

Mefistofele
(Mephistopheles)

1994-1995

Sunday, November 13, 1994 2:00 PM
Wednesday, November 16, 1994 7:30 PM
Monday, November 21, 1994 8:00 PM
Sunday, November 27, 1994 2:00 PM
Wednesday, November 30, 1994 7:30 PM
Saturday, December 3, 1994 8:00 PM
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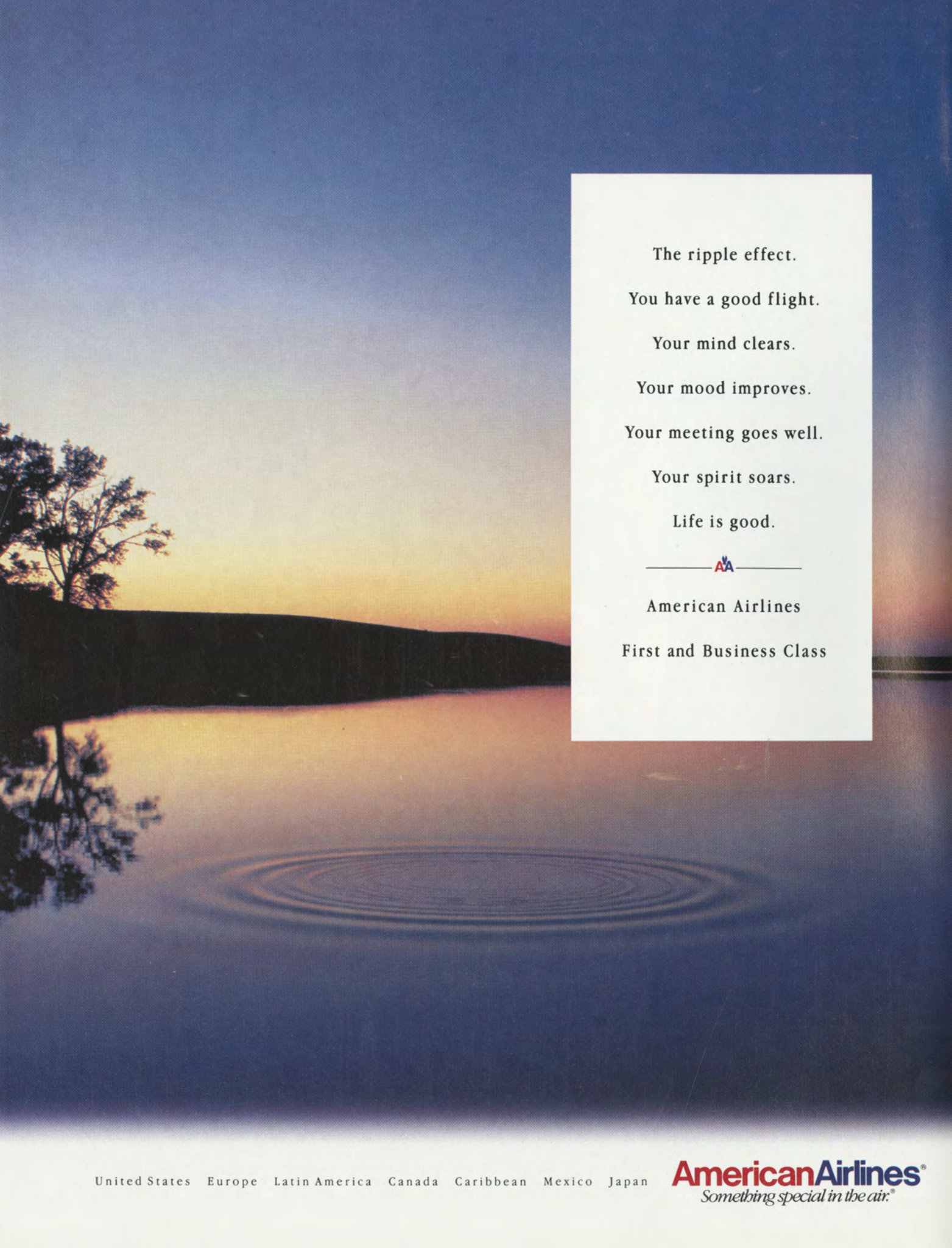
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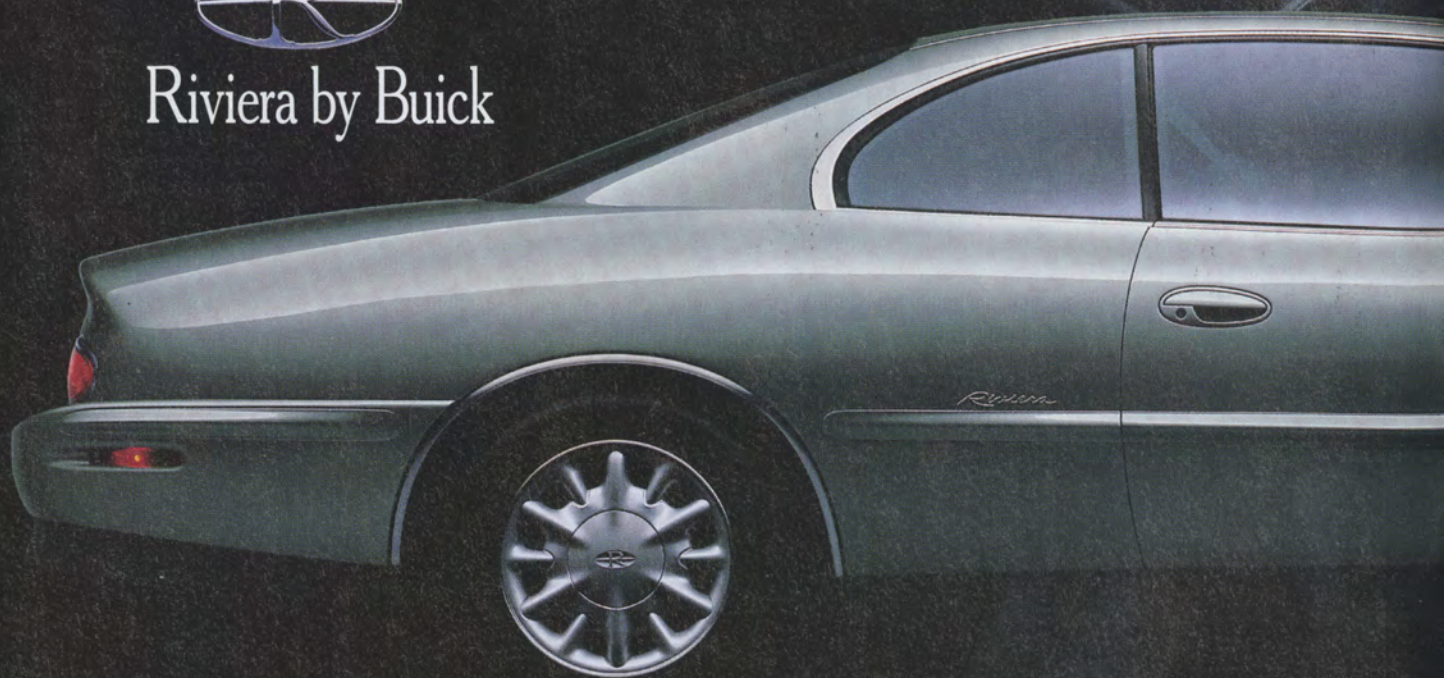
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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

Mefistofele

1994 Season
Vol. 72, No. 8

FEATURES

- 18 Boito in Three Acts** by Stephanie von Buchau
A chronicle of Boito's life, which includes a lot of pertinent details that help to illuminate his magnum opus, *Mefistofele*.
- 50 Catching Up** by Jake Heggie
The author shares his impressions of daily life at the San Francisco Opera, gathered during his first year with the Company.

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COVER

Redon, Odilon (1840-1916)
*Then I saw an angel descend from heaven
carrying the key to the abyss and a large chain. . .*

From *Apocalypse de Saint-Jean*
Album of 12 lithographs and a frontispiece
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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

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On behalf of the Board of Directors, welcome to San Francisco Opera's exciting 1994 Fall Season—one that is particularly noteworthy for the Company both artistically (as you will read in our General Director's letter) and financially. Due to a remarkable team effort—highlighted by the success of a special Board campaign led by Finance Chairman William W. Godward, the reduction of expenses and increased income delivered by the Company's administrative staff, and a strong increase in individual giving—the Opera ended the 1993 performance year with a surplus of \$1.3 million. Still, there is much to do to eliminate the remaining deficit in the Opera's general fund. Our '93 success bodes well for the Company's future.

Positive news like this is due in great part to the generosity of the Opera's many benefactors, and it is a tremendous pleasure to acknowledge and thank them for their part in underwriting productions for the Fall Season. We must extend a special thank you to Lexus for its ongoing support, and particularly for sponsoring the 1994 *Lexus Summer Concerts*, which took San Francisco Opera to several Bay Area stages. And we gratefully acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by San Francisco Opera Guild, as well as the efforts of BRAVO! CLUB.

This year, our gifted resident designer, Gerard Howland, has created spectacular new sets for seven productions—significantly reducing our on-stage production costs without compromising the Company's high artistic standards. Support for the Resident Designer project affects the new productions of *Macbeth*, *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *Il Trovatore*, *Otello*, *Tannhäuser*, *Hérodiade* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and has been provided by the Columbia Foundation, Mrs. Sheldon G. Cooper, Mr. and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis, The L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, and Mr. and Mrs. Marshall I. Wais.

The 1994 Fall Season opens with *Macbeth*, a production made possible by gifts from San Francisco Opera Guild and anonymous friends of San Francisco Opera. The world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons* has been made possible by gifts from the California Arts Council, the estate of Gilbert L. Gasch, the National Endowment for the Arts, Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Opera for a New America, and Mrs. Paul L. Wattis. The new production of *Il Trovatore* has been underwritten by gifts from the Franklin/Templeton Group of Funds and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Hamilton. The Company premiere of Rossini's *Otello* has been made possible by Sun Microsystems, Inc. Our *Tannhäuser* has been made possible by a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Evert B. Person. The Company's first production of *The Fiery Angel* has been made possible by a gift from The Edward Meade Smith Trust. *Mefistofele* has been made possible by The Bernard Osher Foundation. And the new *Lucia di Lammermoor* has been made possible by gifts from The Herman J. Miller and Edward J. Clarke Foundation, and from an anonymous friend in honor of William W. Godward.

We are always delighted to see new names appear on our roster of production sponsors, and look forward to enlarging that list with the names of more individuals, corporations and foundations who wish to enjoy the benefits and tremendous satisfaction of joining this special group.

Additionally, we gratefully acknowledge government funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, and the Grants for the Arts program of the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund. Our sincere gratitude also goes out to Mayor Frank Jordan and Chief Administrative Officer Rudolf Nothenberg for their invaluable support; and to the War Memorial Board of Trustees, for their ongoing support and assistance.

Reid W. Dennis
Chairman

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President

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR

LIEBERMAN



Welcome to the 1994 Fall Season at San Francisco Opera—our Company's 72nd consecutive season, and one that continues a rich operatic tradition that is recognized internationally. Nowhere in this country will you find a comparable treasury of great operas and new productions within a single season—and I am proud to say that this has become one of our hallmarks. Think of it, within the three-month period from September 9 to December 11, San Francisco Opera will present 67 performances of nine operas, including the world premiere of a major American opera, three Company premieres, and seven spectacular, new productions.

Our roster of singers features many of today's most exciting stars—including the much anticipated return of Plácido Domingo, who will sing his first Jean (John the Baptist) in the Company premiere of *Hérodiade*. Several artists will appear in important national and local debuts, and seven fine conductors will take the podium, headed by Donald Runnicles, now in his third season as the Opera's music director.

This past summer, audiences throughout the Bay Area had the unusual opportunity of hearing our marvelous Opera Orchestra, Chorus and guest soloists in several concerts at regional outdoor theaters—these were the acclaimed *Lexus Summer Concerts*. Under the baton of Maestro Runnicles, the ensembles also performed with the immensely gifted Adler Fellows from the San Francisco Opera Center in the exciting North American premiere of Michael Tippett's *King Priam* in four sold-out performances. Popular and critical praise for these summer productions was phenomenal, and confirms the reputation our orchestra, chorus and Opera Center have earned for being among the world's finest.

In 1992, San Francisco Opera commissioned *The Dangerous Liaisons*—with music by Conrad Susa, libretto by Philip Littell, and direction by Colin Graham—as part of our Pacific Visions program. This season's world premiere of the opera is a real "dream come true" for this Company. We recognize that the introduction of new and unusual operas to the repertoire is vital to this great art form, and we are proud to be pro-active in our commitment to bringing new work to the stage.

In that same light, the 1994 Fall Season also features an astounding first for this or any other company—seven new productions with sets designed by one artist. The difficult economic trials we experienced here and throughout California over the past several years created this innovative approach to producing opera. And through the very capable hands and imagination of Resident Designer Gerard Howland, you will see a new vision of grand opera—one that serves each individual production brilliantly.

From Verdi and Wagner to Prokofiev and Susa, this season will be a fantastic journey through the full range of human emotions and dramas—all presented with the high standards of excellence that have made San Francisco Opera one of the world's most respected opera companies. On behalf of our wonderful team at the Opera, I want to express special thanks to you—our loyal audience—for your ongoing and invaluable support in making all of this possible. Enjoy the season.

