

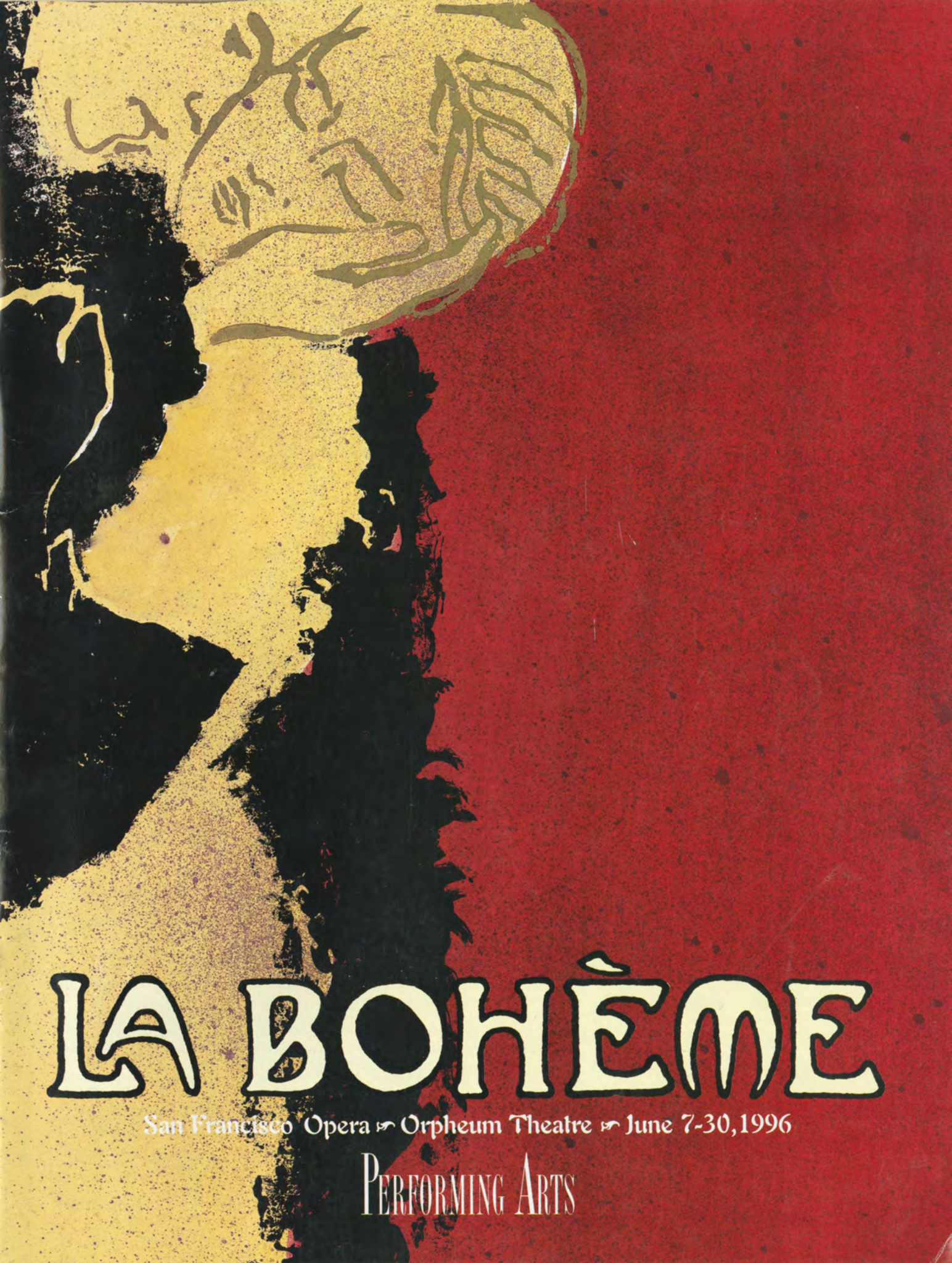
La Bohème
(La Boheme)

1995-1996

Friday, June 7, 1996 7:00 PM
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Wednesday, June 12, 1996 2:00 PM
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Summer 1996

Vol. 74, No. 1

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San Francisco Opera

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A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR



McCARTHY

One hundred years ago, on the stage of the famed opera house in Turin, an impoverished young seamstress and a struggling poet fell in love for the first time and swept the world along in a heartbreaking romance. Since then, *La Bobème* has become the world's most popular opera; Mimì (the seamstress) and Rodolfo (the poet) have fallen in love countless thousands of times; and Puccini's glorious music has welcomed several generations to opera and inspired popular music, theater and film.

On behalf of San Francisco Opera, I am pleased to welcome you to our new production of *La Bobème* at the Orpheum Theatre. We are calling this a "Broadway-style" run because we have combined the best elements of opera and Broadway to present a unique type of music theater. Through multiple performances at lower ticket prices, we are able to make this great opera available to a broader audience than during our regular season. With a distinguished production team and several casts that feature some of today's most gifted young singers, we are able to give you San Francisco Opera's high standard of excellence. You will experience an intimate and exciting performance that involves nearly 150 performers, including the full San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Steven Mercurio and Marco Armiliato, the latter in his Company debut. This is all made possible thanks to the vision of Gordon Getty and the generous sponsorship of the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation.

This is our Company's first production in the Orpheum Theatre, but not the last. Stay with us for our 1996/97 Fall Season, when we will return here to present three operas: Thomas's romantic French opera *Hamlet*, Rossini's spirited comedy *The Barber of Seville*, and the highly anticipated West Coast premiere of Stewart Wallace and Michael Korie's *Harvey Milk*. We will also present six operas in new productions at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. All of this during our one season out of the War Memorial Opera House while it undergoes renovation.

If you are an opera lover, you already know the wonderful and warm magic of *La Bobème*. If this is your first opera performance, I envy you: for you are about to enter a fantastic world, where you will experience a very special kind of magic that speaks from the heart, to the heart.

Lotfi Mansouri
General Director

FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



SOHL

Welcome to San Francisco Opera at the Orpheum Theatre, and our new production of *La Bobème*. This is our first production at the Orpheum and our first series of performances out of the War Memorial Opera House during the extensive renovation that began last fall. It is an exciting time for the Company as we anticipate the adventure of our 1996/97 Season at the Orpheum and Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, and the return to the Opera House in 1997 for San Francisco Opera's 75th anniversary. Through the generosity of the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, we are able to begin this adventure with a unique presentation of *La Bobème*, featuring an extended run of 24 performances at lower ticket prices. We hope that this will make it possible for many opera first-timers to experience the beauty and magic of this great art form. At the same time, it will be a rewarding experience for opera aficionados. In addition to production sponsorship, the Getty Foundation grant has made it possible to expand the Orpheum Theatre orchestra pit to accommodate our full Opera Orchestra, an improvement that will serve us well through the 1996/97 Season and in future projects at the Orpheum.

Enjoy the performance, and join us again this fall. Our adventurous season in two theaters will allow us to explore many new artistic possibilities, all the while maintaining the high quality of production and performance that have made this Company one of the world's most distinguished.

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THE ETERNAL BOHÈME

BY JOHN ARDOIN



Michael Yeargan's design for Act II of San Francisco Opera's new production of *La Bohème*.

Somewhere in the world, perhaps as often as once a day, there are many who are seeing or hearing Puccini's *La Bohème* for the first time. It could be in an ornate theater, a high-school auditorium or on a recording. The opera might be sung in Russian or French or English. It doesn't matter. The message always comes through.

I envy these newcomers to *Bohème*. They are discovering this evergreen score and story with new eyes and ears, unprejudiced by familiarity and past performances. For them, the touching love story of Mimì and her Rodolfo leaps into life with the freshness of a spring day.

Few works of art possess the ability to recreate themselves with such immediacy as *Bohème* and to withstand the pressure of the years and the passing fads and styles they bring. *Bohème* goes on, oblivious to time and tide, touching our most

sensitized emotions. It has become a metaphor for anyone who has ever been in love, lost that love or agonized over the difficulties of loving.

It is a simple story, so simple, in fact, it might have become trite in the hands of a less acutely-attuned man of the theater. In *Bohème*, boy meets girl, boy loses girl, both gets back girl and girl dies in boy's arms. Curtain. How basic can you get? There is barely a variance or development of what has through the years become a dramatic cliché.

And yet, in *Bohème*, we have one of the most adored and enchanted operas ever written. It strikes a sympathetic chord within those who are passionate about opera and those to whom opera is just a diversion. Puccini's music has a great deal to do with this, of course. It is his best — melodious, unpretentious and soaring.

"I love small things," he once said, "and the only music I can or will make is that of small things...as long as they are true and full of passion and humanity and touch the heart." Nowhere was he truer to this credo than in *La Bohème*.

But Puccini cannot take all the credit,

for he did not possess a monopoly when it came to the truths of *Bohème*. Equal admiration must go to the simple beauties of the novel by French author Henri Murger on which the opera is based. It could not have been an easy chore to make a libretto out of these tales of the city — Paris, in this case — that were originally published in serial form (*Scènes de la vie bohème*). They are so populated with people and so overcrowded with incident that the first draft of *Bohème*'s libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica ran to nearly twenty acts!

Each character in the opera is a compound of two and sometimes more figures from Murger's book. Mimì, for example, is drawn from several of Murger's loves — chiefly Lucille Louvet, a midinette who died of tuberculosis. But she is also Marie Vimal, a frail, gentle creature, who later became involved in fraud, and a young girl named Juliette, who also died of consumption. And the episode involving Mimì's lost key in Act I of the opera and her fur muff in Act IV came from events involving yet another character named Francine.

John Ardo is music critic of The Dallas Morning News and author of The Furtwängler Record, published by Amadeus Press. He is currently working on the first history in English of the Maryinsky Theater in St. Petersburg.

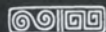
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Mürger's book is a *roman à clef* in which he cast himself as the poet Rodolphe. He and his friends frequented not the Café Momus of the opera's libretto but the Café de la Rotonde in the Paris Montparnasse district. Mürger was frequently there in the company of his friends, with Louvet on his arm. One of the real-life bohemians of that time has described her like this:

"There was a trace of hardness on her face...she was married and separated from her husband, a cabinetmaker...I saw her more than once at his [Mürger's] digs in the Rue Mazarin, on the second floor of the house at the corner of the Rue de Buci. Her countenance struck me: head a little large compared to the bust, hair a blonde chestnut, large blue eyes, pallor, face like wax..."

When she was admitted to the women's ward in the Hôpital de la Pitié in the final stages of her illness, Louvet complained that Mürger had abandoned her. When a mutual friend told Mürger of her plight and her plaint, he responded "What do you want me to do? I don't even have enough to take her a bunch of violets for ten centimes."

The friend counseled him "Take her your heart, but go, for she is very sick." Mürger managed only one awkward visit before Lucille's death at the age of twenty-four. This is a far cry from Puccini's grief-stricken Rodolfo, who throws himself prostrate across Mimì's dead body as the curtain falls on the last act of the opera. Luckily for the romantics among us, art, in this case, did not imitate life.

It took Puccini's librettists three years to boil down their original outline to four acts and complete verses that met Puccini's demands — "logical, concise, interesting and well-balanced." But it was not the four acts we know today. When Puccini set to work on the score, Act I was in two scenes subtitled "The Garret" and "Momus." Act II was the "Barrière d'Enfer," or the customhouse scene; Act III was called "The Courtyard"; and Act IV was a return to "The Garret."

Eventually "The Courtyard" was dropped and the two scenes of Act I became Acts I and II. Evidently, no music was written for "The Courtyard," but the text for this discarded act was found among Illica's papers. It explains a lot.

You will remember that at the end of "Barrière d'Enfer," Mimì and Rodolfo are reconciled as Musetta and Marcello break

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Two images from San Francisco Opera's 1993 *Bohème*: (Below) Roberto Aronica and Verónica Villarroel as Mimi and Rodolfo in Act II; (Bottom) Members of the San Francisco Opera Chorus and children's choruses gathered around the Parpignol of James Caputo.



SOHL

up once again. Yet when Act IV begins, Rodolfo has parted from Mimi and Marcello is still separated from Musetta. All is made clear in the missing act.

It was called "The Courtyard" because Musetta's furniture was there, taken from her apartment in order to be auctioned off for delinquent rent. She had planned a party before this turn of events and, as charmingly capricious as ever, the party is held instead where the furniture is — in the courtyard.

Although this episode takes up barely a page in the novel, Puccini was at first attracted to the idea because it provided another chance for a crowd scene to parallel the one at Café Momus, with exuberant bohemian revels, massed choruses and neighbors complaining about the noise. Interestingly enough, a similar scene exists in Leoncavallo's version of the story, an opera forever fated to be known and downgraded as "the other *Bohème*."

The "missing" act opens with Marcello pointing at Musetta's apartment and telling his bohemian pals (which include the still together Mimi and



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Rodolfo) that Musetta is being kept by "a crown councillor." He refuses to attend her party to which all have been invited ("I don't drink wine from another man's cup") and remains outside the gateway to the courtyard. At this moment a group of bailiffs emerge from the building. They have just attempted to evict Musetta, with little success: "A hellcat! She explodes. Goes wild! A panther! A hornet, a raging lioness."

