

Carmen II

1996-1997

Wednesday, February 12, 1997 7:30 PM

Saturday, February 15, 1997 7:30 PM

Wednesday, February 19, 1997 7:30 PM

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

1996-97 SEASON

CARMEN



Stagebill

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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



ON BEHALF OF THE SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ASSOCIATION, we are delighted to welcome you to our 1996/97 Season at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum Theatre. This is a season that started with a bang seven years ago, when the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake rattled the War Memorial Opera House and the forecast for San Francisco Opera changed dramatically. The extensive Opera House renovation, which includes seismic and safety upgrades, improvements for your comfort in the audience as well as to backstage areas, is nearly a year under way—on time and on budget. Despite the May 2 fire in the Opera House, we are optimistic that the work will be completed, as scheduled, in June of 1997. More than anything, that blaze has served as a reminder of just how fragile and special the Opera House is to this community and the world.

In order to fulfill our commitment to the Opera House renovation and stay in the black operationally during this period, we launched a special three-year campaign in 1995 to raise \$20 million above and beyond our normal fundraising goals. The Company's financial position continues to be strong, with ticket sales and donations at record highs. We have just finished our third year operating in the black and we are also well along, but not finished, with our extra fund-raising programs. Our gratitude goes out to all patrons who have responded to the extra needs of this period by contributing to our three-year campaign and the Committee to Restore the Opera House. Currently, more than 15,000 households support San Francisco Opera. With your help, the restored Opera House will be ready in time for the 1997 Fall Season—and San Francisco Opera will sail into its 75th season maintaining a solid fiscal profile.

For our single season out of the Opera House, General Director Lotfi Mansouri and his fine team have worked diligently to provide you with an exceptional season of great opera, maintaining the high standards that you expect from San Francisco Opera. We have reconfigured the theaters and planned for new productions that will utilize these unique spaces to their fullest extent. Innovation has been the cornerstone of this Company throughout its history, and this year you will see it more visibly than at any other time. As we look to the future of San Francisco Opera, that spirit of innovation will continue to grow.

We extend a special thank you to the San Francisco Opera Guild for its support of the Opera, its outstanding success in taking opera out to the schools, and for coordinating hundreds of volunteers and the thousands of hours they contribute every year. We also thank the BRAVO! CLUB for its efforts in developing a younger audience for opera.

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 goes to San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown 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



WELCOME TO SAN FRANCISCO OPERA'S 1996/97 Season—the most adventurous and varied in our Company's rich 74-year history. During our one season in the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium and the Orpheum Theatre, we will present ten operas over a six-month period that runs from September through February—nearly three months longer than our traditional fall season. This is an exciting time filled with new artistic opportunities, a distinguished roster of great international singers, designers, directors and conductors, eight new productions, the Company premieres of *Prince Igor* and *Hamlet*, and the West Coast premiere of our commissioned work, *Harvey Milk*. Hundreds of people have planned and worked for countless hours over several years to create this special season—and we are delighted that you have joined us.

Music Director Donald Runnicles will be here to conduct four productions this season, leading our wonderful San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus, both acclaimed as being among the world's finest opera ensembles.

During the extensive Opera House renovation, we wanted to offer you an exciting new opera experience. We couldn't begin to recreate the magnificent Opera House, so we went in an entirely new direction and created a bold festival environment for the Civic Auditorium, complete with thrust stage and audience seating in the round. Because it is an epic space, we chose six grand operas well suited to arena stagings which will fill the space with the glorious music and drama opera audiences adore. The Orpheum Theatre features three smaller-scale operas perfectly suited to a more intimate space. The overwhelming success of our three-week run of *La Bohème* at the Orpheum this past summer not only proved that it is a fine theater for opera, but also introduced thousands of new audience members to opera. We are hopeful that this will continue during this season, especially with the increased seating capacity at the Civic (1,001 more than at the Opera House) and a broad range of ticket prices.

The great Plácido Domingo will return to us this year for a special concert at the Civic on October 20. And in December, we will have the rare opportunity of performing during the holidays for the first time in our history: a glittering production of the classic Viennese operetta *Die Fledermaus*, sung in English for five performances, December 26-29. We have also planned a spectacular New Year's Eve party at the Civic: "Prince Orlofsky's Masked Ball," featuring Act 2 of *Die Fledermaus*, special cameo performances by singers and dancers, and a masquerade ball with dinner, dancing and a champagne toast to the new year.

Enjoy the season, and stay with us as we look forward to our 75th season and a sparkling return to the War Memorial Opera House.

LOTFI MANSOURI
GENERAL DIRECTOR

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

Carmen

1996-97 Season
Vol. 74, No. 6a

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- 32 Carmen odds, ends . . . by Koraljka Lockhart
Many prominent people attended Carmen, sharing their impressions in letters; other prominent people transferred their impressions of the story to the silver screen.

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The Singer Lucien Muratore in Carmen, (1924)

Oil on canvas
Marseille, Musée des Beaux-Arts

Photographie Giraudon
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*San Francisco Opera debut

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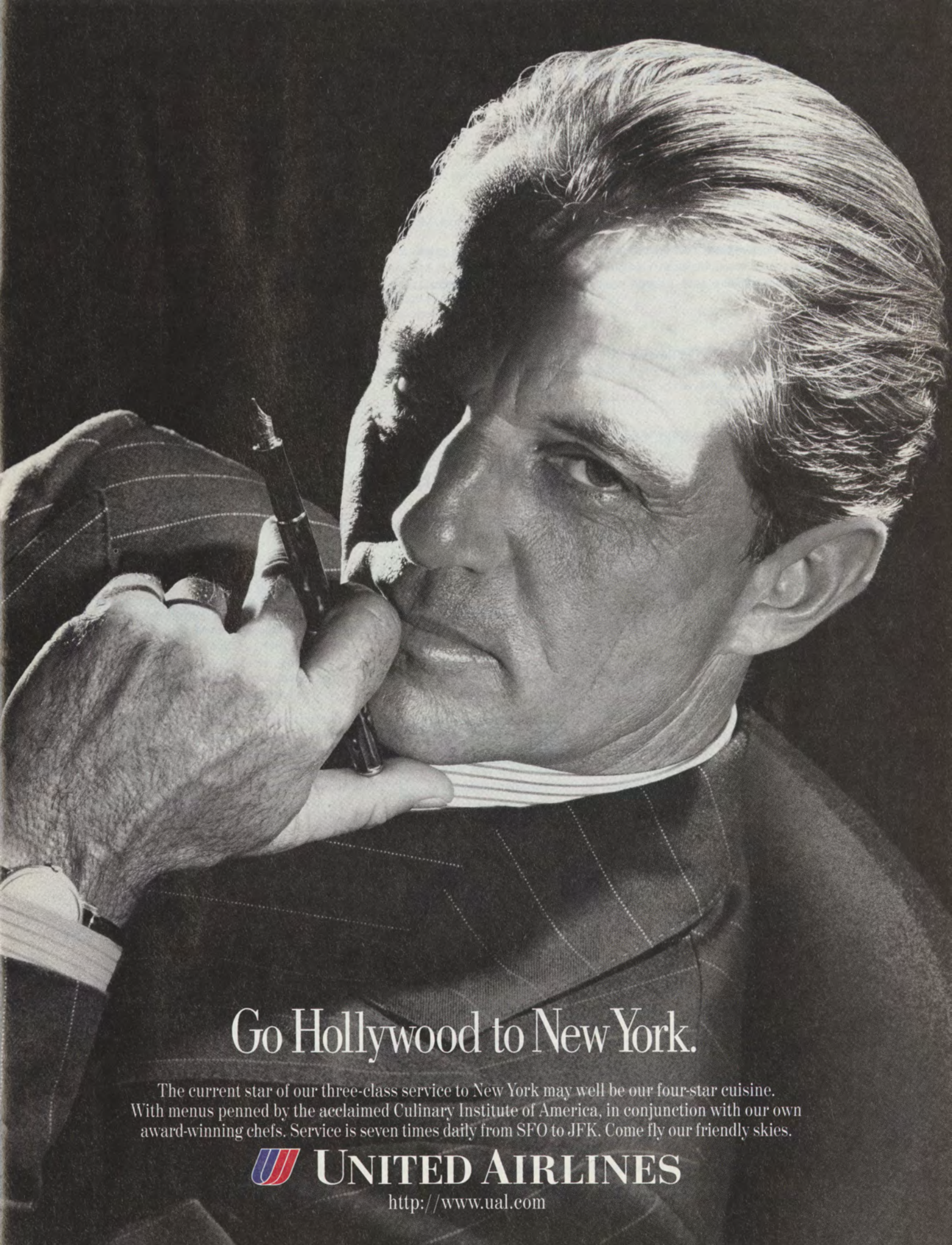
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San Francisco Opera premiere

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Borodin

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Burchuladze*, Ognovenko,
Pluzhnikov/Rideout, Petersen

Anissimov;
Zambello/Brown/Poulin/Munn
Civic Auditorium
Sept. 6, 10, 13, 15, 18, 21, 25

San Francisco Opera premiere

HAMLET

Thomas

Swenson, Forst; Hampson, Lloyd,
Boutet/Hendrick, Langan, Relyea†,
Autry†, Skelton*†, Knežević

Abel*;
Graham/Howland/Perdziola/ Kaczorowski*
Orpheum Theatre
Sept. 12, 14, 17, 19, 22, 24, 27, 29
Production made possible by a generous grant from the
Carol Franc Buck Foundation

New production

LOHENGRIN

Wagner

Mattila, Connell; Heppner/Sunnegårdh**
(10/6,12), Fox, Rootering, Okerlund†,
Boutet, Skelton†, Autry†, Relyea†

Runnicles;
Feldman/Brown/P.J.Hall/Munn
Civic Auditorium
Sept. 28; Oct. 1, 4, 6, 9, 12

IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA

Rossini

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

Campanella;
Copley/Siercke/Walker/Arhelger
Orpheum Theatre
Oct. 10, 13, 18, 20, 23, 26, 28

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

Summers;
Copley/Siercke/Walker/Arhelger
Orpheum Theatre
Oct. 11, 19, 24, 26 (m)

SPECIAL EVENT

PLÁCIDO DOMINGO IN CONCERT

With Adler Fellows of the San Francisco
Opera Center and the San Francisco
Opera Orchestra
Civic Auditorium
Oct. 20

New production

CARMEN

Bizet

Borodina, Mills, Dillard, Foland†;
Cura*, Fink*, Skinner, Okerlund†,
Autry†, Skelton†
Runnicles;
Mansouri/Yeargan/Bosquet/Morgan/Whitfield
Civic Auditorium
Oct. 22, 25, 27, 30; Nov. 2, 5, 8

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

Joël**;
Mansouri/Yeargan/Bosquet/Morgan/Whitfield
Civic Auditorium
Feb. 12, 15, 19, 22

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Dyet†; Orth, Williams*, Wong*,
Very*, Maddalena, Saks*, Autry†,
Chioldi, Okerlund†, Skelton†,
Bryant*, Yu*

Runnicles;
C. Alden/Steinberg/Berry*/Carson*
Orpheum Theatre
Nov. 9, 13, 16, 19, 21, 24, 27, 30

New production

LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN Offenbach

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

Mercurio;
C. Alden/Howland/Björnson*/Munn
Civic Auditorium
Nov. 17, 20, 23, 26, 29; Dec. 1, 3

DIE FLEDERMAUS

Strauss, J. Jr.

Lappalainen*/Foland†, Dahl/Kriha
Dye†; Asawa, Baerg/Okerlund†,
Portilla/Scibelli*, Chioldi/Patriarco,
Strummer, Molomot*

Sander*;
Mansouri/Skalicki/Bosquet/Munn
Civic Auditorium
Dec. 26, 27, 28 (m & e), 29

PRINCE ORLOFSKY'S MASQUERADE BALL

Civic Auditorium
Dec. 31

New production

SALOME

Strauss, R.

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

Weikert*;
Mansouri/Skalicki/Walek/Morgan/Munn
Civic Auditorium
Jan. 18, 21, 23, 26, 29; Feb. 1

New production

AIDA

Verdi

Crider*, Terentiev, Buchanan†;
Armiliato, Noble/C. Robertson (2/20),
D'Artegna*, Patton/Sumegi (2/20, 23),
Skelton†

Runnicles;
Williams/Skalicki/Casey/Byrd*/Munn
Civic Auditorium
Feb. 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, 23

Lister, Grunewald*, Buchanan†;
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MORTON PHOTO

A lot of people take *Carmen* for granted. It is one of the ABCs of opera—*Aida* and *La Bohème* are the others—and there is some truth to the cliché that familiarity breeds contempt. I tend to underestimate Bizet's masterpiece, but when I started to research this article, however, I was surprised by two things: One) How well I knew the music, not because I have a prodigious memory, but because the score is indelibly tuneful; and Two) How amazingly contemporary and sophisticated *Carmen* is. Its effortless combination of intensity and lightness are the quintessence of what we like to call "post-modern."

