

Salome

1996-1997

Saturday, January 18, 1997 8:00 PM

Tuesday, January 21, 1997 8:00 PM

Thursday, January 23, 1997 7:30 PM

Sunday, January 26, 1997 2:00 PM

Wednesday, January 29, 1997 7:30 PM

Saturday, February 1, 1997 8:00 PM

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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA

1996-97 SEASON

SALOME



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

Salome

1996-97 Season
Vol. 74, No. 10

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COVER

Stuck, Franz von (1863-1928)

Salome, 1906

Oil on canvas, 44 7/8 x 36 1/4

Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich

Photo: Koopmann

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*San Francisco Opera debut

(continued on page 6)

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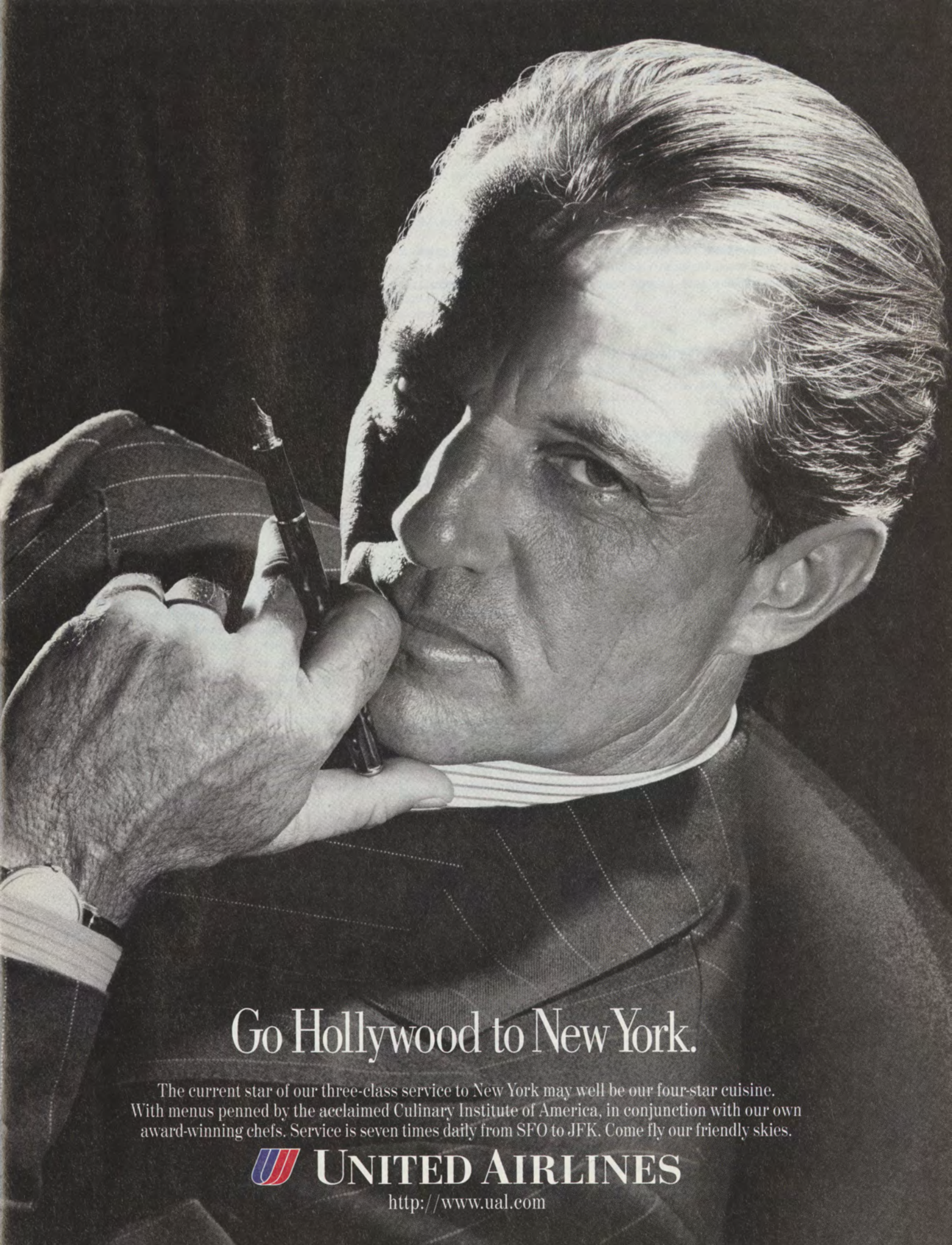
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Opening Night

