

Rusalka

1995-1996

Sunday, November 26, 1995 2:00 PM

Thursday, November 30, 1995 7:30 PM

Saturday, December 2, 1995 8:00 PM

Wednesday, December 6, 1995 7:30 PM

Friday, December 8, 1995 8:00 PM

Sunday, December 10, 1995 2:00 PM

SFO_PUB_01_SFO_1995_08

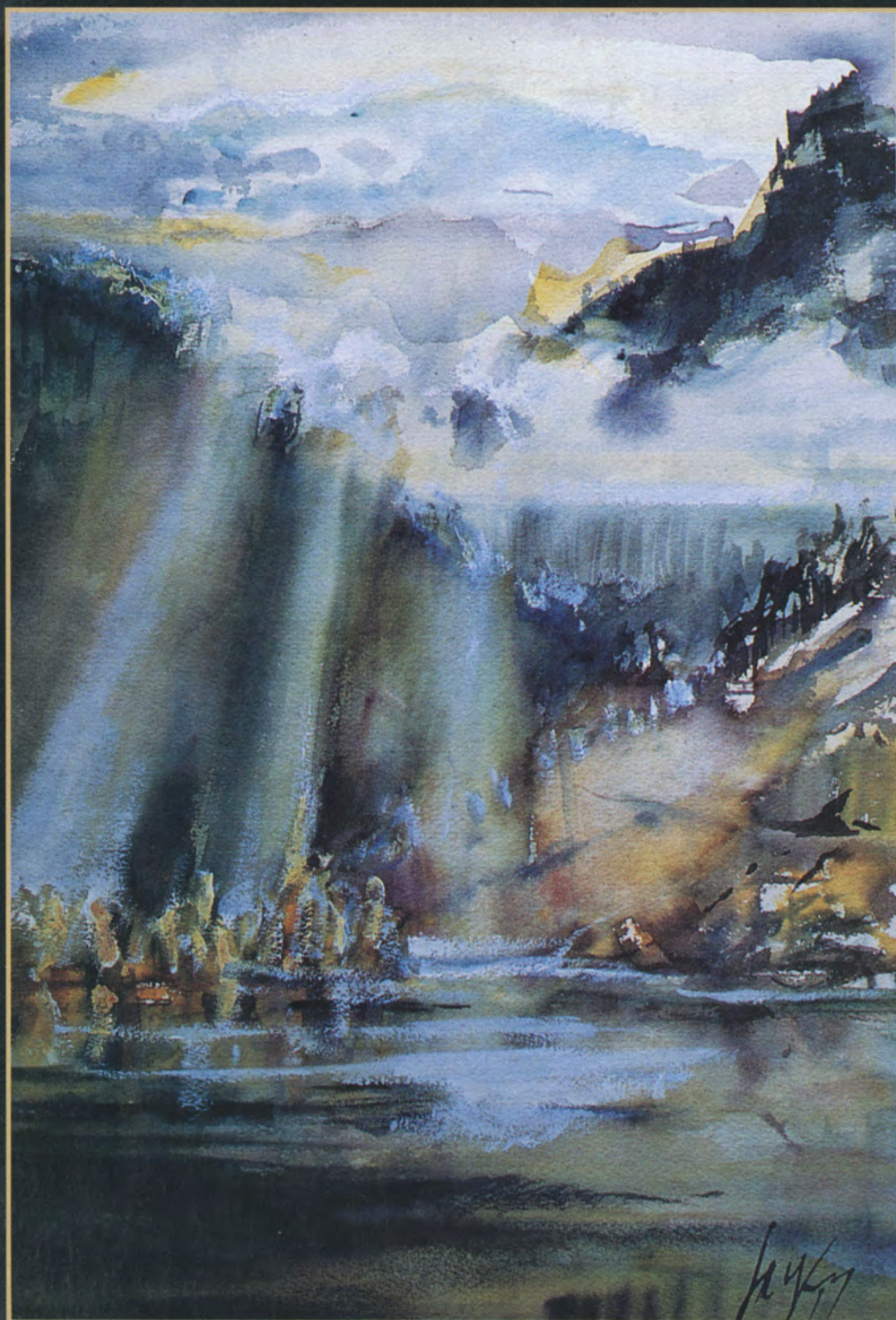
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1995 SEASON

RUSALKA



Stagebill



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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

Rusalka

1995 Season
Vol. 73, No. 11

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Dvořák's most popular opera is introduced, along with details about its libretto and score.
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A peek into the immediate future.

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COVER

Jay, Michael (b. 1945)
August

Watercolor, 13 ½ x 19 in.

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Performance HIGHLIGHTS

Three favorite fables finish up the **San Francisco Opera's** 1995 season. First, no woman is safe when he's near, yet all women wish to be near him. He's the dastardly dashing *Don Giovanni*, and he sings some of Mozart's most sublime music, in a new SFO production Nov. 14–Dec. 7. Next, Dvořák's fairy tale of the water nymph *Rusalka* makes a splash on the Opera stage in an SFO premiere, Nov. 26–Dec. 10. Based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*, *Rusalka* is designed to delight audiences of all ages. Finally, the achingly beautiful *Madama Butterfly* returns for four encore performances Dec. 2, 4, and 9 (mat. and eve.), with sopranos Yoko Watanabe and Christiane Riel as Cio-Cio-San.



Soprano Renée Fleming sings the title role of Dvořák's *Rusalka* for six performances at the War Memorial Opera House Nov. 26–Dec. 10.

tion is a warm, intimate version of the holiday classic, accompanied live by the Oakland East Bay Symphony. To toss in a curve, OB also hosts an annual **A's Night**, in which team members of the Oakland A's appear as toy soldiers and Arabian consorts! *The Nutcracker* runs Dec. 9–24 at Oakland's historic Paramount Theatre.

Meanwhile, Seattle's Paramount Theatre hosts a different team. The Washington Senators are on a winning streak, and there's the devil to pay. *Damn Yankees*, the socko Broadway revival of the 1955 Tony Award-winning musical, stops in Seattle Dec 12–24, on a 36-city tour. It's the classic story of a fan who wants to help his team beat the Yankees, so he offers to sell his soul to—**Jerry Lewis!**—who made his belated Broadway debut as the devil.

—Peter Cieply

A flame flickers at the Stage Door Theatre as **American Conservatory Theater** rekindles *Gaslight*, by Patrick Hamilton. Perhaps best known as the 1943 film starring Ingrid Bergman, the 1938 "Victorian thriller" plays—well, like mad on stage, keeping audiences on the edge of their seats as the maniacal Mr. Manningham connives to drive his wife to insanity. More than a mere whodunnit, the play is a suspense-driven psychological study that delves into issues of mental and emotional manipulation. A.C.T. Associate Artist Albert Takazaukas (*Dinner at Eight*) directs, beginning Dec. 14.

If you like your Victoriana a little less stressful, how about a *Nutcracker* designed after Victorian greeting cards? **Oakland Ballet's** new produc-

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... *Adventure In The Arts Opera Tours presents its 11th annual series of opera programs in the USA & to the enchanting towns of Europe to experience great opera performances and remarkable sightseeing in carefully planned programs to create wonderful memories and meet other caring opera goers.*

Metropolitan Opera Debut of Cecilia Bartoli

February 25th to March 2nd

... lectures and private MMA tour with Dale Harris.

The operas: *La Forza del Destino* (Domingo), *Così fan Tutte* (Carol Vaness, Susanne Mentzer, Cecilia Bartoli, Jerry Hadley), *Madama Butterfly*, *Aida*.

Spring and Opera Extravaganza in New York at the Metropolitan Opera with Levine Gala

April 21st to 28th with Sherwin Sloan

... the final spectacular week at the Met. The Operas:

Die Walküre (Domingo), *La Bohème* (Gheorghiu, Mattila), *Andrea Chenier* (Pavarotti), *Romeo & Juliette* (Swenson, Araiza). NY Philharmonic: Mendelssohn Violin Concerto & Bruckner Symphony No. 6. Private Lectures & tour of MMA with Dale Harris. Met Opera Gala with James Levine.

The Arizona Ring in Flagstaff

June 2nd to 9th with Sherwin Sloan

... we went to Flagstaff to select the seating in orchestra center and the resort hotel. There will be private dinners and lunches and a wonderful atmosphere in this ponderosa pine covered mountainous setting. A wonderful vacation with the Ring and great optional sightseeing to the south Rim of the Grand Canyon and Sedona.

The Third Annual Grand Tour of Italian Opera Houses

May 2nd to 20th with Peter Bessol

... without a doubt the greatest program we have done with best seating at La Fenice in Venice, La Scala in Milan, Teatro Regio in Parma, La Comunale in Florence and Teatro dell'Opera in Rome.

Includes two nights at beautiful Cernobbio on Lake Como, tours of Roman Verona and Bologna, trip to Siena, San Gimignano. Superb lunches and dinners. Walking tours in each town.

Spring in Renaissance & Baroque Prague

June 2nd to 14th with Herb Rowan

... join Herb for the magnificent old town of Prague with walking tours each day to the Loretto, the Hradcany Castle, the Sternberg Museum, the Wallenstein Palace, the Jewish quarter, the old town and guided tours of the museums. The operas: *Rigoletto*, *Katya Kabanova*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Otello*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Il Trovatore*, *Rusalka*, *Don Giovanni*, *Libuse* (Smetana), *Boris Godunov*, *Die Zauberflöte*.

New

Opera Under The Stars

The Santa Fe Opera & Chamber Music Festival

July 29th to August 5th with Rusty Rolland & Jean Rowan

&

The Santa Fe Opera & Chamber Music Festival

August 6th to 13th with Sherwin Sloan

The Operas in the amphitheater in the beautiful mountainous countryside just seven miles from Santa Fe are *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Daphne*, and the World Premiere of Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*. You may choose 5 operas & 1 chamber/ 4 operas & 2 chamber / 3 operas & 3 chamber. Also, spectacular full-day Cumbres & Toltec narrow gauge steam railroad.

Full day Taos, private lectures, wonderful day with backstage tour & lunch at Rancho Chimayo. Much more. (Former Adler Fellows participating: Patricia Racette, Kevin Langan, Dale Travis)

St. Petersburg, The Hermitage & the Savonlinna Summer Opera Festival on a Lake in a 14th Century Castle in Finland

July 15th to 29th with Sherwin Sloan

(May be combined with the Verona Festival & La Scala from July 4th to 16th)

... join Sherwin for 2 days touring the Hermitage, private tours and ballet and opera in St. Petersburg, then opera in a 14th century castle on a lake in Finland. The Operas at Olavinlinna Castle: *Macbeth*, *Tannhäuser*, *The Palace* (Sallinen). Also, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. Carefully selected sightseeing. Private candlelight dinner in the great hall of the castle in a splendid lake setting.

A Private Walking Tour of Venice & Florence with Dale Harris May, 1996

... join a true Renaissance lecturer and art historian and focus on the museums, paintings, cathedrals, & architecture of these two Renaissance cities. Dale Harris, renowned lecturer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Stops in Padua and Roman Verona. Some wonderful dining.

The Verona Festival and La Scala

July 4th to 16th, 1996 with Sherwin Sloan

(May be combined with St. Petersburg and Savonlinna Summer Opera Festival in Finland, July 16th to 29th). ... two wonderful days at lovely Cernobbio on Lake Como, a performance at La Scala and at the famed Verona Arena: *Nabucco*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* & *Carmen* in best seating. Walking tours and carefully selected sightseeing. Of course, wonderful dining.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



Welcome to the 1995 Fall Season and the beginning of a challenging three-year period. Following this season, the Company will need to vacate the War Memorial Opera House to clear the way for seismic work. Although we will miss our home while we are out for 18 months, we will be presented with an ideal opportunity to implement much needed improvements.

The Opera, Ballet and the War Memorial have formed the Committee to Restore the Opera House (CROH), with a goal of raising \$24 million for improvements not paid by the city. These will include: spot air conditioning and improved ventilation, upgraded electrical and lighting systems, and expanded storage and backstage facilities.

San Francisco Opera's own artistic plans include the use of two historic San Francisco venues: the Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum Theatre. Reconfiguring these theaters to make them suitable for opera, plus the new productions needed will result in extraordinary costs beyond our normal budget.