Lotfi Mansouri
General Director

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(Continued on page 10)

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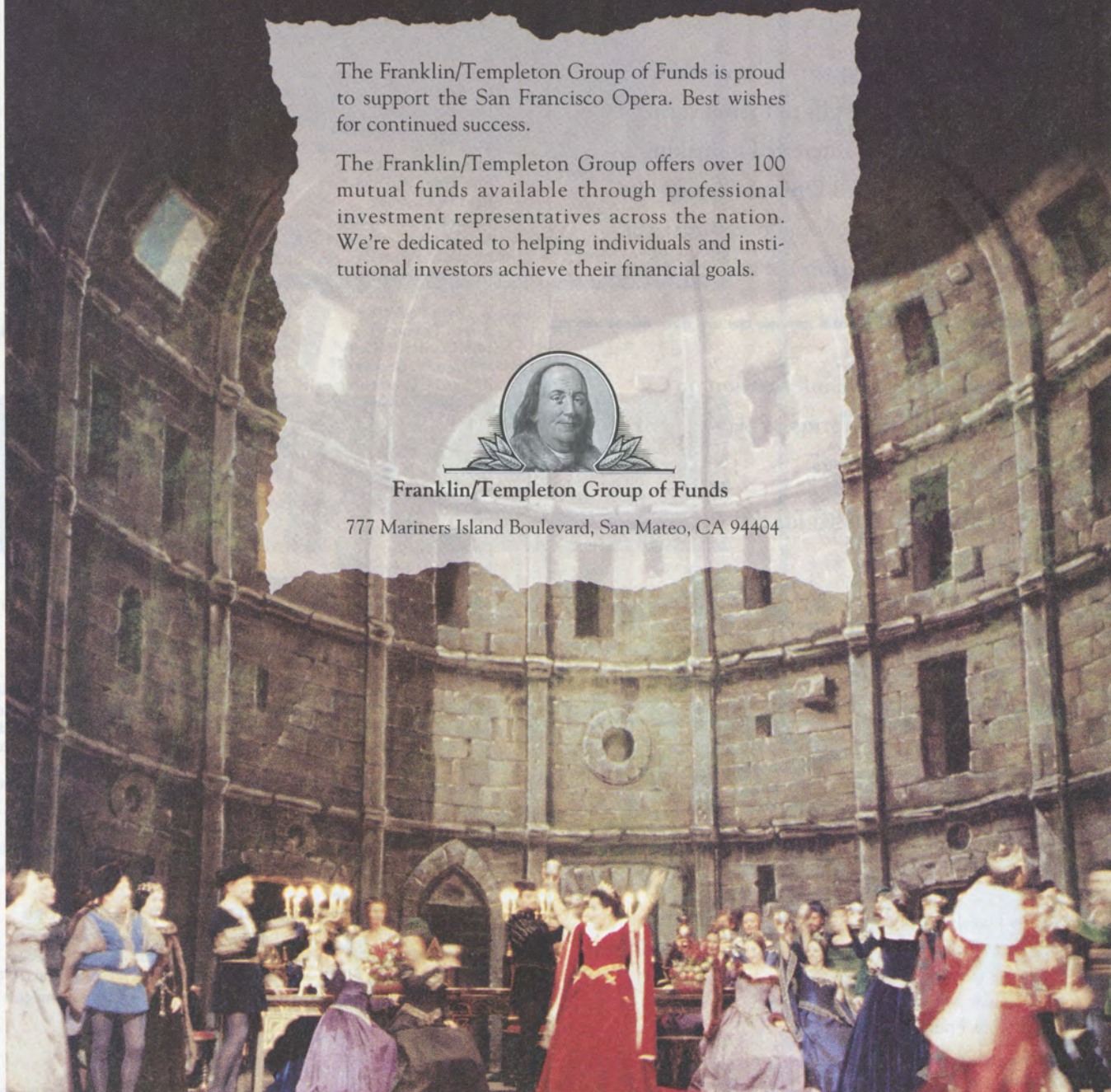
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BOITO IN THREE ACTS

By **Stephanie von Buchau**



Arrigo Boito, 1842–1918, in a portrait by Salvatore Corvaya.

In his 76 years, composer Arrigo Boito completed only one opera, so his life can be conveniently divided into three acts: Before *Mefistofele*, *Mefistofele*, and after *Mefistofele*.

Act One: Before *Mefistofele*

Boito was born in Padua, in the Veneto region, on February 24, 1842, son of Silvestro Boito, an Italian painter of miniatures, and Giuseppina Radolinska, a transplanted Polish countess. He was christened "Enrico" (Henry), but was known throughout his life by the diminutive Arrigo (Harry). His volatile father soon decamped, leaving Boito's mother to raise Arrigo and his older brother, Camillo, in Venice. Encouraged by Giuseppina, Arrigo displayed musical talent early: at age nine he arranged Verdi's "La donna è mobile" as a polka.

His Venetian teachers, Antonio and Giovanni Buzzola, were less sanguine about his talents than the boy's mother; yet, at age 11, Arrigo was accepted into the Milan Conservatory where he became a scholarship student in 1854. A friendship formed with another young student, Franco Faccio, who was admitted to the Conservatory in 1855, stimulated Boito's scholastic interests. His teacher was Alberto Mazzucato, who had written a number of unsuccessful operas—including *The Bride of Lammermoor*, *Don Quixote* and *Hernani*—before quitting the stage in order to teach singing, composition and music history in Milan. It is worth noting that Mazzucato's music was considered by contemporary critics to be "noisy, diffi-

Stephanie von Buchau is San Francisco correspondent of Opera News who contributes program notes to Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera and the Los Angeles Music Center Opera.

San Francisco Opera

cult and lacking in melody," complaints also lodged against his most famous pupil.

Boito and Faccio became inseparable, writing together a cantata, *Il quattro giugno* (1860), about the Battle of Magenta in which one of their schoolmates had been killed. Their second patriotic cantata, *Le sorelle d'Italia*, was produced in 1861, the year of their graduation. It so impressed musical authorities, including Verdi's old friend, the influential Countess Clara Maffei, that the young men were each given 2,000 Lire grants for travel abroad. They chose Paris as their first stop, where they had letters of introduction to Rossini, Berlioz and Verdi. Boito, whose talents as a poet were often considered superior to his musical gifts, wrote the text for one of the few "occasional" pieces Verdi ever composed, the *Inno delle Nazioni* (Anthem of Nations), first performed in London in 1862.

The bombastic piece for tenor and chorus (available on a compact disc in an old Toscanini performance) may make us smile today, with its silly parade of national anthems, but it is notable as the first collaboration of the poet and composer whose joint efforts on behalf of Shakespeare produced two of the 19th century's finest operas. For the rest of his creative life, Boito was conflicted between his desire to write "new" music and his talent for creating libretti. While in Paris, stimulated by Verdi and, to a lesser degree, Meyerbeer, he is said to have conceived the ideas for the two operas that would occupy him for the next half century—*Mefistofele* and *Nerone*—though Mazzucato's son claims that Arrigo was working on his *Faust* project during his student days at the Conservatory.

Back in Milano, Faccio was the first to have an opera produced—the coolly-received three-act melodrama, *I Profughi Fiamminghi* (The Flemish Refugees)—at La Scala in November of 1863. It was at a banquet honoring Faccio that Boito read his inflammatory "Sapphic ode" titled *All'arte Italiana* (To Italian art). One stanza of this poem, published in the magazine *Museo di famiglia*, where Verdi surely read it, caused the older man much anguish:

Perhaps the man is already born
Modest and pure
Who will set Art
Erect once more on that altar
Befouled like a brothel wall.

Perhaps Boito didn't mean the "brothel wall" simile as a direct attack on his older colleague, but since Verdi was at that time the reigning emperor of Italian musical art—with such masterworks as *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Un Ballo in*



Before rehearsal photography became widely available, opera premieres were covered in popular magazines by artists' sketches. Here is how the *Mefistofele* premiere looked in 1868.

Maschera and *La Forza del Destino* having been presented in the previous decade—what was he supposed to think when this arrogant young Turk told the world that Italy needed to clean up its operatic act? It was years before Verdi could speak of Boito without devastating sarcasm, which makes their eventual collaboration all the more amazing.

In Boito's defense, he was very young (only 21) and moving in heady circles, a group of avant-gardists who called themselves *I Scapigliati* (literally, the "unkempt," or disheveled ones). Bohemian, iconoclastic, outspoken and often rude, they were in love with their own rhetoric and wished to sweep away all that was traditional and

conservative in Italian art, much as Pierre Boulez in the 1950s advocated blowing up opera houses without actually meaning that anyone should do so. Italy was at the triumphant conclusion of its Risorgimento (or unification) and the enthusiastic patriotism that fuelled Boito and Faccio's student cantatas and the *Inno delle Nazioni* expressed itself both in intemperate words and, to give the young man credit, in action. The friends promptly joined Garibaldi's insurgents to fight for the freedom of their native province, the Veneto, long ruled by the Austrians, who were finally driven out in 1866. At the same time, Boito kept plugging away at *Mefistofele* and, in 1868, secured its premiere at La Scala.



Two backstage images from our 1963 staging of *Mefistofele*: (L. to r.) Mary Costa as Elena; Janis Martin as Pantalis.

Act Two: *Mefistofele*

A single fact about *Mefistofele* will help explain Boito's life-long conflict between words and music. His opera was the first one ever performed at La Scala with a libretto written by its composer. His ironic wit, his passion for word play and clever rhymes, and his theory of *Dualismo* (the title of an ode published in 1863), caused philosopher Benedetto Croce to call Boito "the only true Romantic in Italian literature, fascinated by the eternal struggle between Good and Evil." He was also a superbly educated young man, with an intellectual penchant for northern music (he adored Bach), literature and ideas.

It was inevitable that Boito would be seduced by Goethe's *Faust*, the most influential poetic play published in the first half of the 19th century. In its first part, which appeared in 1808, Goethe develops the character of the aging, discontented philosopher, who yearns to exchange his bookish wisdom for real experience, but finds that

the price is the sale of his immortal soul to that eternal tempter, Mephistopheles. The young Faust then seduces Gretchen who, having borne him an illegitimate child, drowns it in panic and is sent to prison. Faust tries to rescue her, but she rejects him, refuses to flee and puts her trust in God. The first part of *Faust* ends with Gretchen's redemption, a scene made famous in music by Charles Gounod in his 1859 opera which the Germans, in their horror of the sentimentality and banality of Gounod's setting, insist on calling *Margarete*, to distinguish it from Goethe's masterwork.

Gretchen (or Margarete; Marguerite in French) is saved, but Goethe's play is not about shopgirl sentiment and part two (published in 1832, exactly a decade before Boito was born) is the philosophical heart of the work, developing Goethe's ideas on mythology, culture, art, progress, statesmanship, war, science, economics, and even courtly life, to the point where the plot disappears altogether. It isn't hard to sympathize with Gounod who, faced with this *olla*

podrida of fascinating but undramatic philosophical ideas, chose to skip part two and concentrate on the operatic verities of betrayed love in the form of Marguerite, Faust and Méphistophélès singing one of the most famous trios ever written.

Boito was made of sterner stuff and he actually attempted to operaticize the second part of Goethe's *Faust*. That he didn't succeed will come as no surprise to anyone who has read the entire play, even in an English translation. It is dense, difficult and seemingly undramatic, though Gustav Mahler, in his E-flat major Symphony No.8 (1906-07) conquered more of it than any other composer. You have to know Goethe to understand what is going on in the "Symphony of a Thousand," because Mahler picks up at the most difficult part—not the penultimate scene as envisioned by Boito, where the defeated Mephistopheles whistles derisively at the powers of Goodness, but the final scene in which the anchorites and mystical chorus spell out the meaning of the entire 12,000-line work:

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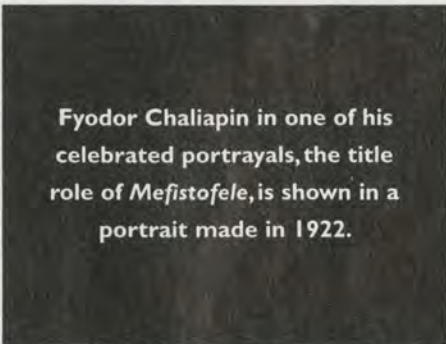
The enthusiastic reception of Gounod's work at La Scala in 1862 halted Boito's composition of his own opera and he wrote instead a libretto for Faccio's *Amleto* (1865), notable mainly because it was the poet's first Shakespearean adaptation. Eventually, he wrote nearly a dozen libretti for composers such as Catalani, Palumbo, Coronaro and Mancinelli, including, under the pen name Tobia Gorrio (anagram of Arrigo Boito), a flamboyant reduction of Victor Hugo for Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* (1876). And, of course, the three Verdi works—a revision of *Simon Boccanegra*, *Otello* and *Falstaff*—which are still his main claim to operatic immortality.

Boito's Faust opera was planned, like Goethe's original play, in two parts—each named for the woman who dominates it: *Margherita* (Italian for Margarete/Gretchen) and *Elena* (whom we know as Helen of Troy, the face that launched a thousand ships). But when Boito returned from the successful war of unification and began working on his opera again, he revised the two-opera plan into one grand work named after the play's antagonist—*Mefistofele*. Boito had originally designed the role of Faust for a tenor, but was persuaded by the powers at La Scala to recast it for a baritone. His former teacher, Mazzucato, was supposed to lead the premiere, but after demanding cuts which Boito refused to make, withdrew from the production, leaving the 26-year-old novice to conduct his own work.

The premiere of *Mefistofele* at La Scala on March 5, 1868, is one of those historic fiascos similar to the premiere of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* that make us feel smugly superior to our ancestors. Yet the *Mefistofele* about which we are still ambiguous today is nothing like what the Milanese audience booed in 1868. Unlike Puccini's *Butterfly* score, which exists in all its permutations, Boito's original draft has been lost because the corrections and changes he made were put directly into the autograph, with the offending parts cut out and destroyed. And, apparently, there was much to offend.

Contemporary accounts insist the performance went on for five-and-a-half hours, lasting until well after midnight. (Since nearly every opera I ever attended in Italy lasted until after midnight—they often don't start until 9 or 10 o'clock—this is not necessarily an indication of quality or lack of it.) Still, the day after the fiasco, the *Gazzetta di Milano* commented, "If a wing of La Scala itself had collapsed, the disaster could not have caused a more violent sen-

sation." The battle in the auditorium appeared to be extra-musical; Boito's supporters cheered too loud and too often, provoking his detractors to overreact in the opposite direction. One critic challenged another to a duel, a gesture Boito would have appreciated as he fought several duels himself, though not over music. The second performance of *Mefistofele* was presented in two parts—March 7 and 8—but it wasn't



Fyodor Chaliapin in one of his celebrated portrayals, the title role of *Mefistofele*, is shown in a portrait made in 1922.

any more successful than the premiere had been; the police had to be called to calm a hostile public.