Albert Innaurato, playwright and enthusiast of "Golden Age" singers, recently told *Opera News* readers exactly why Bizet's work shocked the Parisian bourgeoisie at its world premiere (March 3, 1875) and why we love it so much in this century: "The way the genre music, swaying songs, sentimental sweetness, sheer hilarity and sudden tragic eruptions rub up against one another is really indecent." One century's indecency is another's daily truth. It is not accidental that *Carmen* had its premiere at the Opéra-Comique, a company whose name describes an art form that does not mean "comic opera," but "opera of everyday life."

Carmen is the first modern woman in opera, the first anti-heroine, unapologetic for her actions and desires. She is sexually liberated to the point that she would rather die than become any man's slave. I'm sure there are feminist scholars—see Catherine Clément: *Opera, or the Undoing of Women*; University of Minnesota Press—who think of *Carmen* as the "victim" of a patriarchal sexual mindset, but it is just as easy to consider her someone willing to gamble everything for personal liberty. Does anyone denigrate Spartacus, Gandhi or Che Guevara as mere "victims" because they were willing to die for their idea of freedom? The

iCarmen

By STEPHANIE VON BUCHAU

amazing thing about Carmen is not that she dies rather than be bound by conventional romantic ties, but that she was created by men in the middle of 19th-century Paris: the novelist Prosper Mérimée, the librettists Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, and the composer Georges Bizet. Even more amazing, she ended up at the Opéra-Comique.

The Comique was a theater known as "The Marriage Mart." There, the bourgeoisie of mid-century France, trying to ameliorate the excesses of the Second Empire, strove for social propriety above all. Much as in America today, "family values" ranked above every ideal except money; social hypocrisy was common currency. Wealthy families paraded their nubile teenaged daughters and marriages were arranged in the boxes between acts of the opera. It goes without saying that the subject matter on stage had to be G-rated—*The Little Mermaid*, not *Basic Instinct*. The tender sensibilities of the virgins in the boxes could not be sullied by anything immoral on stage.

Yet, the management of the Comique offered Bizet a commission for a three-act work, libretto to be supplied by the authors of Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène* and *La Vie Parisienne*, but no subject was stipulated. Bizet chose the somber, laconic novella of Mérimée. A less suitable tale for "The Marriage Mart" could hardly be imagined. Carmen refuses to be legally tied to any man, is sexually profligate, breaks the law and is murdered on stage by one of her discarded lovers.

The Opéra-Comique, founded in 1715, had given rise to a form of musical theater of the same name that changed its style and character from generation to generation, reflecting the social, political and economic attitudes of its patrons. As such, it was a truly democratic form of theater, ranging from fairy tales to revolutionary tracts, from satire to sentimentality. Only two aspects of

opéra comique remained constant: the popular quality of the music and the spoken dialogue between the tunes. Of course, opéra comique had its critics. The year in which Bizet was born, Théophile Gautier exercised his critical wit thus, calling opéra comique "that wretched bastard form composed of two incompatible elements, in which actors excuse their bad acting by saying they are singers, and sing out of tune on the plea that they are actors."

A new opera house opened in Paris in the mid-1850s, called the Théâtre-Lyrique. It was there that Bizet's *Pêcheurs de Perles* (1863) and *La Jolie Fille de Perth* (1867) were given their premieres, without spoken dialogue. Bizet is said to have accepted the commission from the Comique to write a dialogue opera in the hopes of reforming what was becoming a sclerotic institution. Yet the battle to stage *Carmen* proved the composer's death knell. Bizet's music was met with hostility by the orchestra, which claimed it to be unplayable. The women's chorus objected to smoking on stage and having to move individually, rather than as a unit. One of the theater's directors tried to get Bizet to compose a happy

ending and then quit in shock over Carmen's lascivious behavior.

On opening night, only Micaëla's and Escamillo's arias were well received. Press notices were generally damning, evoking morality rather than aesthetics. The opera was given 45 times, which is actually a lot in one season, but audiences steadily diminished. On the night of the 31st performance (June 3rd), Bizet died in Bougival, a Paris suburb. He was only 36. We have no way of knowing what he might have accomplished

Opposite: San Francisco Opera, 1936—Bruna Castagna as Carmen, Charles Kullman as Don José. Below: A contemporary engraving shows Célestine Galli-Marié and Paul Lhérie (Carmen and Don José) as they looked at the world premiere of *Carmen* in 1875.



BIBLIOTHÈQUE DE L'OPÉRA

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

en!



Left: Edmond Clément as Don José at the 1000th performance of *Carmen* at the Opéra-Comique in 1904. Right: Emma Calvé (1858-1942), a famed actress/singer and a celebrated Carmen, earned special praise from Mme. Galli-Marié and the *Carmen* librettists for her portrayal. This studio portrait was made in 1892.

operatically had he lived. When Verdi was 36, he had not yet written his first masterpiece, *Rigoletto*. What would we think of the composer of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Aida*, *Don Carlos*, *Otello* and *Falstaff* if his legacy had ended with *La Battaglia di Legnano*?

Bizet's reputation as one of the finest opera composers of all time rests on one single work, a favorite of musicians such as Brahms, Busoni, Debussy, Delius, Fauré, Gounod (Bizet's teacher and role model), Grieg, Saint-Saëns, Stravinsky, and especially Tchaikovsky, who seemed to identify with the doomed Don José. (I know it is difficult for Californians, but that name is pronounced "Zhoe—not Hoe—ZAY.") Winton Dean has pointed out the echoes of Bizet's tragic style in the first movement of Tchaikovsky's B-minor symphony ("Pathétique"). And the great basso Fyodor Chaliapin once said that the only time he regretted not being a tenor was when he read Don José's music.

Yet what musicians admire is not always appreciated by literary critics, and it is from them that lay audiences receive their opinions, which may explain why *Carmen* is pop-

ular but not always spoken well of. (Why, for instance, do writers who should know better, such as Pauline Kael, confess that they can't "listen to *Il Trovatore* with a straight face"?) For decades, the literary knock on Bizet's *Carmen* has been that Mérimée wrote a tough, gritty novella that Bizet and his librettists ruined by softening it up for "The Marriage Mart." It's true that they changed Mérimée's work, but not, as we have seen, to cosy up to the Comique's comfortable audience.

If you are a literalist, you may well find the differences between Mérimée's novella and Bizet's opera disturbing; after all, an existing work of art has been gutted and altered. Yet that is the nature of creating opera, in which the sung word takes three times as long as the spoken one. If you wonder why contemporary opera seems flat-footed and literal (and so long) much of the time, it is not because the composers can't write tunes, but because they feel constrained by contemporary literary taste to honor their sources in an excessively pedantic manner. If they don't, they'll hear about

it from critics and scholars, much as the creators of *Carmen* did.

Mérimée's Carmen is a liar and a thief, not above rewarding her partners with sex if they perform some grisly deed such as murder at her behest. Yet she is also earthy, honest, independent and courageous. As Martin Cooper points out, "Bizet and his librettists cannot be blamed for presenting the positive rather than the negative elements [of Carmen]." Why should Don Giovanni be the only operatic character to get away with being both irresistible and lethal?

In the automatic compression that takes place when a libretto is fashioned from a literary source, two important aspects of Don José's character were lost, making him prey to charges of being a "mama's boy." One, he is the main narrator of the novel, telling a traveler (i.e. Mérimée) the sordid story of his romance and murder of Carmen. It is impossible to reproduce a first-person narrative as a dramatic stage effect unless you invest it with 20th-century distance and irony; we can't attack Bizet for not employing the dramaturgy of a century yet to come.

(continued on page 38)



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Historic exhibit on San Francisco Opera's early years (1923-29) in Civic Auditorium. (Located at the top of the east escalator.)

"Backstage," featuring 30 photos taken by Ira Nowinski from 1975 to 1981. (Located on the West second floor hallway.)

A group of 24 color prints of San Francisco Opera productions, taken by Robert Cahen between 1965 and 1995. (Located in the East hallway.)

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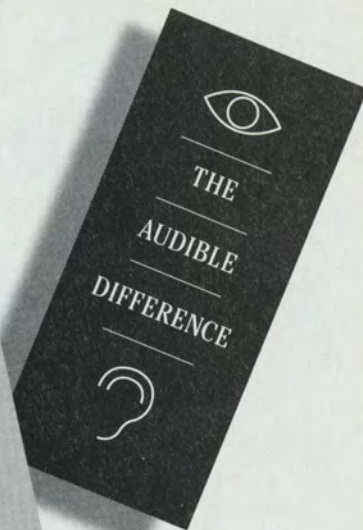
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Text by HENRI MEILHAC and LUDOVIC HALÉVY
Based on the novella by PROSPER MÉRIMÉE

Carmen

(in French)

Conductor

Emmanuel Joel**

Production

Lotfi Mansouri

Set Designer

Michael Yeargan

Principal Costume Designer

Thierry Bosquet

Costume Design Coordinator

Walter Mahoney

Lighting Designer

Michael Whitfield

Sound Designer

Roger Gans

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Choreographer

Victoria Morgan

Musical Preparation

Bryndon Hassman

Adelle Eslinger

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First performance:

Paris, March 3, 1875

First San Francisco Opera

performance: October 1, 1927

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15 AT 7:30

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19 AT 7:30

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22 AT 7:30

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Moralès David Okerlund†

Micaëla Patricia Racette

Don José Sergei Larin

Zuniga Philip Skinner

Carmen Nancy Maultsby*

Frasquita Nicolle Foland†

Mercédès Pamela Dillard

Le Dancaire John Autry†

Le Remendado Stuart Skelton†

Escamillo Gino Quilico

Soldiers, townspeople, children, cigarette girls, Gypsies

Corps de ballet

**U.S. opera debut

*San Francisco Opera debut

†1996-97 Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: 19th century; Seville, Spain

ACT I—A street in Seville

INTERMISSION

ACT II—Lillas Pastia's tavern

INTERMISSION

ACT III—In the mountains

ACT IV—Outside the arena

Supertitles provided by a generous gift from Pacific Gas & Electric Company

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

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

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

SYNOPSIS

Carmen

ACT I

At a village square in Seville, Micaëla, who is looking for her beloved, Corporal Don José, is told to come back later. Presently, the change of the guard arrives, José among them. The bell at the cigarette factory signals a break and the women employed there, including Carmen, enter the square. Flirting with the men, she sings a habanera, often directing her words at José. Carmen throws him a flower, just as the bell rings again and she and the others go back to work. Micaëla returns, bringing José news of his mother. There is a disturbance in the cigarette factory, and the women rush out, accusing Carmen of assaulting Manuelita with a knife. Captain Zuniga orders José to arrest Carmen, then he leaves. Carmen flirts with José in a seguidilla, hinting at a rendezvous at Lillas Pastia's tavern. José loosens the ropes which bind her wrists, so she will be able to break free. The captain re-enters, followed by the soldiers. Carmen is to be taken to jail, he says. However, she breaks away and José is arrested for letting her escape.

ACT II

A month later, at Lillas Pastia's tavern, Carmen entertains Gypsies and smugglers with a song, in which she is joined by her friends Frasquita and Mercédès. The famous bullfighter Escamillo enters and is soon smitten with Carmen. She is impressed by him, but her mind is still on José, who, she hears, has been released from jail. After the inn closes, Carmen tells her smuggler friends, Dancaire and Remendado, that she cannot join their latest escapade because she is in love. They suggest that she invite José to join them, and she promises to do so. When José arrives, she dances for him. A bugle is heard, signalling that he must go back to the barracks. She teases him for wanting to leave, whereupon he produces the withered flower she threw to him the first day they met and confesses his love for her. Carmen suggests that he join the smugglers, but he cannot bear the idea of becoming a deserter. Zuniga appears at the inn and makes advances to Carmen, provoking José to attack him. Carmen calls for help, the Gypsies rush in and lead Zuniga away, leaving José no choice but to join the smugglers.

ACT III

The smugglers are gathering in the mountains, Carmen and José among them. José is unhappy with the outlaws' way of life, but cannot leave Carmen, who is by now rather uninterested. He swears never to let her go. Frasquita and Mercédès start telling their fortunes from cards and soon Carmen does the same. The two girls find riches and men in their cards, but Carmen finds only death. The Gypsies move on, and Micaëla appears, still looking for José. She hides when a shot rings out, fired by José at an approaching stranger. It is Escamillo, who has come to see Carmen. The two men start to fight, but are separated by the Gypsies. Micaëla is led in and she begs José to return to his dying mother. He leaves with her, warning Carmen that they will meet again.