Musetta appears on her balcony, heaping further abuse on the bailiffs. The bohemians watch her display of fury with admiration. She sees them and comes running down the stairs to greet them. At this point, Giacosa and Illica give her a second aria:

"Behold, autumn enshrouds the street! Farewell, wide hats of Florence, revealing dresses, transparent veils that don't tell lies and sleeves that laugh at caution! Farewell, radiant sun, farewell, sweet songs of birds. Musetta's in her melancholy mood."

As she sings, the porters come out of the building with her furniture which is piled up in a corner of the courtyard. Musetta tells her friends that her "protector," the crown councillor, "roared like Vesuvius" when he saw Marcello's name on the guest list for the party and refused to pay the rent. "Now," she moans, "I have bailiffs and a summons, and guests — but no salon."

Rodolfo, ever the poet, rises to the occasion: "Look around," he sings. "The courtyard, don't you see, is a large greenhouse without glass, and Musetta and Mimi are its flowers. What more do you need? Some candles, wine and friends."

Everyone is swept up in the spirit of the moment and they begin arranging the furniture as for a ball. Rodolfo leaves to get wine from the councillor's cellar in the apartment building and returns with Marcello in tow. Musetta greets him coquettishly, and he responds sheepishly, still smitten with her prettiness and joie-de-vivre.

The neighbors begin opening their windows to see what is going on and to complain about the noise. Schaunard issues an invitation to them all: "Mme. de Musette invites to the ball, the entire house, 8, rue Labruyère. All are invited, from ground floor to garret, regardless of rank, class, sex or age."

In a good-natured way, the neighbors accept and descend to the courtyard, and

LA BOHÈME AT 100

First, some facts: First performance: Turin, Teatro Regio, February 1, 1896. The conductor was the 28-year old Arturo Toscanini.

First performance in the United States: Los Angeles, October 14, 1897. It was given by an Italian traveling opera troupe on a side trip from Mexico.

First San Francisco Opera performance: September 26, 1923. It was the inaugural performance of the newly founded San Francisco Opera, and the evening's conductor was Company founder Gaetano Merola. The cast: Queena Mario (Mimi), Anna Young (Musetta), Giovanni Martinelli (Rodolfo), Alfredo Gandolfi (Marcello), Adamo Didur (Colline), Louis D'Angelo (Schaunard).

In its early years, *La Bohème* went around the world with amazing speed: In June of 1896, it was given in Buenos Aires; in 1897 alone, in Alexandria, Moscow, Lisbon, Manchester, Berlin, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, London, Vienna, Los Angeles and The Hague; 1898: Prague, Barcelona, Athens, New York, Paris, Malta, Valparaiso, Warsaw, Zagreb and Smyrna. And so on.

By now, *La Bohème* ranks as the most frequently performed opera in many of the western world's leading opera houses. Among the exceptions is the Vienna State Opera, where Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* leads the pack, having started tallying some years before *La Bohème* came into being.

Frequently dubbed "the most popular opera of all time," it had a less than auspicious beginning, sharing that aspect with two other staples of the operatic repertoire: Verdi's *La Traviata* and Bizet's *Carmen*. Although the 1896 audiences received the opera warmly, the critical reception was downright hostile. From today's perspective, it is hard not to smirk at the words of Carlo Bersezio of *La Stampa* who penned the following in 1896: "*La Bohème*, just as it leaves no great impression on the mind of the spectator, will leave no great mark on the history of our opera."

After the Metropolitan Opera premiere in December of 1900, Henry Krehbiel of the *New York Tribune* said: "*La Bohème* is foul in subject, and fulminant but futile in its music....It is better to dismiss it with a smile than to reflect upon it till vexation sets in."

And W. J. Henderson in *The New York Times*: "Nevertheless, we cannot believe that there is permanent success for an opera constructed as this one is."

To which we can add: "Ha!" — and a "Happy 100th Birthday, Mimi, Musetta, Rodolfo, Marcello, Colline, Schaunard...."

K.L.

are soon joined by a passing band of students. The dancing begins, and Rodolfo is miffed to see Mimi with one of the students. He tries to stop her from dancing, but she refuses. His anger increases when his friends tell him to leave her alone.

He soon becomes as sullen as Marcello in the Momus scene and, like him, melodramatically asks for a glass of poison. Musetta and Marcello also quarrel and at the height of the party, dealers arrive to bid on Musetta's furniture. The act ends as Rodolfo is taken away sobbing and the auction reaches a fever pitch.

Why was the act discarded? We can only guess. Perhaps Puccini decided not

to enlarge the character of Musetta to the point that she threatened the dominance of Mimi. Or perhaps he was unwilling to show his beloved Mimi (for whom he wept as he penned her death) in the same frivolous, flirtatious light that we see Musetta in the Momus scene.

Then, too, he might have felt that another big crowd scene would detract from the intimacy of Mimi's ensuing death scene. This was not the first or last time Puccini was dramatically ruthless when it came to his operas, paring away what to him seemed unessential to keep our attention and sympathies focused on his heroine.

A further word about the two *Bobèmes*. It is said that the Galleria in Milan was the scene of the famous encounter between Puccini and Leoncavallo (the composer of *Pagliacci*) over *Bobème*. Over coffee, Puccini told his colleague that he had a new libretto with which he has in love, "It is based on a French novel, *La vie de bohème*," he added.

Leaping up, Leoncavallo cried out, "But don't you remember that I suggested *La Bobème* to you and showed you my libretto. When you said you had no interest in it, I decided to set it to music myself." "Then," Puccini said quietly, "there will be two *Bobèmes*."

To stake out his artistic claim, Leoncavallo announced in next morning's newspaper that he had just completed an opera on Mürger's book. Puccini followed in the evening paper with a similar announcement.

Was Puccini poaching? We know for a fact that a few years later he had no scruples

in wresting the rights to set Sardou's *Tosca* to music from his colleague Alberto Franchetti (shamelessly aided by their publisher-in-common, Giulio Ricordi, who saw more profit in a Puccini *Tosca* than a Franchetti one).

Perhaps Puccini had turned down Leoncavallo's offer of a collaboration on *Bobème* believing that if a fellow composer (who was also a librettist) didn't choose to set his own words, they couldn't have been very good. Whatever the truth of the matter, this is a classic case of the end justifying the means.

Puccini may have behaved unethically, but who would want to be without his *Bobème*? So, historically, the opera world wound up with two versions of the story. But in the affections and minds of the public, there is only one.

It had its premiere in Turin in 1896, exactly a hundred years ago, with Arturo Toscanini conducting. A year later in Venice, the premiere of Leoncavallo's

Ilona Tokody and Luis Lima as Mimì and Rodolfo in San Francisco Opera's 1983 summer presentation of *La Bohème*.



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Bobème took place and furnished the first important break for a new young tenor named Enrico Caruso. Oddly enough, neither opera was an enormous success on first hearing; both were received with much the same polite enthusiasm.

In later years, Toscanini said that he felt the reason Puccini's version was not immediately accepted and adored was that the critics and the public had expected a grander work from him after his previous opera *Manon Lescaut*, and that they were not prepared for an opera as personal and unprepossessing as *La Bohème*.

Also, before *Bobème*, the opera-going public had thought of love in more tragic and bigger-than-life terms. Radames and Aida, Tristan and Isolde, Carmen and Don José set the standards. But with *Bobème*, suddenly the operatic stage held figures we all knew and in which we could recognize aspects of our friends and ourselves.

It took time, but little by little, the public and even the press came around to Mimì and Rodolfo and their chums, and today the Leoncavallo opera is little more than a curio, while a strong case can be made for Puccini's setting as the most beloved theater piece ever written among opera's basic ABCs (*Aida*, *Bobème*, *Carmen*).

It can be faulted, if you are hard-hearted enough to want to do so, for

there are unexplained dramatic holes in the libretto, and musically there are a few awkward transitional moments in the linking of scenes and set pieces. Yet, these pale next to the spontaneity of the score, its buoyancy, flow and sweetness. These qualities carry the day, cement the cracks and endear the opera to the public.

In *Bobème*, Puccini breathes life into his characters by encasing their words into a natural, conversational manner, yet one that remains thoroughly melodic and singable. The score is a triumph of what composer Gian Carlo Menotti has termed "parlar cantando," or "speaking-singing," a manner which he said has been the greatest challenge facing operatic composers from Monteverdi forward.

That the score is so alive is actually somewhat of a miracle and attests to Puccini's single-mindedness in bending his material to his will. It is interesting to note that he drew some of the opera's most famous phrases from bits and pieces of his other music.

The rapid, scampering opening figure that begins Acts I and IV comes from a *Capriccio Sinfonico* for orchestra he wrote during his own bohemian student days at the Milan Conservatory, at which time he shared a room with Mascagni. And when Rodolfo sings of the gray skies of Paris, it is in a phrase originally in praise of the blue skies of Sicily, written for an opera that was never finished — *La Lupa*.

Then, too, Musetta's waltz, arguably the best-known moment in the opera and what seems on the surface to be a perfect bit of musical characterization, was originally a piano solo written for, of all things, the launching of a battleship in Genoa! Puccini forced Giacosa and Illica to fit a text to the tune, because he sagely knew it was a melody too good to be wasted on a one-time christening.

The touching quartet in Act III is the expansion of a song "Sole e amore," written in 1887 (again, new thoughts were fashioned to old music). Apart from borrowing from himself, Puccini utilized other sources as well. The fanfare played by the military band in Act II, for example, came from a tune written in the time of Emperor Louis Philippe. He also added autobiographical details to the libretto. Puccini himself once had to sell a coat to survive and his diaries speak of a student supper for four that consisted of a single herring.

Ultimately, what matters most is that all these ideas and sources go together to create a new unity that is intensely expressive and individual. These qualities shine forth whether *Bobème* is sung in Hungarian or Chinese, sung by professionals or students, or seen at La Scala or in a tent. *Bobème* remains *Bobème*, an opera possessed of an affecting and universal appeal that will sustain it as long as people love and opera is performed. □



"Bobemians" at the San Francisco Opera in 1978: (L. to r.) Julia Migenes (Musetta), Dale Duesing (Schaunard), Samuel Ramey (Colline) and Brent Ellis (Marcello).

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Civic Auditorium

Sept. 6, 10, 13, 15, 18, 21, 25

San Francisco Opera premiere

HAMLET

Thomas

Swenson, Forst; Hampson, Lloyd,
Boutet/Hendrick, Langan, Relyea†,
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Abel*;

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Orpheum Theatre

Sept. 12, 14, 17, 19, 22, 24, 27, 29

*Production made possible by a generous grant
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Mattila, Connell; Heppner/Merritt
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IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

Rossini

Larmore, Cook; Hvorostovsky*, Ford,
Miles, Del Carlo, Autry†

Campanella;

Copley/Siercke/Walker/Arhelger

Orpheum Theatre

Oct. 10, 13, 18, 20, 23, 26, 28

Shigematsu, Cook; Patriarco,
Saccà**, Patton, Condy, Knežević

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Bizet

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Cura*, Fink*, Skinner, Okerlund†,
Autry†, Skelton†

Runnicles;

Mansouri/Yeargan/Bosquet/Whitfield

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Oct. 22, 25, 27, 30; Nov. 2, 5, 8

Maultsby*, Racette, Dillard,
Buchanan†; Larin, Quilico, Skinner,
Okerlund†, Autry†, Skelton†

Runnicles;

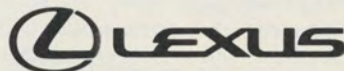
Mansouri/Yeargan/Bosquet/Whitfield

Civic Auditorium

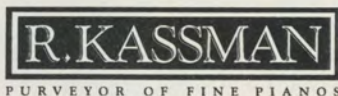
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Okerlund†, Skelton†

Runnicles;

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Orpheum Theatre

Nov. 9, 13, 16, 19, 21, 24, 27, 30

New production

LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN

Offenbach

Dahl, Racette, Keen, Quittmeyer,
Bishop; Hadley, Ramey, Sénéchal,
Frank, Skinner, Autry†, Skelton†,
Knežević, Relyea†

Mercurio;

C. Alden/Howland/Björnson*/Munn

Civic Auditorium

Nov. 17, 20, 23, 26, 29; Dec. 1, 3

DIE FLEDERMAUS

Strauss, J. Jr.

Lapallainen*/Foland†, Dahl/Kriha
Dye†; Asawa, Baerg/Okerlund†,
Portilla/Scibelli*

Sander*;

Mansouri/Skalicki/Bosquet/Munn

Civic Auditorium

Dec. 26, 27, 28 (m & e), 29, 31

New production

SALOME

Strauss, R.