Crushed, Boito withdrew the work, burned some of the score and set about revising and salvaging the rest. The *Prologo*, with its phalanxes of cherubim, seraphim, penitents and mystics, had received acclaim both nights, so it remained unchanged, but almost everything else felt the editor's blue pencil. A scene in the emperor's court and an orchestral Battle Symphony à la Beethoven were jettisoned. The Wagner-Faust duet in Act One was tightened and the protagonist was returned to his original tenor range. A women's chorus in the Classical Sabbath was recast as the duet ("La luna immobile") for Elena and Pantalio. Boito revised arias for Faust and Margherita and inserted the celebrated duet ("Lontano, lontano") in the prison scene, borrowing music from his own unfinished *Ero e Leandro*. Finally, he modified the orchestration and expanded the choral fugue at the end of the Brocken (Witches' Sabbath) sequence.

In 1875, for a more progressive audience in Bologna, *Mefistofele* was revived, and this time it was a roaring success. The next year, Boito added "Spunta l'aurora pallida" to the prison scene, creating the definitive version we know today. The opera had its debut in London in 1880 with Christine Nilsson and in the same year in Boston. The Scala revival of 1881, performed to great acclaim, was conducted by Boito's loyal friend, Franco Faccio, who by this time had given up composition for the career of a respected conductor. In 1887, he led the

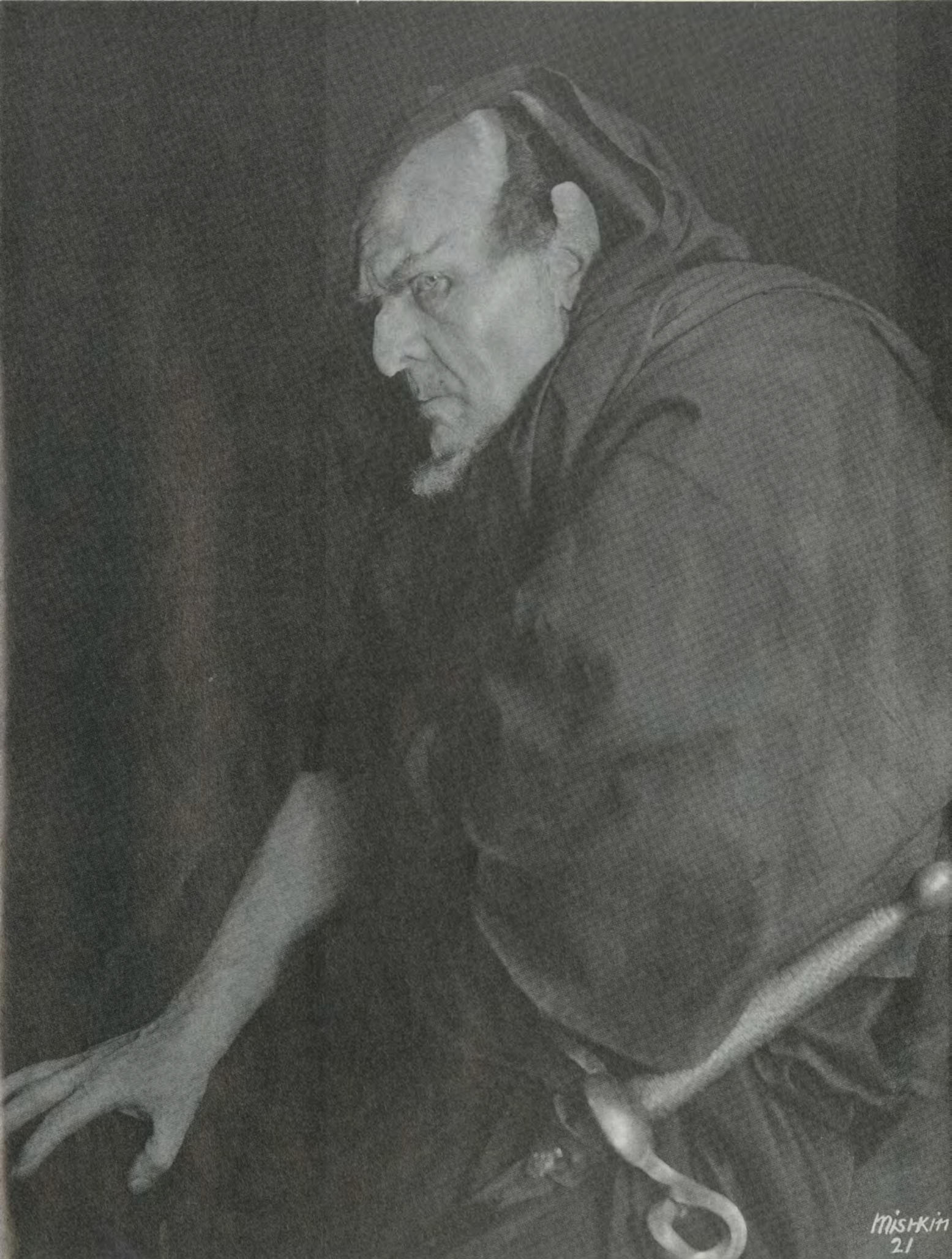
Milan world premiere of Verdi's *Otello*, with Boito's libretto.

Act Three: After *Mefistofele*

Concurrently with his revision of *Mefistofele*, Boito continued to work on his other magnum opus, *Nerone*. The libretto of the five-act version was published in 1901 and the four-act version exists in a printed score. But *Nerone* was never completed to the composer's satisfaction, nor performed in his lifetime. He struggled with the work, vainly trying to find a musical style that would adequately express his huge, complicated ideas about art and morality. Too self-critical for his own good, he allowed the music to *Nerone* to wallow in a profoundly disorienting eclecticism. In the *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, William Ashbrook characterizes the score as one of "morbid fascination [that] for all its grandiose spectacle and erudition . . . contains little to move an audience."

Ultimately, the struggle for Boito's soul between poetry and music was resolved when he renewed his association with Verdi. The older composer, relenting after many years of pushing by mutual friends, including the publisher Ricordi and the Countess Maffei, allowed Boito to revise the libretto to *Simon Boccanegra*. His magnificent Council Chamber scene convinced Verdi that Boito was worthy to adapt his beloved "Shaspear," making *Othello* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* into viable music drama. Boito even encouraged Verdi to attempt *King Lear*, but the composer felt himself too old and perhaps frightened by the power of the story to do more than discuss it. That their collaboration succeeded to the extent it did continues to amaze—especially when one reads that Verdi never did appreciate *Mefistofele*, referring to it as "lacking in spontaneity . . . and short of melody."

Yet, they worked together in a mature and civilized manner, the fiery former *Scapigliato* and the always prickly senior composer. Their correspondence has recently been published in English (University of Chicago, 1994). Boito eventually came to feel that his achievements with Verdi were more important than his own music. Obsessively isolated and even violent in his private life—he used to answer the door with a hunting rifle under his arm—he accepted the fact, in the moving words of Marcello Conati and Mario Medici, editors of the Verdi-Boito correspondence, that "his friendship with Verdi was to be virtually the center of his existence." ■





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Opera in four acts with prologue and epilogue by ARRIGO BOITO

Text by the composer, after the epic drama *Faust* by JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Mefistofele

(in Italian)

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Julius Rudel

Production
Robert Carsen

Stage Director
Peter McClintock

Designer
Michael Levine

Lighting Designer
Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson

Assistants to Maestro Rudel
Ian Robertson
Valery Ryvkin

Choreographer
Victoria Morgan

Musical Preparation
Joyce Fieldsend
Svetlana Gorzhevskaya
Ernest Fredric Knell

Prompter
Jonathan Khuner

Assistant Stage Director
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Stage Manager
Jerry Sherk

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First performance:
Milan, March 5, 1868 (revised 1875)

First San Francisco Opera performance:
October 1, 1923

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21 AT 8:00
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27 AT 2:00
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30 AT 7:30
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3 AT 8:00
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6 AT 8:00
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9 AT 8:00

CAST (in order of appearance)

<i>Mefistofele</i>	Samuel Ramey
<i>Faust</i>	Richard Margison
<i>Wagner</i>	Joseph Frank
<i>Margherita</i>	Aprile Millo Patricia Racette (Dec. 3, 6, 9)
<i>Marta</i>	Judith Christin
<i>Elena</i>	Carol Neblett
<i>Pantalis</i>	Elizabeth Bishop†
<i>Nereo</i>	Gregory Cross

Celestial choir, cherubim; townspeople; witches, warlocks; people of Greece

Corps de Ballet

†1994 Adler Fellow

PROLOGUE		In Heaven
ACT I	Scene 1	Easter Sunday
	Scene 2	The Pact
INTERMISSION		
ACT II	Scene 1	The Garden
	Scene 2	Walpurgis Night
ACT III		The Death of Margherita
INTERMISSION		
ACT IV		Classical Walpurgis Night
EPILOGUE		The Death of Faust

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 thirty minutes.*

Mefistofele / Synopsis

PROLOGUE - *In Heaven* — A heavenly choir praises the Lord; Mefistofele appears and mockingly addresses God, apologizing for his lack of a halo. He complains that God's worldly creation, Man, has become so degenerate that he is not worth tempting any more. A mystical choir asks him if he knows Faust. Mefistofele does indeed, and wagers to trap the aging, fanatical scholar. Mefistofele boasts to the Creator that by ensnaring Faust he will finally triumph over God. The scene ends with a hymn of praise to the Master of the Heavens.

ACT I — Scene 1 — *Easter Sunday*. Faust and his student Wagner join the holiday crowd. The old scholar notices the first signs of spring; a group of townspeople begins a country dance. After the crowds leave, Wagner and Faust notice a monk, the sight of whom greatly disturbs the old man; he imagines seeing traces of burning footprints on the ground.

Scene 2 — *The Pact*. In his study, Faust prepares to meditate on the Bible when a piercing cry is heard and the mysterious monk appears. Faust invokes the powerful sign of Solomon which forces Mefistofele to abandon his monk's disguise. He introduces himself as the spirit that negates and destroys everything. Mefistofele offers his services to Faust on Earth, on condition that their positions be reversed after Faust's death. Faust accepts, provided that he find just one moment of true happiness which he could greet with the words, "Stay, for you are beautiful!" The contract is signed and Mefistofele transports Faust away.

INTERMISSION

ACT II — Scene 1 — *The Garden*. The rejuvenated Faust (now calling himself Enrico) courts Margherita, while Mefistofele distracts her neighbor Marta. Margherita asks Faust about his religious beliefs, but he says he seeks an even deeper truth: the mystery of love. He persuades Margherita to let him visit her at home, and gives her a sleeping potion (provided by Mefistofele) for her mother. Faust reassures Margherita that her mother will come to no harm as both couples declare their love.

Scene 2 — *Walpurgis Night*. Mefistofele urges Faust up the mountains to witness the Witches' Sabbath. Witches and warlocks appear; Mefistofele demands obeisance as their king. They present him with the attributes of his power and a symbol of the world, which he derides and then destroys. Faust suddenly sees in the sky

a vision of a young girl in chains who resembles Margherita. Mefistofele tries to dismiss it as a trick of imagination, but Faust realizes that the woman with a ring of blood around her neck is indeed the girl he abandoned. The revels continue.

ACT III — *The Death of Margherita*. The imprisoned Margherita, condemned to death for poisoning her mother and drowning the child she bore Faust, has lost her reason. Faust begs Mefistofele to save her; the devil denies responsibility, but promises to do what he can. He produces a key and Faust enters the prison. At first, Margherita thinks she is being led to execution, but then recognizes Faust and starts to relive their past, recalling their meeting in the garden. Faust wants her to escape with him, but she cannot face a life of remorse. They imagine the happiness they might have had. When Mefistofele orders Faust to leave with him, Margherita prays for forgiveness and renounces Faust: a celestial choir proclaims Margherita's salvation.

INTERMISSION

ACT IV — *Classical Walpurgis Night*. In his quest for the perfection of art and beauty, Faust has been transported by Mefistofele to ancient Greece. Elena (Helen of Troy) and her companion Pantis are serenaded the full moon. In the distance, Faust is heard calling for Elena. As the two women leave, Faust enters, enchanted with his surroundings. Mefistofele, however, feels uncomfortably out of place. Elena now reappears, praised by a chorus who pay homage to her, but she is obsessed by a nightmare vision of the destruction of Troy. She receives Faust, who declares his love for her, the embodiment of pure and ideal beauty. They pledge their love and contemplate life together in peaceful Arcadia.

EPILOGUE — *The Death of Faust*. In his study, Faust reflects on his past: the love of the real woman brought only suffering, while that of the goddess was only an illusion. Mefistofele despairs that Faust has still not experienced the supreme moment. Realizing that death is near, Faust invokes another dream, one in which he would rule wisely over prosperous people in a peaceful world. Mefistofele, fearing that his victim will escape him, urges Faust to accompany him once again. But Faust, now enraptured in his heavenly vision, speaks the fatal words, "Stay, for you are beautiful!", and dies redeemed. Mefistofele, although defeated, whistles in defiance.