ACT IV

A crowd by the bullring in Seville awaits the procession into the arena. After the participants in the corrida pass, Escamillo enters, with Carmen on his arm. They sing of their love and he enters the arena. Frasquita and Mercédès warn Carmen that José is lurking nearby, but she pays no attention. José appears, confronts Carmen, and begs her to return to him. She throws away the ring he gave her and starts for the bullring, but is overtaken by José who stabs her. The crowd turns from the arena to find the dead woman and the heartbroken José.

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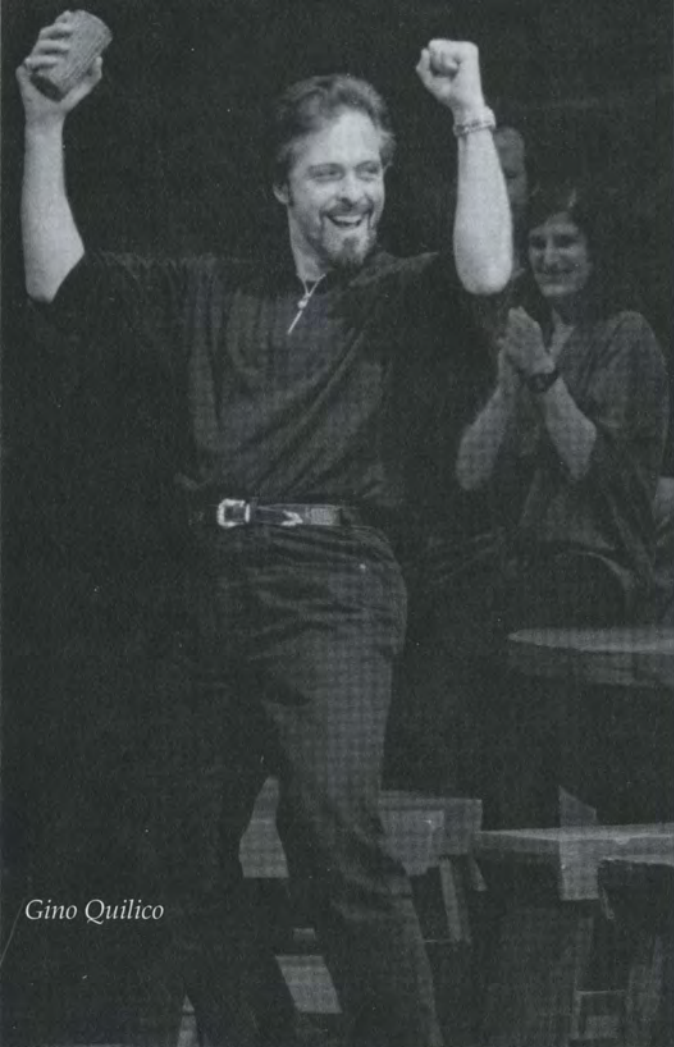
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Carmen

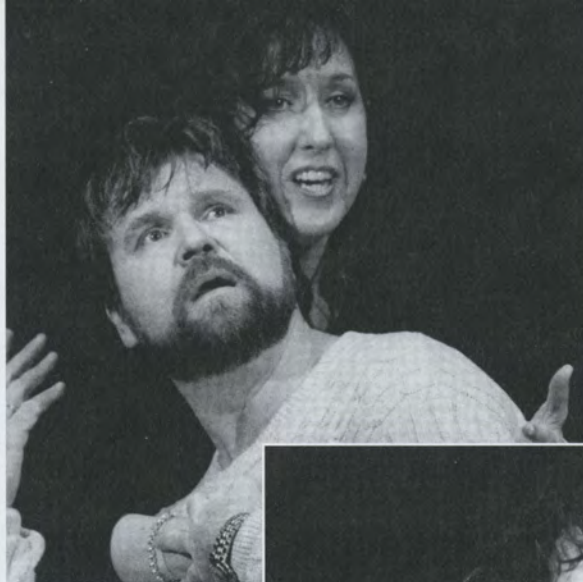
Photos taken in rehearsal by Marty Sohl



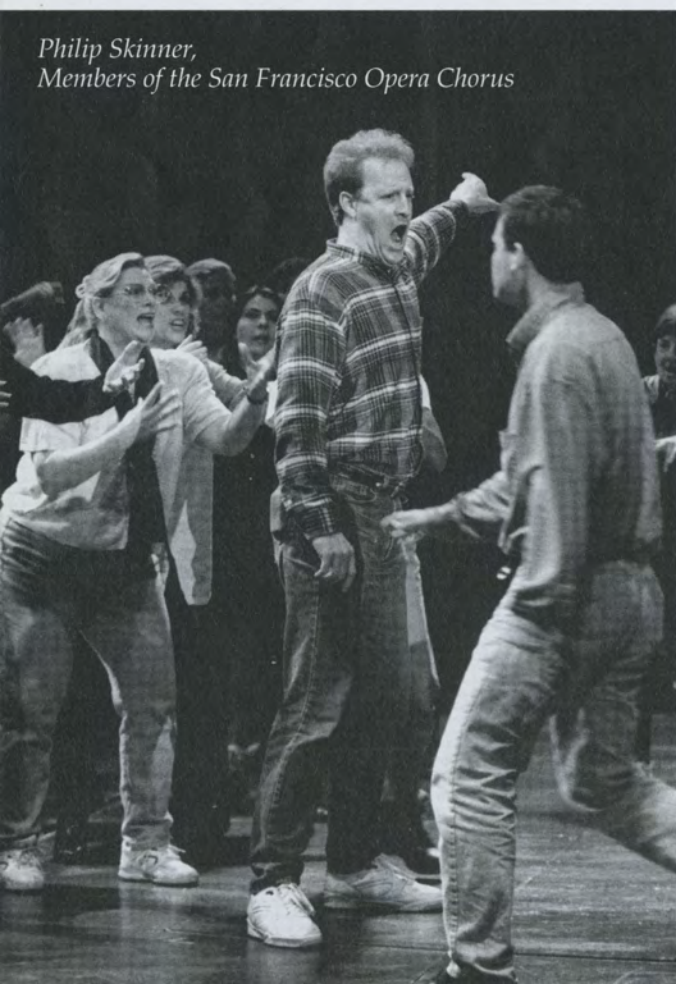
*Nancy Maultsby,
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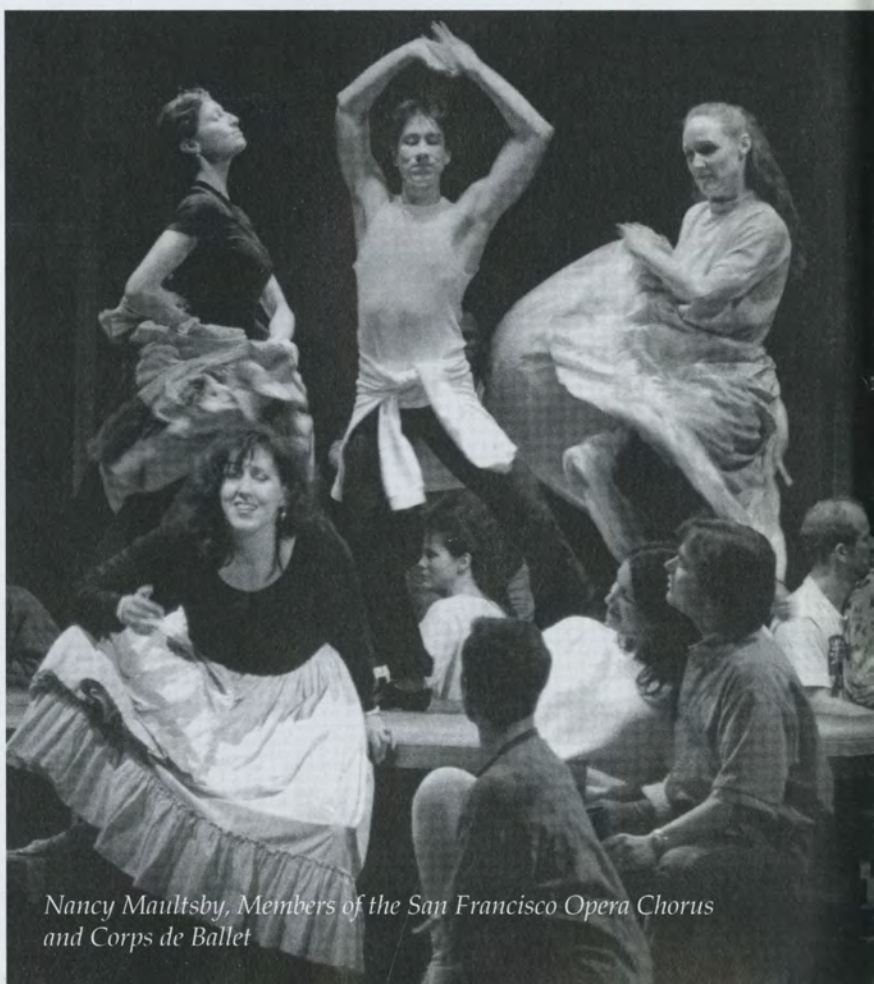
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Sergei Larin*



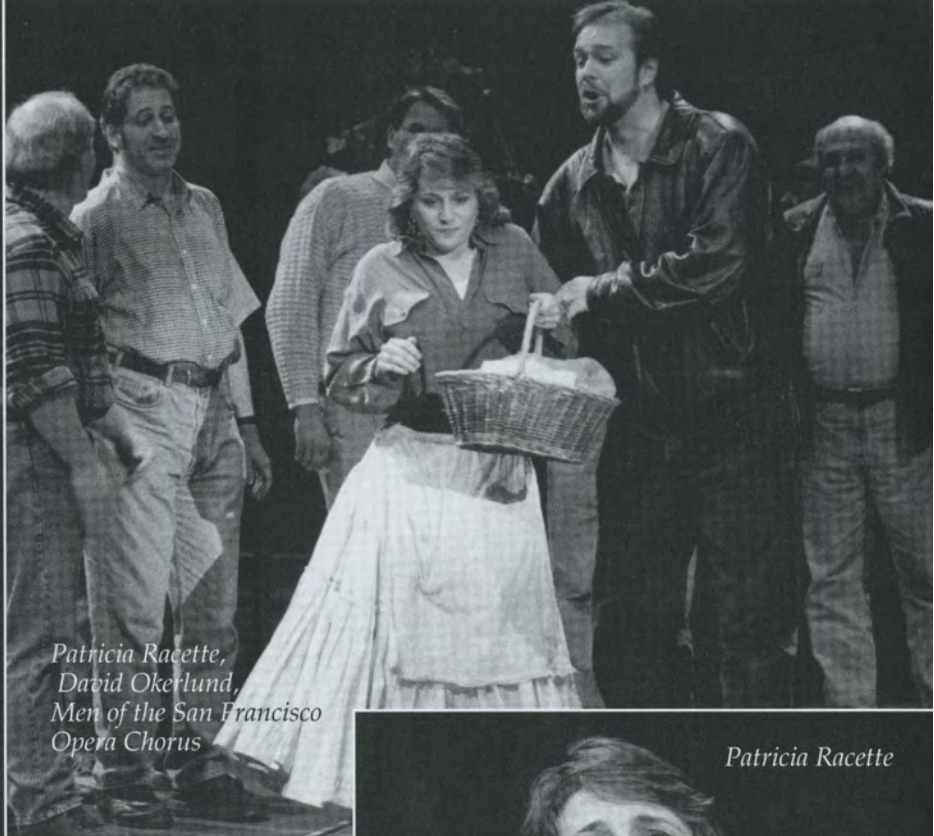
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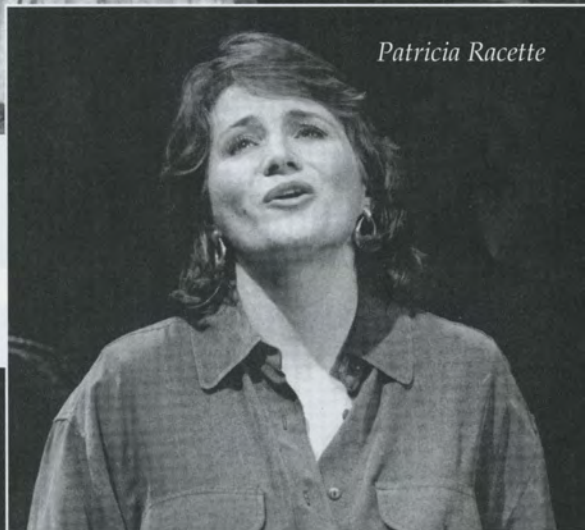
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*Nancy Maultsby,
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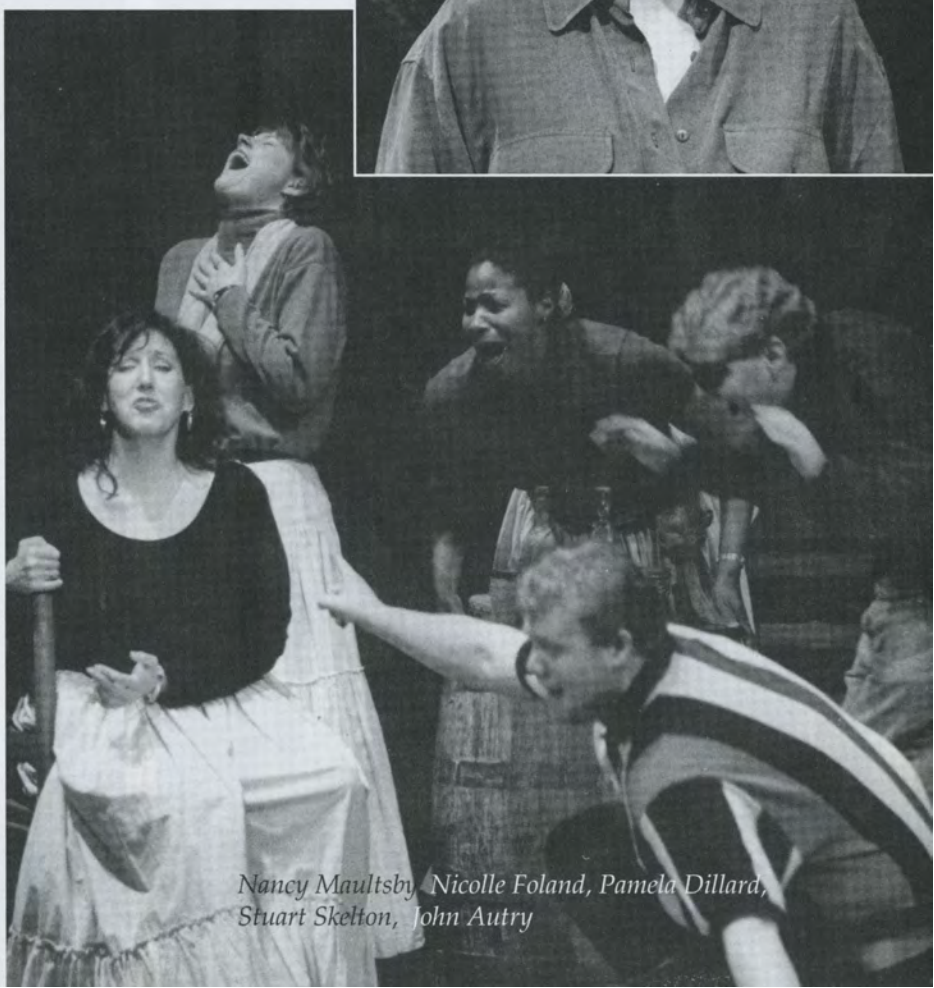
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Patricia Racette