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, Condly, 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

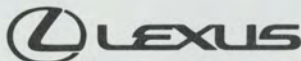
Borodina, Mills, Dillard, Foland†;
Cura*, Fink*, Skinner, Okerlund†,
Autry†, Skelton†
Runnicles;
Mansouri/Yeargan/Bosquet/Morgan/Whitfield
Civic Auditorium
Oct. 22, 25, 27, 30; Nov. 2, 5, 8

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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Very*, Maddalena, Saks*, Autry†,
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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;
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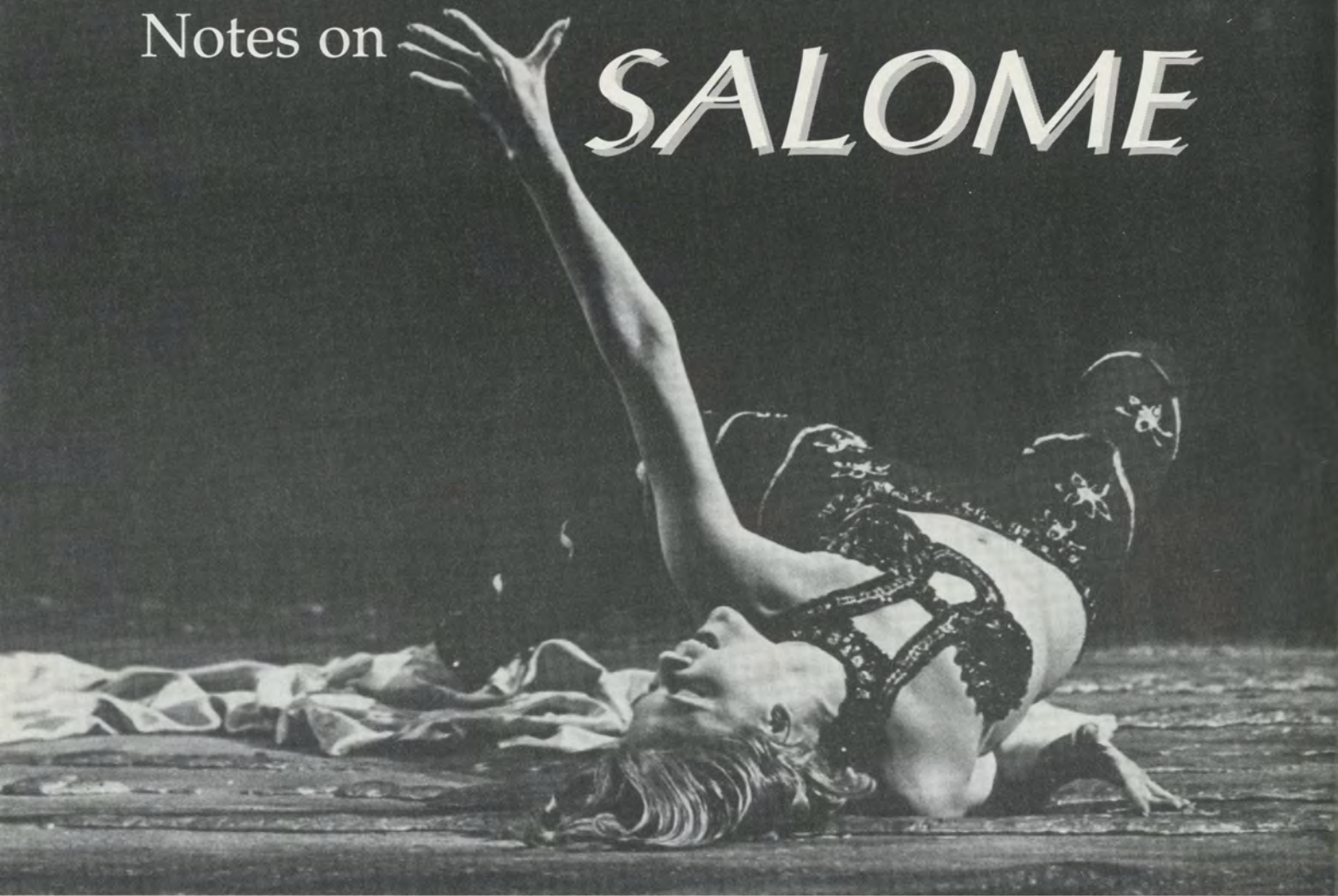
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Notes on *SALOME*



By ALAN JEFFERSON

1996 was the centenary year of Oscar Wilde's trial and his degradation in the Old Jail at Reading, England, and it is all the more topical that the brilliant Irish poet, playwright and man of letters has two direct contacts with the opera that is being heard in San Francisco this season. The city was on Wilde's itinerary of American cities visited during his lecture tour in 1882 and, of course, it was his semi-original play *Salomé* that became the libretto for the Richard Strauss opera.