To do the job for 1995, 1996 and 1997—that is, to stay in the black operationally and fulfill our commitment to the Opera House renovation—San Francisco Opera has launched a single, three-year campaign to raise \$20 million above and beyond our annual fundraising goals. It is an ambitious program, but we feel optimistic because two years of successful Board fundraising efforts and cost reductions implemented by management have resulted in a greatly improved financial position for the Company. These goals and successes are made possible by you, the members of our generous family. And it is to you that we turn once again, to make it possible to carry forth the important legacy this Company has built over 73 years.

We want to extend a special thank you to Lexus for its ongoing support of San Francisco Opera. We also wish to acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by the San Francisco Opera Guild, as well as the efforts of the BRAVO! CLUB.

We also wish to thank our generous production sponsors for the 1995 Fall Season. The production of *Anna Bolena*, originated by the Canadian Opera Company, is made possible by a gift from The Gramma Fisher Foundation, through the auspices of the Lyric Opera of Chicago; *Ruslan and Lyudmila* is made possible by Mr. and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Hamilton; *Madama Butterfly* by The Franklin/Templeton Group of Funds; *La Cenerentola* by The Herman J. Miller and Edward J. Clarke Foundation; the new production of *Don Giovanni* by gifts from Mr. George M. Bowles and the estate of Edith Bentley Bailey Cook; and *Rusalka* by The L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation and the Carol Franc Buck Foundation.

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

Reid W. Dennis
Chairman

William W. Godward
President

A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR



San Francisco Opera's 73rd season is a time to cherish for all opera lovers. Not only is our 1995 Fall Season overflowing with the artistic elements that make opera the most exciting of art forms, but at the conclusion of this season, we will vacate the War Memorial Opera House for 18 months. This is the kickoff for a tremendous adventure outside of our beautiful home until we return in time for a gala 1997 Fall Season—San Francisco Opera's 75th anniversary.

During the 18-month closure of the Opera House our home will undergo major seismic upgrading. This period also presents a golden opportunity to perform restorations and improvements that will add significantly to your comfort and enjoyment. Bear in mind that this will be the first opportunity for any significant work to be performed on the Opera House since the building was opened in 1932—more than 60 years ago! It's time to give this, one of the finest opera houses in the world, the loving attention that it deserves.

While we're out of the Opera House, we will present a season of opera in a dynamic and unique way at Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum Theatre. There will be new productions, exciting stars and a variety of repertoire, including *Carmen*, *Aida* and the West Coast premiere of *Harvey Milk* (co-commissioned by San Francisco Opera). From September 19 through October 1 this season, members of the Opera's staff will present a series of informative pre-performance lectures about our plans for the Opera House and for the new venues. We have also created a special video to illustrate our plans for Civic Auditorium.

During the 1995 Fall Season, from September 8 to December 10, you will see a marvelous array of operas at the War Memorial Opera House, including two Company premieres and two new productions. We are pleased to present an artistic roster that boasts some of the world's finest singers, with outstanding directors, beautiful productions and internationally acclaimed conductors leading the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus. Our fine music director, Donald Runnicles, will lead three operas this fall, and we welcome back our principal guest conductor, Sir Charles Mackerras, who will lead two productions. We are also proud to honor Sir Charles on his 70th birthday with a special concert on November 17.

It is an exciting time, like no other in our Company's history. Stay with us, it's going to be an incredible adventure!

Lotfi Mansouri
General Director

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When Dvořák returned from America in 1895, he was widely known as a master of orchestral and chamber music. His audience might have expected several more symphonies to follow the *New World*, and many more chamber works like the *American* quartet and quintet. They might even have anticipated another round of the *Slavonic Dances* which had helped to make the composer famous. They would have been disappointed, though, for after completing two chamber works in 1895, Dvořák wrote no more symphonies or chamber music in the nine years of life remaining to him. His motto might well have been "it don't mean a lot if it don't have a plot." He was simply uninterested in "abstract" instrumental music, and there is some evidence that this mood had prevailed for some time. It is likely that all of his last three symphonies draw on stories of one kind or another.

Upon returning to Bohemia, his first project was a series of orchestral tone poems based on Czech legends, but he lost interest after the first set and became passionately involved in the composition of dramatic works. He tried to explain the reasons for this shift in an interview published by a Viennese newspaper shortly before his death:

In the last five years I have written nothing but operas...I consider opera the most suitable form for the nation...I am viewed as a composer of symphonies and yet I proved long years ago that my main bias is towards dramatic creation.

In his avowal that opera was "the most suitable form for the nation," Dvořák was following in the footsteps of that arch-nationalist Wagner, whom he revered. Although Dvořák is usually considered a follower of Brahms, there is plenty of evidence that he always wanted to be Wagner when he grew up. From the time he played under the "great little man's" baton in the 1860s as a violist in the Provisional Theater Orchestra and furtively followed him through the streets of Prague, Dvořák had

been a closet Wagner freak. Perhaps it was only the death of his friend and mentor Brahms in 1897 that fully liberated him to realize his operatic ambitions.

Background

Just about every society which has as much as a little pond of water has legends of lake sprites, water nymphs, or mermaids. The Greeks spoke of naiads,

Fouqué described the fairy world this way:

...the woods are haunted by spirits which are of the air; while the far-spread race of water-sprites lives in lakes, and streams, and brooks; they dwell too in resounding crystal vaults, through which heaven with its sun and stars shines in, lofty coral plants with blue and red fruits shine in their gardens; they wander over bright sands and over gay, many-colored mussels, and all that the old world possessed of the beauty which the present world is no longer worthy to enjoy, and which the waves conceal with their mysterious veil of silver... Those who dwell there are pure and lovely to look upon, fairer than even mankind.

Undine, with her unearthly beauty, self-sacrifice, and erotic longing, became a kind of symbol for Romanticism itself, and several operas based on this story and other water sprite legends came into being, including E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Undine*, Dargomyzhsky's *Rusalka*, and works by Lortzing, Tchaikovsky, and Lvov.

The plot of Dvořák's *Rusalka* is the kind of compendium of water-world fairy tales one might expect when a late-Romantic Czech poet goes on vacation to Denmark. The librettist of the opera, Jaroslav Kvapil (1868-1950), acknowledged as much:

I got my inspiration in the land of Andersen, on the island of Bornholm, where I was spending my summer holidays. The fairy tales of Karel Jaromír Erben and Božena Němcová accompanied me to the seashore. And there, Andersen's fairy tales, the love of my childhood days, merged with the rhythm of Erben's ballads, the most beautiful Czech ballads.

Hans Christian Andersen's (1805-1875) *The Little Mermaid* is a familiar tale to most of us: a heartsick mermaid falls in love with a mortal Prince and must sacrifice her voice and risk eternal damnation for her trans-

Coming Up for Air

By MICHAEL BECKERMAN



Růžena Maturová created the title role of *Rusalka* at the 1901 Prague world premiere of the opera. (PRAGUE NATIONAL THEATER ARCHIVES)

nymphs and sirens, and seamen have from the earliest days described elaborate encounters with humanoid creatures, seen or unseen, in the great deep. The interface between such legends and the yearnings of Romanticism is reflected in a tale called *Undine*, written by the German writer Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué (1777-1843).

Michael Beckerman is the author of *Dvořák and His World*, *Janáček and Czech Music* and *Janáček the Theorist*. He teaches Music History at the University of California at Santa Barbara and is currently completing a collection of essays on Dvořák and spending a year as a Fellow of the Humanities Center at Stanford University.

formation into a human being. Less well known, though, is the name K. J. Erben—yet, he is a key to understanding the context of the opera, as Kvapil makes clear:

I think that what brought me close to Dvořák was our love for Erben, and that the atmosphere of Erben's ballads which I tried to communicate to *Rusalka*, meant more for Dvořák than the actual libretto.

Since Erben played such a powerful role in the imaginations of both the composer and the librettist, it is worth saying a few words about him. K. J. Erben was a distinguished writer and folklorist whose *Bouquet of National Legends* was published in 1853. His poetic tales, such as *The Water Goblin*, *The Noon Witch*, *The Golden Spinning Wheel* and *The Wood Dove* exerted a powerful pull on the imaginations of musicians and poets with their combination of the familiar countryside and the ghastly world which lay at its fringes. Erben's influence on Dvořák is incalculable. Earlier in his career the composer had set Erben's *Specter's Bride* and it seems certain that his *Legends* for piano (later orchestrated) were based on various Erben ballads. Dvořák turned the four Erben ballads mentioned above into tone poems in the years following his stay in America, and kept the strange spirit of Erben alive in *Rusalka*.

The Libretto: Kvapil's *Rusalka*

One of the essential characteristics of the libretto is the way it juxtaposes lyrical tableaux with striking moments of conflict. The former, invoking images of nature and its inhabitants, include the choruses of wood sprites and Rusalka's "Song to the Moon," creating a kind of woodland pastoral. These opening scenes, draped in muted forest and water images, may disguise the fact that almost all the characters are engaged in a potent series of struggles. In order to ensure these charged encounters, Kvapil adapted the story shrewdly. For example, in his version of the legend, the Princess becomes an interloper pure and simple, and her controlled hysteria is part of what distracts the Prince. Ježibaba is truly a witch from an Erben ballad, both a real human woman and a spell-caster, an operatic combination of the Witch in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Mozart's Queen of the Night, and the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*;

her enigmatic interaction with Rusalka is an animating feature of the drama.

Most notable, though, is the relationship between Rusalka and the two primary male characters in the opera: the Water Sprite (Vodník) and the Prince. In other versions of the legend, the Vodník is either an unpleasant character or merely benign. In *Rusalka*, he is a fascinating personality; teased by the sprites as a kind of "dirty old

His world is ours—and yet, I say, beware!

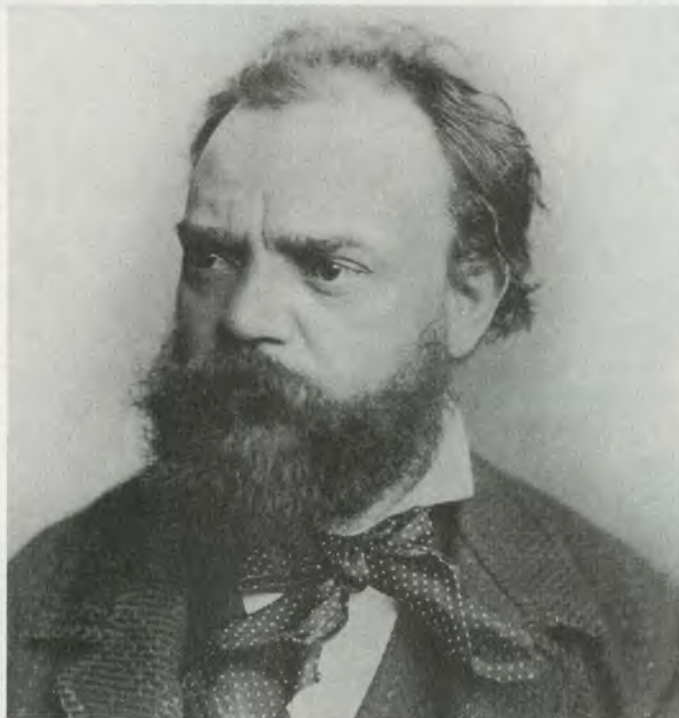
Half here, he lives—half, no one could tell where!

Perhaps most interesting is the interaction between Rusalka and the Prince. Rendered mute by Ježibaba in a fateful compromise, Rusalka is in reality only part human. Despite her deep love for the Prince, she cannot give him the passion he needs. The Prince is not simply an inconstant lover—a typical self-absorbed Adonis, punished by the spirit world for his philandering—but rather a victim of an inevitable series of consequences stemming from a supernatural agreement he never accepted or understood.

In Andersen's fairy tale, the Little Mermaid refuses to "kiss and kill" and so never gains a soul, becoming instead a piece of cosmic dust glowing in the universal firmament. (This is, of course, antithetical to Disney's version of the fable which has the Little-Mermaid-as-Valley-Girl eventually marry the studly Prince. Buck up humanists, Great Art is different...) Kvapil adapted the conclusion of the libretto from Fouqué's *Undine*, where it is foretold that the Prince must die if he betrays the water sprite.

The Score: Dvořák's *Rusalka*

The musical conception of the opera reflects an interaction between dramatic conflict and evocation of nature. At its core is a series of flexible leitmotives, standing for both specific and highly general states. Many of these may be heard in the overture, which opens with a figure which introduces us to the enchanted world. Next, we hear the central theme of the work, Rusalka's motive, which appears in literally dozens of permutations. In the second act, for example, it becomes the basis for a ballet, while in the last act, it turns into a funeral march for the Prince. Dvořák was already working with this idea during his American years and in some of its variants it reflects his "American" style with its rhythm and pentatonic inflections. This "Rusalka" motive unfolds as a common melodic type which can be easily linked with the notion of reaching for something, attaining it for an instant and then falling back (the main theme of the Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique* is a longer version of the same type).