The performance of November 16th is sponsored by British Airways

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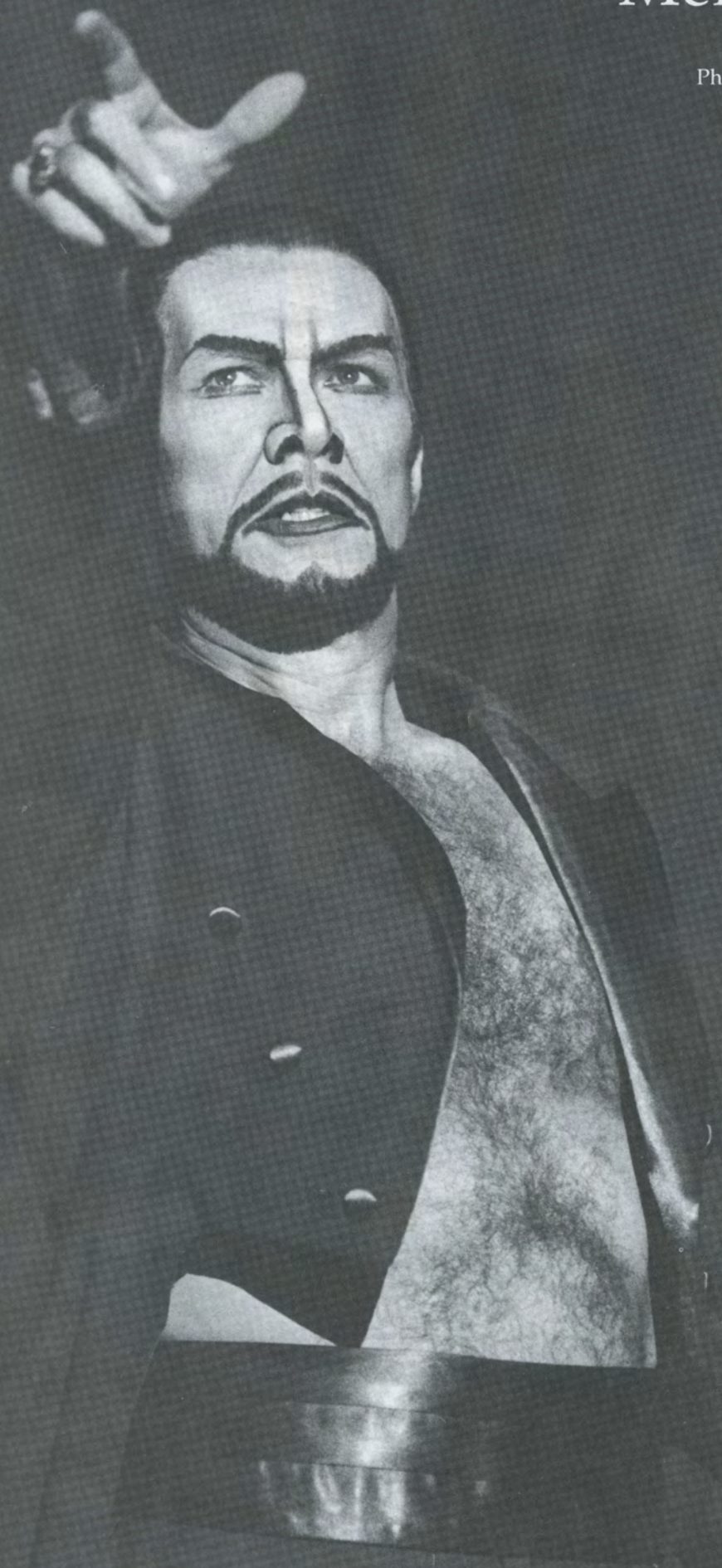
The performance of December 6th is designated in honor of Mr. and Mrs. William R. Hewlett's membership in the Triple Gold Circle.

The performance of December 9th is sponsored by Bain & Company

Mefistofele

Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

Samuel Ramey





Samuel Ramey



Joseph Frank

San Francisco Opera Chorus and Children's Choruses





Richard Margison



Richard Margison, Aprile Millo

Aprile Millo



Samuel Ramey





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Men of the San Francisco Opera Chorus



L.A. OPERA

1994-95 SEASON



SEPT. 9, 11, 16, 18M, 21, 24, 28, 1994

FAUST

Charles Gounod
New Production
Foster: Corsaro, Colavecchia,
Brown, Dana, Hickey
Villaruel, Silvasti, Tumanyan, Gilfry,
Guzman, Howe, Fitzpatrick

SEPTEMBER 10, 13, 17M, 20, 23, 1994

ELEKTRA

Richard Strauss
Behr: Pountney, West, Bury, Dana
Zschau, Voss, Rysanek, Mack,
Bernstein, Lebherz, Gallup, Ebbers,
Leighton, Howe, Nikkel, Guzman,
Roderer, Burzynski, Rashkovsky, Tash,
Curtsinger, Wallace

SEPT. 27, 30, OCT. 2, 5, 8M, 11, 14, 1994

DON GIOVANNI

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Foster: Miller, Stone, Israel, Dana, Hickey
Kozlowska, Rasmussen, Allen (9/27,
30; 10/2, 5, 8m) / Gilfry (10/11, 14),
Randle, Plishka, Atkins, Lebherz

PHOTO: JUNE ANDERSON

OCT. 29, NOV. 2, 5M, 8, 12, 1994

XERXES

George Frideric Handel
Brydon: Wadsworth, Lynch,
Pakledinaz, Kaczorowski
Hunt, Bradley, Waters, Rasmussen,
Asawa, Atkins, Opalach

FEBRUARY 4, 7, 10, 12, 1995

PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE

Claude Debussy
Salonen: Sellars, Tspyn, Ramicova, Ingalls
Groop, Le Roux, White, Cox, Wallis,
Le Roi, Atkins, Fitzpatrick
In association with the Los Angeles
Philharmonic

MARCH 18M, 21, 23, 26, 29, APRIL 1M, 1995

DON PASQUALE

Gaetano Donizetti
Pidò: Lawless, Ponnelle, Pyant
Çako, Desderi (3/18m-29)/
Gallup (4/1m), Fedderly,
Gilfry, Walker

MAY 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20M, 23, 1995

OTELLO

Giuseppe Verdi
Behr: Friedrich, Harlan,
Schneider-Siemssen, Skalicki
Anderson, Domingo
(5/6, 9, 12, 15, 18)/
Bogachov (5/20m, 23),
Yurisich, Rasmussen,
Fedderly, Lebherz, Ebbers,
Bernstein, Fitzpatrick

JUNE 7, 8, 9, 10M, 10E, 11, 13,
14, 15, 16, 17M, 17E, 18M, 1995

PORGY AND BESS

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DeMain: Clarke, Foy,
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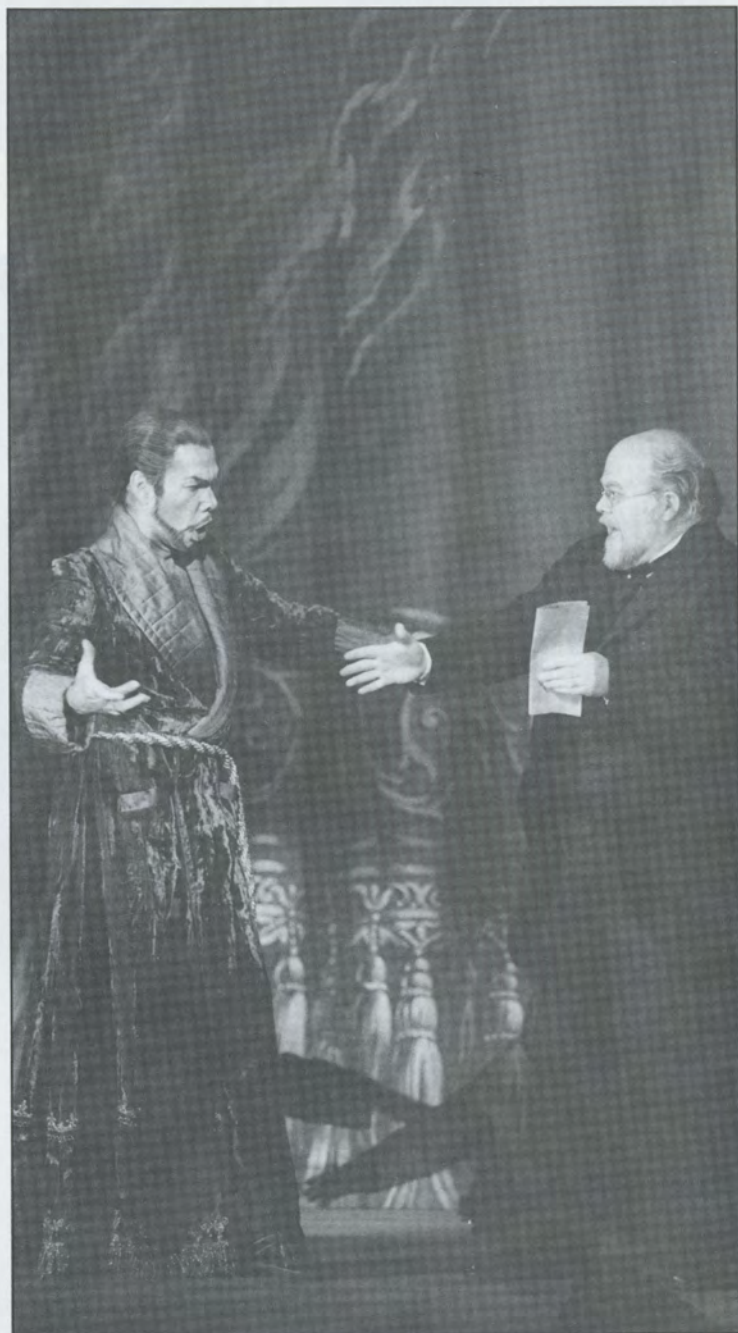


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Lotfi Mansouri, *General Director*
Donald C. Runnicles, *Music Director*

Opening Night New Production

Macbeth Verdi
Jones, Waite*†; Morris, Lloyd, Li,
Guggenheim, Del Campo*†, Wilde,
Patton†
Runnicles; Mansouri/Howland/
Pizzi/Whitfield
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from San Francisco Opera Guild and
anonymous friends of San Francisco Opera.*
Sept. 9, 13, 16, 20, 24, 29, Oct. 2

World Premiere

The Dangerous Liaisons Sosa/Littell
Von Stade, Fleming, Mills, Meier*,
Forst, Claycomb, Bishop*†, Clayton*†,
Dillard*, Gao, Shigematsu†;
Hampson, Hobson**, Vasquez, Sikon*,
Lord*, Cross*, Portilla*†, Patriarco†
Runnicles; Graham*/Howland/Munn
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from the California Arts Council, the
estate of Gilbert L. Gasch, the National
Endowment for the Arts, the Lila Wallace -
Reader's Digest Opera for a New America,
and Mrs. Paul L. Wattis.*
Sept. 10, 15, 18, 21, 23, 27

New Production

Il Trovatore Verdi
Millo/TBA, Zajick/Toczyska,
Bishop†; Armiliato*/O'Neill,
Gavanelli/Chernov, Wells/Skinner,
Guggenheim, Sumegit, Portilla†
Oren/Robertson; Copley/Howland/Munn
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from the Franklin/ Templeton Group of
Funds and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Hamilton.*
Sept. 17, 22, 25, 28, Oct. 1, 6, 11
Dec. 1, 4, 7, 10

New Production

San Francisco Opera Premiere
Otello Rossini
Gasdia, Shigematsu†; Merritt, Estep,
Ford*, Langan, Cross, Li, Portilla†
Summers; Feldman/Howland/Brown/
Munn
*This production is made possible by a generous
gift from Sun Microsystems, Inc.*
Oct. 4, 9, 13, 18, 22, 25, 28

*Support for the Resident Designer project
has been provided by the Columbia
Foundation, Mrs. Sheldon G. Cooper, Mr.
and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis, The L.J. and
Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, and Mr. and
Mrs. Marshall I. Wais.*

New Production

Tannhäuser Wagner
Voigt, Keen, Dillard; Schmidt*,
Hynninen, von Halem*, Sumegit,
Guggenheim, Rideout, Wilde
Runnicles; Mansouri/Smuin/Howland/
Mahoney/Munn
*This production is made possible by a generous
gift from Mr. and Mrs. Evert B. Person.*
Oct. 12, 15, 20, 23, 26, 29, Nov. 2

New Production

San Francisco Opera Premiere
Hérodiade Massenet
Zajick, Fleming, Clayton†;
Domingo/Keyes*(11/23, 25), Pons,
Cox, Vasquez, Del Campo†, Portilla†
Gergiev/Ethuin* (11/23, 25);
Mansouri/Howland/Walek/Munn
Nov. 8, 12, 15, 18, 20, 23, 25

Mefistofele

Boito

Millo/Racette, Neblett, Christin,
Bishop†; Ramey, Margison, Frank,
Cross
Pappano; Carsen/McClintock/
Morgan/Levine/Munn
Co-production with the Grand Théâtre
de Genève. Co-owned with the Lyric
Opera of Chicago.
*This production is made possible by a generous
gift from The Bernard Osher Foundation.*
Nov. 13, 16, 21, 27, 30, Dec. 3, 6, 9

New Production

Lucia di Lammermoor Donizetti
Swenson, Shigematsu†; Giordani,
Servile**, Miles, Lord, Portilla†
Santi; Bernhard/Howland/Toms/Munn
*This production is made possible by generous
gifts from The Herman J. Miller and Edward J.
Clarke Foundation and from an anonymous
friend in honor of William W. Godward.*
Nov. 19, 22, 26, 29, Dec. 2, 8, 11

* San Francisco Opera debut
** U.S. opera debut
† 1994 Adler Fellow

*All performances are in the original language
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Clayton, Filimonova*, Waite†, Gao,
Bishop†, Dillard, Shigematsu†;
Leiferkus, Hanedanyan, Pluzhnikov*,
Minzhilkiev*, Lord, Wilde, Sumegit,
Del Campo†, Patriarco†, Condy
Gergiev/Polianichko** (10/21);
Freeman*/Roger*/Munn
Produced in association with the Royal
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and the Kirov Opera, St. Petersburg.
*Production is made possible, in part, by
contributions from The Friends of Covent
Garden and the British Council.
The San Francisco Opera production is made
possible by a generous gift from The Edward
Meade Smith Trust.*
Oct. 19, 21, 27, 30, Nov. 1, 5, 9

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

presents
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Lucia di Lammermoor
Gaetano Donizetti/in Italian
Friday, December 2 at 1:00
Thursday, December 8 at 1:00

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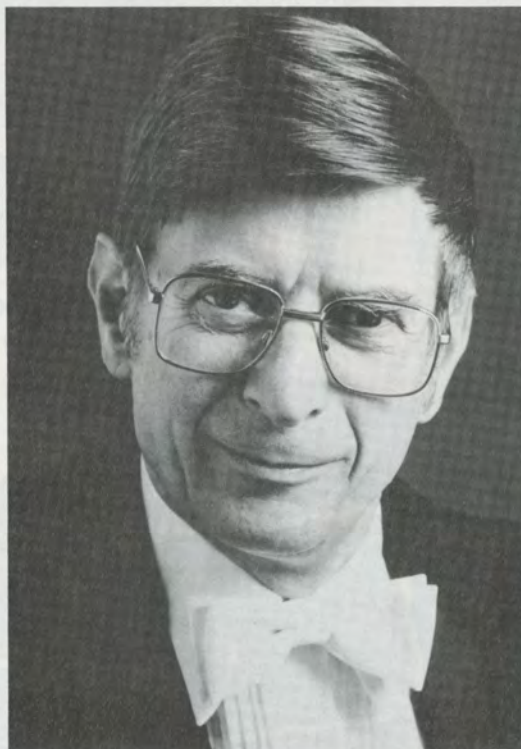


Performance Highlights

Presented by CHRYSLER ★



Anybody in the market for a distinctive mode of transportation might want to stop at the Hyatt Regency on November 4 for **Opera Festiva**, the **San Francisco Opera** Guild's annual gala dinner and auction. Items on the block include a 1995 BMW convertible, a two-year old Arabian stallion, and lunch aboard an aircraft carrier with the world famous Blue Angels. For those who prefer the comforts of home, fine wines, antiques, and art are also in the offering. All proceeds from the event go to fund the Guild's numerous education programs. Another gala, in honor of tenor **Plácido Domingo** and to benefit the Opera itself, is held on November 20, following an afternoon performance of *Hérodiade*, featuring Domingo as John the Baptist in Massenet's seldom-heard version of the Herodias-Salome-St. John story. The gala begins at 6 p.m. with a cocktail reception in the lobby, and moves on to a lavish Roman banquet held on the stage, where guests can get a close look at Gerald Howland's elaborate set, built for the new production.