Oscar Wilde's riotous comedies of manners are based on human fallacies and idiocies, sometimes altogether on the ridiculous. His short stories, on the other hand, reflect a tenderness towards children and a strong religious morality. In 1891 he wrote his play *Salomé* in French, in the misty language of Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande* that Debussy had taken for his opera of the same title for Paris in 1902. It was all the

rage throughout Europe, but Strauss thought it contained too many "Wagnerisms." Wilde's play *Salomé* was a different matter. It failed in Paris, was banned by the Lord Chamberlain in London, but succeeded for 200 performances, in a German translation by Hedwig Lachmann, on the stage of the Berlin Kleines Theater in 1902, staggeringly produced by the brilliant young Max Reinhardt.

The New Testament gives two biblical accounts of certain happenings in Judea in the very early years of the first century A.D. They concern Herod, his wife Herodias, his step-daughter [Salomé], and John the Baptist. They are to be found in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark,¹ and conjure up a variety of questions to the inquiring mind. Every artist needs more than a plain, unvarnished subject; needs the strands, the layers, the hints of unsaid and unseen thoughts from the personalities and the circumstances in which they are placed. Something original will then emerge. No

wonder that the great painters, from Botticelli to Picasso to Klimt, have each given their impressions of Salomé and those around her. Most show her as a young girl with the Baptist's severed head; a few others make her a crude, unattractive woman. That's how they saw her in their minds. We don't know what she was really like, and consequently she becomes keen prey to the imagination—and the stage director.

By 1903, Richard Strauss, composer of songs, tone poems and two less than successful operas,² had been continually inspired by the esthetic trend in art and literature, current in Europe for the past decade. Strauss saw Reinhardt's production of Wilde's play *Salomé* in Berlin, and afterwards a friend remarked to him: "That's a good subject for an opera. Wouldn't it suit you?" The composer replied: "I've already begun it!"

Strauss had adapted Lachmann's translation with relatively few changes, and made his own libretto. Two years later he

Alan Jefferson is a British author, whose published works include six books on Richard Strauss. He has also been active in legitimate theater and as a London orchestra manager. His most recent book is a biography of soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf.

had completed a score that simmers with the unhealthy heat and passion of a corrupt court ruled by an unhinged, insecure despot who is usually referred to as Herod, but in the opera is almost always called "Tetrarch" (a not very exalted title) by his sulky nymphet niece and stepdaughter, Salome.

Strauss's orchestra of 108 players creates some amazing and novel sounds which, in places, can only be described as instrumental "effects," yet more than ninety years later, they continue to raise the hair on the back of your neck! The composer's demands on his players and singers are today, in 1997, as taxing as they were then, in 1906.

The world premiere of Strauss's *Salome* was scheduled for the Dresden Royal Opera in December of 1906, his second opera there. This fine theater had a long tradition of opera premieres going back to Weber and Wagner in the nineteenth century, possessing a complement of experienced staff, musicians and singers under a very able music director, Ernst von Schuch. In addition, Dresden was a good place to try out a new opera. It lies within easy reach of Berlin, the center of German music-making, even by the trains of 1906: "... an El Dorado for first performances..." as conductor Karl Böhm was to emphasize later.³

At the first rehearsal, all the leading singers—but one—handed back their scores, insisting that the work was completely unsingable. However, when the Czech tenor Carl Burrian said, very quietly, that he had studied his role of Herod and already knew it by heart, the other singers were considerably put out and, after a quick consultation, agreed to rehearse under the conductor's and composer's tutelage. The leading soprano, Marie Wittich, accustomed to being heard in the comfortably proper role of Leonore in *Fidelio*, had the vocal ability for Salome but had long lost the physical proportions of "a sixteen-year-old girl with the voice of Isolde" that Strauss sought. While rehearsing, he re-

marked in an aside: "During the summer she has put on a fine stomach. It doesn't matter: voice, Horatio, the rest is—tummy."⁴ Wittich was slow to learn the role because she considered Salome's character disgusting; as well as some of the stage business she refused to do. "I am a decent woman," she averred, in her prudish way. Strauss found the orchestra players also needed encouragement. "Come along gentlemen!" he exhorted them. "Cheer up! There's no need to make big difficulties where none exist, just watch the little problems. My opera is no more than a comedy with a deathly outcome!"⁵

