 17
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Tickets for Guild members $2; non-Guild members $5. Advance reservations required. For further information, please call (415) 565-6433.

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

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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.

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

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

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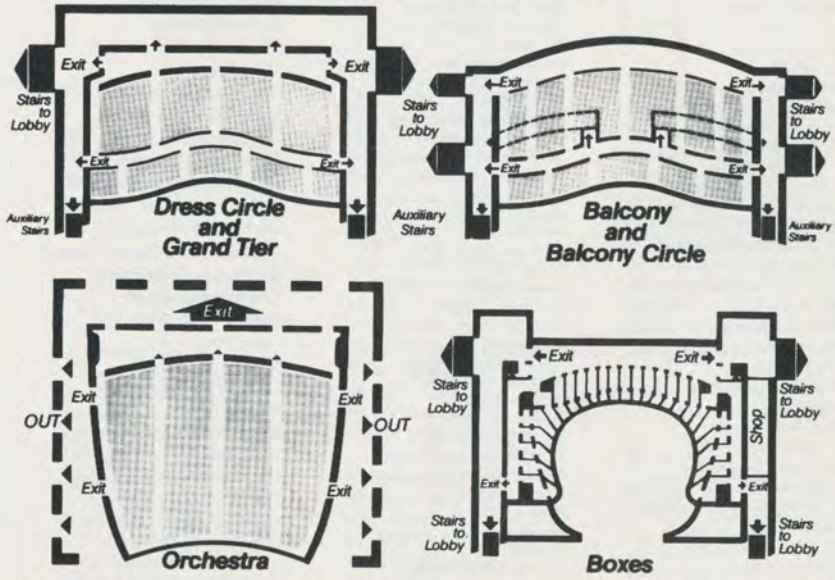
War Memorial Opera House



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

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