Antonín Dvořák, 1841-1904.

man," he is nonetheless deeply sympathetic to Rusalka's woes, and at least part of the time functions as a Greek chorus, intoning "Běda Rusalka, Běda" (Alas, Rusalka, alas), reminding the heroine and the audience of her cruel fate.

It is likely that Kvapil's view of the Vodník character derives from an allegorical play called *The Sunken Bell* by Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946), the most prominent German playwright at the turn of the century. Written in 1896, it projects a thoughtful relationship between the characters corresponding to the Vodník and Rusalka. In this passage from Hauptmann's work, the Vodník tries to explain human beings to the water nymph:

I warn thee, maiden. Man's a curious thing,
Who naught but woe to such as you could bring.
Although, perchance, with ours his fate's entwined,
He is, yet is not quite, of our own kind.

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Based largely on Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* and Fouqué's *Undine*
Libretto by JAROSLAV KVAPIL

Materials furnished by Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., publisher.

Rusalka

(in Czech)

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Charles Mackerras

Stage Director
Laurie Feldman

*Set and Original
Lighting Designer*
Günther Schneider-Siemssen

Costume Designer
Dietmar Solt

Lighting Designer
Joan Arhelger

Sound Designer
Roger Gans

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson

Choreographer
Victoria Morgan

Musical Preparation
Susanna Lemberskaya
Kathleen Kelly
Patrick Summers
Svetlana Gorzhevskaya

Prompter
Jonathan Khuner

Assistant Stage Director
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First performance:
Prague, March 31, 1901

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26 AT 2:00
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30 AT 7:30
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 8:00
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6 AT 7:30
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8 AT 8:00
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 AT 2:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

First Wood Nymph Nicolle Foland†

Second Wood Nymph Kristin Clayton†

Third Wood Nymph Pamela Dillard

The Water Spirit Philip Skinner

Rusalka Renée Fleming

Ježibaba Felicity Palmer

The Hunter Bojan Knežević†

The Prince Sergei Larin

The Gamekeeper Michel Sénéchal

The Kitchen Boy Zheng Cao†

The Foreign Princess Stephanie Sundine

Water nymphs, the Prince's entourage, wedding guests

Corps de ballet

†1995 Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: Legendary

ACT I A meadow by the edge of a lake

INTERMISSION

ACT II The garden of the Prince's castle

INTERMISSION

ACT III The meadow

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Supertitles by Christopher Bergen, San Francisco Opera.

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The performance will last approximately three hours and fifteen minutes.

SYNOPSIS

Rusalka

ACT I—On a moonlit meadow near a lake, three Wood Nymphs sing, dance and tease the Water Spirit, ruler of the lake's underwater realm, who pretends to try to catch them. As they leave, the Water Spirit becomes aware of his daughter Rusalka, a water nymph, who tells her father of her love for the Prince, a mortal whom she often sees by the lake. She wishes to become human and have a soul. Horrified, the wise Water Spirit gloomily tells his daughter of the consequences of becoming human and advises her to consult the witch Ježibaba. Alone, Rusalka confides to the moon the secret of her longing and calls to Ježibaba, begging for her help. The witch tells Rusalka that the price of becoming human is very high: Rusalka must remain mute, and if she does not succeed in keeping the Prince's love, she must return as a spirit to the waters, where she will lure her love to his death. Heedless of the witch's warnings, Rusalka insists, and Ježibaba brews a potion and gives it to Rusalka to drink.

As dawn breaks, the Prince appears leading a party of hunters. They have been pursuing a white doe that has mysteriously vanished. The Prince senses something strange about this place and sends his hunters away, hoping to be alone with his thoughts. He meets Rusalka, who has been transformed into a lovely maiden, and is enchanted by her beauty. Unable to speak, Rusalka throws herself into the Prince's arms. He leads her off to his castle as the water nymphs and her father mourn her loss.

ACT II—At the castle, the Gamekeeper and the Kitchen Boy gossip about the upcoming marriage of the Prince to the strange, speechless maiden. They suspect witchcraft, and are glad that the Prince's interest in the nameless

bride is waning. He is already paying attention to one of the wedding guests, a beautiful Foreign Princess.

The Prince enters with Rusalka. He wonders why she is so cold and shows no signs of love for him. When the Princess seductively talks to the Prince, Rusalka realizes the threat to her happiness and speaks to her father of her fear. The Water Spirit advises her to persevere, but Rusalka is no match for the aggressive Princess, who soon has enticed the fickle Prince with her charms. As the Prince rejects Rusalka, the Water Spirit reappears, seizes his daughter, and drags her away. The frightened Prince appeals to the Princess, who cruelly laughs at him and departs.

ACT III—Rusalka sits alone by the moonlit lake, speaking of her sorrow. Ježibaba emerges from her cottage and tells the sad young creature that in order to wash away the curse, she must now kill the Prince. Rusalka is unwilling to consider this but is resigned to her fate. As the water nymphs comment on her short stay in the human world, Rusalka slowly vanishes.

Frightened, the Gamekeeper and the Kitchen Boy have come to the woods to ask Ježibaba for advice about the Prince, who has fallen ill, cursed by some strange spell. The Water Spirit appears and chases the timid pair away, cursing the human race.

The Prince emerges from the forest like a madman, crying out for Rusalka and calling upon heaven and earth to help him find her. Appearing as a spirit in the moonlight above the lake, Rusalka speaks to the Prince, who rushes into her arms. Rusalka kisses him and he dies as she begs heaven to be merciful to him.

Supernumeraries

Michelle Bierer
Josephine Bigman
Katherine Brazaitis
Jeff Bryant
Nigel Delaney
Richard Dobbins
Nicholas Doxey
Kara Erickson

Mary Freeman
Linda Gamino
Genevieve Gerst
Zane Groshelle
Emily Knell
Andrea Kohlruess
Kirsten Konigsmark
Albert Malkin

Wayne McCord
Oliver Pollard
Oliver Reyes
Stephanie Salter
Louis Schilling
Valentina Simi
Don Stoddard
Raymond Sullivan

Thane Thomas
Kimberly Thompson
Tom Tillman
Pierre Vulliez
Laurel Winzler
Samantha Wong

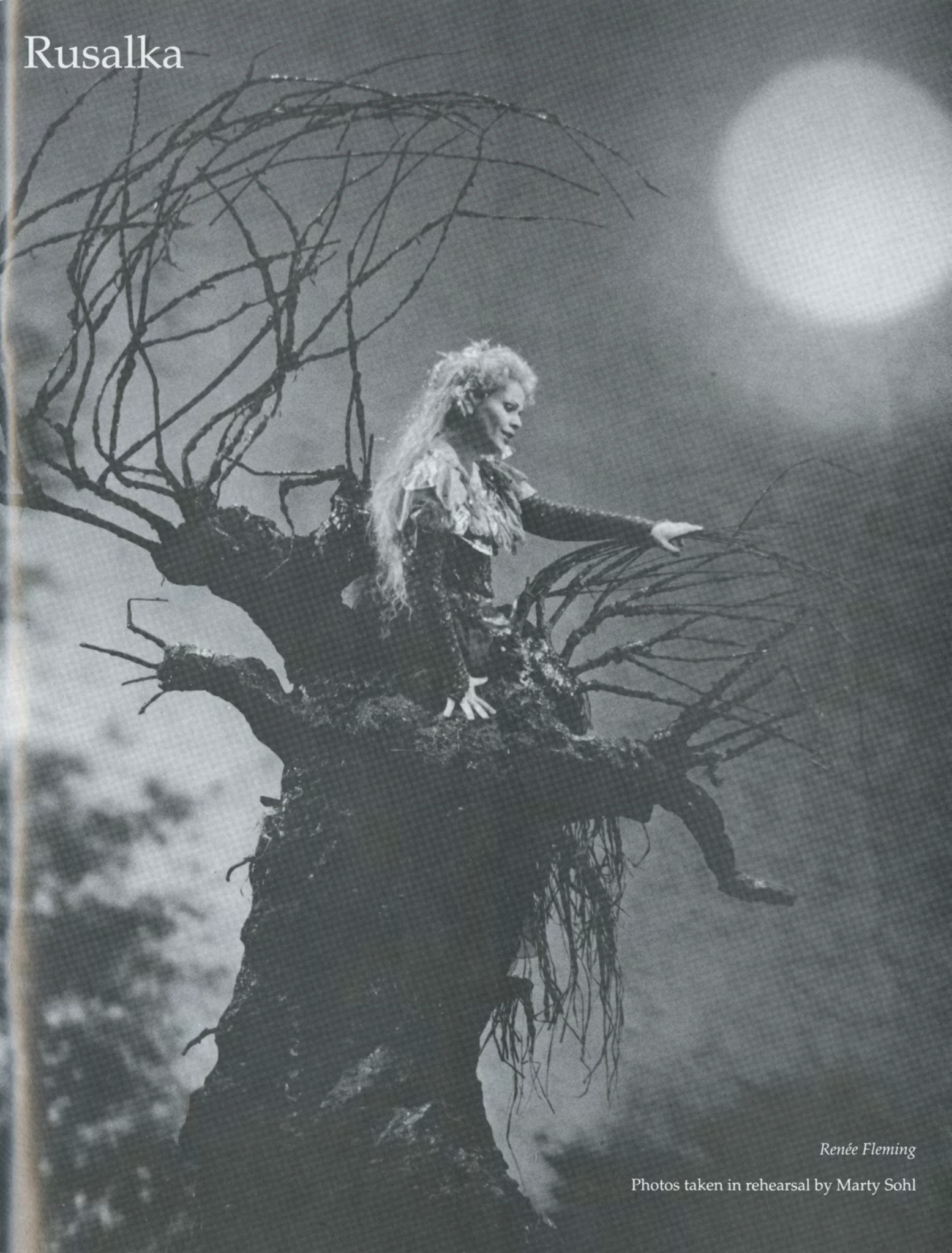
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Rusalka