Setgei Larin



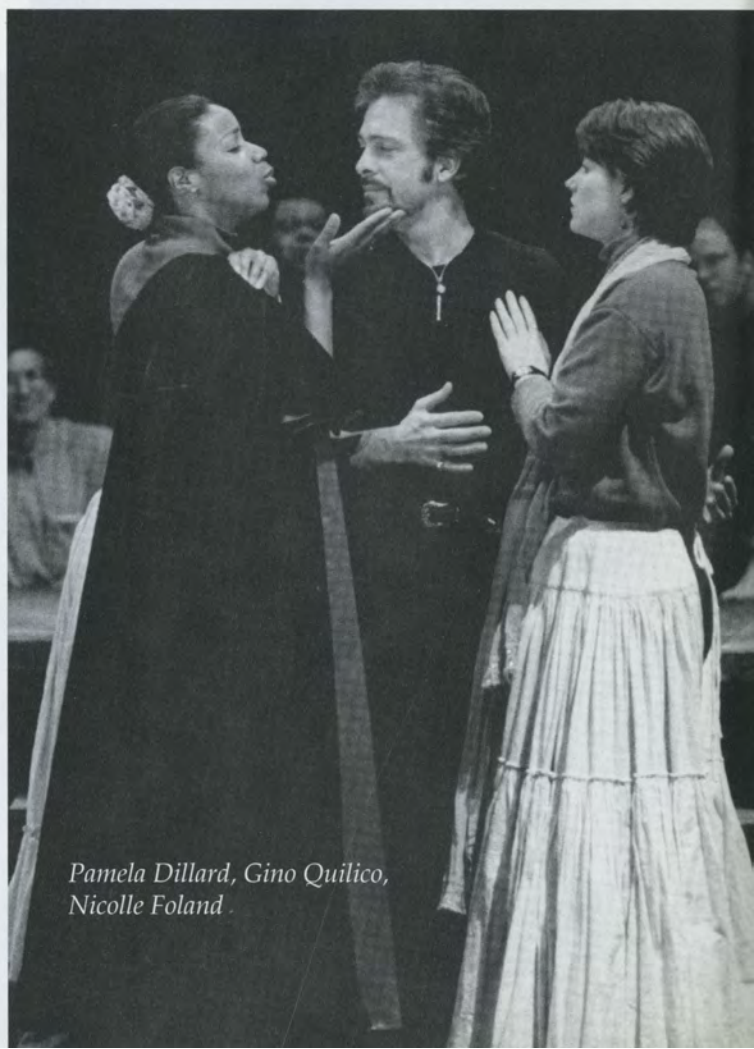
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ARDIS KRAINIK

A Tribute From Lotfi Mansouri

On Saturday, January 18, the opera world lost one of its most beloved and inspiring leaders: Ardis Krainik. She served as general director of the Lyric Opera of Chicago beginning in 1981, and in just 15 years transformed the Lyric into one of the world's great opera companies: artistically exciting, financially successful. She was deservedly nicknamed the "Superwoman of Opera." In addition to being a universally esteemed colleague, Ardis was a close friend of mine for more than 30 years. She personified warmth, humanity, and generosity. She cared deeply for the art form and for all of her colleagues.

Ardis was born in Wisconsin in 1929. She initially pursued a career as a mezzo-soprano (during the Lyric's first season in 1954) until she was appointed assistant manager at Lyric Opera in 1960 and artistic administrator in 1975. She worked closely with company founder Carol Fox until, upon Carol's retirement, Ardis was named the general director. Her accomplishments there are too numerous to mention, but include vastly expanding the company's repertory, the scope of productions and initiating "Toward the 21st Century," a special program begun in 1989 to include two 20th-century operas every season. In 1993, she announced the purchase and renovation of the Civic Opera House and backstage areas, supported by a \$100-million campaign. As a past president of OPERA America, she had the ability to bring everybody together and inspire them, which it seems was her hallmark wherever she went.

Although Ardis suffered from her illness during the past few months, in her typically dignified way she announced her resignation and oversaw the selection of her successor, William Mason. He had been her right hand, as she had been a right hand to her predecessor. She made sure that the health and well-being of the company would remain intact.

My last meeting with Ardis was at the gala concert in her honor last year in Chicago. It was a day filled with love and gratitude. The Board named the theater after her, and many great artists came especially to participate. At the end of the concert she came onstage in her wheelchair, visibly altered by her illness but with her amazing positive energy. Her speech was awe-inspiring. And after the tribute in the house, she went backstage and graciously received tributes from the orchestra and chorus.

And when all of the formality backstage was finished, I remember that she wheeled herself over to the stage door, and with this wonderful smile, looked up and said warmly, "Now, let's go meet the people." She cared more for people than absolutely anything. And that is my last, and my lasting image of the great Ardis Krainik.

Aida

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A 1916 poster promoted Charlie Chaplin's take on *Carmen*.

Carmen odds, ends . . .

By KORALJKA LOCKHART

It started simply enough. The writer Prosper Mérimée (1803-1870) was traveling in Spain in 1830. In Andalusia, near Murvieda, he stopped at an inn for water and gazpacho. The waitress was a Gypsy girl named Carmencita who made his guide extremely edgy. When pressed for the reason, he whispered that she was a witch. Mérimée made a note of it and moved on. While in Madrid later, he spent some time with the family of Eugénie de Montijo (the future Empress Eugénie, wife of Louis Napoleon III), whose mother told him the true story about a local Gypsy girl who was killed by her jealous lover. He made a note of that as well. That was all.

In 1844, when he started writing the "Carmen" story, he blended the two items, and reworked the whole as a narrative, told to a Frenchman by the imprisoned Don José, the latter relating the whole tragedy in flashback. (The Mérimée plot differs in several places to the all-familiar plot of the opera: Lucas, the picador, becomes Escamillo, the toreador; Carmen dies in the open country, far from Lucas/Escamillo, rather than outside the bullring. Several characters not found in Mérimée were added to the opera: Micaëla, Zuniga, Morales, Frasquita and Mercédès; others, who appear in the novella, have been eliminated.

Don José's suggestion to Carmen that they start a new life in America likewise doesn't exist in the opera.)

Then, in 1874, Georges Bizet (born Alexandre-César-Léopold Bizet in 1838; christened as Georges a year and a half later; died in 1875), for reasons that are still unclear, selected *Carmen* as his next composition. Difficulties during the composition and staging of *Carmen* are covered elsewhere on these pages. Suffice it to say that the opera, after the initial unfavorable response, was fated to become one of the most popular works of all time for the lyric stage. Mérimée still has a name as a prominent French author, but it would not be too far-fetched to say that his name lives on most strongly because of his novella's transformation into the opera, *Carmen*.

After the first performance at the Opéra-Comique, on March 3, 1875, an apparent fiasco, *Carmen* started traveling around the world. According to Loewenberg's "Annals of Opera," the first production was given "only" 50 performances. The composer died shortly after the 30th, believing his opera a complete failure. It re-turned to Paris in 1883, and before too long logged the following statistics: 1891—500th performance; 1904—1,000th; 1910—1,200th, and so on.

Outside of Paris, it went first to Vienna (October 1875), where it was given in Ger-

man, with the composed Guiraud recitatives. Brussels, Antwerp and Budapest followed in 1876; St. Petersburg, Stockholm, London, Dublin, New York (Academy of Music), and Philadelphia in 1878; Melbourne and Naples in 1879; Hamburg, Berlin, Prague and Geneva in 1880; Zurich, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Malta, Barcelona and Buenos Aires in 1881, and so on and on and on.

It made waves. Some prominent people left their *Carmen* impressions in writing. Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, writing to Nadezhda von Meck from Vienna in 1877:

. . . It seems to me that Germany is deteriorating in music. I think the French are now coming to the fore. They have many new and fine talents. Recently I heard Delibes's very skillful music—in its own style—for the ballet *Sylvia*. . . *Swan Lake* is poor stuff compared with *Sylvia*. Nothing during the last few years has charmed me as much as *Carmen* and Delibes's ballet. Perhaps Russia will have a new word to say and also to the rest of Europe. But in Germany there is a marked decline and Wagner is the representative of the period of decadence.

Tchaikovsky to Mme. von Meck from San Remo in 1878:

Among the modern French composers, Bizet and Delibes are my favorites . . . I am very familiar with Bizet's opera *Carmen*. The music is not profound, but it is so fascinating in its simplicity, so full of vitality, so sincere, that I have almost learned it by heart from beginning to end.

And again, this time from St. Petersburg, in 1880:

Yesterday evening—to take a rest from my own work—I played through Bizet's *Carmen* from cover to cover. I consider it a *chef d'oeuvre* in the fullest sense of the word: one of those rare compositions which seems to reflect most strongly in itself the musical tendencies of a whole generation. . . . I cannot play the last scene without tears in my eyes; the gross rejoicings of the crowd who look on at the bullfight, and, on the side of this, the poignant tragedy and death of the

Koraljka Lockhart is San Francisco Opera's Publications Editor

two principal characters, pursued by an evil fate, who come to their inevitable end through a long series of sufferings.

I am convinced that ten years hence *Carmen* will be the most popular opera in the world. But no one is a prophet in his own land. In Paris *Carmen* had no real success . . .

Giacomo Puccini, writing from Milan to his mother in 1881, was brief and to the point:

The season ticket for La Scala is 130 Lire during Carnival and Lent. Frightful, isn't it? To get a reserved seat it is 200 Lire besides admission, which brings it up to 330. Isn't it appalling? Curse poverty! Yesterday I sneaked in for nothing to hear *Carmen*. It really is a beautiful work. What a crowd!