The "Blomstedt Decade" celebration, honoring Herbert Blomstedt's final season as music director of the **San Francisco Symphony**, continues at Davies Symphony Hall. During November, Blomstedt conducts the work of Richard Strauss, one of the maestro's fortés. Blomstedt has led the Orchestra in several acclaimed Strauss recordings, including the *Alpine Symphony*, *Don Juan*, and *Ein Heldenleben*. On November 9, 10, 11, and 12, Blomstedt and the Orchestra perform the German composer's *Death and Transfiguration*, in a concert that also includes Sibelius' Third and Beethoven's Eighth symphonies. Strauss also plays a role in a second concert this month, one by the **San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra**, the much-lauded ensemble whose members range from age 12 to 20. The Youth Orchestra performs *Don Juan*, along with Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, and, as an ear-opening prelude, "Double Music," a 1941 work by John Cage and Lou Harrison written for twin percussion quartets.

So much to celebrate:
San Francisco Opera honors
tenor Plácido Domingo (above);
San Francisco Symphony pays
homage to Herbert Blomstedt
(below) in his final season as
music director.

—Robert Simonson

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1994 San Francisco Opera Company (Continued)

Although our program magazines regularly list members of the Administration and Company (please see pages 8 and 10), 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 and regular staff are listed in front of the magazine, as usual; the many others, upon whom so much depends, are listed below.

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ARTIST PROFILES



Soprano **Aprile Millo**, acclaimed in her 1992 San Francisco Opera debut as Madalena in *Andrea Chénier*, sings the roles of Leonora in *Il Trovatore* and Margherita in *Mefistofele*. Since her successful 1984 debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra* (as a last-minute replacement for an ailing colleague), she has scored numerous triumphs at the Met, most recently in *Il Trovatore*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and in the company's first staging of *I Lombardi*, which was presented both in New York and on tour to Frankfurt, Germany. In addition to her notable performances at the major opera houses in North America, Miss Millo has also been hailed in Europe (Milan's La Scala, Vienna State Opera, Barcelona's Liceu, Arena di Verona, etc.) and South America. Distinguished for her portrayals of Verdi heroines, the soprano is also at home with the works of Bellini, Rossini and Catalani among other composers, and has performed in opera, concert and on recordings with such leading conductors as James Levine, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Myung-Whun Chung and Nello Santi. Her discography includes a best-selling album of Verdi arias, as well as complete opera recordings of *Il Trovatore*, *Aida*, *Luisa Miller*, *I Lombardi* and *Don Carlo*. On television, she has appeared in the title role of *Aida* in the worldwide telecast of the 1989 opening night of the Metropolitan Opera (released on videocassette), as Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, as well as several specials. The New York native is the winner of several prestigious awards including First Prize from the Richard Tucker Foundation (1985) and the Maria Callas Foundation Award (1986).



Soprano **Patricia Racette** sings the role of Margherita in the December performances of *Mefistofele*. Having already performed important roles with San Francisco Opera, the Vienna State Opera (Mimi in *La Bohème*), Grand Théâtre de Genève (Micaëla in *Carmen*), Welsh National Opera (Liù in *Turandot*), New York City Opera (Musetta in *La Bohème* and Micaëla), and Boston Lyric Opera (all three heroines of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), she is scheduled to make further debuts: with Metropolitan Opera and Paris Bastille Opera (Musetta), as well as at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden (Mimi). The role of Mimi will also be the vehicle of her debut with the San Diego Opera. Recent appearances elsewhere include the title role of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*. A 1989-90 Adler Fellow with numerous San Francisco Opera Center credits, she made her Company bow in 1989 as Mistress Ford in family performances of *Falstaff*. Since then, the New Hampshire native has sung many roles here, including Freia in *Das Rheingold*, Helmwig in *Die Walküre*, Rosalinda in the family performance of *Die Fledermaus*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, and Mimi in the 1993 fall season *La Bohème*. Miss Racette is the recipient of numerous awards and grants, the most recent of which is the prestigious Marian Anderson Award (1994). Future plans include the role of Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes* at Vancouver, the title role of *La Traviata* with the Minnesota Orchestra, and two gala concerts: the 25th anniversary celebration of the Opera Theatre of St. Louis (scheduled for a PBS TV broadcast) and the Marian Anderson Foundation concert.

MEFISTOFELE



Carol Neblett, currently celebrating her 25 years in opera, returns to San Francisco Opera as Elena in *Mefistofele*. Her previous roles with the Company have been Electra in *Idomeneo* (1977), Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West*, Chimène in *Le Cid* (1981), Chrysothemis in *Elektra* (1984) and Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1985). Born in Modesto and raised in Southern California, she began studying the violin at the age of two and piano and voice at 15. At 19, she made her professional debut with the L.A. Philharmonic in Respighi's *Laud to the Nativity* and in 1969, she made her opera debut at the New York City Opera as Musetta in *La Bohème*. Thereafter, she sang a great number of roles with that company, including Margherita and Elena in *Mefistofele*, title roles of *Manon*, *La Traviata*, *Louise*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, as well as Yaroslava in *Prince Igor*, Marietta/Marie in *Die Tote Stadt*, and the Queen of Shemakha in *Le Coq d'Or*. Her Metropolitan Opera debut took place in 1979 (Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer*), and she has returned to the Met regularly in a long list of leading roles, which included two of her signature roles: Tosca and Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West*. Miss Neblett's foreign career took her to Vienna, Moscow, Leningrad, Buenos Aires, Hamburg, London's Covent Garden and the Salzburg Festival. She is also very active in the concert and recital hall, and her recordings include *La Bohème*, *La Fanciulla del West*, Mahler's Symphony No.2, and "Magnificat" with the Roger Wagner Chorale. In addition, her *Fanciulla* and *La Clemenza di Tito* portrayals are available on laserdisc and videotape. When not conducting master classes in techniques of opera and concert interpretation all across the United States, she and her husband, Dr. Philip Akre and their three children reside in Coronado, California.



Judith Christin portrays Marta in *Mefistofele*, a role she sang for the Company in 1989. Since her 1986 San Francisco Opera debut as Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, her roles here have also included Marthe in *Faust*, the Third Lady in *The Magic Flute*, and Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*. The mezzo-soprano has been acclaimed in over 70 roles, performing with leading opera companies throughout the United States. She has appeared in many world and U.S. premieres: Susanna in Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* at the Metropolitan Opera; La Baronne in Massenet's *Chérubin* at Carnegie Hall; and Dolly in Iain Hamilton's *Anna Karenina* with the Los Angeles Opera Theatre, among others. Recent highlights include her sixth season at the Met in *Die Zauberflöte*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Die Walküre* (as well as the Met's *Walküre* production which was presented in Japan); *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Seattle Opera; and Santa Fe Opera's productions of *Die Zauberflöte*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Intermezzo*, and Weill's *The Protagonist*. Miss Christin is also a noted orchestral soloist and has been lauded for her performances with the Minnesota Orchestra, Oratorio Society of New York; National, Denver and Houston Symphonies; as well as Buffalo and Long Island Philharmonic. Recipient of numerous awards, the Rhode Island native received her bachelor and master of music degrees from Indiana University. In February of 1995, she is scheduled for a New York recital in Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall.



A 1994 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, mezzo-soprano **Elizabeth Bishop** makes her San Francisco Opera mainstage debut as Emilie in *The Dangerous Liaisons*, continuing as Inez in *Il Trovatore*, A Nun in *The Fiery Angel*, and Pantalís in *Mefistofele*. In 1993, she made her Metropolitan Opera debut in a production of *Death in Venice*, and will return to the Met in 1995 to appear in *The Ghosts of Versailles*. This summer, Miss Bishop received critical acclaim for her portrayal of Helen in Opera Center's Showcase production of Tippet's *King Priam*. She participated in the 1992 and 1993 Merola Opera Programs, during which she sang Meg Page in *Falstaff* and Ida in *Die Fledermaus*, and portrayed Prince Orlofsky and Ida in Western Opera Theater's national tour of the latter. A native of Greenville, South Carolina, the young mezzo earned a master of music degree from The Juilliard School in 1991 and completed a two-year apprenticeship program as a Juilliard Opera Center Young Artist. While there, she took part in performance demonstrations of *The Ghosts of Versailles*, *Medea* and *The Rape of Lucretia*. Since 1992, Miss Bishop has been featured annually in San Francisco Symphony Pops Concerts.



Bass **Samuel Ramey** returns in the title role of *Mefistofele*, a part which he performed in the Company's 1989 staging of the work. Heralded not only as one of the world's most acclaimed opera stars, but also as the most recorded American-born bass in history, he has literally dozens of recordings to his credit. Ramey made his 1978 San Francisco Opera debut as Colline in *La Bohème* and has since returned as Count Rodolfo in *La Sonnambula* (1984), in the title roles of *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1986), *Mefistofele* (a production that was televised nationally and released on videocassette), *Don Quichotte* (1990), *Don Giovanni* (1991, when he stepped in as a last-minute replacement for an ailing colleague), *Attila* (1991), and in a Lexus Summer Concert this year. Born and raised in Kansas, Ramey made his New York City Opera debut in 1973 as Zuniga in *Carmen* and went on to become a leading bass with that company, singing nearly 40 roles there. By now, he is a welcome and sought-after guest at all major opera centers and music festivals of the world. In addition to his success in different types of repertoire — from baroque literature to coloratura roles of the bel canto era and dramatic bass works — Ramey has performed the devils of Gounod's *Faust*, Berlioz's *Damnation de Faust* (which he performed this summer during the S.F. Symphony's French Festival), and Boito's *Mefistofele*. His television credits include *The Barber of Seville* and *Manon* for the "Live from Lincoln Center" series, a special on Rossini with Marilyn Horne, the Salzburg Festival production of *Don Giovanni*, as well as *Carmen*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, *Don Giovanni* and *Semiramide* for the "Live from the Met" series. Recently added to his long list of recordings is the role of Olin Blitch in the world premiere recording of Floyd's *Susannah*, led by Kent Nagano.



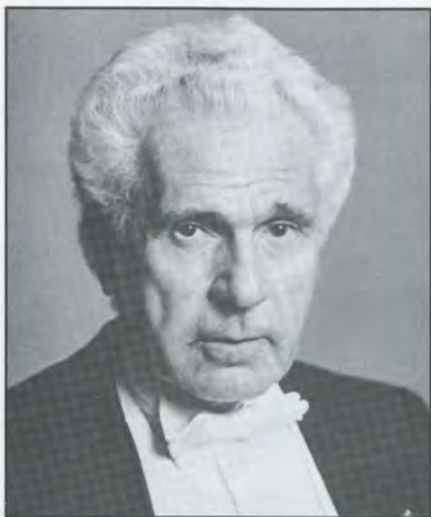
Richard Margison, who made his 1992 San Francisco Opera debut in the title role of *Don Carlo*, this season portrays Faust in *Mefistofele*. He began his career with appearances at the leading opera centers of his native Canada, including the companies of Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Ottawa, Calgary, Edmonton and Manitoba. The tenor quickly gained recognition on the international scene after his acclaimed 1989 European debut with the English National Opera as Riccardo in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. He has subsequently made major debuts with Houston Grand Opera in the title role of *Faust*, at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden and at the Deutsche Oper Berlin as Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, with the Stuttgart Opera and at Barcelona's Liceu as Don José in *Carmen*, with the Washington Opera in *Ballo*, and at the Vienna State Opera as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*. Engagements during the 1993-94 season have included *Carmen* at Covent Garden and in Brussels; *Tosca*, *Don Carlo* and *Madama Butterfly* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and *Il Trovatore* (his first Manrico) at Australia's Victoria State Opera. Future highlights include debuts at the Metropolitan Opera in *Madama Butterfly*, with Dallas Opera in *Il Trovatore*, and at the Bavarian State Opera in *Turandot*, as well as a new production of *Il Tabarro* in Hamburg, and his first *La Fanciulla del West* for the Flemish Opera. Margison also frequently appears as concert soloist, and was heard with the Royal Philharmonic under Yehudi Menuhin in concerts and a recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and with the symphonies of San Francisco, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Montreal, Ottawa and Brussels.