Oscar Wilde's—and consequently Strauss's—version of the story is in one continuous act without a prelude. The curtain rises in silence on a large terrace below the great hall of Herod's palace where he is giving a banquet to foreign dignitaries. Narraboth, a young Captain of the Guard, is on duty outside a subterranean cistern or vault, a prominent part of the stage set. He is facing upstage, where he can see Salome at the feast. "How beautiful is the Princess Salome tonight" are his first words. A Page, who is devoted to Narraboth, warns him that it is dangerous to look so hard at the Princess: "Something terrible may come of it!" But Narraboth is not to be sidetracked in his passion, and hears none of this, nor the Page's remark that the moon looks strange tonight, like a woman rising from her tomb. The stage moon has a significant part to play in the opera, sometimes reflecting words spoken or portents hinted at. There is no chorus in the opera; instead, there are solo male voices, sometimes combined, of the two Nazarenes, five Jews, a Cappadocian and two Soldiers.

For the first time, the deep booming voice of Jokanaan (John the Baptist) is heard from the cistern, announcing the coming of Christ. The Cappadocian is the only one to believe he is a holy man, for Herod's attitude towards him is ambivalent. He thinks Jokanaan may be a good man, and regards him with awe, but since the Prophet has insulted Herodias, the Tetrarch feels obliged to keep him imprisoned, and refuses to hand him over to the Jews who clamor for him because of his "heresy."

Having become bored with the banquet, Salome appears on the terrace, and Narraboth grows restless. She is unsettled, too: by the guests at the table, especially the hated Roman conquerors, and by her stepfather's piercing and lecherous gaze. She sighs with relief at the balmy outside air and the light of a cool, chaste moon. Then she pauses at the sound of Jokanaan's voice, apparently hearing it for the first time, and asks who he is. "Ah, the Prophet!" she says, after Narraboth's explanation, having heard about him and his defamations of her mother.

A Slave brings Herod's command for her to return to the table, but Narraboth intervenes in an effort to gain Salome's attention. She ignores both of them, for the invisible Prophet has already engaged her excitement and she demands to see him. The Soldiers tell her that Herod has forbidden even the High Priest to see the Prophet, so she turns to Narraboth, knowing that she can get what she wants from him. In desperation, he tries to hold out against her female wiles, but eventually she makes vague promises to Narraboth, who reluctantly gives the order for Jokanaan to be brought to the terrace.

Two of San Francisco Opera's Salomes in action: (opposite) Anja Silja in 1968; (below) Gwyneth Jones in 1987.



¹ Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, Ch. III vv 1-11, XIV vv 1-11. Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, Ch. I vv 2-8, VI vv 17-29, in both of which it is strongly implied that Salome's wish emanated from Herodias.

² *Guntram*, Weimar, 1894; *Feuersnot*, Dresden, 1901.³ Quoted by Eugen Dostal in *Begegnung mit Richard Strauss*, p.42, Doblinger, Vienna-Munich 1964.

⁴ Strauss purposely misquotes the last line of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. *Richard Strauss: An Intimate Portrait* by Kurt Wilhelm, translated by Mary Whittall, p.100. Rizzoli, New York, 1989.

⁵ Roland Tenschert: *Anekdoten um R.S.*, p.25. Wilhelm Frick, Vienna, 1945.

Jokanaan appears, and calls for Herod to come before him to repent his sins; in vain, of course. Without naming her, he then slanders Herodias for her lust, but Narraboth and Salome both understand him. "He is terrible!" says Salome, half repelled, half fascinated by Jokanaan who, aware of her for the first time, asks who she is. In turn, he becomes uncomfortable at the obviously lustful feelings she directs towards him and urges her to repent, to seek out the Savior in the wilderness.