Huffstodt*, Forst, Cao†; Cochran,
Weikl, Streit, Patton, Skelton†,
MacMaster*, Molomot*, Relyea†,
Sumegi

Mackerras/Runnicles (1/29, 2/1);

Mansouri/Skalicki/Walek/Munn

Civic Auditorium

Jan. 18, 21, 23, 26, 29; Feb. 1

New production

AIDA

Verdi

Crider*, Terentiev, Buchanan†;
Armiliato, Noble/C.Robertson*
(2/20), D'Artegna*, Sumegi,
Skelton†

Runnicles;

Williams/Skalicki/Casey/Munn

Civic Auditorium

Feb. 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, 23

Lister, Grunewald*, Buchanan†;
Fraccaro*, Noble, D'Artegna, Patton,
Skelton†

Runnicles;

Williams/Skalicki/Casey/Munn

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* San Francisco Opera debut

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Opera in four acts by GIACOMO PUCCINI

Text by GIUSEPPE GIACOSA and LUIGI ILLICA

Based on the novel *Scènes de la vie de bohème* by HENRI MÜRGER

La Bohème

(in Italian)

Conductor

Steven Mercurio

(6/7, 8, 9m, 12m, 12, 14,
15, 16m, 19m, 20)

Marco Armiliato*

(6/13, 22m, 22, 23m, 25,
26, 27, 28, 29m, 29, 30m)

Ian Robertson

(6/15m, 19, 21)

Production

Mark Lamos*

Set Designer

Michael Yeargan

Costume Designer

Walter Mahoney

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Musical Preparation

Bryndon Hassman

Adelle Eslinger

Jonathan Khuner

Ernest Fredric Knell

Supertitles

Clifford Cranna

Assistant Stage Directors

Paula Williams

Laurie Feldman

Stage Manager

Jerry Sherk

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First performance:

Turin, February 1, 1896

First San Francisco Opera performance:

September 26, 1923

Opening Night, Friday, June 7 at 7 p.m.

Tuesday through Saturday evenings
at 8 p.m.

Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday
matinees at 2 p.m.

June 7, 8, 9m, 12m, 12, 13, 14, 15m, 15

June 16m, 19m, 19, 20, 21, 22m, 22

June 23m, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29m, 29, 30m

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

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

*The performance will last approximately
two hours and 45 minutes*

CAST (in order of appearance)

Marcello

Earle Patriarco (6/7, 9m, 12, 15, 19m, 21, 23m, 25, 27, 29)

Victor Ledbetter (6/8, 12m, 14, 16m, 20, 22, 28, 30m)

Mark Oswald* (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m)

Hector Vásquez (6/26, 29m)

Rodolfo

Marcello Giordani (6/7, 9m, 12, 15)

Roberto Aronica (6/8, 12m, 14, 16m, 20, 22, 28, 30m)

Tito Beltrán* (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m, 26, 29m)

Alfredo Portilla (6/19m, 21, 23m, 25, 27, 29)

Colline

Philip Skinner (6/7, 9m, 12, 15, 19m, 21, 23m, 29m)

Chester Patton (6/8, 12m, 14, 16m, 20, 22, 26, 28, 30m)

Daniel Sumegi (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m)

John Relyea*† (6/25, 27, 29)

Schaunard

Hector Vásquez (6/7, 9m, 12, 15, 19m, 21, 23m)

David Okerlund† (6/8, 12m, 14, 16m, 20, 22, 28, 30m)

John Autry*† (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m, 26, 29m)

Michael Chioldi* (6/25, 27, 29)

Benoit

Peter Strummer

Bojan Knežević (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m, 26, 29m)

Mimi

Patricia Racette (6/7, 9m, 12, 15, 19m, 21, 23m)

Mary Mills (6/8, 11, 14, 16m, 20, 22, 28, 30m)

Alison Buchanan*† (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m)

Leontina Vaduva** (6/25, 27, 29)

Kristin Clayton† (6/26, 29m)

A vendor

Colby Roberts (6/7, 9m, 12, 14, 15, 19m, 20, 22m, 23m, 26, 28, 29)

Richard Walker (6/8, 12m, 13, 15m, 16m, 19, 21, 22, 25, 27, 29m, 30m)

Parpignon

Jim Croom (6/7, 9m, 12, 14, 15, 19m, 20, 22m, 23m, 26, 28, 29)

Daniel Harper (6/8, 12m, 13, 15m, 16m, 19, 21, 22, 25, 27, 29m, 30)

A boy

Peter Sherman (6/7, 9m, 12, 14, 15, 19m, 21, 22m, 23m, 26, 28, 29)

Erik Dorey (6/8, 12m, 13, 15m, 16m, 19, 20, 22, 25, 27, 29m, 30m)

Musetta

Ann Panagulias (6/7, 9m, 12, 15, 19m, 21, 23m, 25, 27, 29)

Nicolle Foland† (6/8, 12m, 14, 16m, 20, 22, 28, 30m)

Peggy Kriha Dye*† (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m, 26, 29m)

Alcindoro

Peter Strummer

Bojan Knežević (6/13, 15m, 19, 22m, 26, 29m)

Customhouse sergeant

Ken Johnson (6/7, 9m, 12, 14, 15, 19m, 20, 22m, 23m, 26, 28, 29)

Jere Torkelsen (6/8, 12m, 13, 15m, 16m, 19, 21, 22, 25, 27, 29m, 30m)

Customhouse guard

Cameron Henley (6/7, 9m, 12, 14, 15, 19m, 20, 22m, 23m, 26, 28, 29)

Frederick Matthews (6/8, 12m, 13, 15m, 16m, 19, 21, 22, 25, 27, 29m, 30m)

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TIME AND PLACE: Mid-19th-century Paris

ACT I A garret

ACT II The Latin Quarter

INTERMISSION

ACT III A city gate, the Barrière d'Enfer

INTERMISSION

ACT IV The garret

LA BOHÈME SYNOPSIS

ACT I

As Marcello paints, Rodolfo, unable to write, gazes through the windows at the smoking chimneys of the Parisian rooftops. The bohemians are suffering from the cold. Marcello is about to sacrifice one of the sparse furnishings to the empty stove when Rodolfo has an inspiration: his drama will warm them. Colline returns from a fruitless visit to the pawnbrokers. As the fire dies, Schaunard saves the day by arriving with food, firewood and pockets full of money. The table is already laid before Schaunard can announce that for Christmas they will dine out. The friends are about to leave when Benoit, the landlord, comes for the rent. The bohemians trick him into talking about his amours; then, feigning moral indignation, they throw him out, unpaid. The friends leave, but Rodolfo stays behind to finish an article he is writing.

Presently, there is a knock on the door. A young woman enters. She asks if she may light her candle and Rodolfo invites her in. As soon as her candle is lighted, she departs only to return moments later in search of her key. Rodolfo quickly finds and pockets the lost key without informing his companion. As they continue to search, their hands touch. Rodolfo suggests they stop looking for a moment until the moon provides better light. He tells her that he is Rodolfo, a penniless poet who has already fallen in love with her. She replies with a description of her modest existence as a seamstress. As she ends her narrative, the voices of Rodolfo's friends rise from the street, urging him to hurry. Rodolfo goes to the window and tells them to meet him later at the Café Momus.

He turns to Mimì and declares his love, which she timidly admits is returned.

ACT II

A holiday crowd mills about the small square in the Latin Quarter dominated by the Café Momus. (Momus was the Greek god of ridicule.) The bohemians meet at the café and order dinner, after Rodolfo has presented Mimì to his friends.

Musetta and Alcindoro, an elderly admirer whom she orders around like a pet poodle, take the table adjoining the friends. Marcello studiously avoids looking at Musetta, with whom he has recently quarreled. Musetta tries to attract his attention by staging a temper

tantrum. Raising her voice so that all may hear, Musetta delivers an oration on her beauty and its devastating effects. She decides it is time to rid herself of Alcindoro and feigns a terrible pain in her foot. Musetta sends Alcindoro off for a new pair of shoes. The merrymaking is dampened by the arrival of the bill. The bohemians search their pockets hopelessly until Musetta takes the bill from the waiter and deposits it together with her own at Alcindoro's place. She announces that Alcindoro will pay both bills on his return. Alcindoro returns with Musetta's new shoes and is confronted with the bills.

ACT III

Amid the snow and mist of a February dawn, the city's early risers begin their

daily routines, while the revelers in a tavern continue the night's festivities. Mimì asks directions of a sergeant who points out the tavern decorated with Marcello's paintings.

Mimì asks a servant to send Marcello out to her. She appeals to him to help her and bursts into tears. She refuses to go into the tavern because Rodolfo is inside. He has left her. Marcello promises to talk to him and sends Mimì home. Rodolfo attempts to justify his cruelty to Mimì on the grounds of her coquettishness, but Marcello sees through the pretext. Rodolfo admits that he still loves Mimì, but says he cannot endure watching her health fail because of his inability to provide for her. Coughing and violent sobs betray Mimì's presence. Rodolfo takes her into his arms, while Marcello charges into the tavern to investigate the cause of a burst of Musetta's brazen laughter. Mimì says goodbye to Rodolfo and tells him they must part without bitterness. They quickly realize they cannot go through with the separation. Their decision to stay together until spring is made against the background of violent quarreling between Musetta and Marcello.

ACT IV

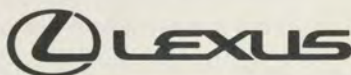
Sadly reminiscing about their broken love affairs, Marcello and Rodolfo try to work. Both try unsuccessfully to appear pleased that their former companions are flourishing. Schaunard and Colline arrive with frugal provisions and a more cheerful outlook. They fall upon the food and stage a mock ball which is followed by a simulated duel. At the height of their clowning, Musetta appears. Mimì is waiting on the stairs; she is seriously ill. Rodolfo rushes to Mimì and brings her in.

Musetta sends Marcello to pawn a pair of earrings and bring back a doctor. Colline bids a fond farewell to his overcoat which is destined for the same fate as Musetta's jewels. One by one the friends find discreet reasons to leave. The lovers are alone.

Feeble attempts at their former banter are succeeded by reminiscences of their love. Musetta returns with a muff to warm Mimì's hands. Marcello announces that a doctor is on the way. Mimì falls asleep as Musetta murmurs a prayer. Rodolfo notices that a change has come over his friends, who already know what he only now realizes: Mimì is dead.

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KRISTIN CLAYTON



ANN PANAGULIAS

Soprano **PATRICIA RACETTE** (*Mimi*) has already performed major roles with the San Francisco Opera; the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera at Covent Garden and the Paris Opera — Bastille (Musetta in *La Bobème*); the Vienna State Opera and San Diego Opera (*Mimi*); Grand Théâtre de Genève (Micaëla in *Carmen*); Welsh National Opera (*Liù* in *Turandot*); New York City Opera (Musetta and Micaëla); and Boston Lyric Opera (all three heroines of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*). She also recently made two major role debuts — Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* for the Opera Company of Philadelphia and Marguerite in *Faust* at Vancouver Opera. Recent appearances elsewhere include the title role of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes* with Vancouver Opera. A 1989-90 Adler Fellow with numerous 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*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, and *Mimi* in the 1993 fall season *La Bobème*. Miss Racette is the recipient of numerous awards and grants, the most recent of which is the prestigious 1994 Marian Anderson Award. Upcoming assignments include *Liù*, *Mimi*, Ellen Orford, and Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Met, Antonia and Micaëla during San Francisco Opera's 1996-97 season, as well as Violetta in *La Traviata* in Santa Fe, Houston, and at the Paris Opera — Bastille.

Soprano **MARY MILLS** (*Mimi*), a former (1990-91) Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, made her acclaimed 1994 Metropolitan Opera debut as Zdenka in *Arabella* and returned to the Met last season as *Mimi* in Franco Zeffirelli's staging of *La Bobème*. Additional engagements include the title role of Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Micaëla in *Carmen* at the Washington Opera; Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Greater Miami Opera; Gilda in *Rigoletto* in Miami and Costa Rica; *Mimi* in Detroit, Antwerp, Geneva, and Santiago, Chile; Juliet in *Roméo et Juliette* in Antwerp; and Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Santiago. The artist made her professional debut as Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Houston Grand Opera and made her 1989 San Francisco Opera bow in *Lulu*. She has appeared in Company productions of, among

others, *Rigoletto*, *Don Quichotte*, *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *War and Peace*, *Don Carlo* and *The Dangerous Liaisons*, a 1994 world premiere in which she created the role of Cécile de Volanges. A native of Dallas, Miss Mills graduated from the University of Cincinnati College — Conservatory of Music, and received a master of music degree from Yale University. Future plans include Micaëla during San Francisco Opera's 1996-97 season, Poppea in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* in Miami, the title role of *Manon* at the Paris Opera (Bastille), and Susanna for Seattle Opera.

A 1996 Adler Fellow, **ALISON BUCHANAN** (*Mimi*) hails from Bedford, England, a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music in London where she won many prestigious awards. She was a winner of the Maggie Teyte Prize in 1991 and sang in recital at the Royal Opera House Crush Bar as a result of the award. Shortly thereafter, the young artist received a Wingate scholarship and a Countess of Munster Award, enabling her to study at the Curtis Institute of Music where she is currently pursuing her master of music degree. Miss Buchanan was also a winner of the Mario Lanza Competition (1993) and the Luciano Pavarotti Competition (1995). Operatic roles performed include the Countess (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Rosalinda (*Die Fledermaus*), Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Fortuna (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*) and Musetta (*La Bobème*). As a member of the 1995 Merola Opera Program, the soprano appeared in *La Périchole* and replaced an ailing colleague to sing the role of Mozart's Countess, subsequently repeating this part on Western Opera Theater's national tour of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. She was featured earlier this year as part of the Opera Center's 1996 Schwabacher Debut Recital Series. Future plans include Juliana in the Showcase production of Argento's *The Aspern Papers*, as well as several roles with the Company during the 1996-97 season.