The ever-observant Sigmund Freud, writing to his family from Rome in 1907, had an amusing report, in which the minutest details never escaped his attention. Here are a few excerpts:

This evening, *Carmen* was scheduled at the Quirino Theater. It started at 9 p.m., the hour I usually retire . . . The stage curtain showed all kinds of advertisements: sewing machines, underwear, furniture by installments . . . The . . . orchestra . . . was almost deserted when I arrived. Only one conscientious elderly gentleman was trying out his violin and evidently hadn't had the time to tune and clean it at home. One by one the others appeared, the younger men hitching up their trousers before sitting down; then they produced instruments which they cleaned, put together, and on which they proceeded to make the most appalling sounds . . . Gradually some thirty musicians, with varying amounts of hair, arrived; one of them was a girl . . . I received my first shock when there appeared on the stage a lady whom I took to be Carmen, until I remembered that she must be the good Micaëla. For she was long and thin, her teeth long and bare, with a carrot-colored wig. In short, she looked a bit like those English ladies sent abroad to scare the public. . . . The second, more enduring shock came soon after, for when the bell had stopped ringing there appeared the ardently awaited girls from the cigarette factory, each with a cigarette in her mouth, but so exquisitely ugly, as if they had been provided by an infirmary, an almshouse, or a domestic

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agency. That they smoked was the only human thing about them, but this they shared with the audience. When I arrived, the conscientious violinist had been smoking a Virginia; in the audience, people smoked without restraint, and in the intervals even I—for whom smoking in the theater has always been made difficult because of my strict upbringing—joined in.

At last Carmen made her appearance... [She], by the way, had a very powerful voice and acted with great vivacity, but often rather overdid it. The colossal lady did not seem to be quite the right object for tenderness, and later when she began to dance, in order to detain José, it wasn't exactly graceful... [Don José's] acting, too, was exaggerated; in the beginning he took little notice of Carmen, as though she were a fly buzzing around his newspaper, although she almost shook him by the hair. In the third act he grew furious. Escamillo cut a brilliant figure; unfortunately he mumbled so that one recognized his couplet only when the chorus repeated it. That they didn't restrain themselves when it came to the "March of the Toreador" you can well imagine. The conductor dished it out in all directions, and I had an earful...

Opinions of prominent personalities abounded. Friedrich Nietzsche's *Carmen* summation: "The music is wicked, refined, fantastic, and yet it retains a popular appeal." Richard Wagner, who saw the opera in Vienna in 1875: "At last, someone with ideas in his head." Johannes Brahms, who claimed he saw *Carmen* twenty-one times, called it the finest opera written since the Franco-Prussian War. Ferruccio Busoni considered it "almost perfect," Debussy thought Bizet's death was the greatest blow to French music in a hundred years, and Stravinsky counted *Carmen* among his favorites.

After the turn of the century, *Carmen* continued her reign in the world's opera houses, but it also added a new venue: the silver screen. It started modestly (and silently) in 1907, with Chronophone Films' featurette, followed in 1908 by a Brazilian short, made by Williams & Cia., which included only the Toreador Aria. "Film d'Arte Italiana" got into the act in 1909 with the first longer feature, in which Vittorina Lepanto portrayed Carmen. Marguerite Silva was Carmen in a version produced by Cines shot in 1914-16, which, according to its publicity, was available with the Bizet score "for large and small orchestra."

In 1915, the story hit big time, with a Cecil B. DeMille *Carmen*, starring Geraldine Farrar in the title role, Wallace Reid as Don José, and the appropriately named Pedro de Cordoba as Escamillo. The screenplay was created by the director's brother, William C. DeMille, who used both the opera libretto and the original novella as his basic material. Miss Farrar, for a fee of \$20,000, (plus all expenses and a special railroad car for her trip to and from Hollywood) took an 8-week leave of absence from the Metropolitan Opera in order to be immortalized on celluloid. On



Above: In the Geraldine Farrar "Carmen" book, with images taken from the 1915 movie, this one is captioned: " 'You are the Devil,' José said. 'Yes,' she answered." The actor who portrayed Don José, never identified in the book, was Wallace Reid. Left: Pola Negri as Carmen in the 1918 Ernst Lubitsch movie.

October 1, 1915, the 60-minute film was first shown in Boston's Symphony Hall, "at the special request of Miss Farrar." In November of the same year, a curious hard-bound book hit the bookstores: the "Photo Drama Edition" of *Carmen*. At first glimpse, it gives the appearance of having been written by Miss Farrar, but eventually one finds out that "The editor of this version has woven around the original story of *Carmen* by Prosper Mérimée, the plots upon which both opera and picture are based, so that the reader may better understand and enjoy the various productions of this great classic."

1915 was a vintage year for *Carmen*. No less than three versions were filmed: the one mentioned above, one with Theda Bara in the title role (released in 1916), and Charlie Chaplin's *Burlesque on Carmen* with Edna Purviance.

Another vamp in the Theda Bara vein, Pola Negri, filmed *Gipsy Blood* with director Ernst Lubitsch in 1918 and changed her name from Barbara Apollonia Chalupiec for that purpose; Raquel Miller in 1921, and Vivienne Romance in 1942 (with Jean Marais as Don José). There was even a Mack Sennett version, *The Campus Carmen*, filmed in 1928. *The Loves of Carmen* was filmed twice: in 1927, with Bizet's music and Dolores del Río as Carmen (Victor

McLaglen was Escamillo...), and again in 1948, this time without Bizet, but with Rita Hayworth in the title role and Glenn Ford as Don José.

1955 brought Otto Preminger's *Carmen Jones*, with Dorothy Dandridge and Harry Belafonte in the leading roles. All of the principals' sung numbers were dubbed, Miss Dandridge's by a very young soprano named Marilyn Horne, whose future was to include her San Francisco Spring Opera debut as Carmen in 1961, a Met triumph in the role, and a major recording.

There were lots of others. So many, in fact, that it is safe to assume Bizet's *Carmen* has created more filmed versions, one way or another, than any other opera in the repertoire. There's Peter Brook's abbreviated version, *La Tragédie de Carmen* (1983); there's Carlos Saura's *Carmen Story*, with the action transferred to a flamenco dance studio (1983); there's Francesco Rosi's 1984 major film version of the opera, with Plácido Domingo and Julia Migenes-Johnson; there are videos, laserdisc versions, and many, many recordings.

All that because of Mérimée's novella? Not likely. It is because of Bizet's opera that Carmen became a household word. And to think that it all started with water and gazpacho in a remote Andalusian inn in 1830... ♦

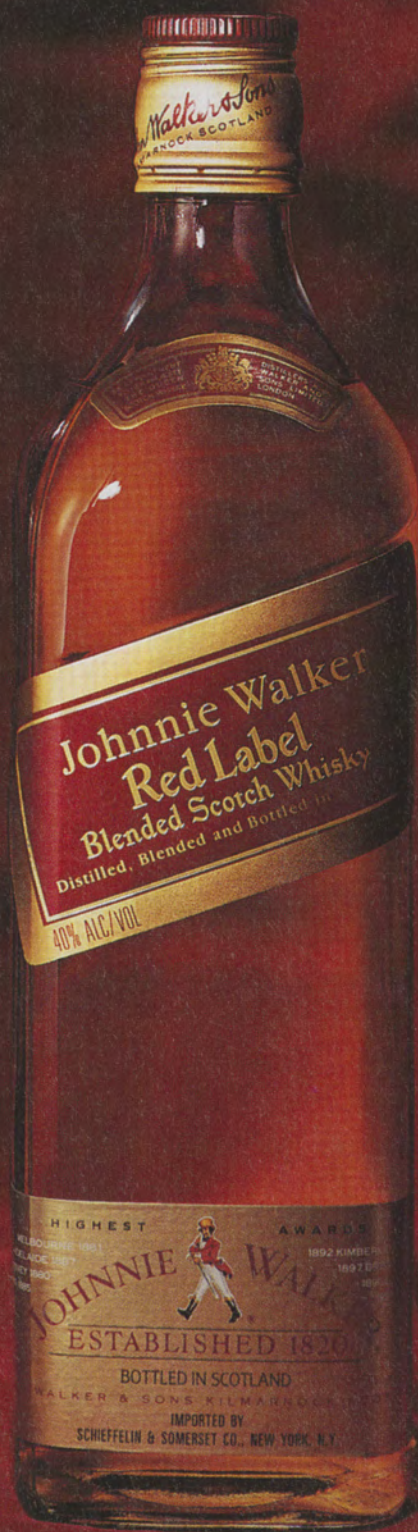
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(continued from page 12)

Secondly, in the novella it is clear that Don José is not a Spaniard but a Basque, and a very religious one at that. He's in the Spanish army stationed near Seville because he killed a man at home, a crime for which his deeply religious mother has not forgiven him. Thus when Micaëla (in the opera; she doesn't appear in the novella) arrives to bring José a "kiss from his mother," it is not the coyly sexual suggestion that it seems on stage, but a significant sign that the tormented young man has been forgiven by his beloved mother. Now he is free to indulge in thoughts other than guilt and forgiveness, and is thus an exposed target for the heat-seeking missile that is Carmen.

Like Puccini's Liù, another much-misunderstood, invented character who does not appear in the original literary source, Micaëla has an important dramatic function. As a foil to the smoldering Gypsy, the Basque girl is everything proper, virginal, sweet and family-oriented. (No wonder the teens in "The Marriage Mart" loved her.) Yet it is a mistake to assume she is merely a "milk-and-water miss." She has the native intelligence to avoid the sexual innuendo of José's soldier friends and the courage to climb the mountains in search of the smugglers when José's mother is taken ill.

Escamillo is also a made-up character, only vaguely suggested in the novel, by a picador named Lucas with whom Carmen admits to José she had an affair. According to Cooper, Escamillo is "the symbol of masculinity and worldly success that José can never hope to achieve." (Making José, of course, a post-Freudian type we are all too familiar with: the lout who treats other people badly because he has no self-esteem. Note that José's abject lack of pride is an invention of the librettists. In the novel he is unbending, stern and much more attractive, described by Mérimée as having the bold look of Milton's Satan.) Cooper responds to complaints about Escamillo's banality by noting that Bizet marked his aria "avec fatuité." It sometimes seems that a baritone is so taken with his "suit of lights" and his swaggering tune that he forgets to project the torero's vanity.

A further hindrance to accepting *Carmen's* greatness is the fact that, for nearly a century, we heard not Bizet's original opéra comique—with tons of spoken dialogue clearing up plot and motivational questions and serving as a palate-cleansing *sorbet* to the riches of the vocal music—but a bastardized version with recitatives (sung dialogue) by Ernest Guiraud. They were written for a Vienna pro-



Ezio Pinza was San Francisco Opera's Escamillo in 1928, 1931, 1934, 1936, 1940, and 1943. This photo was taken backstage in 1936.

duction of *Carmen* after Bizet's death; the Austrian capital could not accept opera with spoken dialogue, or so it is said. (How did they perform *Die Zauberflöte*?) Guiraud, a New-Orleans-born musicologist who wrote the first French analysis of Wagnerian scores and who was Debussy's much-loved tutor, is best known today as the "monster" who composed recitatives for *Carmen* and completed the orchestration of Offenbach's posthumous *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (also on this season's San Francisco Opera schedule). Guiraud's recitatives were included in the Choudens score, used universally for nearly a century.

We could endlessly discuss how the recitatives alter the work and whether dialogue is artistically preferable. We cannot discuss whether dialogue works in a large theater, spoken by non-French speaking audiences. The blunt truth is that it does not work. San Francisco Opera has performed *Carmen* since the mid-1970s in dialogue versions. Even with as insinuating a heroine as Teresa Berganza, there was always something puny about the spoken word in a house as large as the War Memorial, nearly twice the size of the Opéra-Comique. Since

the Civic Auditorium is even larger, San Francisco Opera has wisely decided to revert this season to Guiraud's recitatives. Suffice to say that, while the dialogue version may be an ideal, it is the *music* of *Carmen* that has kept the work alive for 121 years.

Bizet was a magpie. He literally needed to borrow, even from himself, in order to free his muse. Of course he managed to make the borrowings his own, but the act itself was a kind of emotional kleptomania. For much of his career, whenever Gounod wrote something, Bizet tried to copy him. He desperately wanted to write a French grand opera in the style of Meyerbeer. These ambitions make us smile today. Why would a genius like Bizet want to emulate hacks like Gounod and Meyerbeer? The truth is that the composer lacked self-confidence, possibly because his vision was so far in advance of his times. It has been said that Bizet wanted to "reform" opéra comique, but in reality he killed it. After his death, no one could top *Carmen* and so the genre died.

In *Carmen* we hear self-borrowings from lesser, unfinished or now lost operas. Bizet supposedly wrote 30 such works, but only half a dozen still exist. José's "Flower Song" is borrowed from just such a lost opera, *La Coupe du Roi de Thulé*. Carmen's "Habanera", on the other hand, was stolen outright from a song titled "El Arreglito" by Sebastian Yradier. The *entr'acte* before the bullfight was filched from a *polo* (Andalusian tune) by Manuel García, the famous singing teacher whose daughters Maria Malibran and Pauline Viardot typified the opera diva of the last century.