Renée Fleming

Photos taken in rehearsal by Marty Sohl

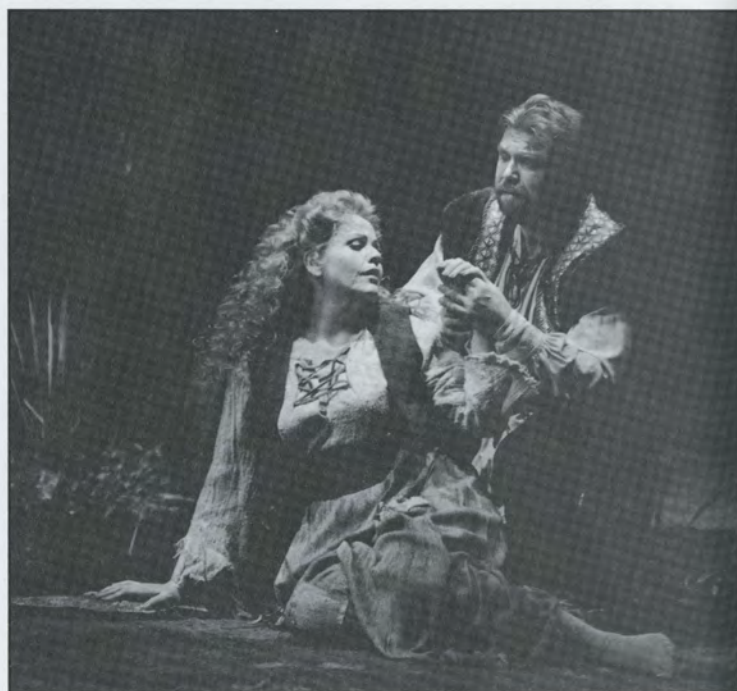


Renée Fleming

Sergei Larin, Renée Fleming, Stephanie Sundine



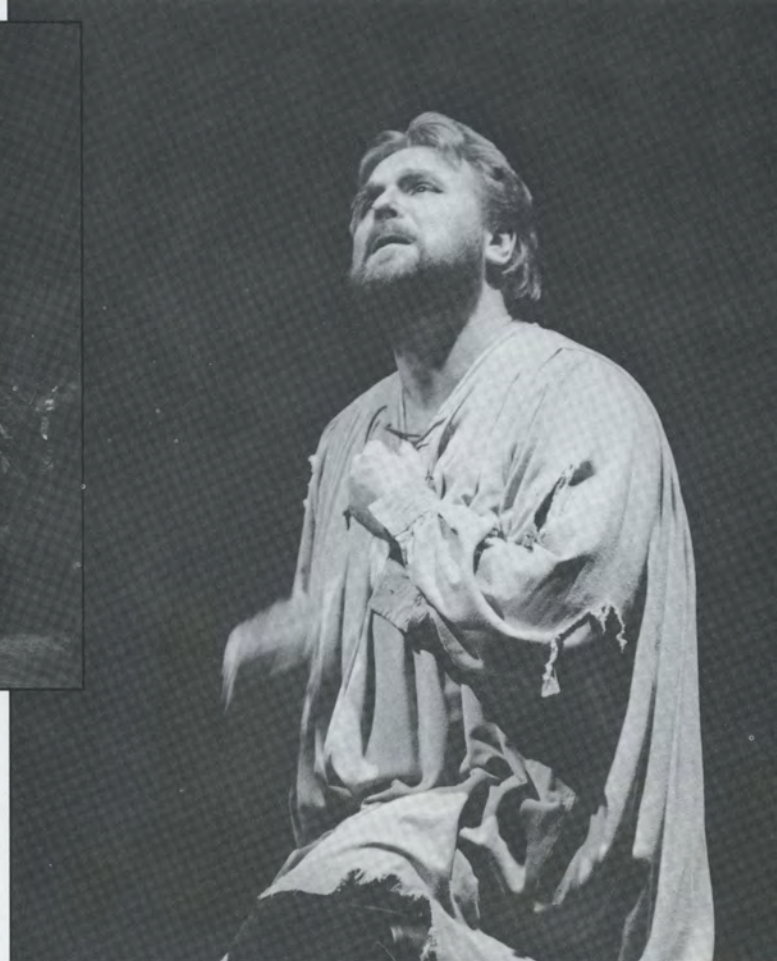
Pamela Dillard, Nicolle Foland, Kristin Clayton



Renée Fleming, Sergei Larin



Felicity Palmer and Friends

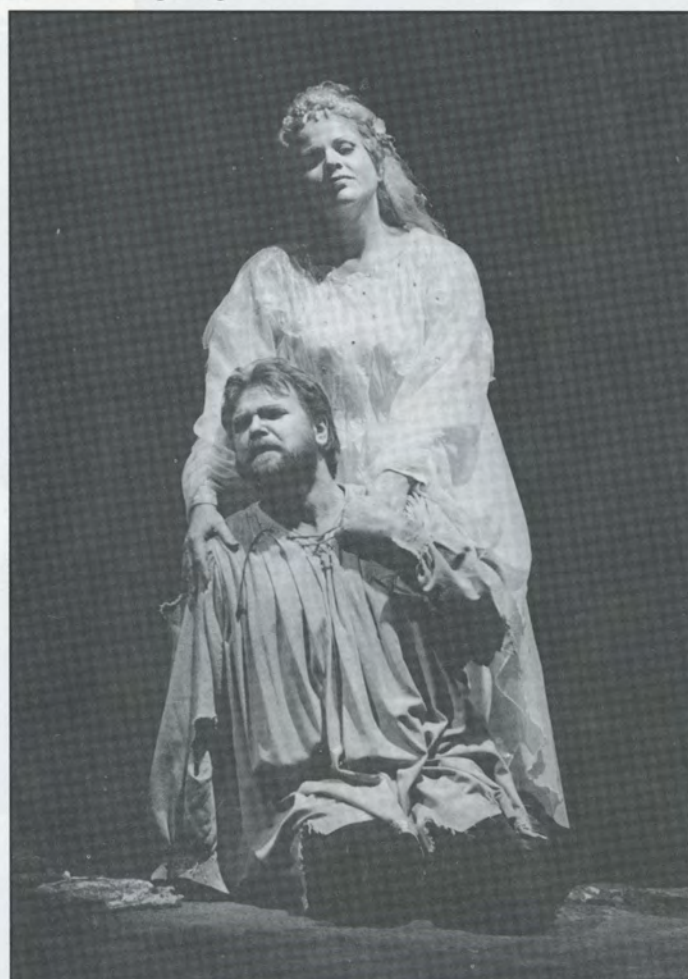


Sergei Larin



Philip Skinner

Renée Fleming, Sergei Larin





Michel Sénéchal



Felicity Palmer, Renée Fleming



Stephanie Sundine

Zheng Cao, Felicity Palmer





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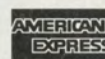
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The next motive introduced in the overture is taken from the Hunter's song of Act I. It is simple, ardent and triadic, a rich contrast to Rusalka's more ambiguous material; associated with the Prince, it suggests his straightforward passion and implies his inability to understand fully the complexity of his companion. In Act II it will appear as a "solo dance," a kind of counterbalance to the ballet based on the Rusalka theme.

We next hear a slithery motive made up of thirty-second notes, sliding up to four repetitions of the highest note. This strange and disturbing passage will interrupt Rusalka's famous "Song to the Moon," and reappear constantly throughout the work to foretell the dissonance which lies ahead.

The overture concludes with a slow chromatic descent, which perhaps suggests the inexorable pull of the waters or even fate itself. It is very close to Wagner's sleep motive from the *Ring* cycle. Most forcefully, it appears just after the death of the Prince where it is accompanied by Vodník's tormented call, "Alas, Rusalka." There are two other widely used motives. The first is introduced at the beginning of the first act, just as the sprites are coming out to play, and becomes associated both with them but also with Ježibaba, while the passionate four-note figure which ends the first act is associated with uncontrollable desire—it wells up and accompanies the final scene as well.

Just as Rusalka appears out of the waters, these motives become part of a continuous accompaniment, delicately orchestrated, out of which striking set pieces occasionally appear. There are two framing scenes with the wood sprites in the first and last acts, the Vodník's devastating aria in Act II, Rusalka's three songs, and memorable arias and ariettas for the Prince, Ježibaba, and the Princess, and of course instrumental marches and dances. In many cases these set pieces are punctuated, interrupted, or subtly accompanied by the range of motives. It is this combination of ongoing orchestral texture and individual "numbers" of great charm that is a distinguishing characteristic of the opera.

By the time Dvořák turned his hand to *Rusalka*, he was a most experienced composer, and one of his special gifts was the ability to command many different musical dialects. One delightful feature of the opera is the manner in which these numerous sub-styles interact. As we have already noted, Dvořák was always mad for Wagner, and echoes of *Tannhäuser* and other

operas can be heard in his symphonies, tone poems and chamber works. We know that he had many discussions about Wagner in New York in the early 1890s with his friend Anton Seidl, the conductor of the New York Philharmonic who gave the symphony *From the New World* its premiere almost a century ago. Not only does the overall musical conception of *Rusalka* owe a great deal to Wagner, but several motives are decidedly Wagnerian, most notably the slow chromatically descending theme. Yet the singing of the sprites in Act I and the Act II wedding chorus feature a different style entirely, closer to the *Slavonic Dances* than to *Lohengrin*, while a certain modal lyricism heard both in Ježibaba's Act I song (sounding remarkably like the song of Jirka the Shepherd in *The Devil and Kate*) and the Act III song of the wood sprites recall Dvořák's "American" style.

As an example of the way in which Dvořák is able to create a stylistic whole out of disparate elements, we may look at the most famous aria in all of Czech opera, Rusalka's "Song to the Moon" from Act I. This piece is made up of at least four disparate stylistic strands. As an introduction, we hear stock late-19th-century "water sounds" from the harp. The first part of the aria is a kind of modal pastoral, tinted with archaic folk gestures. The most conspicuous section, featuring the heart-rending upward leap, shows one of Dvořák's favorite compositional gambits: a seemingly straightforward (decidedly non-national) chord progression into which is inserted a "surprise" inflection. Coupled with the exotic melodic ornament which directly precedes it, this unexpected chord powerfully enhances the aria's bright and shimmering quality. Finally, the two stanzas of the aria are separated by one of the main leitmotives of the work, the slithery chromatic motive which may be linked to any number of ghoulish moments in German Romantic opera. This aria is a microcosm of the opera as a whole. When we listen to it, we are not conscious of multiple styles, since the combination of elements creates a unified whole, creating a forceful impression.

Dvořák's opera is a kind of a fantastic combination of *The Magic Flute*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Tristan und Isolde*. Like Mozart's work, *Rusalka* has a rich and diverse musical language made up of interrelated yet distinctive dialects. The sprites remind us of the Three Ladies and

the Rhinemaidens in their playfulness and lush sonority. As in Shakespeare's comedy, Dvořák was able to create an otherworldly atmosphere, a coherent portrait of a unique fairyland into which human beings stumble at their peril. Finally, similar to *Tristan*, *Rusalka* is a tale of love and death, of unquenchable passion, inevitability, and reconciliation.

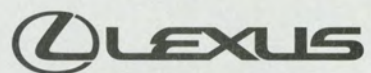
There are no perfect operas, and *Rusalka* has its flaws. Dvořák was no master of transitions and there are a few too many diminished chords used to symbolize conflict. Dvořák's use of leitmotives cannot really compare with Wagner's and his handling of the incidental characters such as the Gamekeeper and the Kitchen Boy is not particularly deft. Yet even a single listening will make it clear that some of the most beautiful operatic music ever written can be found in *Rusalka*. The composer's ability to create a sustained musical image of a moonlit woodland is astonishing, his sense of stylistic variety rivals Mozart at his best, while the passionate conclusion of the opera is devastating, exhilarating and cathartic, in its own way as powerful as any operatic finale by Wagner or Verdi.

From its first performance, on March 31, 1901, *Rusalka* was an enormous success in the Czech lands, and so it remains to this day. Although *Rusalka* has come up for air from time to time in foreign lands, it has become customary to consider it, and other Dvořák operas, as quintessentially "Czech" works, a notion which is slightly true and mostly false. While there is no doubt that Kvapil's version of the story differs from that of Fouqué, Andersen, and Hauptmann, it is inappropriate to ascribe the differences entirely to some hypothetical "national imagination." Dvořák's *Rusalka* is no more Czech than *Don Giovanni* is Austrian or German. What the opera does reflect are Dvořák's personal solutions to questions of musical style and dramatic structure, his deep love of nature (which is not an exclusively Czech characteristic) and the composer's sense that artistic universality can best be achieved, at least in part, through the elevation of essentially local elements. Thus, *Rusalka* is at once Czech, Slavic, European, Dvořákan, and, of course, deeply human. The ideal of "Czechness" is a figment of our imagination, albeit a tantalizing one. It is harmless as long as we realize that the tragic character of *Rusalka* is not merely a bit of local Czech color, but rather one of the great and memorable protagonists on the world stage. ■



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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA AT THE CIVIC AUDITORIUM AND THE ORPHEUM THEATRE

San Francisco Opera General Director Lotfi Mansouri discusses his artistic vision for 1996: a preview of coming attractions.

By JAKE HEGGIE

Setting the Stage — Part II: Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum Theatre

In June of this year, San Francisco Opera announced ambitious artistic plans for the next three seasons. The Company also launched a three-year campaign to raise \$20 million to cover the extraordinary costs that will be incurred during 1995, 1996 and 1997. These costs are directly related to the need to vacate the Opera House in January of 1996 for 18 months of seismic upgrades and improvements, and the need to continue to present high quality opera during that period. The large three-year campaign was designed to avoid smaller piecemeal efforts during this challenging period.

Two-thirds of the goal, or \$13.5 million, will be used to support the costs of presenting opera at Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum Theatre, including nine new productions in a "spread season" that will run from September of 1996 through February of 1997.

The remaining third of the goal, \$6.5 million, represents the Opera's commitment to the restoration of the War Memorial Opera House. The Committee to Restore the Opera House (CROH) was formed earlier this year to raise a total of \$24 million to see that the Opera House receives the care it so desperately needs—work that has not been performed on the House since it opened in 1932.

Early in the season, Brayton Wilbur, Jr., (one of the co-chairs of CROH) explained the details of the Opera House renovation in an interview with writer David Landis. In the following interview, San Francisco Opera's general director, Lotfi Mansouri, explains his vision for producing an exciting opera season during the period out of the Opera House.



VIDEO ARTS

Two computer-generated images of the Opera's performing environment at Civic Auditorium. The orchestra will be situated in the large space located above and behind the stage.