Romanian soprano **LEONTINA VADUVA** (*Mimi*) studied at the Bucharest Conservatory of Music, subsequently winning first prize in both the Toulouse and s'Hertogenbosch International Singing Competitions, as well as major prizes in the Barcelona and Verona International Competitions. She has become closely associated with the title part of Massenet's *Manon* and has sung the role to great acclaim in Nice, Montpellier, Bordeaux,

at the Opéra-Comique in Paris, the Vienna State Opera, and with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden where she won the coveted 1988 Olivier Award. Additional roles at Covent Garden include Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, and Juliette in a new staging of *Roméo et Juliette*. Miss Vaduva has also appeared as *Mimi* in *La Bobème* in Paris, Toulouse and Buenos Aires; Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Vienna, Lyon, Cologne and Toulouse; Gilda in *Rigoletto* in Bilbao, Bordeaux, London and Cologne; Leila in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* in Avignon, Paris and Toulouse; Ninetta in Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra* in Barcelona and Paris; Norina in *Don Pasquale* in Nice, Paris and Toulouse; and as Micaëla in Paris, Buenos Aires and Vienna. Future engagements include *Manon* in Vienna, *Roméo et Juliette* in Geneva and Zurich, *La Bobème* in Munich, London and Vienna, and *Carmen* in Hamburg. She can be heard on recordings of *Rigoletto*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Carmen* and *La Bobème*. Video productions include *Carmen* with Zubin Mehta and *Roméo et Juliette* led by Charles Mackerras.

Currently in her third year as an Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, soprano **KRISTIN CLAYTON** (*Mimi*) made her San Francisco Opera debut during the 1994 Fall Season when she was heard in four operas, including the world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons*, which was telecast nationally. She also sang with Plácido Domingo in *Hérodade*, a recording of which was recently released. Last season she portrayed a Wood Nymph in *Rusalka* and was a participant in the Company's United Nation's 50th Anniversary Concert. Among her future plans are Juliana in the Showcase presentation of *The Aspern Papers* and the role of the Old Lady in the Company premiere of *Harvey Milk*. Opera Center credits include Andromache in the Showcase production of *King Priam*, as well as both Rosalinda and Adele in *Die Fledermaus* for Western Opera Theater. In the 1993 Merola Opera Program Grand Finals, she was the recipient of the Jean Donnell Memorial Award. Miss Clayton has also performed with Wolf Trap Opera in *Don Giovanni* (Donna Anna) and *Die Zauberflöte* (First Lady), as well as with the Marin Symphony Orchestra as *Mimi* in a concert version of *La Bobème*. A native of Atlanta, she received her master of music degree from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where



NICOLLE FOLAND



PEGGY KRIHA DYE



MARCELLO GIORDANI



ROBERTO ARONICA



TTITO BELTRÁN



ALFREDO PORTILLA

she performed in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen* and *Die Fledermaus*.

Soprano **ANN PANAGULIAS** (*Musetta*) received critical and public acclaim with San Francisco Opera in 1989 in the title role of *Lulu*, and scored another triumph here in 1991 when she sang her first Natasha in the Company premiere of *War and Peace*. Additional SFO highlights since her 1988 debut in *Parsifal* include a concert with Plácido Domingo (1990), Cinna in Mozart's *Lucio Silla*, Marzelline in *Fidelio* (1992), and *Musetta* (1993). A member of the 1986 Merola Opera Program, she toured with Western Opera Theater for two seasons, gave two Schwabacher Debut Recitals, and appeared in Opera Center presentations in such roles as Fortuna in Handel's *Giustino*, Mimì in *La Bohème*, and Norina in *Don Pasquale*. Highlights elsewhere include her European debut at La Fenice in Venice in *Lulu*, the title role of *L'incoronazione di Poppea* in Montpellier, Antwerp, Ghent and Lisbon, her debut at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris as Angelique in Lully's *Roland*, a debut with Los Angeles Music Center Opera as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* with a return to L.A. as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, as well as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Catherine in the U.S. premiere of Weill's *Der Protagonist*, and *Musetta* for Santa Fe Opera. During the 1994-95 season she appeared with the Washington Opera as Marie in *The Bartered Bride*, with Dallas Opera as Poppea, at Charleston's Spoleto Festival in Henze's *Der Prinz von Homburg*, at Santa Fe Opera as Effie in the world premiere of David Lang's *Modern Painters*, and at Pittsburgh Opera as Nedda in *Pagliacci*. Miss Panagulias, a native of Pittsburgh, received her bachelor of music degree from the Oberlin College Conservatory and a master of music degree from the New England Conservatory. Future plans include Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* at Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice, her Canadian Opera Company debut as *Mahagonny's* Jenny and the Shostakovich 14th Symphony with the Richmond Symphony Orchestra.

In her second year as an Adler Fellow, **NICOLLE FOLAND** (*Musetta*) sang four roles in her debut season with San Francisco Opera last year: Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Clorinda in *La Cenerentola*, Gerhilde in *Die Walküre*, and a Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*. The soprano appeared as Adele in the 1993 Merola Opera Program production of *Die Fledermaus* and sang both Adele and Rosalinda in Western Opera Theater's national tour of the same production. The following

year, she was applauded as Donna Anna in the Merola Program's mounting of *Don Giovanni* and again on WOT's national tour. Later in 1994 she portrayed Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with Indianapolis Opera. Miss Foland, a native of Des Moines, received a master of music degree from the University of Northern Iowa where she appeared as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*. The winner of numerous awards and competitions, she was a studio artist with Central City Opera and has appeared with Peoria Civic Opera as Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Future plans include Tina in the Showcase presentation of Argento's *The Aspern Papers* as well as Frasquita in *Carmen*, Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*, and several roles in the West Coast premiere of *Harvey Milk* for San Francisco Opera during the 1996-97 season.

A 1996 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, **PEGGY KRIHA DYE** (*Musetta*) recently completed her second year as a member of the Juilliard Opera Center where she appeared as Etain in Rutland Boughton's *The Immortal Hour*. As a participant in the 1993 Merola Opera Program, the soprano sang the roles of Nannetta in *Falstaff* and Adele in *Die Fledermaus*. Last year she appeared as Barbarina in the Merola Program staging of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, repeating the part and singing the role of Susanna on the subsequent Western Opera Theater tour of the same production. A native of Brainerd, Minnesota, Miss Dye received her undergraduate degree in music from St. Cloud University and completed two years of graduate work at the Manhattan School of Music. While attending the M.S.M., she appeared in many new productions, performing the roles of Charlotte in Ronald Perera's *The Yellow Wallpaper* and Berenice in Rossini's *L'occasione fa il ladro*. Additional engagements include a 1993 San Francisco Symphony Pops concert and the leading role of Trun in the world premiere of Conrad Cummings's *Tonkin* at Opera Delaware. Later this season she will appear as Olimpia in the Showcase presentation of Argento's *The Aspern Papers* and as Adele in *Die Fledermaus*.

Italian tenor **MARCELLO GIORDANI** (*Rodolfo*) made his 1991 San Francisco Opera debut as Alfredo in the opening night *La Traviata* and returned to the Company in 1994 to portray Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Born in Sicily, he made his professional debut at Spoleto in 1986 as the Duke in *Rigoletto*. Since then, he has appeared in leading roles at Milan's La Scala, Houston Grand Opera, Michigan Opera

Theatre and in Rio de Janeiro (Rodolfo in *La Bohème*), the Verona Arena, Hamburg State Opera, Houston (Duke in *Rigoletto*), New York's Metropolitan and Trieste (Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*), the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Hamburg, Munich, Bilbao and Venice (Alfredo in *Traviata*), Barcelona, Portland (U.S. debut), and Costa Mesa (Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*), Bilbao Festival, Chicago, Seattle and Berlin (Edgardo in *Lucia*), Tokyo, Bilbao, Toronto, Houston and Seattle (Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*), Vienna State Opera (Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Arturo in *I Puritani*), Baltimore and Portland (title role of *Faust*), and Portland (Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment*). Recent engagements include his Covent Garden debut as Alfredo, a debut at the Paris Opera/Bastille as Faust, a return to Vienna as Arturo, his first Hoffmann in Portland Opera's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and Roméo in Houston Grand Opera's 1995-96 season-opening *Roméo et Juliette*. Among the artist's future plans are a return to the Met for *Traviata*, *Bohème* and his first Des Grieux in *Manon*, a debut with the Dallas Opera in *Elisir*, *Werther* (role debut) in Santiago, Chile, *Simon Boccanegra* at Covent Garden, and *Lucrezia Borgia* at La Scala.

ROBERTO ARONICA (*Rodolfo*) made his 1993 U.S. opera debut with San Francisco Opera as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* and returned to the Company last year to portray Alfredo in *La Traviata*. A pupil of Carlo Bergonzi, he has emerged as one of the most promising singers of his generation. He made his debut as the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* at the Teatro Municipal in Santiago, Chile, in 1992. Since then, he has won acclaim for his appearances as Rodolfo in Turin and Reggio Emilia; as Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Macerata and Treviso; as the Duke in Genoa and Treviso; as well as Ruggero in *La Rondine* and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Turin. Among the highlights of his 1994-95 season were *La Bohème* in Florence, Macerata and Mannheim; *Rigoletto* in Treviso; *La Traviata* in Costa Mesa and Cardiff; *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Paris; and *Der Rosenkavalier* in Bologna. Future plans include productions of *La Bohème* at the Bastille Opera in Paris, and in Turin and Amsterdam. In addition to his operatic performances, Aronica has also been in demand for concert appearances throughout his native Italy. The young tenor studied at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, where he obtained both a scholarship and a diploma. He also won a scholarship in memory of Maria Mazzanzana Ziliani, an award which enabled him to study under Bergonzi.



EARLE PATRIARCO



VICTOR LEDBETTER



MARK OSWALD



HESTOR VÁSQUEZ



PHILIP SKINNER

Chilean-born tenor **TITO BELTRÁN** (*Rodolfo*), a finalist in the 1993 Cardiff Singer of the Year competition, received his musical training at Sweden's Göteborg Academy of Theater and Opera. He began his professional career singing the roles of Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* and Rodolfo in Sweden; Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for the Icelandic Opera; the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier* for Copenhagen's Royal Danish Opera; and Ruggero in *La Rondine* for Opera North. Highlights from his 1994-95 season include his French debut at the Toulouse Opera as Macduff in *Macbeth* (with a return to Toulouse as Rodolfo), his bow with Monte Carlo Opera as the Duke, and a debut at the Royal Opera Covent Garden as the Italian Tenor with subsequent Royal Opera performances as Rodolfo. Earlier this season the artist appeared as Ismaele in *Nabucco* at Santiago's Opera Chile, as well as Rodolfo at Opera North and at Michigan Opera Theatre (U.S. opera debut). Among his future plans are Nemorino in Seville, Rodolfo at Covent Garden, the Duke in Toulouse and Geneva, as well as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* and the Duke at Opera Chile. In addition to his operatic activities, Beltrán performs in concert and recital and has recorded two solo albums of arias and songs.

A 1994-95 Adler Fellow, **ALFREDO PORTILLA** (*Rodolfo*) made his San Francisco Opera debut during the '94 season in the world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons*, followed by appearances in *Il Trovatore*, *Otello*, *Hérodiade* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Last fall, he was featured with the Company as Gastone in *La Traviata* and as Pinkerton in three performances of *Madama Butterfly*. The tenor hails from Mexico City and since 1990 has been a member of the Bellas Artes company, where his roles included the Duke in *Rigoletto*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and Alfredo in *La Traviata*. He has also appeared with numerous Mexican symphony orchestras, and at the most important festivals in his native country. In 1992, Portilla was selected by the S.F. Opera Center from auditions around the Asia/Pacific region to participate in the first-ever Pacific Voices program. Opera Center credits include Paris in the Showcase production of Tippet's *King Priam*, and Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* for the Merola Opera Program and Western Opera Theater. Recent highlights include Edgardo with New Jersey Opera, Ismaele in *Nabucco* with New Israeli Opera, Rodolfo in *La Bohème* with New York City Opera, Pinkerton

in *Madama Butterfly* with the Opéra de Lyon (in that company's first U.S. performances as part of the United Nations 50th Anniversary celebration), and soloist in the Company's U.N. Concert. Future engagements include Alfred in The Company's 1996 production of *Die Fledermaus*, his Paris Opera (Bastille) debut as Cavaradossi in *Tosca*, Rodolfo, Pinkerton and the title role of *Werther* at the Opéra de Lyon, as well as Pinkerton at the Australian Opera.