The Prophet is appalled when she asks: "Is He as beautiful as you?" but only replies that he can hear the beating of wings of the Angel of Death, an oblique remark explained later. Narraboth is besides himself at Salome's behavior, particularly after she heaps excessive praise on various parts of Jokanaan's body and demands to touch him. The Prophet is revolted, so Salome takes the opposite tack and declares his body to be loathsome. She praises his hair, then his scarlet mouth, beseeching him: "Let me kiss your mouth!" At every one of her demands, Jokanaan cries out in rage and disgust: "Never, daughter of Sodom, daughter of Babylon, never!"

Narraboth gives up the unequal struggle, kills himself with his sword and falls unnoticed between Salome and Jokanaan. "Let me kiss your mouth!" Salome insists once more, but Jokanaan curses her and goes back into his prison. There follows an orchestral interlude of great splendor that states the end of a paragraph in the action.

Herod comes out to the terrace, followed by his wife and the Court. He is looking for Salome, while Herodias criticizes and whines. He seems slightly drunk, slightly mad, believes he sees and hears strange sounds, and fancies that the moon is reeling like a drunken woman. While carpets are being spread out for the assembly to be re-seated on the terrace, Herod slips in Narraboth's blood and is annoyed that a death has occurred without his command. He dispassionately orders Narraboth's body to be removed but then is overcome by one of his fits: he feels cold and believes hearing the

beating overhead of those wings that Jokanaan prophesied.

Herodias is bored by all this and reminds Herod that she has told him time and time again not to look at Salome in the way he does. But Herod is not listening. "Come, Salome, drink wine with me!" he calls to the object of his desire, urging her to place her lips on the same cup of "costly wine." She answers, sulking, that she is not thirsty. He offers her fruit: she is not hungry; he wants her to sit next to him in her mother's place: she is not tired. Herodias is delighted at Salome's responses and reminds her despised husband that his two women are descended from *royal* blood, while his father was only a camel driver and a thief.

Once more Jokanaan raises his voice, and Herodias is irritated at what he is saying about her, complaining that he is being allowed to continue these insults. Why, for instance, can't the Jews deal with the Prophet? They are always asking for him. This sets off a general squabble among the various Jewish sects represented, but when the

Nazarenes repeat the Prophet's word that the Messiah has performed miracles, including raising the dead, Herod is shocked at the idea—it is too close for comfort. Nobody is quite certain what happened to Herodias's first husband, Herod's brother, Philip...

In a general uproar, Jokanaan utters the fateful words against Salome: "Let the captains crush her beneath their shields." Again rejecting Herodias's request that he silence the Prophet, Herod turns to Salome in a relaxed manner and asks her to dance for him. Becoming excited at the prospect, he promises her anything, even as much as half his kingdom, if she will dance for him. When Salome demands reassurance in the form of an oath, he swears it by his life, his crown, his gods! Herod has committed himself and now cannot go back; the result is another imagined feeling of icy cold, coupled with the sound in his mind of beating wings, followed instantly by blazing heat over his body.

He manages to pull himself together as Salome is preparing herself for the dance, although the voice from the cistern continues its imprecations. Herod is almost unable to contain himself when Salome declares "I am ready." Unusually strident and barbaric music begins as she appears, clad only in seven veils, for the Dance that has often been described as the most celebrated striptease in history.⁶

When Salome concludes her performance, Herod calls out "Wonderful! Magnificent!" and the girl comes forward to get her reward. But everyone is astonished to hear what she asks: "On a silver platter..." she says sweetly; and then, in the shocked silence, "The head of Jokanaan!" Herod twists and turns for a long time with pleas and arguments in an effort to dissuade Salome, offering her all his most precious possessions, but no! She won't listen. In gradually increasing tones of anger and determination, she repeats: "The head of Jokanaan!" Her mother is enjoying it hugely and laughs loudly at Herod. Eventually he offers Herodias's place on the throne to Salome and, last of all, the Veil of the Holy of



Leonie Rysanek was San Francisco Opera's Salome in 1974.

⁶ Marie Wittich, and other Salomes, insisted that a trained dancer deputize for them.