Joseph Frank, who sings the role of Wagner in *Mefistofele*, is celebrating the 20th anniversary of his San Francisco Opera debut (1974, Dancing Master in *Manon Lescaut*). The versatile tenor from Pennsylvania has subsequently appeared with the Company in over 25 lyric and character roles which include Goro in *Madama Butterfly*, Beppe in *Pagliacci*, Pong in *Turandot*, Triquet in *Eugene Onegin*, Bardolfo in *Falstaff*, the Fool in *Wozzeck*, Snout in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Emperor Altoum in *Turandot*, and the Dancing Master in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. It was in this last role that he made his 1979 Metropolitan Opera debut, returning there for numerous assignments including *Manon Lescaut*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Madama Butterfly*. He is a familiar figure on the stages of leading opera companies, including those of Houston, Miami, St. Louis, Seattle, San Diego and Dallas, and is a frequent performer with Santa Fe Opera where his credits include the U.S. premiere of the three-act version of Berg's *Lulu*. Highlights from recent seasons include his Canadian debut with Montreal Opera as Dr. Caius in *Falstaff*, a debut with Los Angeles Music Center Opera in *The Makropulos Case*, and a return to the Met for *Der Rosenkavalier* and *La Fanciulla del West*. The tenor appears in the video and laserdisc releases of the Met's *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Turandot* (1993 SFO production), and can be heard as Prince Shuisky on a critically acclaimed recording of *Boris Godunov* with Nicolai Ghiaurov. Frank joined the San Jose University School of Music as Professor of Music in 1991.



Young American tenor **Gregory Cross**, in his San Francisco Opera debut season, will be heard as the Duel Second in *The Dangerous Liaisons*, the Doge in *Otello* and Nereo in *Mefistofele*. His career has already taken him to many important performing arts centers of the world, such as the Festival Baroque de Versailles, where he made his European debut during the 1992-93 season as Renaud in Gluck's *Armide*. Also in 1992, he was heard as Count Almaviva in a telecast performance of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the Nancy Opera in a new production staged by Ruggero Raimondi. At Greater Miami Opera, he performed Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* last year, while this year, he traveled to London for the role of Iopas in *Les Troyens*, conducted by Sir Colin Davis. A large portion of his career so far has been taken up with oratorio and concert performances, and the Colorado native has performed with many leading orchestras and conductors throughout the U.S. and Canada. His debut recording, made with the Montreal Symphony under Charles Dutoit, features him and baritone Gino Quilico in the duet from Bizet's *Pearl Fishers*.



A celebrated conductor on the international opera and concert scene, **Julius Rudel** returns to San Francisco Opera to lead performances of *Mefistofele*. His previous assignments for the Company include *Pelléas et Mélisande* (debut, 1979), *Samson et Dalila* (1980), *Manon* and *Le Cid* (1981); *Don Quichotte* and *Die Fledermaus* (1990); and *Lucio Silla* (1991 Mozart Festival). Born in Vienna, Maestro Rudel began his musical training at that city's Academy of Music and completed it in the United States. In 1943, he joined the artistic staff of the New York City Opera, the company whose general director and principal conductor he became in 1957. His 22-year tenure in that capacity extended through 1979 and formed a fruitful 37-year professional relationship. During this period he also established himself as one of the leading conductors on the international concert circuit. His repertoire ranges from baroque to contemporary works, includes several world premieres, and encompasses well over 150 operas. He has directed summer festivals and led the opening seasons of Washington's Kennedy Center as its first music director, and was also the first music director of the Wolf Trap Festival. Other posts he has held encompass music directorships of the Cincinnati May Festival and the Caramoor Festival, music adviser to the Opera Company of Philadelphia, and a six-year tenure as music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic. Rudel's extensive discography has garnered a Grammy award and seven Grammy nominations, and includes complete performances of *Mefistofele* (Caballé, Domingo, Treigle), *Rigoletto*, *I Puritani*, *Manon*, *Cendrillon*, Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, Weill's *Silverlake* and Ginastera's *Bomarzo*. He has also made several television films and conducted many operas on video, including San Francisco Opera's *Samson et Dalila*. The maestro has received decorations from many nations (Germany, Israel, Austria) and was made a Chevalier des Arts et Lettres by the government of France. Among his honors are nine honorary doctorates from colleges and universities throughout the United States.



Robert Carsen originally conceived and staged this production of *Mefistofele* for his 1989 San Francisco Opera debut. Early in his career, the Canadian-born artist was associate and revival director at Glyndebourne where he was awarded the Carl Ebert Award for directing. He also served as assistant director at the Royal Opera House in London, the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, and the Spoleto Festivals in Italy and the U.S., assisting such directors as John Cox, Frank Corsaro, Trevor Nunn and Ken Russell, the designers Erté, David Hockney and Maurice Sendak, and playwright Tom Stoppard, with whom he collaborated on (and co-translated) *The Love for Three Oranges*. He has since gained an international reputation for his work at the Geneva Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Canadian Opera Company, Opera Theatre of St. Louis and Santa Fe Opera, among other companies. Engagements in recent seasons include *Salome* for the Opéra de Lyon, *Ariadne auf Naxos* in Santa Fe, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* in Geneva, *Nabucco* for the Vienna Volksoper, Oscar Wilde's play *Lady Windermere's Fan* for the Bristol Old Vic, and, earlier this year, a highly praised production of *Wozzeck* for the Canadian Opera Company.



Peter McClintock, the stage director of *Mefistofele*, made his 1990 San Francisco Opera directorial debut staging *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* for the Wagner Ring Festival, returned here the following year to direct *Don Carlo*, and staged last fall's new production of *Turandot*. He began his association with the Company in 1985 and was an Assistant Director here from 1987 to 1993, during which time he worked on over 25 productions, including *Mefistofele*, *War and Peace*, *Parsifal*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Otello*, *Falsstaff*, *Guillaume Tell*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Capriccio* and *Così fan tutte*. McClintock is currently a Staff Stage Director at the Metropolitan Opera, where he has worked on many productions over the past six years, including the Ring cycle, *Die Meistersinger*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Faust*, *Salome*, *Rigoletto*, *I Lombardi*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Idomeneo*. In April of this year, he revived his production of *Turandot* at the Houston Grand Opera. Additional production credits include engagements with Long Beach Opera, San Diego Opera, Portland Opera, and the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. He received his bachelor's degree in theater arts from UCLA and was awarded a scholarship from the San Francisco Opera to further his studies in Italy.



Designer **Michael Levine** made his 1989 San Francisco Opera debut with this production of *Mefistofele*, and returned the following year for the sets and costumes to Berg's *Wozzeck*. The Canadian-born artist first studied at the Ontario College of Art and later earned a bachelor of arts degree from the Central School of Art and Design in London, England. After an apprenticeship at the famed Glasgow Citizens Theatre, he returned to London to co-design (with the Polish artist Voytek) Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude*. The production, which was also staged in New York, garnered Levine nominations for England's prestigious Olivier award as well as a Tony award. Additional legitimate stage designs include *Light Up the Sky* for the Old Vic, *Revenger's Tragedy* for the Royal Shakespeare Company, *Heartbreak House* and *Arms and the Man* for Niagara-on-the-Lake's Shaw Festival, and (with Robert Lepage) *Tectonic Plates* for the Du Maurier Theatre Festival in Toronto. His designs for opera have been seen at the Belfast Opera (*Don Giovanni*), Canadian Opera Company (*Idomeneo*, *Wozzeck*), English National Opera (*The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*), and Santa Fe Opera (*A Night at the Chinese Opera*).



Victoria Morgan, who staged the dance sequences for *Hérodiade* and *Mefistofele*, is in her seventh year as Ballet Mistress for San Francisco Opera. She has previously served as the Company's choreographer for *Don Quichotte* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1990), *War and Peace* (1991), *Andrea Chénier* (1992), and has rendered movement assistance for numerous productions. She has been the choreographer and assistant director for several new productions for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. These include *Black River*, *Midnight Angel* and, most recently, *Candide*, directed by Colin Graham. In 1995, she will be re-staging the work for Boston Lyric Opera. Miss Morgan has also choreographed *Die Fledermaus* for the Geneva Opera, as well as works for the San Francisco Ballet, Utah Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Nashville Ballet, Ruth Langridge Company, Mountain Play Theater, and S.F. Dance Theater. She was a principal dancer with San Francisco Ballet and Ballet West who performed lead roles in ballets by George Balanchine, Michael Smuin and Lew Christensen, and created new roles in works by Bruce Marks, James Kudelka and William Forsythe. She has numerous television credits, and was the featured choreographer and dancer in the documentary *The Creation of O.M.O.*. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Utah with an M.F.A. (receiving the university's Young Alumni award in 1986), and has been awarded grants for her choreography from the National Endowment for the Arts, Carlisle Residency Program, and the Djerassi Foundation.



Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera since 1976, **Thomas J. Munn** created the lighting for *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *Il Trovatore*, *Tannhäuser*, *The Fiery Angel*, *Hérodiade*, *Mefistofele* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He has designed the lighting and special effects for over 153 productions for the Company, including the highly acclaimed presentations of Wagner's *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*. In addition to his work for the San Francisco Opera, Munn has designed scenery and lighting for Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theater, ballet, industrials and films. His television and video credits include San Francisco Opera productions of *La Gioconda* (for which he received an Emmy Award), *Samson et Dalila*, *Aida*, *L'Africaine*, *La Bohème*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Mefistofele*, *Capriccio* and *Turandot*. Credits for other companies include work for the Houston Grand Opera, Washington Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera and the Netherlands Opera, scenery and lighting for Hartford Ballet's *Nutcracker* and Ballet Arizona's production of *Coppélia*. He is currently working on a new *Nutcracker* for the Atlanta Ballet.

Mefistofele

Corps de Ballet

Carolyn Houser Carvajal	David Bier
Jill Cassimatis	Ney Fonseca
Nora Heiber	Danny Furlong
Marina Hotchkiss	John Konetski
Summer Lee Rhatigan	Mark Lopez
Debra Rose	Eric Thomé

Children's Chorus

Oona Appel	Maria Zagatsky
Christie Ariate	Ian Crawford
Lilly Akseth	Erik Dorey
Catherine Baldassari-	Conrad Frank
Litchman	Zachary Gassoumis
Ingrid Behrsin	Damian Hites
Kelly Brandli	David Kashevaroff
Laura Epstein	Warren Lain
Audrey Harris	Vincent Lee
Kim Knight	James Locke
Josephine Liu	Alexis Manetas
Kristen Oei	
Jill Peterson	Joe McQuaid
Mayela Gutknecht-	Nicholas Pleasure
Rodriguez	Jeffrey Power
Emily Ryan	Brendan Raven
Lauryn Salazar	Matthew Ryan
Emily Stumpf	Brandon Sherman
Ariel Tosta	Peter Sherman
Caitie Unkovic	Brooks Wilson
Amy White	Michael Wood

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Ragazzi, the Peninsula Boys Chorus — Joyce Keil, Director;

San Francisco Boys Chorus — Laura D. Kakis, Director;

San Francisco Girls Chorus — Sharon Paul, Director;

Elizabeth Avakian, Chorus School Director.

Supernumeraries

Traude Albert	Ian Mishkin
Elayne Ashman	Steve Moulds
Phyllis Blair	Jim Mullins
Rae Bryant	Paul Newman
Madeline Chase	Chris Noll
Huguette Combs	Christopher Patnoe
Sean Dubin	William F. Perasso
Mary Freeman	Oliver Pollard
Karen Goodwyn	Paul Ricks
Esther Jennings	Louis Schilling
Janet Johnston	Jim Shields
Andrea Kohlruss	Frank Sommers
Debbie Naylor	Don Stoddard
Dorothy Papo	Michael Strickland
Ann Paras	Brendan Vermillion
Valentina Simi	Rick Weil
Ceci Valente	Ron Wizelman
Carolyn Waugh	Michael Wright
Susan Weiss	
Phyllis Williams *	

Steve Bauman
David Black
Mark Burstein
Peter Cannon
Tom Carlisle
Dante Cecchini
David Clover
Joe Dial
Robert Dunn
Gilbert Gonzalez
Bill Higgins
Clint Jennings
Jim Shields
Frank Jorgensen
Alfred Knoll
Dan Kyte
Jim Miller

Children
Hannah Hunt
Emily Knell
Molly Lehrkind
Jennifer Martinelli
Hayden Moulds
Kate Noll
Tory Noll
Ricah Quinto
Rachael Steimnitz
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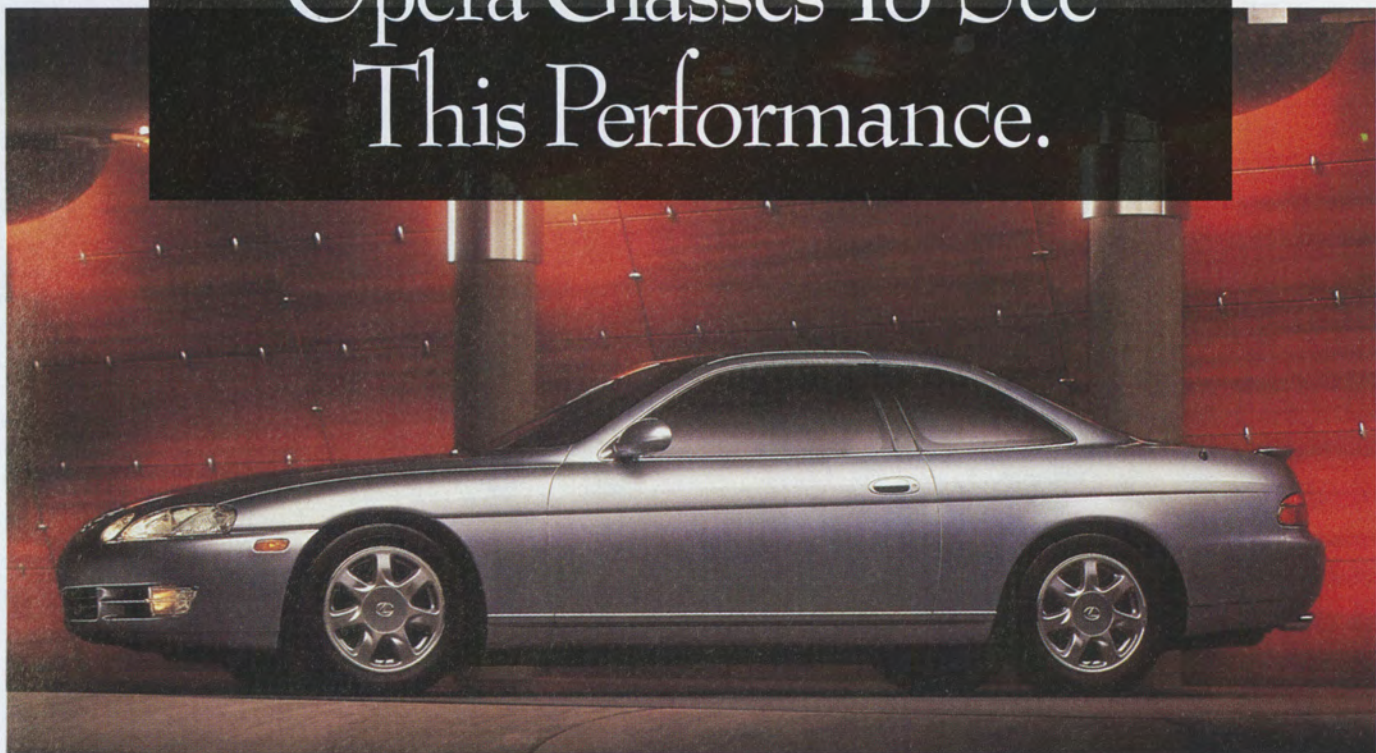
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CATCHING UP

By Jake Heggie

Two weeks prior to the Opera's opening night, while waiting for a camera crew, I sat at the Opera House stage door and watched wide-eyed as a rapid stream of cast, orchestra, chorus, crew and staff rushed back and forth in a blur of activity. Three operas to get on stage . . . for now. Six more down the road. Conversations, debates, jokes, songs, all blazing away, clearly focused on a thousand different topics.