EARLE PATRIARCO (*Marcello*) made his Metropolitan Opera debut earlier this year as Ping in *Turandot* and stepped in at the last moment to replace an ailing colleague as Figaro in two performances of the Met's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. He made his San Francisco Opera mainstage debut in the 1992 production of *Boris Godunov* and has subsequently appeared in Company stagings of *Andrea Chénier*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Christophe Colomb*, *The Dangerous Liaisons* and *The Fiery Angel*. Most recently, he was featured as Masetto in last fall's presentation of *Don Giovanni*. A 1993-94 Adler Fellow, his Opera Center credits include *La Traviata* and *La Bohème* for the Merola Opera Program, Hector in the North American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam*, and a highly praised Schwabacher Debut Recital. In addition to his Met debut, recent highlights include his European operatic debut at the Staatstheater Stuttgart as Marcello, Dandini in Opera Colorado's staging of *La Cenerentola*, and Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Boston and Costa Mesa. Future engagements include *Barbiere's* Figaro for San Francisco Opera and the Welsh National Opera, Dr. Falke in the Company's December mounting of *Die Fledermaus*, Marcello in Stockholm, as well as a debut at the Paris Bastille Opera as Valentin in *Faust*. He has appeared on the concert platform at the Lugano Mozart Festival and with the San Francisco Symphony in a pops concert. A prize winner in multiple vocal competitions, he represented the U.S. in the 1995 Singer of the World competition in Wales and won a 1995 Richard Tucker Career Grant as well as a grant from the Singers Development Foundation. A native of Southern California, Patriarco earned his bachelor of music degree from Biola University and his master of music degree from the University of Southern California.

Quickly gaining a reputation as a baritone of great range and versatility, **VICTOR LEDBETTER** (*Marcello*) is in his ninth season with San Francisco Opera. He has sung over 15 roles with the Company, appearing in

such parts as Silvano in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Shchelkalov in *Boris Godunov*, Roucher in *Andrea Chénier*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, the Night Watchman in *Die Meistersinger* and, most recently, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* last fall. A participant in the 1986 Merola Opera Program and a 1988-89 Adler Fellow, his Opera Center credits include Count Almaviva in Hiram Titus's *Rosina*, Marcello for Western Opera Theater's tour which included performances in China, Scarpia in China's first presentation of *Tosca*, and a 1989 Schwabacher Debut Recital. Among highlights from recent seasons are Gérard in *Andrea Chénier* in Cincinnati; Germont in *La Traviata* at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels and for New York City Opera; Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus* at San Diego Opera; Sharpless at Dublin Grand Opera and the Cincinnati Opera; Valentin in *Faust* and Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* for Washington Opera; and John Sorel in *The Consul* at the Montreal Opera. He continues to be in demand as a concert artist, having performed with, among others, the symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Minneapolis, Boston, Cleveland, Houston, Atlanta, Saint Louis and Washington, D.C. The Georgia native is a graduate of Mercer University who also studied at Indiana University with the late Nicola Rossi Lemeni.

Baritone **MARK OSWALD** (*Marcello*) has been singing major roles at the Metropolitan Opera since 1991. They include Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, Arlecchino in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Silvio in *Pagliacci*, and Schuarnard in *La Bohème*. He also traveled with the company to Japan in 1993 to perform the part of Belcore and just took part in the James Levine 25th Anniversary Gala. Earlier this year he returned to the Met to sing Rossini's Figaro, Papageno, and Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette*. The young artist has also portrayed Marcello in *La Bohème* with the Boston Lyric Opera, Prince Ottokar in *Der Freischütz* with the Washington Concert Opera, and Orest in *Iphigenia in Tauris* at the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. 1994-95 season highlights include several debuts: at the Hamburg State Opera (European debut) and the Teatro Municipal in Santiago, Chile as *Barbiere's* Figaro; at San Diego Opera as Marcello in *La Bohème*; and at Greater Miami Opera as Mercutio. Oswald also continues to attract growing attention on the concert platform. Orchestral engagements include Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Cincinnati and Vancouver, Mahler's *Rückert Lieder* with the New York Chamber Ensemble, Orff's *Carmina*



CHESTER PATTON



DANIEL SUMEGI



JOHN RELYEA



DAVID OKERLUND



JOHN AUTRY

Burana with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, as well as his debut with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal in performances and a recording of *Carmina Burana* under the baton of Charles Dutoit. The baritone is the winner of numerous awards including the 1989 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a 1993 Career Grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation, and the George London Award from Opera America.

A native of California, baritone **HECTOR VÁSQUEZ** (*Schaunard* and *Marcello*) has appeared throughout the nation as a soloist in both concert repertoire and opera. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut last season as Beaumarchais in *The Ghosts of Versailles*. Associated with San Francisco Opera for many years, Vásquez was an Adler Fellow in 1991-92 and made his Company debut in the 1991 production of *War and Peace*. He has returned numerous times to sing in Company stagings of *Tosca*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Andrea Chénier*, *I Vespri Siciliani* (substituting in one performance for an ailing colleague in the leading role of Montforte), *Capriccio*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Die Meistersinger*, *La Bobème* and, most recently, in the 1994 productions of *The Dangerous Liaisons* (Azolan) and *Hérodiade* (Vitellius). As a member of the 1989 and '90 Merola Opera Programs, he appeared in stagings of *Carmen* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* and performed on Western Opera Theater tours of these productions. Recent highlights include a Schwabacher Debut Recital, the title role of *Rigoletto* with Opera San Jose, Brander in *The Damnation of Faust* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the title role of *Don Giovanni* at the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival and the Mendocino Music Festival, as well as a return to the Met as Le Dancaire in *Carmen*. Later this season Vásquez will create the role of Alvaro in the world premiere of Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas* at Houston Grand Opera.

In his twelfth consecutive season with San Francisco Opera, **PHILIP SKINNER** (*Colline*) has appeared here in over 30 different operas since his 1985 debut in *Adriana Lecouvreur*. Among the numerous roles he has sung with the Company are Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, Méphistophélès in the student/family performances of *Faust*, Lorenzo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Count Horn (Sam) in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and Colline in *La Bobème*. Last fall he appeared here as the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*, Wagner in *Faust*, and the Water Spirit in *Rusalka*. The bass-baritone was a 1985 Merola Opera Program participant and went

on to tour with Western Opera Theater in the title role of *Don Giovanni*. A 1986-87 Adler Fellow, he appeared in several of the Center's Showcase productions and was a 1990 Schwabacher Debut Recitalist. In recent seasons Skinner sang King Philip in *Don Carlo* with Portland Opera, Timur in *Turandot* with Atlanta Opera, Colline and Ferrando with Dallas Opera, Angelotti in *Tosca* and the First Workman in *Wozzeck* with the Chicago Lyric Opera, made his Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie debut in *Salome*, and appeared as the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* at the Opéra de Nantes. He has also performed with the opera companies of Houston (title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and the four villains of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Seattle, Vancouver, Toronto, Edmonton, and Melbourne, Australia, among others, as well as with numerous prominent U.S. orchestras. The American artist, currently a resident of the Bay Area, graduated from Northwestern University and received his master's degree from Indiana University. He will appear with the Company during the 1996-97 season as Zuniga in *Carmen* and Crespel in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and will be a soloist with the San Francisco Symphony in Handel's *Messiah*.

An Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center from 1993-95, bass **CHESTER D. PATTON** (*Colline*) made his Company debut in *Salome* during the 1993 Strauss Festival, returning that fall for the Mandarin in *Turandot* (televised on PBS) and Lord Walton in *I Puritani*. During the 1994 season, he portrayed the Doctor in *Macbeth*, Raimondo in the student matinee performances of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and last fall appeared as Alidoro in the student matinee presentation of *La Cenerentola*. He was also heard as soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony last summer as part of the Company's United Nations 50th Anniversary Concert. Opera Center credits include the title role in the North American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam*, Colline in *La Bobème*, and a 1995 Schwabacher Debut Recital. Elsewhere in the Bay Area, he has performed with West Bay Opera, Opera San Jose, Pocket Opera, and Berkeley Contemporary Opera. Recent engagements include his debuts at Opera Pacific as Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Opéra de Lyon as Pizarro in *Fidelio*, and the Paris Opera as the High Priest in *Nabucco*. He also appeared as Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* and Colline at Hawaii Opera Theater. He will be seen with the Company during the 1996-97 season in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Salome* and *Aida*. Addi-

tional future engagements include a debut at Vancouver Opera as Timur in *Turandot* and a return to the Paris Opera for a revival of *Nabucco*. A native of Columbia, Mississippi, Patton earned his master of music degree at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Australian bass **DANIEL SUMEGI** (*Colline*), a 1993-94 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, made his Company debut during the 1992 season as Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier* and Snug in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has subsequently appeared with S.F. Opera in *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Capriccio*, *Die Meistersinger*, *The Queen of Spades*, *La Bobème*, *Il Trovatore*, *Tannhäuser* and *The Fiery Angel*. A member of the 1991 Merola Opera Program, his Opera Center credits include Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata* (U.S. debut), a 1993 tour of Japan and the U.S. in Western Opera Theater's production of *Bobème*, and the title role in the North American premiere presentation of Tippet's *King Priam*. His 1995-96 engagements included Ramfis in *Aida* and Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the Australian Opera; Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Turin's Teatro Regio; Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* for Victoria State Opera; Méphistophélès in *Faust* at the National Reisopera of the Netherlands; Seneca in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* for Glimmerglass Opera at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; and Ratcliffe in *Billy Budd* at the Paris Opera Bastille. A finalist in the 1992 Pavarotti Voice Competition, Sumegi was a winner of the 1994 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a finalist in Plácido Domingo's worldwide competition, Operalia '95. He was also the recipient of a 1995 grant from the William Matheus Sullivan Musical Foundation. Future engagements include the First Soldier in *Salome* and the King of Egypt in *Aida* during the Company's 1996-97 season; the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* and Ramfis in *Aida* for the Victoria State Opera; Don Alonso in *Il Guarany* at Washington Opera; Banquo in *Macbeth* with Houston Grand Opera; and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* for the Bonn Opera.

JOHN RELYEA (*Colline*), a 1996 Adler Fellow, made his 1991 operatic debut in *Die Zauberflöte* with Opera Atelier of Toronto (the bass-baritone's native city), and most recently appeared as the Police Sergeant in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Vancouver Opera. At the age of 23, he has already been a featured soloist with many of Canada's major symphony orchestras including the Toronto Symphony, Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, and the Calgary Philhar-



MICHAEL CHIOLDI



PETER STRUMMER



BOJAN KNEŽEVIĆ



STEVEN MERCURIO



MARCO ARMILIATO

monic. As a member of the 1995 Merola Opera Program, Relyea portrayed Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (the role he also sang on Western Opera Theater's national tour) and was the recipient of the prestigious Schwabacher Family Award at the Grand Finals Concert. The young artist recently completed his bachelor of music degree at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, where he performed roles in *Die Fledermaus*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. This summer, he portrays Borelli in the Showcase presentation of Argento's *The Aspern Papers* and then appears with the Company during the 1996-97 season in *Hamlet*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Salome*.

DAVID OKERLUND (Schaunard) made his bow with San Francisco Opera last fall, portraying Baron Douphol in *La Traviata*, Dandini in the student matinee presentation of *La Cenerentola*, and the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*. The 1995-96 Adler Fellow was featured earlier this year as part of the Schwabacher Debut Recital series. A native of Kearney, Nebraska, the young artist earned a master's degree in vocal/opera performance from the Kansas City Conservatory of Music at the University of Missouri. While teaching at Longview College, he received apprenticeships from the Des Moines Metro Opera and the Lyric Opera of Kansas and sang many leading baritone roles with these companies. A 1993-94 member of the Merola Opera Program, his Opera Center credits include Falke in *Die Fledermaus* and the title role of *Don Giovanni*, roles he performed both for the Merola Program and for Western Opera Theater's national tours. Additional engagements include Donner in Arizona Opera's production of *Das Rheingold*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* for Opera Carolina and Piedmont Opera Theater, Britten's *War Requiem* and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the San Mateo Masterworks Chorale, as well as two assignments he performed as part of the 1995 United Nations 50th anniversary celebration: the role of the Bonze in the Opéra de Lyon's production of *Madama Butterfly*, and soloist in the Company's U.N. Concert. Future plans include the role of The Lodger in the Showcase production of *The Aspern Papers*, several roles with the Company during the 1996-97 season (including the King's Herald in *Lohengrin*, Morales in *Carmen* and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*), and the title role of *Don Giovanni* as well as Silvio in *Pagliacci* at the Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

1996 Adler Fellow **JOHN AUTRY** (Schaunard) was recently acclaimed in his New York City Opera debut as Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, a

role he repeated on that company's 1995 national tour of the same production. Additional recent engagements include Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with Birmingham Opera Theater, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Shreveport Opera, as well as Ping in *Turandot* and Benoit in *La Bobème* with Palm Beach Opera. As a member of the 1995 Merola Opera Program he sang the roles of the Viceroy in *La Périochole* and Antonio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. A native of Birmingham, Alabama, the baritone received his bachelor of music degree from Samford University and continued his studies at Boston University and Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts. A 1994 National Winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Autry had also won awards at vocal competitions in Palm Beach, Birmingham and Mobile. Future plans include Pasquale in the Showcase production of Argento's *The Aspern Papers* and several roles for the Company during the 1996-97 season.