Above all, Bizet was a melodist. (That would explain Tchaikovsky's infatuation with Bizet, for he, too, was a supreme tunesmith.) We have only to listen to the tenor aria and tenor-baritone duet from *Pêcheurs de Perles* to recognize melody so ravishing it is nearly indecent. Melodic eroticism is rampant in *Carmen*; you don't have to see it on stage or even understand French to experience its melodic attraction. Let Bizet have the last word, in case you think the charms of *Carmen* are somehow an accident. In 1867, the composer confessed to a friend: "I am German by conviction, heart and soul [i.e. he means musically; Beethoven was a god], but I sometimes get lost in artistic houses of ill fame. And I confess to you under my breath that I find infinite pleasure there. I love Italian music as one loves a courtesan . . ." Be thankful that he did, and that he wasn't ashamed to let us share his passion. ♦

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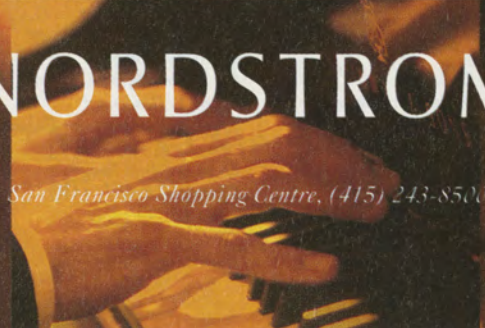
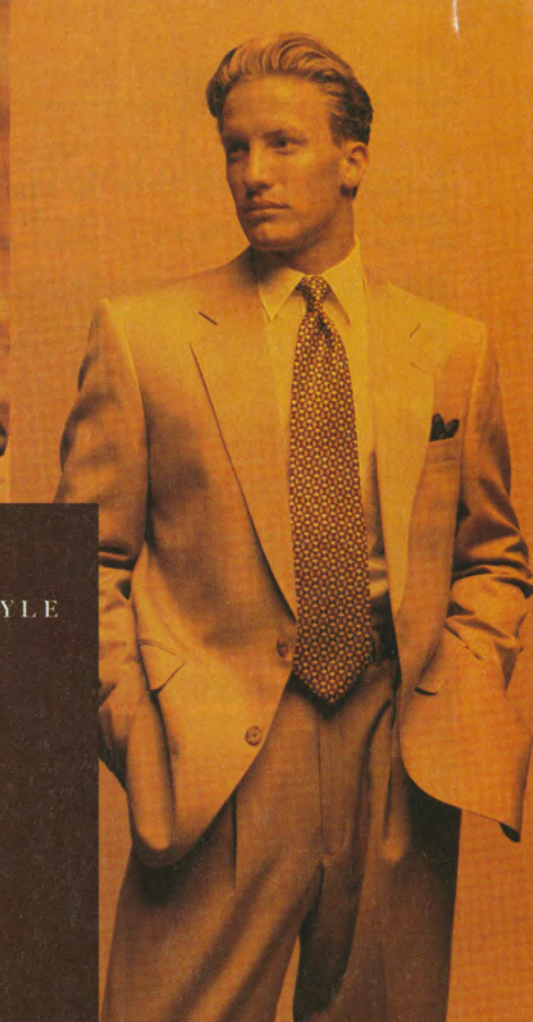
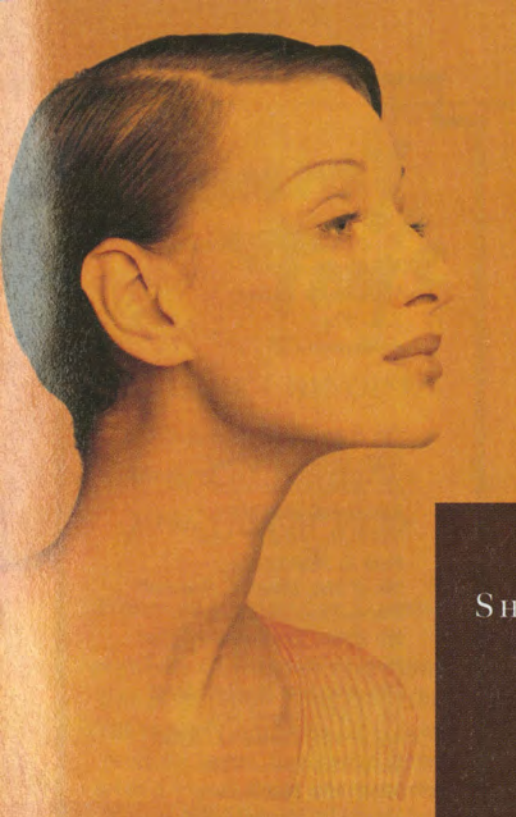
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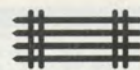
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ARTIST PROFILES



A 1993 recipient of the prestigious Marian Anderson Award and 1996 winner of Lincoln Center's Marvin E. Segal Award, mezzo-soprano **NANCY MAULTSBY** is in demand by opera companies and orchestras throughout the world. She made her European operatic debut with the Netherlands Opera as Afra in Catalani's *La Wally* and was soon re-engaged there for performances of Maddalena in *Rigoletto*. Her Italian operatic debut was at Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice as Adalgisa in *Norma* led by Bruno Bartoletti. A graduate of the Lyric Opera of Chicago's Center for American Artists, Miss Maults-

by has a close association with the parent company, where she has sung Erda in *Das Rheingold* and Siegfried, Grimgerde in *Die Walküre*, and the First Norn in *Götterdämmerung*. Recent operatic highlights include the *Ring* cycle (Erda, Schwertleite, First Norn), Charlotte in *Werther*, and the title role of *Carmen* for Seattle Opera, Jocasta in Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* at the Ludwigsburg Festival, and a return to Chicago for their *Ring* cycle. The mezzo also has an impressive list of orchestral and concert credits. She has performed at the major music centers of the world with the symphony orchestras of St. Louis, Atlanta, Cincinnati, Washington, D.C., Houston, Baltimore, Minneapolis, Montreal, Amsterdam, Paris, Lyon and Tel Aviv, among others. Her extensive concert repertoire includes Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*, Mahler's Second, Third and Eighth Symphonies, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's Mass in B Minor, Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*, Verdi's Requiem, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*, Bernstein's *Jeremiah* Symphony, and Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été*. Among the artist's recordings are Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, the Mahler Eighth, Mozart's Requiem, and the role of Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* with the Boston Baroque. The young artist is a graduate of Westminster Choir College, later studying with Margaret Harshaw at the Indiana School of Music.



Winner of the prestigious 1994 Marian Anderson Award, soprano **PATRICIA RACETTE** has already performed major roles with the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna State Opera, Netherlands Opera, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Paris Opera/Bastille, Welsh National Opera, New York City Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Santa Fe Opera, San Diego Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Vancouver Opera, and her hometown company, San Francisco Opera. A 1989-90 Adler Fellow with numerous Opera Center credits, she made her Company debut in 1989 as Mis-

tress Ford in family performances of *Falstaff*. Since then the young artist has sung many roles here, including Micaëla in *Carmen*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, and, most recently, Antonia in the new production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. Miss Racette garnered international critical acclaim in the title role of Tobias Picker's *Emmeline* at the Santa Fe Opera this past summer. (The production will be nationally televised on PBS this spring.) Additional recent engagements include her debut with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden and a return to the Met as Mimi, as well as a bow at the Paris Opera/Bastille as Musetta in *La Bohème*. On the concert stage, she has appeared with the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, and was the soprano soloist in the West Coast premiere of Stephen Albert's *Flower of the Mountain*. Upcoming engagements include Mathilde in *Guillaume Tell* for San Francisco Opera, Violetta in *La Traviata* at Santa Fe Opera, Paris Opera/Bastille, and Houston Grand Opera, in addition to *Turandot* (Liù), *Peter Grimes* (Ellen Orford), and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Antonia) at the Metropolitan Opera.



After receiving critical acclaim as Musetta in *La Bohème* this summer, **NICOLLE FOLAND** returned to the Company to sing Frasquita in *Carmen*, Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*, multiple roles in *Harvey Milk*, and the High Priestess in *Aida*. In addition, she appeared as soloist in a special concert with Plácido Domingo. In her second year as an Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, the soprano performed four roles in her debut season with San Francisco Opera in 1995: Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Clorinda in *La Cenerentola*, Gerhilde in *Die Walküre*, and a Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*. A veteran of two Merola Opera Programs and two Western Opera Theater national tours, Miss Foland's Opera Center credits include Adele and Rosalinda in the 1993 production of *Die Fledermaus*; Donna Anna in the 1994 staging of *Don Giovanni*; and Tina in the 1996 Showcase Series production of Dominick Argento's *The Aspern Papers*. Miss Foland, a native of Des Moines, received a master of music degree from the University of Northern Iowa where she appeared as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*. The winner of numerous awards and competitions, she was a studio artist with Central City Opera and has appeared with Peoria Civic Opera as Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* and at Indianapolis Opera as Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. Upcoming engagements include Micaëla in *Carmen* with Cincinnati Opera, as well as Musetta with the Los Angeles Music Center Opera and Seattle Opera.



Mezzo-soprano **PAMELA DILLARD**, Mercédès in *Carmen*, made her San Francisco Opera mainstage debut in 1994 in *The Dangerous Liaisons* and *The Fiery Angel*, and was seen last season as 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* and 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 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 can be heard on *Watch and Pray*, a recording of spirituals and art songs by African-American women composers.

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SERGEI LARIN made his U.S. opera debut as Cavaradossi in San Francisco Opera's 1992 staging of *Tosca* and was seen here in 1995 as the Prince in the Company premiere of Dvořák's *Rusalka*. 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 Theatre, 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, Stockholm, Frankfurt, Berlin and Zurich. Recent highlights include a highly favorable debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Cavaradossi with a return to the Met as Don José in *Carmen*; 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; Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino* and Florestan in concert performances of *Fidelio* in Turin; Dick Johnson in *La Fanciulla del West* conducted by Giuseppe Sinopoli at La Scala; Loris in *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 Claudio Abbado, 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 Abbado, Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa* (Andrei) conducted by Järvi, as well as Scriabin's First Symphony. The artist is the recipient of the coveted Verdi Prize from Parma's Giuseppe Verdi Society.



Held in high esteem as an interpreter of the French and Italian repertoire, baritone **GINO QUILICO** appears regularly with the world's major opera companies, including the San Francisco Opera, Metropolitan Opera, La Scala in Milan, the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Vienna State Opera, Paris Opera and the Bayerische Staatsoper. Among the many festivals in which he has participated are those of Salzburg, Edinburgh, Schwetzingen, Aix-en-Provence and Orange. Since

his Company debut in the fall of 1986 as Lescaut in *Manon*, he has appeared here as Marcello in *La Bohème* (1988), Silvio in *Pagliacci* (1990), in the title role of *Don Giovanni* (1991), as Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* (1992), and Prince Yeletsky in *The Queen of Spades* (1993). Recent career highlights include appearances at the Salzburg Festival as Dandini in *La Cenerentola*; at the Met as Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Valentin in *Faust*, Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Belcore (the last role performed both in New York and on the company's tour of Japan); at La Scala as Lescaut in *Manon Lescaut* and Marcello; at the Paris Opera as Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, Oreste in *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and Yeletsky; as well as at the State Operas of Berlin and Vienna as Oreste. His 1995-96 season included *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Paris Opera/Bastille, Figaro in *The Ghosts of Versailles* and Ford in *Falstaff* at the Met, Don Giovanni and Escamillo in *Carmen* in Munich, and Iago in *Otello* in Cologne. The Canadian singer has appeared in two feature films, *La Bohème* and Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, numerous operatic videos, and has recorded over 20 operas including *Manon*, *Don Pasquale*, *Les Troyens*, *Carmen*, *La Cenerentola* and *Bohème*. Named 1988 "Artist of the Year" by the Canadian Music Council, he was

ARTIST PROFILES

appointed Canada's first Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In recognition of his accomplishments and contributions to the world of music, Quilico was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1993.



Baritone **JOHN AUTRY** performs during the 1996-97 season in *Hamlet*, *Lohengrin*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, *Harvey Milk*, and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. In his second year as an Adler Fellow, he made his Company debut last summer as Schaunard in *La Bohème*, portrayed Pasquale in the Opera Center's '96 Showcase production of *The Aspern Papers*, and sang the role of the Father in the Opera Guild's recent holiday presentation of *Hansel and Gretel*. In 1994, he made his New York City Opera debut as Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, a role he repeated on that company's 1995 national tour of the same production.