My naivete must have showed, for one of the War Memorial guards walked over and asked: "How many seasons does this make for you, Jake?" I responded eagerly, "It's my first." Instantly, his face broke into a big grin, he turned and chuckled, "Start counting, my friend. Start counting."

Initially, I wasn't sure quite how to take that. But with the 1994 Fall Season already half complete—and the stream at the stage door still rushing merrily on—it is now clear exactly what he meant. Seventy performances of nine operas in three months, plus the fantastic variety of goings on in North America's second largest opera company? Every year? Yes. This could be addictive.

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Jake Heggie is a writer and public relations associate at San Francisco Opera. He received his B.A. and M.A. degrees in piano/composition at UCLA and performs in concerts nationally. He is also the author and illustrator of several children's books that are awaiting publication.

San Francisco Opera's new managing director, Michael Savage (left), stands with Resident Designer Gerard Howland and General Director Lotfi Mansouri as the golden lion prepares to make his way from the Scene Shop to the Opera House, August 1.



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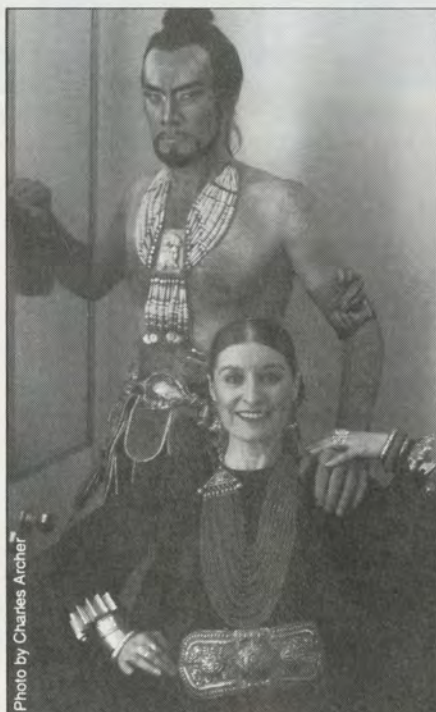


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The lion made his stage debut on October 4 in Rossini's *Otello*, with Chris Merritt in the title role.

on stage and in the pit. There are those who operate lights, build scenery, cut and sew costumes, make wigs, type office memos, send faxes, take photographs, address and stuff envelopes, hire artists, rehearse, usher—and then there are the thousands of audience members, all important partners in the process, too.

Throughout the year, the Opera, Opera Center, and Opera Guild pursue a large number of important programs and events that involve many of these people. Some influence the art world locally, some internationally. With most attention paid to the fanfare and hoopla that accompanies the opening night and run of each production, information about a good number of these might not find its way to your living room.

What follows is a condensed diary to fill you in with what's been going on.

On August 1 of this year, an immense, 36-foot golden lion broke loose from the Opera's Scene Shop and made a memorable

five-mile tour through an unsuspecting city, heralding the Opera's new production of Rossini's *Otello*—and the advent of the 1994 Fall Season. With cameras clicking madly, and audible "oos" and "aahs" filling the air, there was a terrific sense of celebration as the awesome beast was hoisted into the air and cheered into the Opera House (appropriately enough to the tune of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"). More than symbolically, the lion's arrival also anticipated the arrival of the Opera's seven new productions by Resident Designer Gerard Howland. Suddenly, the new season was tangible, and the countdown was really on for Opening Night.

The numerous Company members who left their desks and work stations to join the mob of spectators outside to welcome *Otello*'s Lion of Venice, also had an opportunity to welcome several new faces to the Opera, including Artistic Administrator Christina Scheppelmann and Managing Director Michael Savage. Unofficially, "Lion

Day" heralded Savage's first official day on the job—Opera hospitality at its finest. A Tiburon resident, successful businessman and passionate music lover, Savage has enjoyed a career in the international petroleum business and served on the board of the San Francisco Conservatory since 1983 (as chairman since 1990). Ms. Scheppelmann—whose love for music began at an early age with violin and voice lessons in her native Germany—was already settled into her duties, having arrived one month earlier from the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona.

While technical rehearsals for each of the season's nine productions continued on stage, rehearsals for the world premiere production of *The Dangerous Liaisons*—which would prove to be one of the season's biggest hits—were about to begin. The Opera's music director, Donald Runnicles, was off to open the Edinburgh Festival to glowing reviews with Mahler's mighty Eighth Symphony. Transamerica Corpora-

tion opened a special exhibition of costumes and designs from the Opera Costume Shop called "Behind the Seams." Set in the famous Transamerica Pyramid, the display featured a gorgeous array of gowns, robes, hats, shoes, jewelry and accessories from company productions.

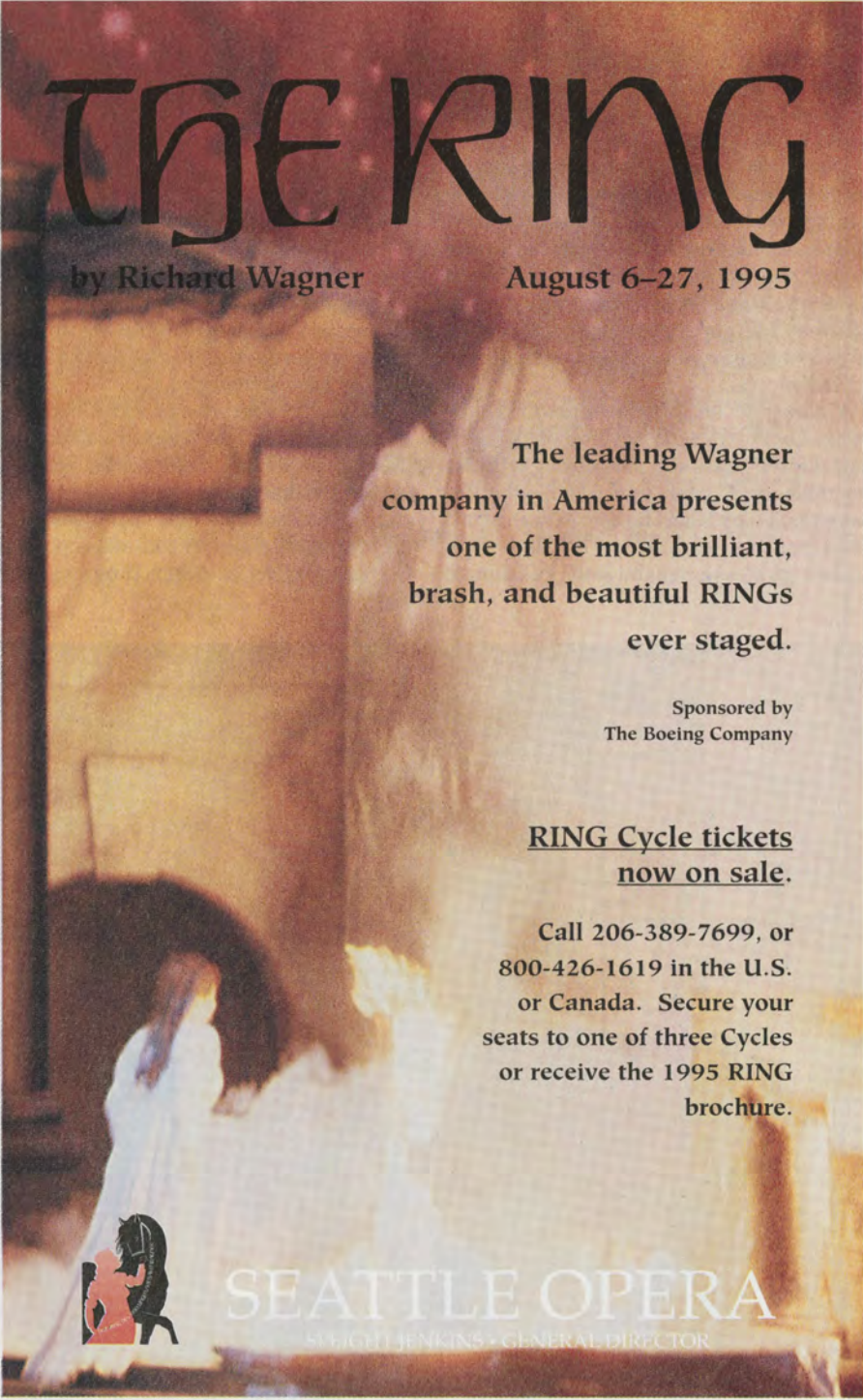
Nearby, the Opera Center's incoming music director, Mikael Eliassen, was already on board, continuing as a coach for the summer Merola Opera Program. (A feature article on Eliassen recently ran in the program magazine for *Tannhäuser*.) The Opera Center's summer programs were in full swing with rehearsals, coachings and classes (oh my) going on virtually round the clock. In July, Runnicles had led the Opera Orchestra and the Adler Fellows in the Center's Showcase '94 production—the North American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam*—which played to four sold-out houses at Theatre Artaud. Also in July, Opera Chorus Director Ian Robertson had led the Orchestra, Chorus and Adler Fellows in the final three *Lexus Summer Concerts*.

Having completed a charming staged performance of *Così fan tutte* at Stern Grove (in an updated version replete with sunglasses, lifeguards and beach umbrellas), the 1994 Merola Opera Program singers and coaches were gearing up in more traditional attire for *Don Giovanni* at Villa Montalvo. Staged by John Copley (who was running between *Giovanni* rehearsals in Saratoga and staging *Il Trovatore* at the Opera House) and conducted by Patrick Summers (still in his role as the Opera Center's music director, the position he had held for five years), these performances turned out to be more memorable than anyone could have imagined.

Don Giovanni opening night—Friday, August 12. Etched in the minds of the 1994 Merolins forever. During the sword fight in Act I, the plot was inadvertently rewritten when the Don (the 6'6" David Okerlund) was accidentally struck in the head and sent to the floor by the Commendatore (Xing Yan Zhang). After a stunned silence, the performance was halted and Okerlund was sent to a community hospital for 15 stitches above the right eye. Though injured and emotionally shaken, the young singer proved himself a true professional, waving an "all OK" to the audience as he was escorted off stage.

But wait, there's more.

During the strained silence following the accident, both a member of the audience and an orchestra member suffered heart fibrillations, and the latter was carried off in the ambulance with Okerlund. You might say it was dramatic. However, after a relatively



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brief pause, the other young professionals of the cast carried on with the Saturday night *Don* and Commendatore (Scott Hogsed and Richard Woods) taking over at a moment's notice. Okerlund and Zhang returned to perform the Sunday performance in rare form, and the cast and production were exceedingly well received.

Just one week later, on August 21, the Merola program singers performed in the annual Grand Finals to an enthusiastic, sold-

out audience at the Opera House. Patrick Summers led his final concert as Opera Center music director (he had held the position for five years and previously been enrolled in the apprentice coach program) to great cheers and a special on-stage thank you. But there was no rest for the weary—Summers had to prepare for Opera in the Park and the production of Rossini's *Otello*, and the Merola program singers needed to prepare for the Western Opera Theater national tour,

which left for a seven-week tour on September 13. (Eliassen stepped in as the Center's new music director the day after the Grand Finals, August 22.)

During this time, opera stars Frederica von Stade and Thomas Hampson—deeply involved with rehearsals for *The Dangerous Liaisons*—took time to talk with the young singers about their experiences, and field questions. In September, Hampson (himself a former Merola Opera Program singer) gave two extensive master classes for the Adler Fellows.

Violinist Zaven Melikian retired from the Opera Orchestra after serving as concertmaster for 17 years and performing with the ensemble for 37 years (since 1957 when he was engaged by Kurt Herbert Adler). Much loved for his leadership, artistry, cool-headed professionalism and passionate

backgammon games at intermissions, Melikian was awarded the Opera Medal in a special on-stage ceremony that followed the September 24 performance of *Macbeth*.

(Plácido Domingo, who celebrates 25 years with San Francisco Opera this November, will be feted this year with his wife, Marta, in a gala party following his final performance of *Hérodiade* on November 20. After a champagne reception in the Opera House lobby, guests will join Mr. and Mrs. Domingo on stage amid Howland's Roman sets for a lavish banquet.)