(continued on page 38)



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Gary Rideout
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Jan-Hendrik Rootering
Roberto Saccà**
Gidon Saks*
Carlo Scibelli*
Michel Sénéchal
Stuart Skelton*†
Philip Skinner
Kurt Streit
Peter Strummer
Daniel Sumegi
Thomas Sunnegårdh**
Raymond Very*
Bernd Weikl
Jeffrey Wells
Bradley Williams*
Randall Wong*
Ping Yu*

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Larry Henderson

** U.S. opera debut

* San Francisco Opera debut

† 1996 Adler Fellow

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Pamela Dale
Laura Decher
Dvora Djoraev
Kathleen Fuchs
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Dallas Lane
Sally Munro
Alexandra Nehra
Rose Parker
Virginia Pluth
Aimée Puentes
Laurel Rice
Elisabeth Rom
Shelley Seitz Saarni
Claudia Siefer
Shawnette Sulker
Page Swift
Donna Turchi
Mitzi Weiner
D.W. Becker
Richard Brown
David Burnakus
Jim Croom
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Robert Delany
Henryk De Rewenda
Daniel Harper
Cameron Henley
Ken Johnson
Frederick Matthews
Jim Meyer
William Pickersgill
Daniel Pociernicki
Valery Portnov
Ken Rafanan
Tom Reed
Colby Roberts
Sigmund Seigel
Dan Stanley
Jere Torkelsen
Richard Walker
Frederick Winthrop

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Deborah Benedict
Bonnie Brooks
Fran Burgess
Theresa Cardinale
Virginia Chen
Melodi Dalton
Joy Davis
Marcelle A. Dronkers
Margaret Genovese
Gemma Kavanagh
Sharon Kaye
Victoria Kelp
Christine Lloyd
Sara MacBride
Josefina Malabuyo
Juliene Malécot
Nadja Matisoff
Sally Mouzon
Erin Neff
Sandra Nipperus
Penelope Rains
Katya Roemer
Julia Ronskaya

Ann Margaret Secour
Janine Shafer
Anna Smirnova
Diana Smith
Delia Voitoff
Nancy Williams
Susan Witt

Mitch Ashley
Gennadi Badasov
John Beauchamp
William Berges
John Coffin
Chris Corley
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Dale Emde
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S.F. PALM

Civic Auditorium Exhibits

Three exhibits curated by the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum (PALM) and drawn from its collections are on view on the second floor of the Civic Auditorium during the current San Francisco Opera season:

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.)

**San Francisco Performing Arts
Library and Museum**
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(415) 255-4800

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San Francisco Opera's BRAVO! CLUB is a group of over 400 young professionals dedicated to building a young audience for San Francisco Opera. BRAVO! hosts a variety of pre- and post-performance parties, receptions and galas throughout the year.

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Lev Rankov

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Maki Ishii

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Principal*

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Ruth Lane

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Steven D'Amico *Assistant Principal*

Shinji Eshima

Mark Drury

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Patricia Farrell*

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*Principal for one or more operas
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James Walker

OBOE

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Deborah Henry* *Assistant Principal*

Janet Popesco

ENGLISH HORN

Janet Popesco

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Anthony Striplen

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Anthony Striplen

BASSOON

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Jerry Dagg

Robin Elliott

HORN

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David Sprung *Co-Principal*

Keith Green

Brian McCarty

Lawrence Ragent

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-Wayne Donnelly, Fi, The Magazine of Music and Sound,
September 1996-review of the VTL MB-750

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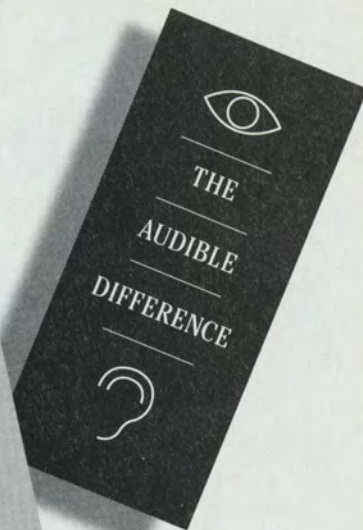
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German translation by HEDWIG LACHMANN

Salome

(in German)

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Ralf Weikert*

Production

Lotfi Mansouri

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Wolfram Skalicki

Costume Designer

Maria-Luise Walek

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Sound Designer

Roger Gans

Choreographer

Victoria Morgan

Musical Preparation

Peter Grunberg

Bryndon Hassman

Kathleen Kelly

Jonathan Khuner

Supertitles

Christopher Bergen

Assistant Stage Director

Sandra Bernhard

Stage Manager

Theresa Ganley

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Additional costumes from
Théâtre de l'Opéra de Nice