It is the most exhilarating and exhausting time of any Fall Season: just after opening weekend and right before the next stream of opening night performances. Every member of the Company is working at top speed, invigorated with the kind of enthusiasm that keeps the energy level running high. At the helm of this enormous ship is the general director, Lotfi Mansouri. He has been at the front lines of opera for more than 40 years and knows better than anybody how to keep the pace. Not only does he lead the Company, he is an active and admired opera director with productions seen on stages around the world. More than just passionate about the art form, Mansouri often refers to himself as a "cockeyed optimist" and speaks about opera with a youthful exuberance and freshness that is infectious.

Though confronted with considerable challenges since he became general director in 1988—from the 1989 earthquake to the 1992 recession and the subsequent financial hurdles—Mansouri manages to embrace them with gusto, seeking out unique and creative solutions. Even with that history, he has never been faced with anything like what lies in store for 1996. Yet he has found a new enthusiasm for the 18 months the Company will spend out of the War Memorial Opera House: a stimulation from fresh opportunities and ideas, taking the art form to a different level and seeing what will happen.

Jake Heggie: The Company has been faced with some pretty overwhelming challenges in the seven years since you began your tenure as general director. You and your artistic team have managed to respond in an incredibly creative fashion. Do the challenges that face you also inspire you to go beyond the norm?

Lotfi Mansouri: Well, they kind of energize you. I'm kind of a cockeyed optimist anyway, and you'd think that by my age I'd have learned to back off a little bit. But

Continued on page 40

Jake Heggie is a writer and public relations associate for San Francisco Opera. Also a pianist and composer, he was a winner in G. Schirmer's national Art Song Competition, and has recently performed with Frederica von Stade, Brian Asawa and Patrick Summers.

San Francisco Opera



RUSLAN & LYUDMILA — PHOTO: VALENTINE BARANOVSKY

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Kirsten Flagstad Exhibit and Lecture

The San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum is honoring the legendary artist Kirsten Flagstad with an exhibit, running September 14 to December 28, 1995. The exhibit will draw on S.F. PALM's extensive collection of Flagstad memorabilia and will include photographs, her personal opera scores, correspondence, and numerous personal items.

On November 4, at the San Francisco Ballet Building, *Wall Street Journal* music critic and lecturer Dale Harris will talk about Flagstad's life and career. The lecture, sponsored by PALM and the Wagner Society of Northern California, starts at 11 a.m.

Information: (415) 255-4800, San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum, 399 Grove Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

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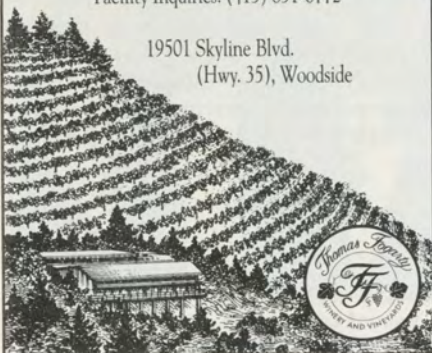
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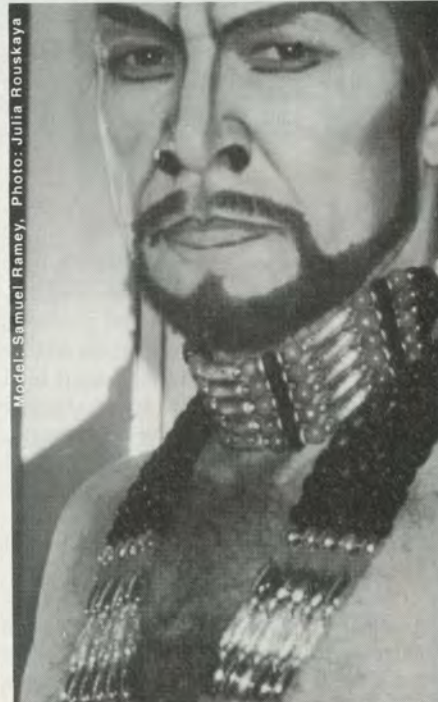
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Vaness, Mentzer; Bardon**;
Scandiuizzi, Sabbatini*, Wilde,
Petersen

R. Abbado; Copley/Pascoe/

Stennett/Whitfield

Sept. 8, 12, 15, 21, 24, 27, 30

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San Francisco Opera Premiere

RUSLAN AND LYUDMILA Glinka

Netrebko*, Tsidipova*/Vassileva
(9/26, 29), Zarembo, Cook; Atlantov,
Wells/Ognovenko, Marusin,
Bezubenkov, Andrasy*, Gogin

Gergiev/Titov**, Mansouri/Golovin/
Korovin/Bosquet/Fokine/Shavrov**/
Munn

Sept. 9, 14, 17, 19, 22, 26, 29

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LA TRAVIATA Verdi

Villarroel, Bishop†, Petersen;
Aronica, Yurisich*, Portilla†,
Okerlund†*, Knežević†*, Wilde

Mercurio*; Copley/Conklin/

Walker/Clara/Munn

Sept. 16, 20, 23, 28

Oct. 1, 4, 7, 10, 12

MADAMA BUTTERFLY Puccini

Malfitano*/Watanabe*/Riel*,

Keen/Bishop, Foland†;

Leech/Margison/Portilla†,

Ledbetter/Baerg, Petersen/

Sénéchal, Barrett*,

Skinner/Okerlund†

Runnicles/Mackerras (Dec.);

Bernhard/Businger

Oct. 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 22

Dec. 2, 4, 9 (mat. & eve.)

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Thursday, November 2 at 1:00

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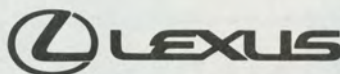
Oct. 13, 15, 18, 21, 25, 28

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Gustafson, Quittmeyer, Cook; Leech,

Ramey, Gilfry*, Skinner

Summers; Joël/Howland/Munn

Oct. 26, 29, 31

Nov. 3, 5, 8, 11, 16

DIE WALKÜRE Wagner

Schnaut, A. Evans, Lipovšek*,

Foland†, Waite†, Holz*, Keen, Cook,

Bishop†, Cao†, Bean; Elming*,

Morris/White, Von Halem

Runnicles; Lehnhoff/Feldman/

Conklin/Munn

Nov. 4, 7, 12, 15, 21, 25, 29

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New Production

DON GIOVANNI Mozart

Riedel*, Dessi*, R. Evans*; Ramey

(11/14, 18, 20)/ Shimell,

Ainsley*/Olsen*, Antoniozzi,

Patriarco, Von Halem

Runnicles; Mansouri/Howland/

Bosquet/Whitfield

Nov. 14, 18, 20, 24, 28

Dec. 1, 3, 7

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San Francisco Opera Premiere

RUSALKA Dvořák

Fleming, Sundine, Palmer, Clayton†,

Foland†, Dillard, Cao†; Larin,

Skinner, Sénéchal, Knežević†

Mackerras; Feldman/

Schneider-Siemssen/Solt*/Arhelger

Nov. 26, 30, Dec. 2, 6, 8, 10

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**U.S. opera debut

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Repertoire, casts and dates are subject to change.

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1995 SAN FRANCISCO OPERA COMPANY

(continued)

Although our program magazines regularly list members of the Administration and Company (please see pages 10 and 12), we know that those lists are by necessity incomplete. In order to give recognition to the many skilled professionals whose work has contributed so greatly to the quality of San Francisco Opera productions, we provide, once a year, a list of everyone involved with our season. In this issue, department heads and regular staff are listed in front of the magazine, as usual; the many others, upon whom so much depends, are listed below.

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA AT CIVIC AUDITORIUM AND THE ORPHEUM THEATRE

Continued from page 26

I'm not that type. When an obstacle comes, I look at it to see if this obstacle is opening a different and new way . . . if it is challenging me to think in different directions. When the earthquake came in 1989, we were forced out of the house. 72 hours later, we were performing at Masonic Auditorium: the orchestra was in the back, the singers were in the front. And we did three really quite exciting performances. I find that to be the thrill of the creative field, the exhilaration of the arts— they stimulate you to use these obstacles that are bound to come along in anybody's life, to find fresh ways to surmount them, rather than always looking for the same solution.

JH: And there's that charge in the back of your mind that "the show must go on" . . .

LM: Absolutely! Our responsibility is always to be creative, always to produce . . .

Designer Gerard Howland's scale model of the opera environment at Civic Auditorium. Although seats are not indicated, notice that performers enter from all sides of the space; the stage thrusts to the middle of the auditorium bringing audience and artists closer together than is possible at the Opera House.

not use excuses to go back or play safe. That's the principle under which I work.

JH: How did you decide on using Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum for the Opera's season out of the House?

LM: We looked very seriously at all of the possible venues in the Bay Area. We had to look for several things: A) a place where we could keep up the standards of the productions, B) a place where we could perform the kind of repertoire we do, and C) a place that would preserve the proximity, accessibility and comfort level that we want for our audience. We looked at everything in the Bay Area and we finally realized that the best possible venues for our big productions would be the Civic Auditorium, and the Orpheum for the smaller productions.

JH: Why was that?

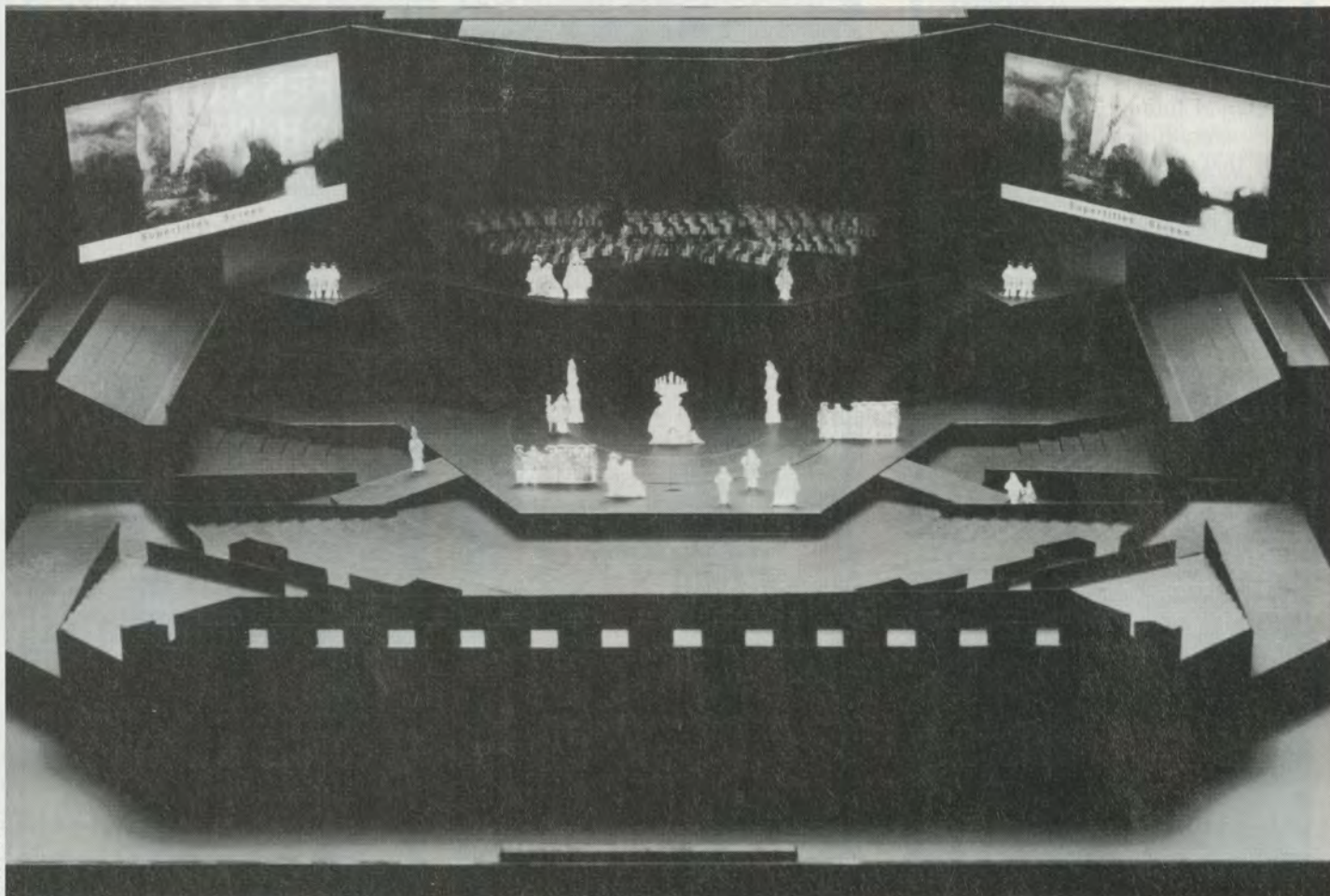
LM: When we looked at the venues, one of our main questions was "how can we create excitement within these walls?" There is no way we can pretend to repeat the performance experience of the War Memorial for our audience. So what we decided to do was really to create a totally new experience for them.