With all of the comings and goings, there was a particularly heightened excitement in the Opera House during the rehearsal period for the world premiere—San Francisco Opera was the sole commissioner of the work (the flagship commission for the Company's Pacific Visions program, estab-

lished in 1992), it was the Company's first world premiere in 18 years and it featured an astonishing and committed cast. Additionally, it was General Director Lotfi Mansouri's "dream come true," he having envisioned the work several years earlier. Composer Conrad Susa and librettist Philip Littell were both on hand, working closely with director Colin Graham and conductor Runnicles. When word arrived that funding had been cleared to videotape the opera for "Great Performances" (which aired October 17 on PBS), the excitement turned to jubilation.

Rehearsals for *The Dangerous Liaisons* had started earlier than for a known work, but soon the schedule included *Macbeth* and *Il Trovatore* (and before those productions were done, *Otello*, *Tannhäuser* and *The Fiery Angel* were added to the mix.) The craziness



The 1994 Merola Opera Program production of *Don Giovanni* at Villa Montalvo in August included performances by David Okerlund in the title role and Xing Yan Zhang as the Commendatore.



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of the days leading up to opening night accelerated, and then it happened.

September 9. Welcome to the Opera's 72nd consecutive season. Hold on.

Scottish-themed galas hosted by San Francisco Opera Guild and BRAVO! CLUB kicked off the festivities with spectacular dinners in an immense tented pavilion (Opera Guild), and in the Green Room of the Veterans Building (BRAVO!). Scottish in honor of the opening night production—Verdi's *Macbeth*. The Guild's event was a benefit that raised approximately \$150,000 to support the numerous programs that are now critical to arts education throughout the Bay Area. Both celebrations closed the evening with dancing and dessert through the wee hours of the morning. (The Fall Season opened with 83% of all available tickets for the nine operas sold prior to the opening performance, a record in the Company's recent history. Because of advance demand, an eighth performance of *Lucia di Lammermoor* was added for December 4.)

The performance that night starred Welsh soprano Gwyneth Jones and bass James Morris as opera's most murderous couple. Native Scotsman Donald Runnicles led the performance, which was staged by Mansouri. (During the month-long run, Dame Gwyneth was awarded a special certificate of recognition by the Mayor's office.) The production ran for seven performances, played to approximately 93% of capacity, and unveiled the first of Howland's seven new sets. The second installment of the designer's work was seen the following evening—*The Dangerous Liaisons* had arrived.

The palpable buzz that surrounded the world premiere on September 10 was heightened by the international audience, including executives from Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Opéra de Lyon, as well as press representatives from virtually every major national paper and many magazines. All eyes and ears were open, and word spread quickly that something very special had happened: *The Dangerous Liaisons* is a hit—get your tickets now. Runnicles led the stellar cast that included Renée Fleming, Judith Forst, Johanna Meier, Mary Mills, Frederica von Stade, Thomas Hampson and David Hobson. By the end of the run, five of the six performances had sold out, the production played to 103% of capacity (including standing room sales and the re-selling of donated tickets) and actually brought in 10% more in ticket sales than the Opera had projected. This success only increased the interest that was expressed for the telecast on PBS.

San Francisco Opera

San Francisco Examiner's Opera in the Park took place at Sharon Meadow in Golden Gate Park on September 10 with Summers leading the Opera Orchestra and stars from the opening productions, headlined by Gwyneth Jones, Dolora Zajick, Paolo Gavanelli, Thomas Hampson, Hong-Shen Li and Robert Lloyd. Adler Fellows Kristin Clayton, Mika Shigematsu, Claudia Waite and Alfredo Portilla made impressive appearances and were cheered in the concert, which was enjoyed by more than 20,000 picnickers. That evening, the concert was broadcast over KDFC 102.1 FM and heard by many thousands more—then repeated the following week.

(On the Tuesday after opening weekend, the Opera announced that Opéra de Lyon [Kent Nagano, music director] will make its first visit to the United States next year with four performances of Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*, June 17, 18, 21 and 22 at the War Memorial Opera House. The visit is part of the United Nations' 50th Anniversary celebration.)

Though soprano Claudia Waite made her mainstage debut on the season's opening night as the Lady-in-Waiting in *Macbeth*, her unexpected big moment came on September 17—opening night of *Il Trovatore*. An ailing Aprile Millo was unable to sing at the last minute, and Miss Waite (Miss Millo's cover) was called upon to sing Leonora. Exciting? You bet. It's a moment that most young singers only dream will come to them. (An article about Claudia's experience can be read in the *Lucia di Lammermoor* program.) Eventually, she sang the first three performances. The production also starred tenor Fabio Armiliato as Manrico, Dolora Zajick as Azucena and Paolo Gavanelli as Conte di Luna. The production will return for four more performances in December.

San Francisco Opera's new artistic administrator, Christina Scheppelmann.



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Summers returned on October 4 to lead the Company premiere of Rossini's *Otello*. The immense lion was finally center stage in Laurie Feldman's production that starred Italian soprano Cecilia Gasdia as the tragic Desdemona. Rossini's rarely performed opus also begs the question, why the fuss over *three* tenors? Because this score demands no fewer than *six* tenors: Chris Merritt in the title role, Gregory Cross (The Doge), Craig Estep (Iago), Bruce Ford (Rodrigo), Hong-Shen Li (Gondolier) and Alfredo Portilla (Lucio). Kevin Langan, as Elmiro, was back at the Opera for his 15th consecutive season and 250th San Francisco Opera performance.

Claudia Waite saw her first opera performances as a child at a San Francisco Opera Guild student matinee production in 1971 (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). The following year, after a student matinee production of *Tosca*, she determined that a career in opera would suit her just fine. Her dream is coming true.

The soprano entered the Opera Center's Merola Opera Program as a result of the national auditions. Those annual auditions, which take place in cities across the conti-

nental United States, have served as the portal for the beginnings of important careers for artists such as Ruth Ann Swenson, Carol Vaness, Deborah Voigt, Dolores Zajak, Brian Asawa and Thomas Hampson. This year, the Opera Center extended its auditions to include international locations in Seoul and Hong Kong, an offshoot of the successful 1992 Pacific Voices festival. The national auditions begin on November 4 in Winston-Salem and will end in New York on December 21. These auditions determine the singers for the 1995 Merola program and Western Opera Theater tour.

Miss Voigt, today one of the world's great dramatic sopranos, stars in the season's new production of *Tannhäuser* (which opened on October 12, conducted by Runnicles and staged by Mansouri) and in a special recital to benefit San Francisco Opera Center on October 31. Accompanied by pianist Peter Grunberg, the soprano scheduled a program of works by Brahms, Griffes, Strauss and Wagner.

In addition to the opening night Opera Ball, San Francisco Opera Guild recently hosted its annual Auction Gala, *Opera Festiva*, at the Hyatt Regency in San Francisco. This elaborate benefit also served to raise

money for the Guild's education programs, including this year's student matinee performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, which will take place December 2 and 8 at 1 p.m., conducted by Peter Grunberg and starring Man-Hua Gao in the title role.

The Opera Guild presents Insights Lectures at Herbst Theatre, too, which this year preceded performances of *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *Otello*, *The Fiery Angel* and *Hérodiade*. Preview lectures take place in advance of each opera throughout the Bay Area, and are presented by Guild chapters and affiliates. The Opera presents pre-performance lectures one hour prior to curtain, and responded to last year's enthusiastic response by expanding its schedule to include discussions prior to virtually every performance.

Whew. There you have it, the very barest outlines of what's been keeping us occupied at the Opera House. There is never a dull moment, and there isn't a second that we aren't grateful for all of the players in this amazing machine. Keep coming back, and we'll do our best to keep you informed.

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SERVICES

SENNHEISER LISTENING DEVICES

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

OPERA HOUSE TOURS

Sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild, house and backstage tours of the War Memorial Opera House will be conducted every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on weekdays and on Saturday; and every 15 minutes from 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Sundays on the following dates:

Tuesday, October 4
Sunday, October 9
Wednesday, October 19
Sunday, November 6
Saturday, November 19
Friday, November 25
Wednesday, November 30
Sunday, December 4

Tickets for Guild members, \$2; non-members, \$5. Reservations required. Information: (415) 565-6433.

IF YOU DRIVE TO THE OPERA . . .

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

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER TOURS

Tours of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center include the Opera House, Davies Symphony Hall and Herbst Theatre and take place as follows: Mondays, every half-hour between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Special tours of Davies Hall only may be scheduled on Wednesdays and Saturdays by request. All tours leave from the Grove Street entrance of Davies Symphony Hall. There are no tours on holidays. General \$3; Seniors and students, \$2.

Information: (415) 552-8338.

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

Food Service. The Opera House lower lounge is open one and one-half hours prior to curtain time for hot buffet service. Patrons arriving before the front doors open will be admitted at the carriage entrance. Refreshments are served in the box tier on the mezzanine floor, the grand tier and dress circle levels during all performances.

Emergency Telephone. The telephone number (415) 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's Ticket and Patron Services Center, 199 Grove at Van Ness, open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Opera House Box Office: open 2 hours before each performance through the first intermission on performance days only. Phone charge: (415) 864-3330, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday (VISA, American Express, MasterCard). Tickets are also available on a limited basis through BASS and STBS outlets.

Make a valued contribution to San Francisco Opera. You can make an important contribution to San Francisco Opera by returning any tickets you cannot use to the Box Office for resale. These ticket returns are of great value to S.F. Opera and to other patrons who may be unable to obtain tickets to sold-out performances. If you are unable to use your tickets or exchange them for another performance of the same opera, you may make a full-value, tax-deductible contribution of your tickets. To make a donation, simply return your tickets to the Box Office or call (415) 864-3330, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. You may also call (415) 565-6485 from 6 p.m. to 10 minutes before curtain. Unfortunately, we are unable to apply the donations towards membership benefits.

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

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

Wheelchair accessible restrooms are located in the lower lounge and on the dress circle level (north). Wheelchair accessible public telephones including "TDD" are located in the northeast corner of the lobby. Accessible drinking fountains are on orchestra and dress circle levels.

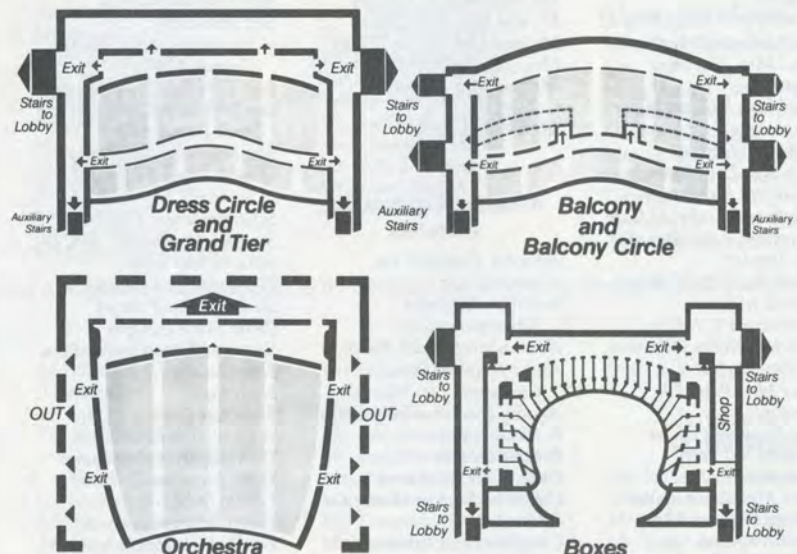
For the safety and comfort of our audience, all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at Opera House cloak-rooms.

Opera glasses are available in the lobby.

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

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

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



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

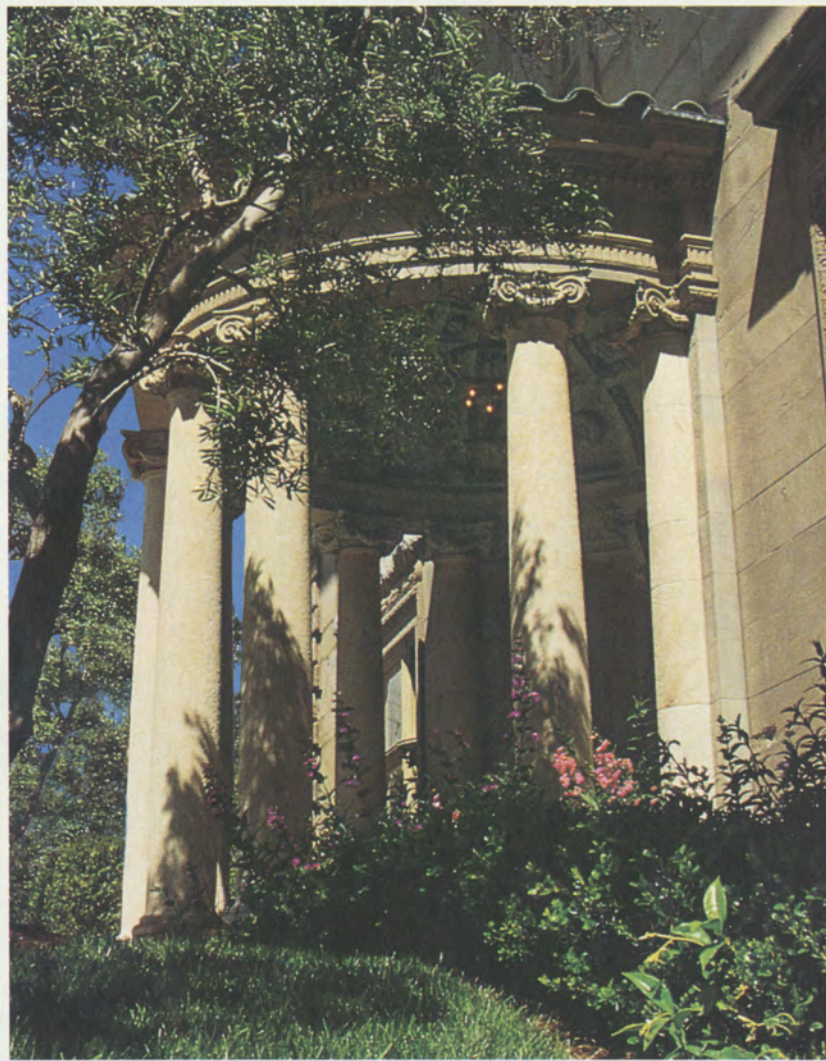


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