Additional recent engagements include Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with Birmingham Opera Theater, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Shreveport Opera, as well as Ping in *Turandot* and Benoit in *La Bohème* with Palm Beach Opera. As a member of the 1995 Merola Opera Program he sang the roles of the Viceroy in *La Périochole* and Antonio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. A native of Birmingham, Alabama, the baritone received his bachelor of music degree from Samford University and continues his studies at Boston University and Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts. A 1994 National Winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Autry had also won awards at vocal competitions in Palm Beach, Birmingham and Mobile. Most recently, the young artist was the recipient of a career grant from Opera Index.



In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, 1996-97 Adler Fellow **STUART SKELTON** performs a number of roles, appearing in *Hamlet*, *Lohengrin*, *Carmen*, *Harvey Milk*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Salome* and *Aida*. The tenor made his operatic debut in his native Australia as Alfredo in *La Traviata* with Rockdale Opera Company. The winner of two of Australia's most prestigious competitions, the Marianne Mathy Award and the McDonald's Aria Award, he made his 1993 Australian Opera

debut in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Skelton recently received his master of music degree from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music where his credits included Sam Polk in *Susanah*, Don José in scenes from *Carmen*, and Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*. Concert engagements include highlights from *Madama Butterfly* and *La Traviata* with the Louisville Symphony Orchestra, and the Verdi Requiem with the Lubbock Symphony Orchestra. A 1995 Merola Opera Program participant, he appeared as Piquillo in *La Périochole* as well as Don Basilio and Don Curzio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, repeating his Figaro roles for Western Opera Theater's 1995 national tour. In addition to his roles for the Company, Skelton portrayed the composer Aspern in S.F. Opera Center's '96 Showcase production of *The Aspern Papers* and sang the part of the Witch in S.F. Opera Guild's holiday presentation of *Hansel and Gretel*.



DAVID OKERLUND is featured in several roles with the Company this season, including the King's Herald in *Lohengrin*, Morales in *Carmen*, and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*. He also took part in a special concert with Plácido Domingo. The baritone made his bow with San Francisco Opera last fall, portraying Baron Douphol in *La Traviata*, Dandini in the student matinee presentation of *La Cenerentola*, and the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*. Assignments for the 1995-96 Adler Fellow earlier this year included a Schwabacher Debut Recital, Schaunard in *La Bohème*, and the role of The Lodger in the

Opera Center's '96 Showcase presentation of *The Aspern Papers*. A native of Kearney, Nebraska, the young artist received apprenticeships from the Des Moines Metro Opera and the Lyric Opera of Kansas where he sang many leading baritone roles. A 1993-94 member of the Merola Opera Program, his Opera Center credits include Falke in *Die Fledermaus* and the title role of *Don Giovanni*, roles he performed both for the Merola Program and for Western Opera Theater's national tours. Recent appearances include Donner in Arizona Opera's production of *Das Rheingold*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* for Opera Carolina and Piedmont Opera Theater, Britten's *War Requiem* and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the San Mateo Masterworks Chorale, as well as two assignments he performed as part of the 1995 United Nations 50th anniversary celebration: the role of the Bonze in the Opéra de Lyon's production of *Madama Butterfly*, and soloist in the Company's U.N. Concert. Future plans include the title role of *Don Giovanni* and Silvio in *Pagliacci* at the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* to inaugurate the New National Theatre of Tokyo, and a return to S.F. Opera during the 1997-98 season to portray Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*.



PHILIP SKINNER portrays Zuniga in *Carmen* and Crespel in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. In his twelfth consecutive season with San Francisco Opera, the bass-baritone has appeared here in over 30 different operas since his 1985 debut in *Adriana Lecouvreur*. Among the numerous roles he has sung with the Company are Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, Méphistophélès in the student/family performances of *Faust*, Lorenzo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and Count Horn (Sam) in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. During the 1995 season he appeared here as the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*, Wagner in *Faust*, the Water Spirit in *Ru-*

salka, and was seen this summer as Colline in *La Bohème*. The artist was a 1985 Merola Opera Program participant and went on to tour with Western Opera Theater in the title role of *Don Giovanni*. A 1986-87 Adler Fellow, he appeared in several of the Center's Showcase productions and was a 1990 Schwabacher Debut Recitalist. In recent seasons Skinner sang King Philip in *Don Carlo* with Portland Opera, Timur in *Turandot* with Atlanta Opera, Colline and Ferrando with Dallas Opera, Angelotti in *Tosca* and the First Workman in *Wozzeck* with the Chicago Lyric Opera, made his Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie debut in *Salome*, and appeared as the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* at the Opéra de Nantes. He has also performed with the opera companies of Houston (title role of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and the four villains of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Seattle, Vancouver, Toronto, Edmonton, and Melbourne, Australia, among others, as well as with numerous prominent U.S. orchestras. The American artist, currently a resident of the Bay Area, graduated from Northwestern University and received his master's degree from Indiana University.

ARTIST PROFILES



EMMANUEL JOEL has conducted extensively throughout Europe, with acclaimed performances at the Paris Opera/Bastille, Wexford Festival, Dublin Opera, Scottish Opera, English National Opera, Australian Opera, New Israeli Opera, and the opera companies of Nantes, Montpellier, Toulouse and Nancy. After studies at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris, the French artist made his 1993 professional opera debut at the Paris Opera/Bastille with Offenbach's *Les Brigands*. There soon followed engagements at the Wexford Festival (Boieldieu's *La Dame Blanche*), in

Utrecht with Opera Zuid (Chabrier's *L'Étoile*), and in Dublin (Delibes's *Lakmé*). Performances during the 1994-95 season included a debut at London's English National Opera with a critically acclaimed new production of *Don Quixote* and a return to the ENO for *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*, *Carmen* at the Jerusalem Festival, *Semele* and *Pêcheurs de Perles* with Melbourne's Victoria State Opera, as well as a new staging of Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène* with Scottish Opera. Among Maestro Joel's most recent engagements are a new production of *Werther* with Tel Aviv's New Israeli Opera, *Eugene Onegin* in Toulouse, *Samson et Dalila* with the Australian Opera, and Chausson's *King Arthur* with the Montpellier Opera. In France, he has led *The Fiery Angel* for Opéra de Nancy with great success, in addition to *Tosca*, *Rigoletto* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio* for the Opéra de Nantes. In concert, the maestro has led the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne at the Montreux Festival, Orchestre de Bretagne, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, and the Orchestre Symphonique de la Monnaie in Brussels.



With productions seen at opera houses throughout the world, **LOTFI MANSOURI** is at the forefront of international opera directors and administrators. San Francisco Opera's fourth general director (appointed in 1988) since its founding, his professional association with the Company dates back to 1963, when he directed six productions. At the conclusion of the 1996-97 Fall Season, the number of Mansouri productions at San Francisco Opera reaches 60, with new stagings of *Carmen*, *Die Fledermaus* and *Salome*. Born in Iran, Mansouri attended college at UCLA and received U.S. citizenship

before serving as resident stage director at Zurich Opera from 1960 to 1966. In 1965, he started working simultaneously at the Geneva Opera, where he became head stage director in 1966 and stayed until 1976. During this period, he began fulfilling engagements as guest director at various houses throughout Italy and North America, including Chicago, Houston, Santa Fe, Philadelphia, Tulsa, San Diego, Dallas and both the Metropolitan and New York City Opera companies. In 1976, he was named general director of the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, where he directed 30 new productions, 12 of them Canadian premieres, including *Wozzeck*, *Lulu*, *Death in Venice*, *Die Meistersinger* and Thomas's *Hamlet* (featuring the only Ophelia ever sung on stage by Joan Sutherland). During his tenure at San Francisco Opera, numerous international artists have made their U.S. operatic debuts here, and five productions have been taped for telecast and videocassette (*Mefistofele*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Capriccio*, *Turandot* and *The Dangerous Liaisons*). Mansouri's 1979 production of *La Gioconda* was the Company's first to receive a live international telecast. He has also worked to establish the highly successful exchange with the Kirov Opera that has resulted in productions of *War and Peace* (1991), *Boris Godunov* (1992), *The Fiery Angel* (1994) and *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1995). In addition, Mansouri conceived the new "festival-style" opera environment at the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. His stagings of *Tosca*, *Death in Venice* and *Guillaume Tell* will be seen at the War Memorial during the Company's 1997-98 season.



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

Opera (*Vanessa*, *Rigoletto*), San Diego Opera (*Aida*), Houston Grand Opera (*Carousel*), and Virginia Opera (*Anna Bolena*, *Così fan tutte*, *Porgy and Bess*), among others. Internationally, he has designed productions for Welsh National Opera (*Beatrice and Benedict*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Norma*, *La Bohème*, *The Merry Widow*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*), Covent Garden (*Stiffelio*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Aida*, *Attila*), Scottish Opera (*La Forza del Destino*, *La Bohème*), Théâtre Musical de Paris (*Die Zauberflöte*), Frankfurt Opera (*Così fan tutte*) and the Australian Opera (*Werther*, *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*). Yeargan has also designed New York productions of Terrence McNally's *Bad Habits* and *The Ritz*, and has worked extensively with the New York Shakespeare Festival, American Repertory Theatre and London's West End. His designs will be seen in the Company's new production of *Rigoletto* during the 1997-98 season.



THIERRY BOSQUET designed the principal costumes for *Aida* and *Carmen*, as well as the costumes for *Die Fledermaus*, the work which was the vehicle of his 1990 San Francisco Opera debut. Additional Company credits have been the sets (from the original Alfred Roller designs) for *Der Rosenkavalier* and the costumes for *Capriccio* (1993 Strauss Festival), the sets and costumes for 1995's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (originally designed by Alexander Golovin and Konstantin Korovin for the 1904 Glinka Centennial and realized by Bosquet), and the costumes for *Don Giovanni*, also presented last fall. The Belgian designer received his training and diploma at the National School of Architecture, Art and Design in Brussels. Since 1959, he has created the sets and costumes for over 75 operas and ballets at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels. He has also designed the sets and costumes for over 50 operas, ballets and dramas produced in France, Italy, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Canada, South America, Australia and the United States. Works recently designed include *Rigoletto* and *Otello* in Liège, *La Belle Hélène* for the Canadian Opera Company, as well as *Werther*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *The Mikado* and *La Traviata* for the New York City Opera. In addition to his work in the theater, he was the designer of the Belgian film *La Chambre Rouge*, and is the subject of a film by Jean Antoine for Belgian television. Bosquet returns to the Company this fall with designs for *Pelléas et Mélisande* and the re-creation of our 1932 production of *Tosca*.



VICTORIA MORGAN, who staged the dance sequences for *Carmen* and *Salome*, is in her ninth year as Resident Choreographer for San Francisco Opera. She has previously created the dances for the Company's stagings of *Don Quichotte* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1990), *War and Peace* (1991), *Andrea Chénier* (1992), *Hérodiade* and *Mefistofele* (1994), last fall's presentation of *Rusalka*, 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*, *La Rondine*, and *Candide*, a work she also re-staged for Boston Lyric Opera. Miss Morgan has also choreographed the recent production of *Turandot* for Seattle Opera, *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, was the featured choreographer and dancer in the documentary *The Creation of O.M.O.*, and recently produced a CD-ROM—a comprehensive visual dictionary of ballet terms. The artist 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.



In his fifth season with San Francisco Opera, **MICHAEL WHITFIELD** is the lighting designer for the new staging of *Carmen*. His previous Company assignments were the 1989 presentation of *Lulu*, *Wozzeck* in 1990, the new staging of *Macbeth* in 1994, as well as last fall's productions of *Anna Bolena* and *Don Giovanni*. The Canadian-born artist received his training at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, and continued at Pennsylvania's Villanova University and the University of Illinois at Urbana. Associated with the Stratford Shakespearean Festival since 1974, he has been resi-

dent lighting designer there since 1978. At the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, he has designed lighting for over 50 productions, including several Canadian premieres, working with an impressive list of stage directors such as John Copley, Jonathan Eaton, Nikolaus Lehnhoff, Brian Macdonald, Lotfi Mansouri and Elijah Moshinsky, among others. Additional opera engagements include those at the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam (*La Belle Hélène*, 1984), Houston Grand Opera (*Boris Godunov*, 1986), Los Angeles Music Center Opera (*Macbeth*, 1987), Welsh National Opera (*Tornrak*, 1990), and New Orleans Opera (*Don Carlo*, 1992). Whitfield is also active in the areas of Canadian regional theater, ballet, television production and teaching. He will be designing the lighting for the Company premiere of *Death in Venice* during the 1997-98 season.