Go the other way: experiment and take the opera to a different level, and take the opportunity to be innovative, to be theatrically exciting, and not fall into the old patterns, routines, clichés and so on. Both Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum seem to offer those possibilities.

There was also the question of seating capacity. In the Opera House, we're at about 3,200. There are not that many places to accommodate an audience of that size that would fulfill these other requirements. At the Civic, we will be able to seat upwards of 4,500 people. It's more than we have in the Opera House, but because of that, we will have a wonderful opportunity for attracting and developing audiences, with fairly inexpensive seats available.

JH: Let's talk about this new operatic environment.

LM: Well, at Civic Auditorium you have to start from scratch. We will be tenants and will come into a building that has four walls, a balcony and a huge vacant floor. We have to create our environment as well as an entire catalogue of spaces, including dressing rooms, lounges, rehearsal spaces,



coaching rooms, storage, patron amenities, and so on. It's an immense project. So when we decided to use the Civic, I asked Gerard Howland, who has done a lot of major environmental designs—for Disney and other corporations—to come aboard. Gerard received his training and established his background in Europe, where I also have my background, and where there are larger stages for festivals. Places where they do huge opera productions for thousands of people.

JH: What are some of those places?

LM: Arena di Verona in Italy, where I directed *Rigoletto* this past summer for audiences of 20,000 people, and outdoor theaters and sport centers like in Zurich or Amsterdam or Brussels. It's done all the time. London has done operas in the round, like the *Carmen* they did at Earl's Court. While we're not trying to copy anybody, we can use these places as models for exciting festival environments that really work.

San Francisco Opera General Director Lotfi Mansouri discusses plans for Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum Theatre with Company Managing Director Michael Savage.

Opera is such a magnificent art form that it lends itself to many different presentations and interpretations. In France, at the Festival d'Orange, there's this enormous Roman wall and I've done *Hérodiade* there in a very successful production. Opera is wonderfully adaptable, and it can play in many theaters. I've done opera in the round, in arenas, sports arenas, in the Opera House, and the wonderful thing is that, as an art form, opera kind of takes over the space. As a matter of fact, operas like *Aida* actually gain . . . they become new and different in these unusual environments. They underline and bring out different aspects of an opera.

JH: And these models have influenced your approach to the Civic Auditorium?

LM: Right. Working together with the Opera's music director, Donald Runnicles, our production team, headed by Glenn Plott and Larry Klein, plus Tom Munn for lighting, Roger Gans for sound and Dennis Paoletti for acoustics, we came up with what we refer to as a "festival environment" at Civic Auditorium. It features a three-quarters in the round thrust stage—the stage goes right into the middle of the auditorium—nicely raked seating with excellent sightlines. The orchestra is above

and behind the stage, and with no orchestra pit, the audience is much closer to the singers. The front row is only eight feet from the stage—and the stage itself is only three feet off of the floor. The furthest anybody will be from the stage is comparable to sitting in the Grand Tier of the Opera House. Everybody will be much closer. In fact, with chorus and other major entrances happening from throughout the auditorium, the audience will be right in the middle of the drama—they will be more involved than you can be at the War Memorial.

JH: How have the artists for next year responded to the plans?

LM: They're excited about it. They're looking forward to the proximity to the audience. It's a different way of performing for them. We've already announced that Plácido Domingo will do a special concert at Civic Auditorium on our new stage. Our Fall Season, which will run from September through February, will include performances by the same high caliber of international artists that you would expect to hear at the Opera House. And naturally, we'll have to create all new productions for this environment. That adds to the excitement, too.



JH: If you think of a skeptical operagoer on the way into the Civic for the first time, what do you imagine would impress him or her right off the bat?

LM: I think the *totality* of the experience. To be in the middle of all this sound and all these visual effects, the lighting and so on. I think they're going to say "hey, this is fun, this is new." I think they're going to be surprised. I know that some will come with a built-in resistance. As human beings, we like established patterns. We become a little insecure if the patterns break. But I'm hoping people will just approach it with an open mind.

I want them to feel that we're their tour guide for a voyage. I'm saying, "you have not visited this place, but we've taken you on other voyages that you've enjoyed. Trust us and come on this one—and it just might be a voyage of discovery." I love that sense of loyalty and faith our San Francisco audience has. Now, I'm not saying that the new space will be for everybody . . . you know, some people will not like it—you can't please everybody. Let's be realistic. But just approach it with an open mind.

JH: Will there be any kind of a preview of the space?

LM: We're planning on having an open house a week before our first performance in the Civic. People will be able to take a look at the environment and see what it's like.

JH: They'll see where their seats are ...

LM: Absolutely, and see what the whole thing is about.

JH: With the considerable extra expense of presenting at the Civic and Orpheum, above and beyond the normal season expenses for a year, did the Opera ever consider just shutting down for a year?

LM: Yes. Some people suggested that perhaps we should just close up for the 18-month period. We did the calculations and found that by closing down, we would actually have lost more money—close to \$14 million. But beyond that, we would also lose all of the good people. You can't ask creative people to sit idly by for 18 months and not do anything. I'm very proud of the team and the staff that I have here, they're all wonderful people, and they would be enticed away. To keep them,

we would have had to pay them and create some attractions anyway, so you would have had all these additional expenses and pressures and no revenue! So, in the long run you would have lost a lot.

This is an opera company, made up of living, breathing, passionately creative people. It's not like a car that you can put into a garage, close the door for 18 months, then put the key in and hope it's going to start. It just doesn't happen.

That would be a lot to ask of our audience, too. They want and deserve to have fine opera from us—it's why we exist. As I said earlier, it is our responsibility to be creative and always to produce. No excuses.

JH: You would lose the good people in the Company and perhaps some of the audience, and when you came back you'd have to start from scratch.

LM: Yes. And by keeping the season going with a fresh presentation of opera, we can excite people. And perhaps when we come back to the House, we will bring some new audiences with us. That certainly wouldn't happen if we shut down for 18 months. This is a wonderful opportunity to become even more visible in the community—to become an even more active member.

The War Memorial Opera House can be daunting for people—they think of it as this artistic "temple" and way out of reach. So when we're at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, where Bette Midler has performed and so-and-so has played, some people may think, "well, maybe I'll try *Carmen*." The Civic doesn't have the kind of mystique that an "opera house" has for the general public.

JH: In June of 1996, the Opera will present a "Broadway style" run of performances of *La Bohème*. Do you think this will also serve to bring in ...

LM: That's another one. I mean, *Bohème* is just about the greatest and most accessible of operas. As an art form, opera has grown so much—there is so much more audience appreciation and attendance. This is another way of opening it up to a new public, and to excite them. And if they see *Bohème* and they love it, then they might say "hey opera is really fun. It's exciting. Maybe next time I want to see *Butterfly*, maybe *Rigoletto*." And little by little, they get excited about the art form. For many people, there is a built-in barrier because opera has a very European connotation—I

mean, "opera" is not an English word, you see? So there is that subliminal, exotic aspect. You have to work to break that down.

JH: Did the fact that the Opera had been at the Civic for its first nine years influence you at all in terms of choosing the Civic?

LM: Not really. Of course, when some people said "Ugh! Civic Auditorium?" I said "excuse me.... San Francisco Opera *originated* there and played there for nine years before the Opera House was built." But while I might have used it as an argument, it did not really influence the decision.

JH: So which came first, the venue or the repertory?

LM: The venue. Then, I picked the operas to fit the venue. As of now, we've announced *Aida* and *Carmen* as two of the six operas we'll do in new productions at the Civic Auditorium. The West Coast premiere of *Harvey Milk* will take place at the Orpheum, as one of the three operas we'll do there. We co-commissioned *Harvey Milk* with Houston Grand Opera and New York City Opera.

JH: So, you're really taking to heart—not only how good the venues are for opera—but also how they are for audience comfort and enjoyment.

LM: Without the audience, no opera companies exist! Number one is our audience. And we're working to see that it's an enjoyable experience. I often tell people "I never plan my failures!" We all want it to be good and that's why we have the very best people working on it. It's a new experience, and that's what the arts should be—any kind of arts—it must always take you on a different journey—a different adventure. The arts die if they are always the same. We become a museum.

How many times can you look at Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," as wonderful as it is? You have to have something else. And by having something else, you might go back to "Mona Lisa" and appreciate her even more. By having a new experience, it might broaden your scope to appreciate an established pattern even more. The more variety of experience you have, the more your judgment becomes based on a rich past experience. That's what the arts can do when they are alive and on the move. And that's what this Company will always strive to do. ■



One of the operatic world's leading artists, **RENÉE FLEMING** sings the title role of *Rusalka*, a part in which she has been acclaimed at the opera companies of Seattle, San Diego and Houston, as well as with the Washington Concert Opera. She made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1991 as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and returned to the Company last fall to portray Madame de Tourvel in the world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons* (which was nationally telecast) and Salomé in Massenet's *Hérodiade* (which was recorded live for release on CD). A young soprano with an

ever-increasing number of invitations from the great opera houses of the world, Miss Fleming has performed on the stages of the Metropolitan Opera, Milan's La Scala, the Vienna State Opera, Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Bastille Opera in Paris, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Houston Grand Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, and at the Glyndebourne Festival, among others. Following her 1991 Metropolitan Opera debut as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, she appeared there as Rosina in the world premiere of Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*, as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Desdemona in *Otello* (role debut), and Ellen Orford in *Peter Grimes*. She opened the Met's 1995 season as Desdemona opposite the Otello of Plácido Domingo. She also performed and recorded the Alban Berg *Lulu* and Wozzeck Suites with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and appeared in a European tour of *Così fan tutte* led by Georg Solti, an endeavor which likewise resulted in a recording. A frequent concert soloist, Miss Fleming recently sang in concerts of Strauss's *Vier Letzte Lieder* and recorded them and other orchestrated Strauss songs with Christoph Eschenbach and the Houston Symphony. Along with the Houston orchestra, she has often sung with the Chicago Symphony in such works as the Requiem Masses by Fauré, Mozart and Brahms, and the Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*. Recent highlights include the title role of *Jenůfa* in Dallas, Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* in San Diego, and Mozart's Countess at the Glyndebourne Festival. Next year, the soprano will sing Marguerite in *Faust* (role debut) for the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Paris Opera, and will make her debut at the Bayreuth Festival as Eva in a new staging of *Die Meistersinger* led by Daniel Barenboim.



The Foreign Princess in the Company premiere of *Rusalka* is portrayed by soprano **STEPHANIE SUNDINE**, who made her San Francisco Opera debut as Emilia Marty in the 1993 staging of *The Makropulos Case*. The native of Illinois has been applauded on three continents for her portrayals in the dramatic soprano repertory, from the late-romantic protagonists of Wagner, Richard Strauss, Janáček and Korngold, to the verismo heroines of Puccini, Mascagni, Boito and Catalani. The part with which she has been most closely associated in recent years is the title role of *Salome*, the vehicle

of her debuts at the Metropolitan Opera, Welsh National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Cologne Opera. The artist has also been praised as Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde* at the Opéra de Nice and Opéra de Nantes. Miss Sundine has created leading roles in a number of contemporary works including the U.S. premieres of Sallinen's *The King Goes Forth To France* and Matthus's *Judith*, both at Santa Fe Opera. Highlights from recent seasons include the title role of *Tosca* in Minneapolis, Marietta/Marie in *Die Tote Stadt* for New York City Opera, Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West* (role debut) for Sarasota Opera, and her first Katya in *Katja Kabanová* with the Canadian Opera Company. Among her most

recent engagements are *Salome* with Oper Leipzig and at Palm Beach Opera, as well as Miss Jessel in *The Turn of the Screw* in Cologne and Dresden. Her performance as Emilia Marty in the Canadian Opera Company's production of *The Makropulos Case* is available on video.