Baritone **MICHAEL CHIOLDI** (Schaunard) began his 1995-96 season with two important debuts: at Washington Opera as Figaro in a new staging of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and at the Metropolitan Opera as Paris in *Roméo et Juliette*. A member of the 1995 Merola Opera Program, he performed the role of Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and repeated the part on Western Opera Theater's national tour of the same production. As a three-year (1993-95) member of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, he appeared in a number of productions including *Rigoletto* (Marullo), *Carmen* (Morales), *Madama Butterfly* (Prince Yamadori), and the world premiere of *Harvey Milk*, the opera in which he will perform for San Francisco Opera this fall. A member of the 1993 Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program, Chioldi received critical acclaim for his performance as the Second Player in Kurt Weill's *The Protagonist*. The Pennsylvania native earned his undergraduate degree from West Virginia University and his master of music degree from Yale University, where he sang the roles of Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, as well as Barone di Trombonok and Don Prudenzio in two different stagings of Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims*. Chioldi is a winner of the 1995 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and the recipient of a 1993 grant from the Sullivan Musical Foundation.

A prominent character bass-baritone, **PETER STRUMMER** (Benoit/Alcindoro) is a regular guest of many leading opera companies. His performances have included Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger* and Dansker in *Billy Budd* at the

Metropolitan Opera, Dr. Bartolo in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (for the opera companies of Houston, New Orleans, Baltimore, Portland, Cincinnati, Manitoba, Calgary and Toronto), Faninal in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Portland, Santa Fe, Montreal), Fra Melitone in *La Forza del Destino* (Toronto, Washington, D.C., New Orleans), and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* (Miami, Manitoba). He has also been praised for his portrayals of the Sacristan in *Tosca* and Benoit/Alcindoro in *La Bobème*, roles he has performed numerous times throughout North America. Recent highlights include Mustafà in *L'Italiana in Algeri* and Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* at Milwaukee's Florentine Opera; Leporello in *Don Giovanni* with Tulsa Opera; Don Magnifico with Calgary Opera and Madrid's Teatro de la Zarzuela; Faninal for Opera Colorado and the Cincinnati Opera; the title role of *Don Pasquale* with the Austin Lyric Opera; Dr. Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Canadian Opera Company; and Kecal in *The Bartered Bride* at the Washington Opera. Strummer was born in Vienna, Austria, and emigrated with his family to Canada when he was a child. After coming to the U.S. to undertake his musical education at the Cleveland Institute of Music, he began his professional career with the Minnesota Opera. He subsequently performed with Santa Fe Opera and San Francisco Opera before embarking on a 12-year career in Germany and Austria. He can be seen on video as Fra Melitone, the Sacristan, the Music Master in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and in the documentary *The Making of an Opera*.

Bass-baritone **BOJAN KNEŽEVIĆ** (Benoit/Alcindoro), a 1995 Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, appeared in his first San Francisco Opera season last fall as Marquis d'Obigny in *La Traviata*, Don Magnifico in the student matinee production of *La Cenerentola*, and as the Hunter in *Rusalka*. A native of Belgrade, he received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Academy of Music in Novi Sad, and has performed with the National Theatre in Novi Sad, as well as in Zagreb and Belgrade. As a three-year member of the Merola Opera Program (1992-94), he performed in Merola stagings of *La Bobème* (Schaunard), *Falstaff* (Pistola), *Die Fledermaus* (Frosch), and *Don Giovanni* (Leporello). He repeated the roles of Schaunard, Frosch and Leporello for Western Opera Theater's national tours. The young artist's credits also include Marcello in *La Bobème* and Leporello with Virginia Opera; Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and Great Mass in C Minor as well as the U.S. premiere of Mascagni's *Silvano* with the Manhattan



IAN ROBERTSON



MARK LAMOS



MICHAEL YEARGAN



WALTER MAHONEY



THOMAS J. MUNN

Orchestra (all works performed at Carnegie Hall); and soloist in the Company's 1995 United Nations 50th Anniversary Concert. Earlier this year he appeared as Leporello with the Minnesota Opera and as Escamillo in *Carmen* to inaugurate the new opera house in Fort Worth. Knežević will appear as The Painter in the Showcase presentation of *The Aspern Papers* and will perform with the Company during the 1996-97 season in *Hamlet*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*.

Conductor and composer **STEVEN MERCURIO** is currently music director of the Spoleto Festival in Italy, where he has led, among others, Menotti's *Goya*, Puccini's *Il Trittico*, Berg's *Wozzeck*, and Shostakovich's *The Nose*. He has conducted 12 productions at the Opera Company of Philadelphia (where he was principal conductor for four seasons), including *Rusalka*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Turandot* (with his own edition of the closing duet and finale), *Rigoletto*, *Eugene Onegin* and Menotti's *The Saint of Bleeker Street*. Among other highlights are the recently televised Richard Tucker Foundation Gala; Zemlinsky's *The Birthday of the Infanta* at the Spoleto Festival USA (U.S. premiere) and the Rome Opera (Italian premiere); *Andrea Chénier* with Seattle Opera; *Turandot* and *La Cenerentola* for Washington Opera; Barber's *Vanessa* for the Dallas Opera; *Ermione* in Brussels; *La Bobème*, *Otello* and *La Traviata* for Opera Pacific; *Tosca* with Michigan Opera Theatre; *Un Ballo in Maschera* at Pittsburgh Opera; a new staging of *La Traviata* for the Bonn Staatsoper; and *La Traviata* for his San Francisco Opera debut last fall. Additionally, he has led concerts with the Minnesota Orchestra, Monte Carlo Opera Orchestra, Stockholm Chamber Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic of Flanders, Netherlands Radio Orchestra, Sacramento Symphony, and the Brooklyn Philharmonic, where he was associate conductor for three seasons under Lukas Foss. As a composer, his repertoire includes songs, chamber works, and pieces for large orchestra. Mercurio's composition, *For Lost Loved Ones*, was given its 1991 world premiere by Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic. He will lead performances of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* during the Company's 1996-97 season.

MARCO ARMILIATO studied piano at the Paganini Conservatory in his native Genoa, and began his conducting career in 1989 with *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Lima, Peru, with subsequent engagements throughout Spain and Italy. In 1992, he was appointed principal conductor of Bilbao's Teatro Arriaga where he has led, among

others, *La Bobème*, *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*. During this time he also began a regular collaboration with the Sofia Symphonic Orchestra, leading the symphony in performances of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Nabucco* and the Verdi Requiem on tours to France, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal. Recent seasons have seen him conduct in the U.S. (*Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Sarasota Festival), Germany (*Aida* in Frankfurt), Peru (*Rigoletto* in Lima), and Spain (*La Traviata* in Santiago, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Palma de Mallorca), as well as in Japan and Czechoslovakia. Engagements during the 1995-96 season have included *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, *Turandot* (with the conductor's brother, Fabio, singing his first Calaf) at the Cincinnati Opera, *Carmen* in Tokyo, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Oviedo, in addition to several concerts in Sofia and Tokyo. Maestro Armiliato's recordings include Boccherini's *Stabat Mater*, a concert with Luciano Pavarotti with the Orchestra Filarmonica di Turin, and the premiere recording of Pergolesi's *Olimpiade*.

Chorus Director and Conductor at the San Francisco Opera since 1987, **IAN ROBERTSON** made his Company conducting debut with the 1988 production of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and has since led performances of *Falstaff*, *Lobengrin*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Don Carlo*, *Turandot* and *Il Trovatore*. In addition to his highly praised work with the Opera Chorus, he has led the Opera Orchestra and Chorus in concerts at the War Memorial Opera House and for the 1994 Summer Concert series. Additional assignments include the Opera Center's production of *The Italian Girl in Algiers*; *Così fan tutte* and *La Pêricole* at Stern Grove for the Merola Opera Program; *Don Giovanni* for Sarasota Opera; in addition to *The Magic Flute* and *Rigoletto* for Edmonton Opera. He recently led *La Rondine* for Philadelphia's Curtis Institute and this summer will conduct *The Elixir of Love* and the Grand Finals Concert for the Merola Opera Program. Before joining the Company, he was Head of Music and Chorus Director of the Scottish Opera, where he made his conducting debut with *The Barber of Seville* and led *The Secret of Susanna* for Scottish Television's award-winning film. He went on to conduct several productions for that company, as well as concerts with the Scottish Opera Orchestra. A native of Scotland, Robertson trained as a concert pianist and accompanist at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, where he won numerous awards and prizes, eventually winning a scholarship to the University of Glas-

gow, where he graduated with honors. His recital career led to appearances at the Edinburgh International Festival and the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room in London. He has recorded recitals for the BBC and appeared as pianist with the New Music Group of Scotland in contemporary works.

Stage director **MARK LAMOS** has been artistic director of the Hartford Stage Company since 1980. During his tenure with the company, he has directed the U.S. premieres of plays by Tom Stoppard, Simon Gray and Lanford Wilson, several world premieres, as well as numerous new plays and an acclaimed series of Shakespeare productions. Elsewhere, he has staged productions for Canada's Stratford Festival, the California Shakespeare Festival (where he was artistic director), on Broadway (Hartford's Stage production of *Our Country's Good* won him a Tony nomination), and off-Broadway (*The End of the Day*). His work in opera includes the 1979 premiere of Harbison's *Winter's Tale* at Herbst Theatre as part of San Francisco Opera's American Opera Project, as well as productions for the Metropolitan Opera (*I Lombardi*, televised on PBS), Dallas Opera (world premiere of Argento's *The Aspern Papers*, also telecast), Santa Fe Opera (*Arabella*), Canadian Opera Company (Mozart's *Il Re Pastore*), Opera Theater of Saint Louis (*Don Giovanni*), and Glimmerglass Opera (*La Bobème*, *Werther*, Britten's *Paul Bunyan*). He has also acted on- and off-Broadway, at many regional theaters, and made his 1989 film debut in *Longtime Companion*. Lamos holds honorary doctorates from three universities: Trinity, Connecticut College and the University of Hartford. Future plans include directing John Harbison's new opera based on *The Great Gatsby*, scheduled for a world premiere presentation at the Met during the 1999/2000 season.

MICHAEL YEARGAN is a professor of stage design at the Yale School of Drama and the resident designer for the Yale Repertory Theatre, where he has designed more than 50 productions. He made his San Francisco Opera debut with the 1993 staging of *I Puritani* and, in addition to this production of *La Bobème*, has designed sets for the Company's 1996-97 season production of *Carmen*. Yeargan's North American opera credits include designs for the Metropolitan Opera (*Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Otello*, *Così fan tutte*), Los Angeles Music Center Opera (*Stiffelio*, *Hänsel and Gretel*), Lyric Opera of Chicago (*Antony and Cleopatra*, *Susannah*), Dallas Opera

Continued on page 31

La Bohème

Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

Due to printing schedules, we are
able to include photos of only two
of the four *Bohème* casts.



Roberto Aronica, Mary Mills



Patricia Racette, Marcello Giordani



Daniel Harper

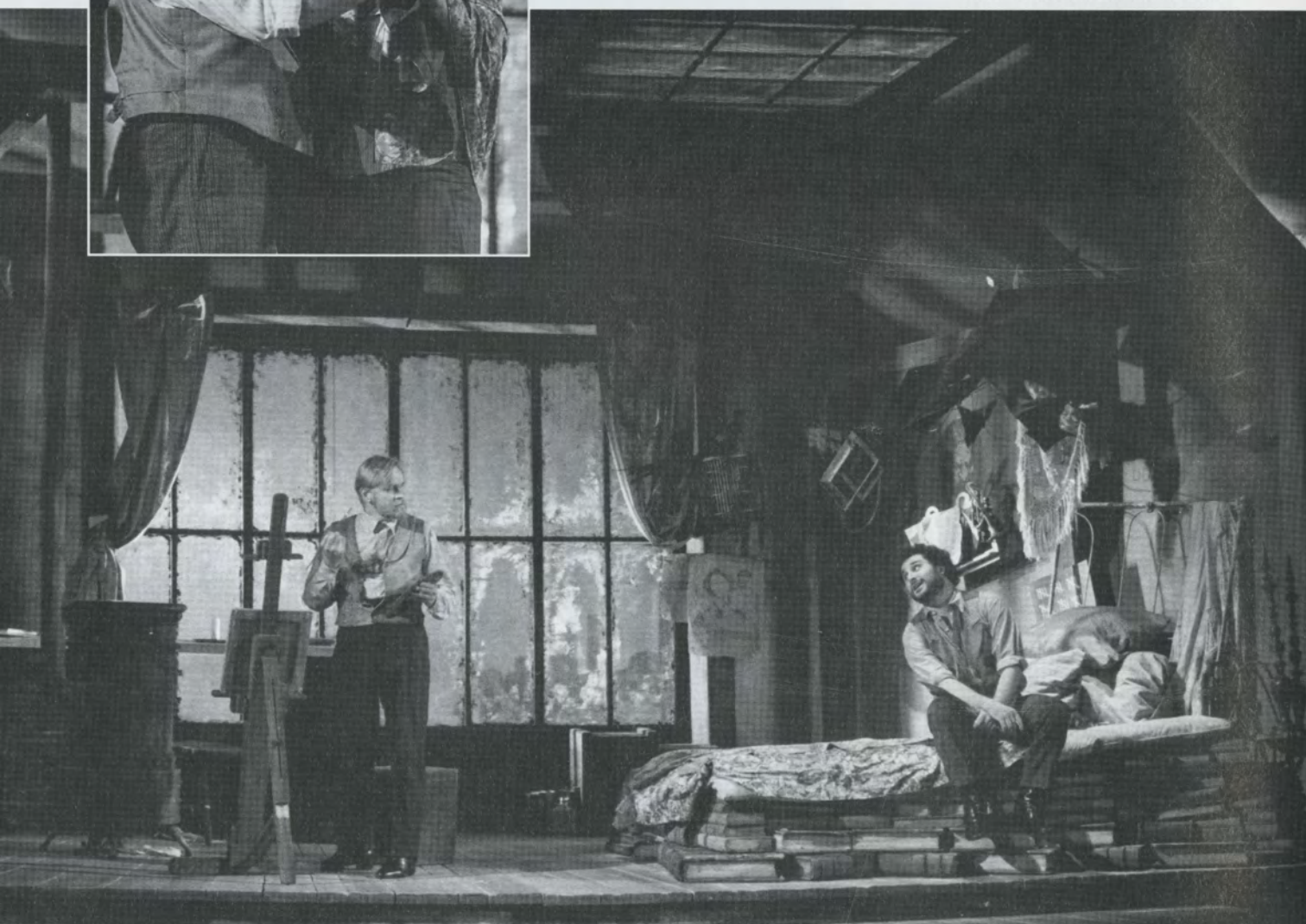


Act II



*Marcello Giordani,
Earle Patriarco*

Victor Ledbetter, Roberto Aronica





(L. to r.) *David Okerlund, Mary Mills, Roberto Aronica, Chester Patton, Victor Ledbetter*