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Carmen

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Janice Chung	Jonathan Chin	Ross Morey
Jessica Dillon	Victor Chu	Spencer Phipps
Ange Hones	Ian Crawford	Gianmarco Puglisi
Lauren Levinger	Jason Delodovici	Jacoby Puglisi
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Liam Bradshaw	Laszlo Hites	Joseph St. Marie
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Nathan Calixto	Ryan Kellett	

CHILDREN'S CHORUSES

San Francisco Girls Chorus	June Wiley, <i>Director</i>
San Francisco Boys Chorus	Ian Robertson, <i>Director</i>
Ragazzi, the Peninsula Boys Chorus	Joyce Keil, <i>Director</i>
Costars	Wanda Sherman, <i>Director</i>

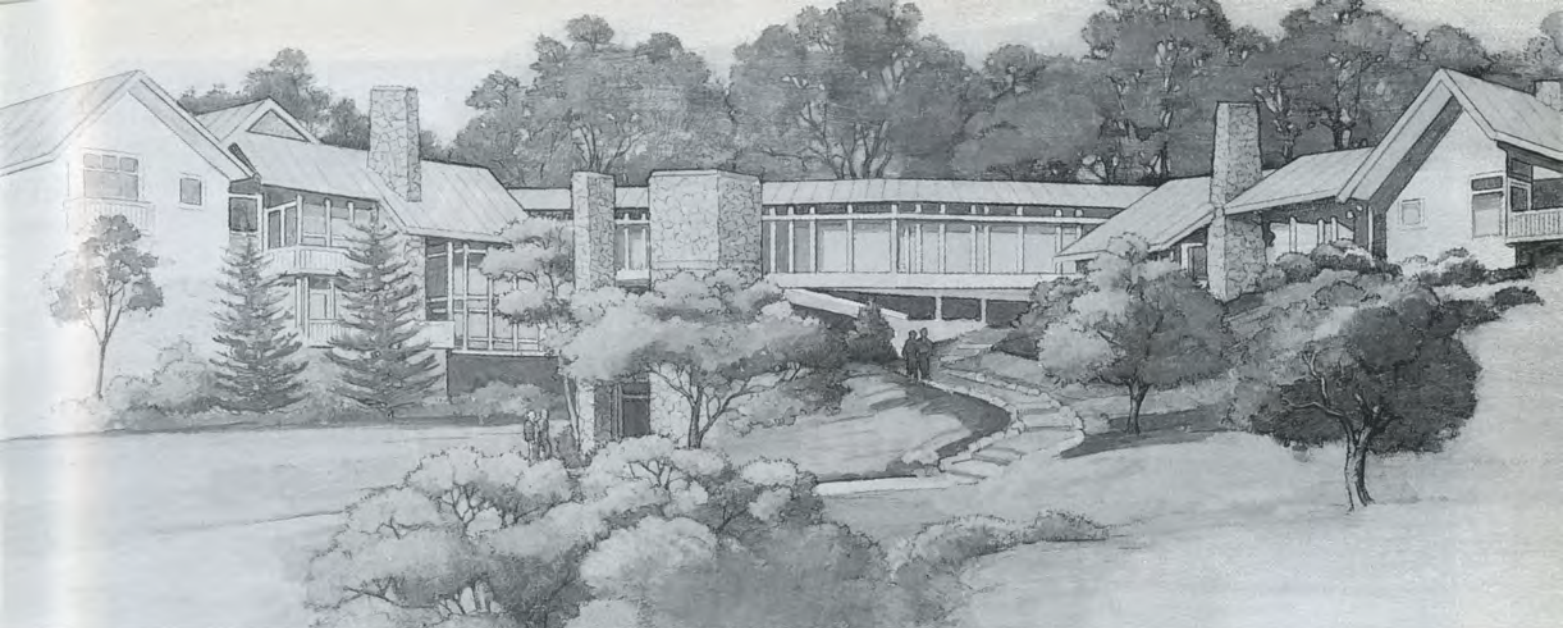
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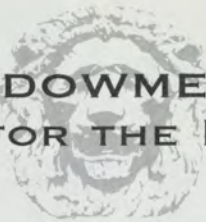
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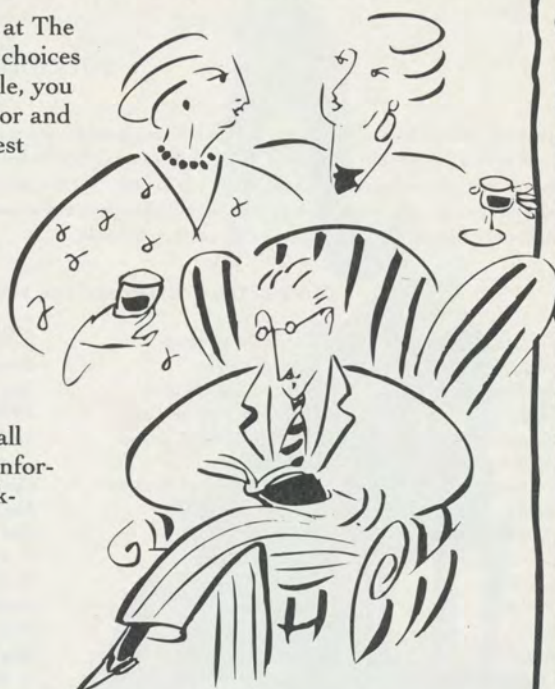
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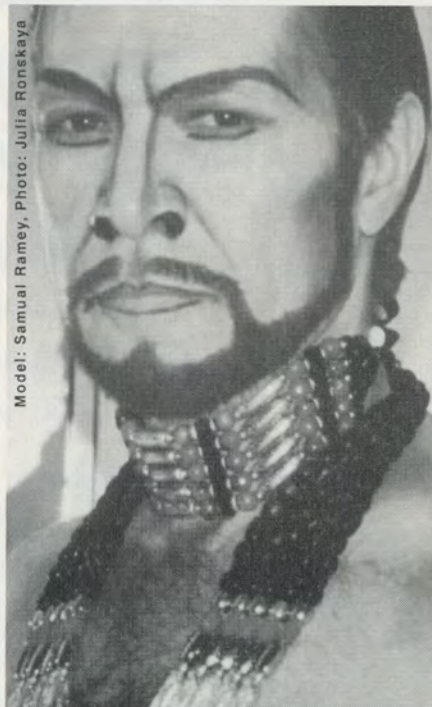
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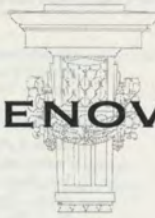
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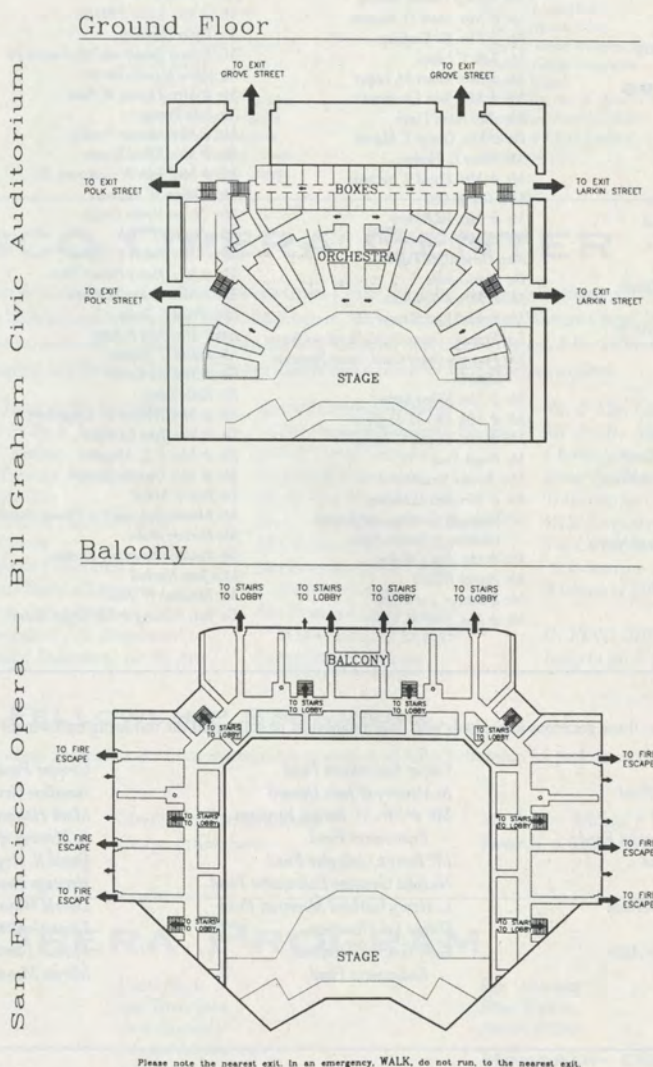
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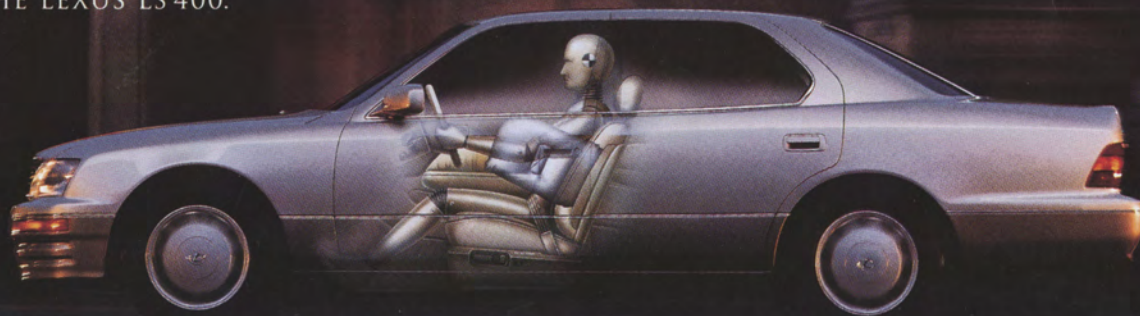
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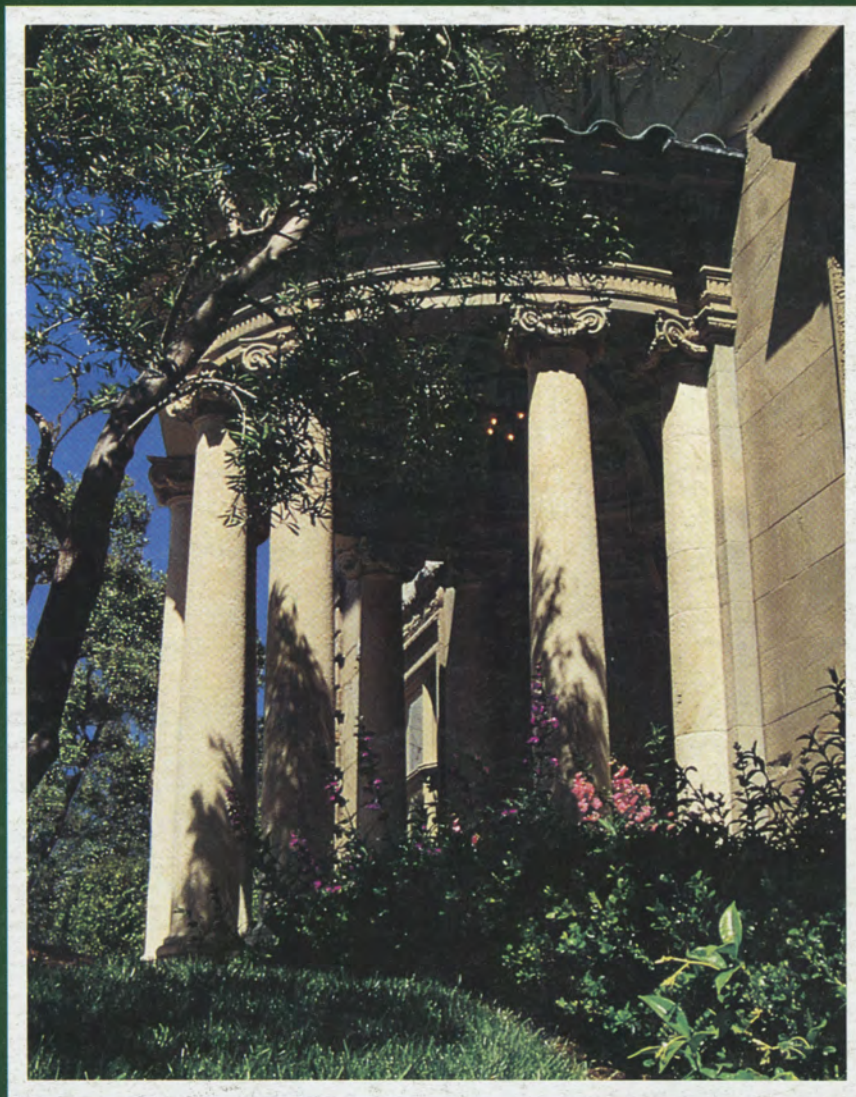
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