Following her first San Francisco Opera appearance as the Marquise of Berkenfeld (role debut) in the 1993 staging of *La Fille du Régiment*, **FELICITY PALMER** returns to portray Ježibaba in the Company premiere of *Rusalka*. Regarded as one of the most versatile performing artists singing today, she appears in a wide repertory, singing roles from Handel to Janáček, from Gluck to Stravinsky, by way of Wagner, Verdi, Strauss, as well as Gilbert and Sullivan. The British mezzo-soprano, who regularly performs throughout the world in opera, concert and recital, has a string of memo-

orable performances to her credit. Among them are the title role of Gluck's *Armide* at the Spitalfields Festival, Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff* at Glyndebourne, and Kabanicha in *Katja Kabanová* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and in Toronto. She continues to add new roles to her vast repertoire: the Countess in *The Queen of Spades* at the Glyndebourne Festival, Klytemnestra in *Elektra* in Leipzig, Dresden, Cardiff and at Milan's La Scala, Geneviève in *Pelléas et Mélisande* for the Netherlands Opera, the Old Prioress in *Dialogues des Carmélites* in Geneva, Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress* in Chicago, Polinesso in Handel's *Ariodante* at the Welsh National Opera, and Ada in Luciano Berio's *La Vera Storia* with the BBC Symphony conducted by the composer. Highlights of her distinguished concert career include the European premiere of Tippett's *The Mask of Time*, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* led by Yevgeny Svetlanov in Moscow, and numerous appearances at the BBC Proms. In demand as a recording artist, Miss Palmer's extensive catalogue of choral and operatic recordings includes Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol*, Tippett's *King Priam* led by David Atherton, *The Mikado* conducted by Charles Mackerras, and vocal works by Benjamin Britten. She was awarded the title of Commander of the British Empire in the 1993 Queen's Birthday Honors.



Currently in her second year as an Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, **KRISTIN CLAYTON** appears as a Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*. The lyric soprano, who was a participant in San Francisco Opera's United Nations 50th Anniversary Concert this summer, appeared in four productions in the Company's 1994 Fall Season, including the world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons*, which was telecast nationally. She also appeared in our 1994 production of *Hérodiade* with Plácido Domingo, subject of a CD recording. 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, singing Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and the First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*. She recently made her debut with the Marin Symphony Orchestra as Mimi in a concert version of *La Bohème*, and was heard as soloist in *Carmina Burana* with the San Mateo Masterworks Chorale. A native of Atlanta, she received her master of music degree from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she performed in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen* and *Die Fledermaus*.



NICOLLE FOLAND sings four roles in her first season with San Francisco Opera: Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Clorinda in *La Cenerentola*, Gerhilde in *Die Walküre*, and a Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*. A 1995 Adler Fellow, 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. Miss Foland 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*. The young artist most recently portrayed Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with Indianapolis Opera.



Mezzo-soprano **PAMELA DILLARD**, who made her San Francisco Opera mainstage debut last season in *The Dangerous Liaisons* and *The Fiery Angel*, returns to portray a Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*. As a member of the 1993 Merola Opera Program, she sang the role of Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*. Miss Dillard made her professional operatic debut in 1992 in Boston Lyric Opera's staging of Weill's *Lost in the Stars*. She returned to Boston Lyric the following year as Ursula in *Beatrice and Benedict*. Her most recent engagements include a highly praised Meg Page in *Falstaff* and the

title role of Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*, both performed at the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, a debut at Tulsa Opera as Tituba in *The Crucible*, and a critically acclaimed Schwabacher Debut Recital. In addition, she has numerous concert engagements to her credit, including performances with the Boston Symphony led by Seiji Ozawa, the Saint Louis Symphony under Andrew Litton, and the Boston Pops led by Keith Lockhart. A native of Atlanta, Miss Dillard graduated from Newcomb College of Tulane University, and earned a master of music degree from the Opera Institute of Boston University. She is a recipient of several honors, including the 1994 Richard Gaddes Fund Award and the 1993 Richard Strauss Opera Study Award from the S.F. Opera Center. The mezzo has recorded *Watch and Pray*, a CD of spirituals and art songs by African-American women composers.



In her debut season with San Francisco Opera, **ZHENG CAO** portrays Grimgerde in *Die Walküre* and the Kitchen Boy in *Rusalka*. She also sang Siebel in two performances of *Faust*, replacing an ailing colleague, and was applauded as Tisbe in the student matinee presentation of *La Cenerentola*. A native of Shanghai, the mezzo-soprano recently sang the role of Suzuki in the Opéra de Lyon production of *Madama Butterfly*, a part she also sang for the New York City Opera's 1994 National Tour. She has also appeared as Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* at the European Opera Center in Ghent. As a member of the Curtis Institute Opera Center, she performed the roles of Carmen in Peter Brook's *The Tragedy of Carmen*, Amastris in *Xerxes* and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*. During the 1991-92 season, she made her recital debut at the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater in Washington, D.C., and was soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the National Symphony Orchestra and the Warsaw Philharmonic. A 1995 Adler Fellow, Miss Cao performed the role of Dorabella in the 1994 Merola Opera Program production of *Così fan tutte*. The mezzo holds a bachelor's degree from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and a master's degree from the Curtis Institute of Music.



The role of the Prince in *Rusalka* is sung by **SERGEI LARIN**, who made his U.S. opera debut as Cavaradossi in San Francisco Opera's 1992 staging of *Tosca*. The Russian tenor studied at the Lithuanian National Conservatory in Vilnius and made his operatic debut with the Vilnius Opera as Alfredo in *La Traviata*. After two years of singing solo roles at Bratislava's National Theater, he made a highly acclaimed 1990 debut at the Vienna State Opera as Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*. Since then, his successful career has taken him to many of the world's important opera centers, including

Milan's La Scala, the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Netherlands Opera, Bregenz Festival, and the opera houses of Bologna, Monte Carlo, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Berlin and Zurich. Highlights from his 1994-95 season include a highly favorable debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Cavaradossi; Dimitri in *Boris Godunov* led by Claudio Abbado at the Salzburg Easter Festival; debuts at the Paris Opera as Cavaradossi and at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires as Don José in *Carmen*; Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* in Turin; *La Fanciulla del West* conducted by Giuseppe Sinopoli at La Scala; *Fedora* in Vienna; as well as *Carmen* in Bologna and at the Arena di Verona. He has also performed on the concert stage with many of the world's prestigious orchestras led by such prominent conductors as Riccardo Chailly, Gianandrea Gavazzeni, Neeme Järvi, Zubin Mehta and Riccardo Muti. Among Larin's recordings are *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (Sergei) led by Myung-Whun Chung, *Boris Godunov* (Dimitri) under Maestro Abbado, Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa* (Andrei) conducted by Maestro Järvi, as well as Scriabin's First Symphony. In October, he was the recipient of the coveted Verdi Prize from Parma's Giuseppe Verdi Society.

ARTIST PROFILES



PHILIP SKINNER portrays the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*, Wagner in *Faust*, and the Water Spirit in *Rusalka*. In his eleventh consecutive season with San Francisco Opera, the bass-baritone has appeared here in over 20 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*, Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Count Horn (Sam) in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Colline in *La Bohème*, and, last fall, Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*. Skinner was a 1985 Merola Opera

Program participant who also toured 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. This past season, Skinner sang King Philip in *Don Carlo* with Portland Opera, Timur in *Turandot* with Atlanta Opera, Monterone with the Israel Philharmonic, and Colline with Dallas Opera. He also appeared with the Chicago Lyric Opera in *Boris Godunov* and made his Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie debut in *Salome*. Additional engagements were 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 several 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.



In his sixth season with San Francisco Opera, **MICHEL SÉNÉCHAL** portrays the Gamekeeper in *Rusalka* and Goro in the December performances of *Madama Butterfly*. Following his 1989 Company debut as Dr. Caius in *Falstaff*, the venerable French tenor has appeared here as Monsieur Taupe in *Capriccio* (1990 and '93), Don Basilio in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1991), the Abbé in *Andrea Chénier* as well as in several roles in *Christophe Colomb* (1992), in addition to Valzacchi in *Der Rosenkavalier* and Hortensius in *La Fille du Régiment* (1993). Celebrating over 40 years of professional operatic

activity, Sénéchal made his debut at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels in 1950. He has since performed at the major opera houses of the world and has been a regular guest artist at the Paris Opera and at the Opéra-Comique since 1958. He has sung at all of the major festivals, including those at Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg, and Glyndebourne. The Metropolitan Opera has engaged him in the French repertoire since 1982, and he has been one of the few French tenors to have sung principal Mozart roles at the Vienna State Opera. A prolific recording artist, Sénéchal's discography includes *Dialogues des Carmélites* led by Kent Nagano, Massenet's *Chérubin* conducted by Pinchas Steinberg, as well as Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole* and *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, Rameau's *Platée*, Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ*, and an anthology of songs by Francis Poulenc. He is currently Director of the School of Lyric Art at the Paris Opera, and regularly offers master classes at the Metropolitan Opera. His numerous awards include the coveted one of Officer of the Legion of Honor.



Bass-baritone **BOJAN KNEŽEVIĆ**, recently named an Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, appears in his first San Francisco Opera season 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. Knežević returns to the Opera Center after completing his third year in the Merola Opera Program.

Roles for Merola stagings include Schaunard in *La Bohème* (1992), Pistola in *Falstaff* and Frosch in *Die Fledermaus* (1993), and Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (1994). He repeated the roles of Schaunard, Frosch and Leporello for Western Opera Theater's national tours. The young artist's recent credits include Marcello in *La Bohème* 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 Orchestra (all works performed at Carnegie Hall); and soloist in the Company's United Nations 50th Anniversary Concert. Next season he sings Leporello for the Minnesota Opera and Escamillo in *Carmen* to inaugurate the new opera house in Fort Worth.



CHARLES MACKERRAS is on the podium for the December performances of *Madama Butterfly* and the Company premiere of *Rusalka*. Born in Schenectady, New York, he was raised in Australia, where he received his musical education and first professional experience as an oboist and conductor. After winning a British Council Scholarship, he studied conducting in Prague, an experience from which arose his interest in Czech music, especially that of Janáček. As Principal Conductor for the Hamburg State Opera for three years (1966-69), he led that company's 1967 perfor-

mances at New York's Metropolitan Opera as his U.S. conducting debut. In 1969, he undertook his first assignment for a U.S. opera company, leading performances of *The Magic Flute* and *La Cenerentola* at San Francisco Opera. He has since returned here for *Eugene Onegin* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* in 1971, Handel's *Julius Caesar* (in his own edition) for the 1982 Summer Festival, Handel's *Orlando* (again in his own edition) in 1985, *Jenůfa* in 1986 and *Lohengrin* in 1989. In 1993, he was appointed San Francisco Opera's principal guest conductor, leading performances of *Der Rosenkavalier* that summer, as well as *I Vespri Siciliani*, *La Bohème* and *The Makropulos Case* in the fall. Music director of the English National Opera from 1970 to 1978, Maestro Mackerras was also, until 1992, music director of the Welsh National Opera, where he is now conductor emeritus. He is currently principal guest conductor for both the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic. Mackerras has produced a lengthy discography, including a complete cycle of Janáček operas, which has earned him a number of prestigious awards. His series of recordings of British music has culminated in a highly praised recording of Britten's *Gloriana*, which was awarded the Gramophone "Best Opera Recording for 1994." He was honored with the title Commander of the British Empire in 1974, the Janáček Medal from the Czech government in 1979, a knighthood in 1979, and in 1987 was appointed a Fellow of the Royal College of Music.



Laurie Feldman, the director of *Die Walküre* and the Company's first presentation of *Rusalka*, made her San Francisco Opera directorial debut in 1990 with *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*, and has since staged our productions of *Don Giovanni* (1991), the student matinee performances of *La Fille du Régiment* (1993), *Falstaff* for the 1993 Merola Opera Program, and last fall's premiere presentation of Rossini's *Otello*. She has also directed San Francisco Opera productions of *Fidelio* for the Washington Opera, *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Eugene Onegin* for the Canadian Opera Company, *Der*

Fliegende Holländer for Calgary Opera, and *La Traviata* for Santa Fe Opera. Additional credits include engagements with the Metropolitan Opera, Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Los Angeles Music Center Opera, as well as the opera companies of Munich, Cologne and Reykjavik. She will direct *Un Ballo in Maschera* for Florida Grand Opera next season.