Peter Strummer, Ann Panagulias

Marcello Giordani, Patricia Racette



Nicolle Foland

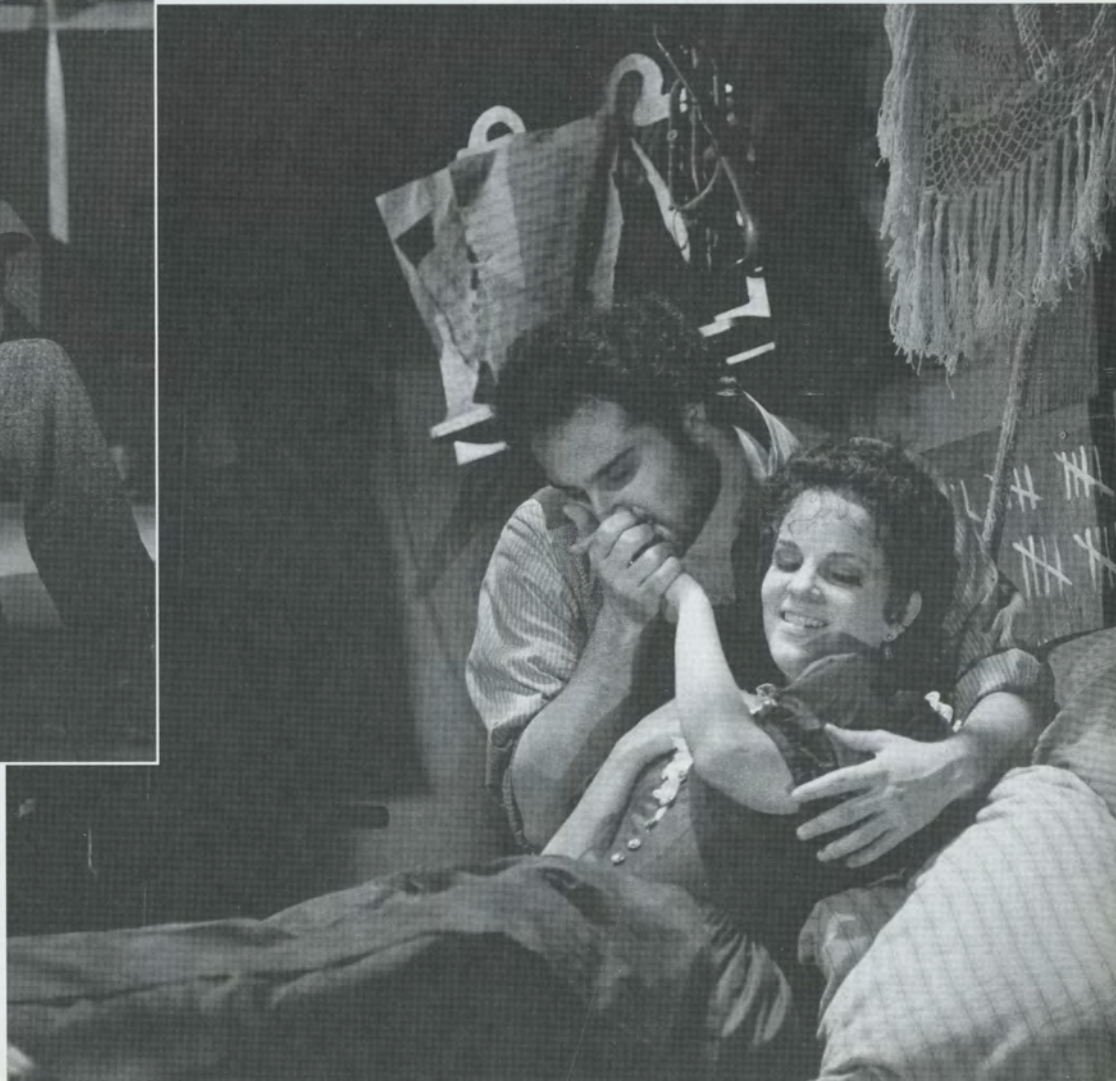


(L. to r.) Marcello Giordani, Philip Skinner, Earle Patriarco, Hector Vásquez



Chester Patton

Roberto Aronica, Mary Mills



ARTIST PROFILES

continued from page 26

(*Vanessa, Rigoletto*), San Diego Opera (*Aida*), Houston Grand Opera (*Carousel*), and Virginia Opera (*Anna Bolena, Così fan tutte, Porgy and Bess*), among others. Internationally, he has designed productions for Welsh National Opera (*Beatrice and Benedict, Eugene Onegin, Norma, La Bobème, The Merry Widow, Cavalleria Rusticana, Pagliacci*), Covent Garden (*Stiffelio, Simon Boccanegra, Aida, Attila*), Scottish Opera (*La Forza del Destino, La Bobème*), Théâtre Musical de Paris (*Die Zauberflöte*), Frankfurt Opera (*Così fan tutte*) and the Australian Opera (*Werther, La Traviata, Rigoletti, Il Barbiere di Siviglia*). Yeargan has also designed New York productions of Terrence McNally's *Bad Habits* and *The Ritz*, and has worked extensively with the New York Shakespeare Festival, American Repertory Theatre and London's West End.

WALTER MAHONEY is the Resident Costume Shop Manager for San Francisco Opera and celebrated his 50th anniversary with the Company in 1994. He has designed new costumes for the Company's productions of *Faust* (1995), *Tannhäuser* (1994), *La Bobème* and *Die Meistersinger* (1993), *L'Elisir d'Amore* (1992) and *Manon Lescaut* (1988), the same year he interpreted the late Nicola Benois's costume designs for *Maometto II*. Also for San Francisco Opera productions, he has designed costumes especially for Ruth Ann Swenson (*Roméo et Juliette*), Mirella Freni (*Manon Lescaut*), Frederica von Stade (*La Sonnambula*), Marilyn Horne (*Samson et Dalila*), Katia Ricciarelli (*La Traviata*), Renata Scotto and Cheryl Parrish (*Werther*), and Ghena Dimitrova (*Il Trovatore*). The native San Franciscan began his local association in 1943 in the Wardrobe Department, and worked with Goldstein & Company, the then-supplier of costumes for San Francisco Opera, until 1971. Since then, he has concentrated most of his efforts on the San Francisco Opera Costume Shop.

THOMAS J. MUNN has served as Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera since 1976 and has created the lighting and special effects for more than 155 productions for the Company, including last fall's stagings of *Ruslan and Lyudmila, La Traviata, Madama Butterfly, La Cenerentola, Faust* and *Die Walküre*. 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* (an Emmy Award winner), *Samson et Dalila, Aida, L'Africaine, La Bobème, Orlando Furioso, Mefistofele, Capriccio, Turandot* and *The Dangerous Liaisons*. Credits for other companies include work for the Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Washington Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Netherlands Opera and Hartford Ballet. Recent credits include lighting for Dallas Opera's production of *La Cenerentola*, scenery and lighting for Ballet Arizona's staging of *Copélia*, as well as art direction and lighting for the video "The Universe Story."

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Nicolle Foland†
Mary Mills
Ann Panagulias
Patricia Racette
Leontina Vaduva**
Roberto Aronica

John Autry*†
Tito Beltrán*
Michael Chioldi*
Marcello Giordani
Victor Ledbetter
Bojan Knežević
David Okerlund†
Mark Oswald*
Earle Patriarco

Chester Patton
Alfredo Portilla
John Relyea*†
Philip Skinner
Peter Strummer
Daniel Sumegi
Hector Vásquez

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Marco Armiliato*
Steven Mercurio
Ian Robertson

STAGE DIRECTOR

Mark Lamos*

SET DESIGNER

Michael Yeargan

COSTUME DESIGNER

Walter Mahoney

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Thomas J. Munn

**U.S. opera debut

* San Francisco Opera debut

† 1996 Adler Fellow

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Julianne Booth
Roberta Bowman
Pamela Dale
Laura Decher
Dvora Djorae
Kathleen Fuchs
Ann Hughes
Dallas Lane
Sally Munro
Alexandra Nehra
Rose Parker
Virginia Pluth
Aimée Puentes
Laurel Rice
Elisabeth Rom

Shelley Seitz Saarni
Claudia Siefer
Shawnette Sulker
Page Swift
Donna Turchi
Mitzie Weiner

Daniel Becker
Richard Brown
David Burnakus
Jim Croom
Frank Daniels
Robert Delany
Henryk De Rewenda

Daniel Harper
Cameron Henley
Ken Johnson
Frederick Matthews
Jim Meyer
William Pickersgill
Daniel Pociernicki
Valery Portnov
Ken Rafanan
Tom Reed
Colby Roberts
Sigmund Seigel
Dan Stanley
Jere Torkelsen
Richard Walker
Frederick Winthrop

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Aya Cash
Arianna Cassidy
Ann Marie Darrow
Rachel McClain
Barrie McClune
Caitlin Murphy
Harmony Murphy
Noelle Peck-Daly
Joanna Taylor
Caitie Unkovic
Maria Zagatsky

Eugene Campanile
Ian Crawford
Jason Delodovici
Erik Dorey
Chris Evans
Jesse Glick
Ryan Kellett
Dylan Lucas
Jeff Power
Peter Sherman
Joseph St. Marie
Benjamin Wilson

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Ragazzi, the Peninsula Boys Chorus – Joyce Keil, Director
Costars – Wanda Sherman, Director;
San Francisco Girls Chorus – June Wiley, Director

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Mattia Cabitza
Tom Carlisle
Renée DeJarnatt
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††Graduates of American Conservatory Theater's
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Adolf Bruk *Associate Concertmaster*
(On leave of absence)
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William Pynchon *Assistant Principal*
William Rusconi
Janice McIntosh
Lev Rankov
Barbara Riccardi
Robert Galbraith
Chang Liu
Julia Skiff
Dawn Harms

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Beni Shinohara *Acting Associate Principal*
Eva Karasik *Acting Assistant Principal*
Gerard Svazlian
Craig Reiss
Sara Usher
Joseph Edelberg
Marianne Wagner
Anthony Blea

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Paul Ehrlich *Acting Associate Principal*
Sergei Rakitchenkov *Assistant Principal*
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Thalia Moore *Associate Principal**
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Nora Pirquet
Emil Miland
Victoria Ehrlich
Ruth Lane

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Joseph Lescher *Principal*
Jonathan Lancelle *Associate Principal*
Steven D'Amico *Assistant Principal*
Shinji Eshima
Mark Drury

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PICCOLO

James Walker

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James Matheson *Principal*
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Janet Popesco

ENGLISH HORN

Janet Popesco

CLARINET

Philip Fath *Principal*
Joanne Burke Eisler
Gregory Dufford

BASS CLARINET

Gregory Dufford

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David Ridge

TUBA

Zachariah Spellman

TIMPANI

Elayne Jones

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Kent Reed
Riely Francis

HARP

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Lauré Campbell
Richard McHenry *Assistant*

*Principal for one or more performances of *La Bohème*



RAYMOND MANTON
1921-1996

On September 20, 1955, Raymond Manton made his debut with the San Francisco Opera. His role was that of the Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and he was addressing his fiendishly difficult aria, "Di rigori armato" to the Marschallin of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, herself making a U.S. debut appearance. From then on, Manton was featured in no less than 36 different roles with the Company, many of them unforgettable portrayals, spread over the next 24 subsequent seasons. He was outstanding as the Astrologer in *Cog d'Or*, the Simpleton or Missail in *Boris Godunov*, Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Andres in *Wozzeck*, Snout in the U.S. premiere of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Bardolfo in *Falstaff*, Beppe in *Pagliacci*, Pang or Altoum in *Turandot*, Vitek in *The Makropulos Case*... In addition to the main stage, Manton was also often featured in performances by Spring Opera Theater, where his roles ranged from Alfredo in *La Traviata* and Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* to unforgettable comic portrayals of Baron Puck in *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein* and Guglielmo Antolstoinolonoff in *Viva la Mamma*. His popularity didn't stop at the footlights, for he was a beloved colleague to anyone who worked with him. He leaves behind memories of an admirable and long-lasting career.