Günther Schneider-Siemssen, the set and original lighting designer of *Rusalka*, has for over 40 years enjoyed an international reputation as one of the world's leading stage designers and, in recent years, directors. The German-born artist made his San Francisco Opera debut in 1977 with the production of *Katya Kabanova* that was revived for the 1983 Fall Season. His designs have also been seen here in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (1987) and the Company premiere of *Lulu* (1989). He is principal designer at the Vienna State Opera and regularly collaborated with the late Herbert

von Karajan on acclaimed Salzburg Summer and Easter Festival productions. They include *Boris Godunov*, the *Ring* cycle, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Falstaff*, *Don Giovanni*, *Otello* and *Fidelio*. The Metropolitan Opera has presented his designs for the *Ring* cycle in cooperation with director Otto Schenk, with whom Schneider-Siemssen has collaborated on more than 40 productions. Some of his recent work has been seen at the Met (*Arabella*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Parsifal*), the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), San Diego Opera (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Los Angeles Music Center Opera (*Otello*), and at Houston Grand Opera (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *Otello*). Schneider-Siemssen has also directed his own productions in Germany and South Africa, as well as in the U.S., where his staging of *Rusalka* was a success in Seattle and Houston.



Dietmar Solt, the costume designer for *Rusalka*, has served as stage design assistant to Günther Schneider-Siemssen since 1984, working on *Parsifal* and the *Ring* cycle for the Metropolitan Opera, *Lulu* for San Francisco Opera in 1989, and on productions in Vienna, Berlin, and at the Salzburg Festival. The Austrian native designed costumes for the world premiere of Gottfried von Einem's *Der Tulifant* at the 1990 Vienna Festival, for a new staging of *Swan Lake* in London, and for the Seattle Opera-Houston Grand Opera co-production of Carlisle Floyd's *Passion of Jonathan Wade*

which received its premiere in Houston during the 1990-91 season.



Victoria Morgan, who staged the dance sequences for *Rusalka*, is in her eighth year as Ballet Mistress for San Francisco Opera. She has previously served as the Company's choreographer for *Don Quichotte* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1990), *War and Peace* (1991), *Andrea Chénier* (1992), *Hérodiade* and *Mefistofele* (1994), and has rendered movement assistance for numerous productions. She has been the choreographer and assistant director for several new productions for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. These include *Black River*, *Midnight Angel*, and *Candide*, a work she recently re-

staged for Boston Lyric Opera. Miss Morgan has also choreographed *Die Fledermaus* for the Geneva Opera, as well as works for the San Francisco Ballet, Utah Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Nashville Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Ruth Langridge Company, and S.F. Dance Theater. She was a principal dancer with San Francisco Ballet and Ballet West who performed lead roles in ballets by George Balanchine, Michael Smuin and Lew Christensen, and created new roles in works by Bruce Marks, James Kudelka and William Forsythe. She has numerous television credits, and was the featured choreographer and dancer in the documentary *The Creation of O.M.O.*. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Utah with an M.F.A. (receiving the university's Young Alumni award in 1986), and has been awarded grants for her choreography from the National Endowment for the Arts, Carlisle Residency Program, and the Djerassi Foundation.



San Francisco Opera Associate Lighting Designer **Joan Arhelger** is responsible for *Rusalka*'s lighting. Since joining the Company in 1983, she has created the lighting for nearly 20 productions here, many of them SFO premieres, *Rusalka* among them. She most recently designed the lighting for *La Fille du Régiment* and *La Clemenza di Tito* during our 1993 season. Her opera credits in lighting design include productions for the San Diego Opera, Spoleto Festival U.S.A., Wolf Trap, and the opera companies of Louisville, Fort Worth, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Omaha, Seattle, Costa

Mesa, Anchorage, and repertory seasons with the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Central City Opera. Her work has been seen locally in Bill Irwin's *In Regard of Flight* (featured on the PBS Great Performances series), and with numerous dance companies.

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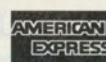
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IF YOU DRIVE TO THE OPERA ...

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

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER TOURS

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

Information: (415) 552-8338.

OPERA HOUSE PATRON ENTRY/ EXIT:

During all 1995 San Francisco Opera performances, patron entry and exit will be via Van Ness and Grove Street doors ONLY. The door that opens one and one-half hours prior to curtain time will be on Grove Street. Three doors on the north (carriage) side of the Opera House will be available during performances for EMERGENCY EXIT ONLY via ramps over the basement excavation.

SPECIAL SERVICE FOR SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PATRONS:

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

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

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE. The telephone number (415) 431-4370 may be used by patrons for emergencies only during performances. Before the performance, patrons anticipating possible emergencies should leave their seat number at the nurse's station in the lower lounge, where the emergency telephone is located.

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

For **LOST AND FOUND** information, inquire at checkroom #3 or call (415) 621-6600, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Monday through Friday.

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

MAKE A VALUED CONTRIBUTION TO SAN FRANCISCO OPERA.

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

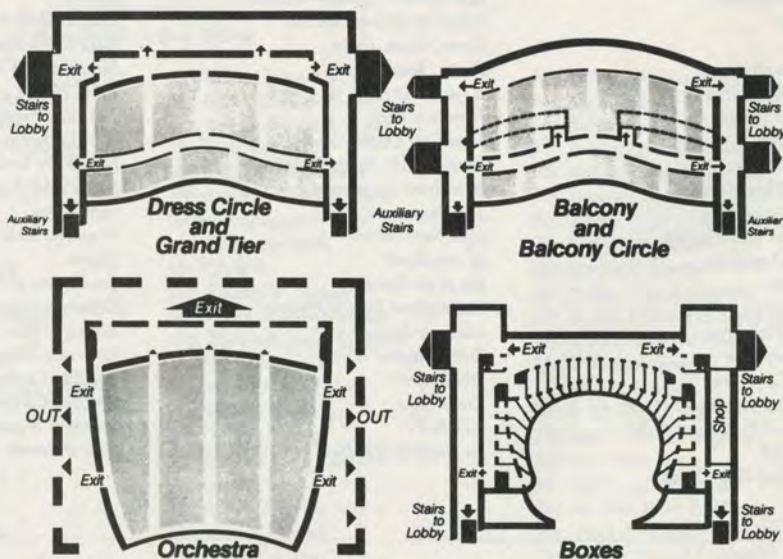
TAXI SERVICE. Patrons needing a cab at the end of the performance should reserve one with the doorman at the taxi entrance before the end of the last intermission.

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

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

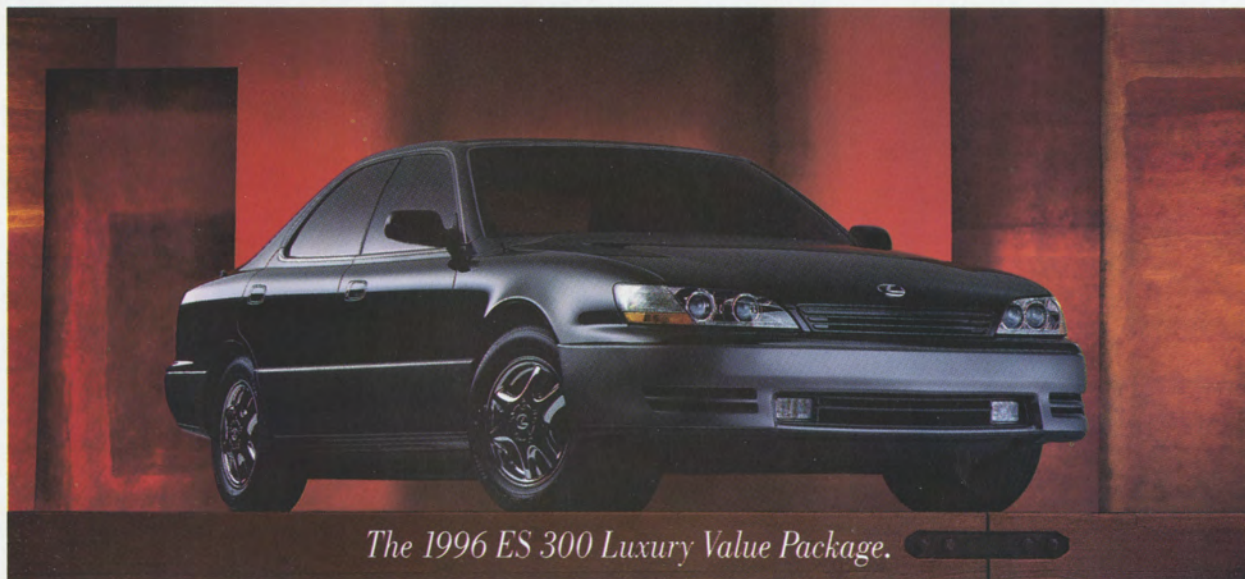
Opera glasses are available in the lobby. No cameras, tape recorders or cellular phones are permitted in the Opera House. Children of any age attending a performance must have a ticket. Management reserves the right to remove any patron creating a disturbance.

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



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

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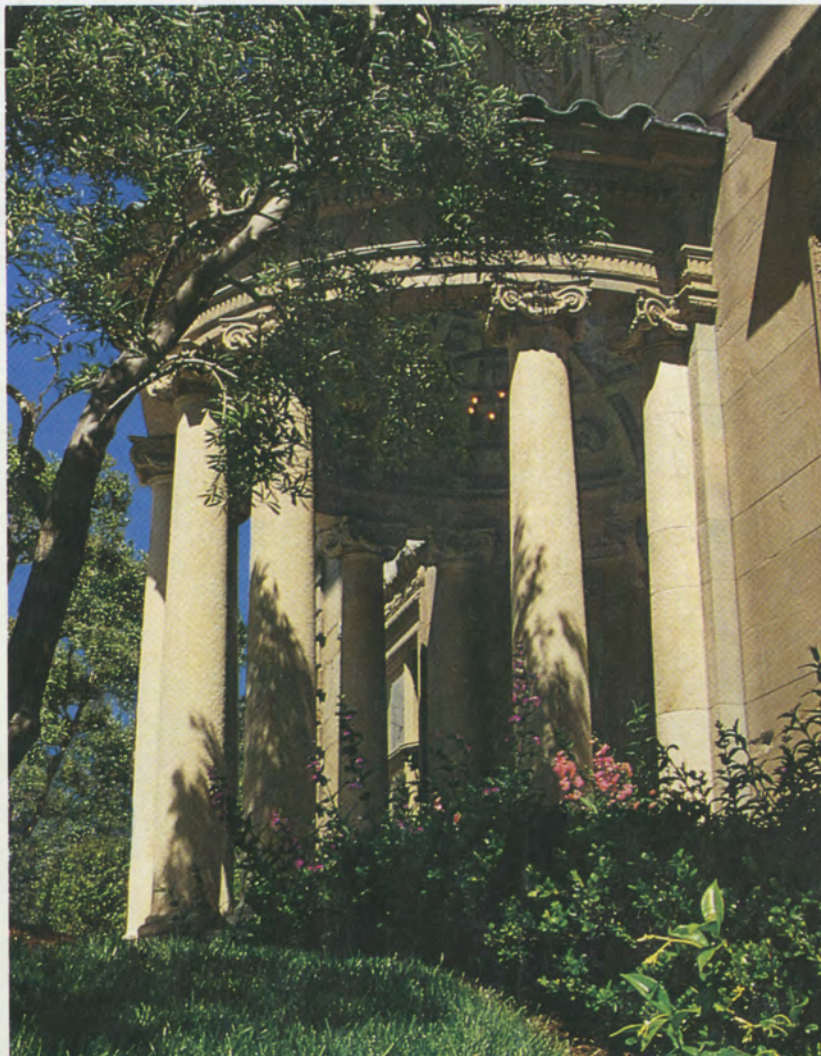
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Wednesday, December 6, 1995

In tonight's performance of *Rusalka*, the role of the Foreign Princess will be sung by Claudia Waite, who replaces the ailing Stephanie Sundine.



Claudia Waite, a second year Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, made her San Francisco Opera debut last fall in *Macbeth* and sang Leonora in three performances of *Il Trovatore*, replacing an indisposed colleague. During the current season, she was heard as Helmwig in *Die Walküre*. A member of the 1993 Merola Opera Program, the young artist's credits for the Opera Center include two tours of the Pacific islands of Guam, Saipan and Pohnpei, Merola Opera and Western Opera Theater performances as Rosalinda in John Copley's production of *Die Fledermaus*, and Hecuba in the North American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam* as part of the Opera Center's Showcase Series. The soprano has also appeared as Musetta in *La Bohème* and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* in the Center's successful Educational Outreach programs, *Opera Inside Out* and *Opera Out*. A California native, she received her bachelor of music education degree from Angelo State University in Texas and a master of music degree from Florida State University. Most recently, she was featured in *When we no longer touch* with the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, and appeared as soloist with the San Mateo Masterworks Chorale in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and as the soprano soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as part of San Francisco Opera's United Nations 50th Anniversary Concert.