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA CENTER 1996 SUMMER EVENTS

Merola Opera Program
 Gaetano Donizetti
The Elixir of Love
 Sung in English
 Ian Robertson, conductor
 Graziella Sciutti, director
 Jay Kotcher, designer
 Walter Mahoney, costumes
 Sunday, July 14 at 2 p.m.
 Sigmund Stern Grove, San Francisco
 Part of Stern Grove Association's 1996 Summer Music Festival
 Free to the public

San Francisco Opera Center's 1996 Showcase Series
 West Coast Premiere
 Dominick Argento
The Aspern Papers
 Sung in English with English Supertitles
 Susan Webb, conductor
 Christopher Alden, director
 Carol Bailey, designer
 With the 1996 Adler Fellows and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra
 July 21 at 2 p.m.
 July 23, 25 and 27 at 8 p.m.
 Center for the Arts at Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco
 (Mission Street between 3rd and 4th Streets)
 Tickets are available at San Francisco Opera Box Office: (415) 864-3330

San Francisco Opera and Center for the Arts at Yerba Buena Gardens present a **Free outdoor concert** featuring the 1996 Merola Opera Program participants and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra
 Robert Dean, conductor
 Esplanade Lawns, Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco
 (Mission Street between 3rd and 4th Streets)
 July 28 at 2 p.m.

Merola Opera Program
 Gioachino Rossini
Il Barbiere di Siviglia
 Sung in Italian with English Supertitles
 Robert Dean, conductor
 John Copley, director
 Villa Montalvo, Saratoga
 August 9, 10 and 11 at 7 p.m.
 For tickets, please call (415) 864-1634

Merola Opera Program
1996 Merola Grand Finale
 Featuring the 1996 Merola participants with
 Members of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra
 Ian Robertson, conductor
 Davies Symphony Hall, San Francisco
 August 18 at 2 p.m.
 Tickets are available at the Davies Hall Box Office:
 (415) 864-6000

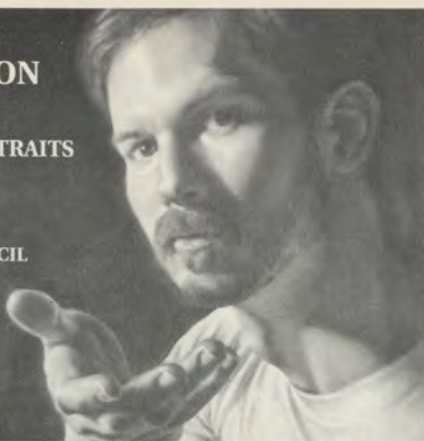
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The following list of lectures and previews includes those that are currently available to the public.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD — INSIGHTS

Renowned artists and personalities from the world of opera in informal interviews. Held from 6 to 7 p.m. in Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness, in San Francisco. Complimentary to Guild members, \$5 at the door.

Information: (415) 565-6432

Sept. 5 *Prince Igor*
Sept. 11 *Hamlet*
Nov. 4 *Harvey Milk*
Jan. 17 *Salome*

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD — PREVIEWS

Speakers: *Prince Igor*: Richard Taruskin; *Hamlet*: Hugh Macdonald; *Lobengrin*: Perry Lorenzo; *Carmen*: Robert Glick; *Harvey Milk*: Michael Korie; *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*: Marvin Tartak

MARIN

Held at 8 p.m. at Mt. Tamalpais United Methodist Church, 410 Sycamore Avenue, Mill Valley.

Information: (415) 388-6789

Sept. 4 *Prince Igor*
Sept. 9 *Hamlet*
Sept. 23 *Lobengrin*
Oct. 14 *Carmen*
Nov. 4 *Harvey Milk*
Nov. 11 *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*

SAN FRANCISCO

Held at 12:00 noon, The Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin St., San Francisco.

Information: (415) 565-6432

Sept. 4 *Prince Igor*
Sept. 11 *Hamlet*
Sept. 25 *Lobengrin*
Oct. 16 *Carmen*
Nov. 6 *Harvey Milk*
Nov. 13 *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*

SAN JOSE

Held at 10:00 a.m. at the Los Gatos History Club, 123 Los Gatos Blvd., Los Gatos.

Information: (408) 741-1331,

or (408) 354-7525

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Sept. 10 *Hamlet*
Sept. 24 *Lobengrin*
Oct. 15 *Carmen*
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SONOMA COUNTY

Held at various locations and times.

Information: (707) 938-2432

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Sept. 12 *Hamlet*
Sept. 26 *Lobengrin*
Oct. 17 *Carmen*
Nov. 4 *Harvey Milk*
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SOUTH PENINSULA

Held at 8:00 p.m. at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant St., Palo Alto.

Information: (415) 941-3890

Sept. 3 *Prince Igor*
Sept. 10 *Hamlet*
Sept. 24 *Lobengrin*
Oct. 15 *Carmen*
Nov. 5 *Harvey Milk*
Nov. 12 *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*

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Held at 8:00 p.m. at different locations.

Information: (510) 527-1846 or (510) 838-9255

Sept. 5 *Prince Igor*
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We are particularly grateful to those donors who responded to our urgent appeal for a three-year pledge. 1995, 1996, and 1997 will be some of the most exciting and challenging years for San Francisco Opera as we meet major added costs incurred because of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Relocating the entire company during the eighteen months out of the house, establishing temporary operations at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium and Orpheum Theatre, and renovating the facilities are significant extraordinary expenses beyond our annual costs.

Successfully meeting our three-year campaign goal of \$20,000,000 will require extensive new contributions and major increased gifts from the opera family. We ask those thoughtful and valued friends of the opera to respond to our appeal with extraordinary generosity to help us continue the tradition of artistic excellence and ensure that we all can enjoy one of the finest opera houses in the world.

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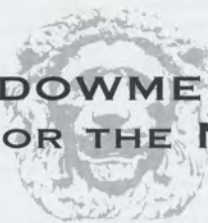
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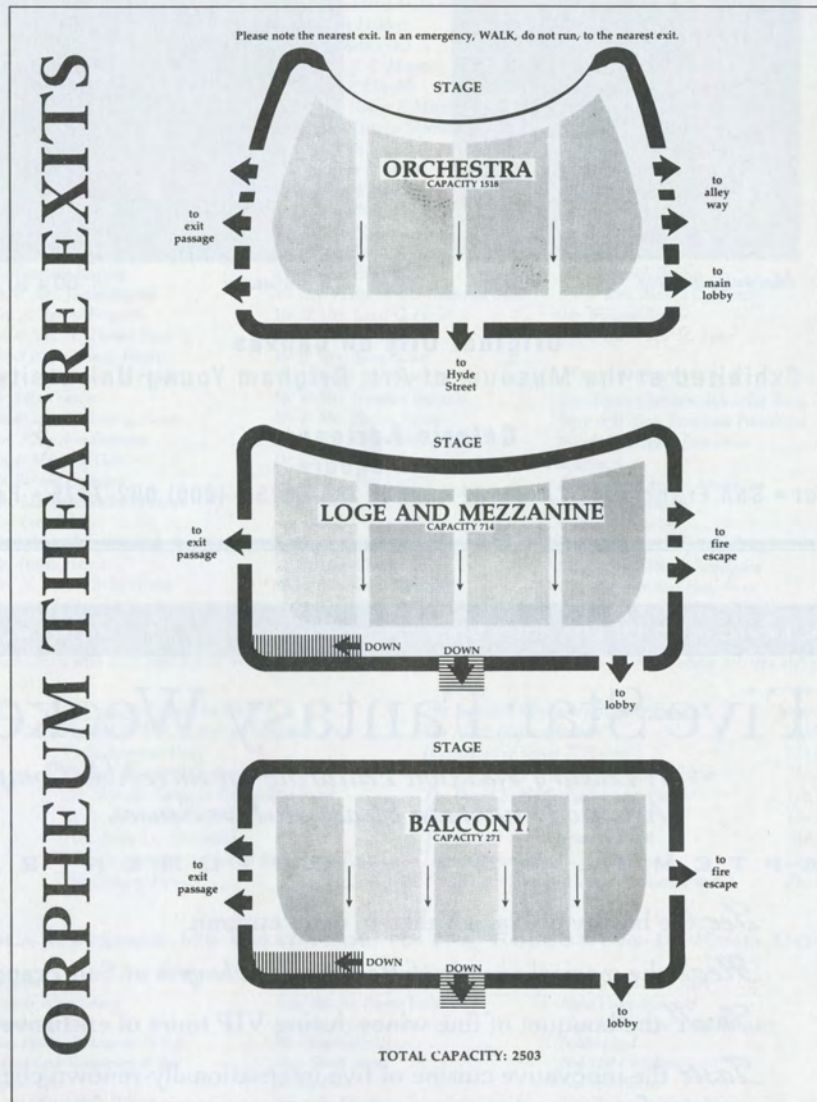
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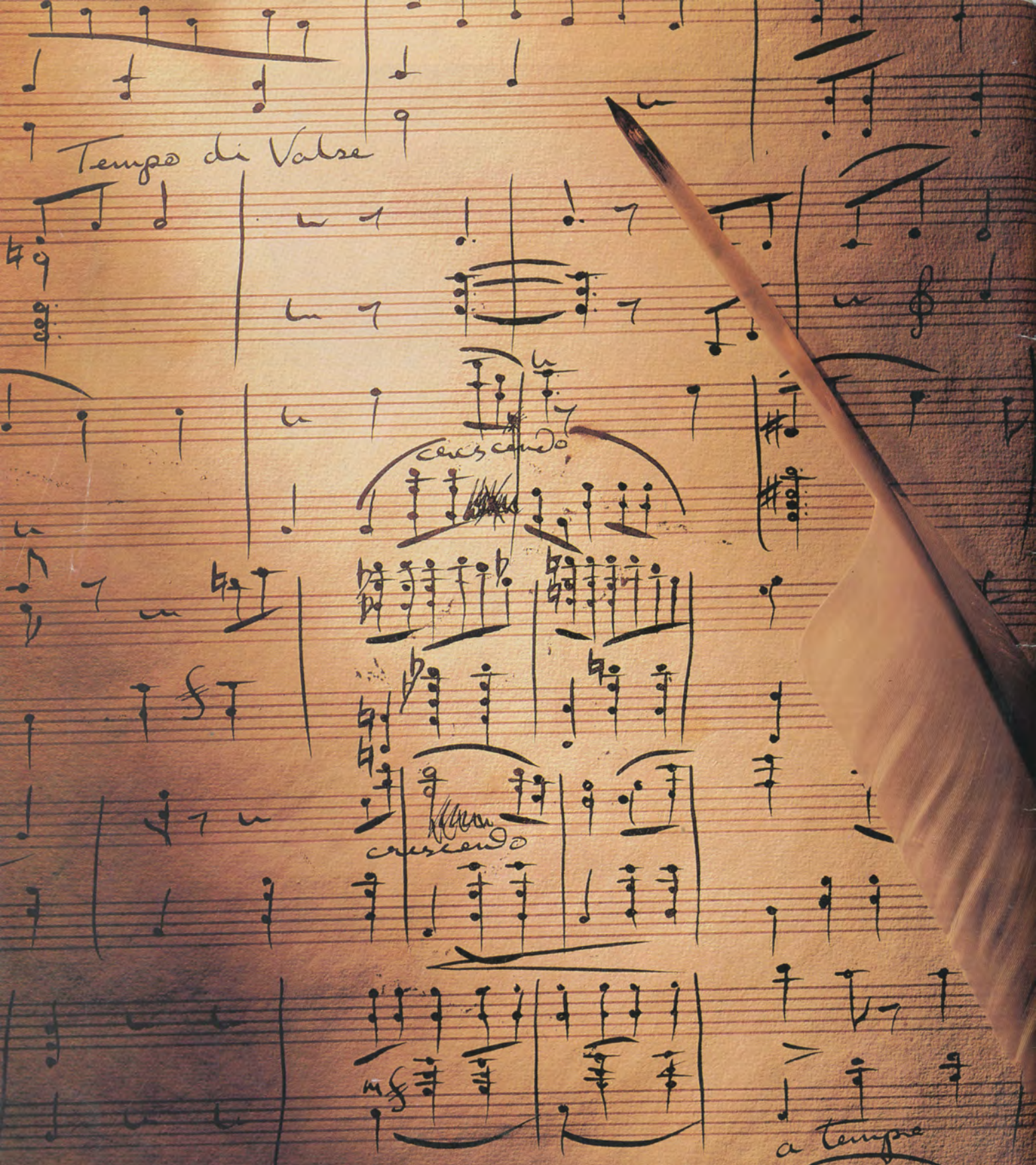
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