First performance:
Dresden, December 9, 1905

First San Francisco Opera
performance:
September 12, 1930

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18 AT 8:00
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21 AT 8:00
THURSDAY, JANUARY 23 AT 7:30
SUNDAY, JANUARY 26 AT 2:00
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29 AT 7:30
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1 AT 8:00

1996-97 Season

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Narraboth Kurt Streit

A page Zheng Cao†

First soldier Daniel Sumegi

Second soldier David Langan*

A Cappadocian Valery Portnov

Jokanaan Bernd Weikl

Salome Karen Huffstodt*

A slave Peggy Kriha Dye†

Herod William Cochran

Herodias Judith Forst

Five Jews Stuart Skelton†

Carlo Scibelli

John Mac Master*

Marc Molomot

John Relyea†

First Nazarene Chester Patton

Second Nazarene David Okerlund†

Executioner Alfonso Garcia

Servants, soldiers, guests, handmaidens

*San Francisco Opera debut
†1996-97 Adler Fellow

PLACE AND TIME: Herod's palace in Judea, about 30 A.D.

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 one hour and forty-five minutes
without intermission.

Salome

On a moonlit terrace in Herod's palace in Judea, Narraboth, captain of the guard, rhapsodizes on the beauty of the princess Salome. A page warns him that he stares too intently at the princess and that evil will come of it. The voice of the prophet Jokanaan (John the Baptist) is heard from an old cistern, where the holy man has been kept prisoner by Herod. He foretells the coming of the Messiah, and the soldiers argue about him, disputing his saintliness. They are interrupted by the appearance of the princess Salome, who, disgusted with her stepfather Herod's lecherous glances and with his guests, has left the banquet hall and come out to the terrace. Jokanaan's voice rings through the night, and Salome, fascinated, decides she must speak with him. She asks the soldiers to bring the prisoner to her. When they say that they cannot disobey Herod's orders, she coaxes Narraboth into agreeing.

Jokanaan is presented to Salome. Instead of being disgusted by him, Salome is attracted to his voice, his deathly pallor and ascetic looks. He tells her to repent. She claims that she must touch the prophet's white flesh, feel his shining black hair, kiss his scarlet lips. Jokanaan denounces her, but Salome's desire for him becomes uncontrollable. Narraboth, frightened by the confrontation that he has allowed, stabs himself and dies, as Salome continues to beg Jokanaan to be allowed to kiss him. "Daughter of adultery," the prophet cries, "go seek repentance!" Salome repeats her demands. Jokanaan pronounces her cursed and goes back into the cistern.

Herod enters—followed by his guests—looking for Salome, obsessed by her. Herodias, his wife and Salome's mother, jealously

tells Herod that he looks too much at her daughter. Herod offers the princess food and wine, but she rejects him. Jokanaan's admonitions again arise from the cistern, and Herodias asks Herod to get rid of him, to turn him over to the Hebrews. Herod refuses, thinking of Jokanaan as a holy man. At this, a theological argument breaks out among the Hebrew guests about the presence of good and evil in the world. Two Nazarenes then report the miracles of Jesus, claiming that the Messiah has arrived. Jokanaan again curses the wickedness of Herodias, who screams for him to be silenced.

Herod suddenly asks Salome to dance. Salome, supported by her mother, refuses. Not until Herod promises—swears—to give her whatever she desires, does Salome agree. Ignoring her mother's pleas, Salome performs the Dance of the Seven Veils.

Herod now asks her to name her request. She would like, she says, the head of Jokanaan on a silver tray. Herod is horrified, but Herodias approves, thinking Salome has done this to avenge her. Herod offers Salome precious jewels, rare white peacocks, even the holy veil of the temple—anything—to dissuade her, but Salome is adamant. Finally, Herod agrees.

Eagerly, Salome hangs over the edge of the cistern, anticipating the sounds of the execution. No sounds come. Just as she is about to send more soldiers down, the arm of the Executioner rises up out of the darkness bearing the head of Jokanaan. Salome grabs her reward and passionately sings to Jokanaan as if he could still hear her. "The mystery of love," she sings, "is greater than the mystery of death." Salome ecstatically kisses the severed head. Herod orders her to be killed.

The performance of January 18th is sponsored by Citron Haligman Bedecarré

The performance of January 23rd is sponsored by American Airlines

The performance of January 26th is sponsored by Saintsbury

The performance of January 29th is sponsored by Union Bank of California

SUPERNUMERARIES

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Gary Morgan
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Rod Palaby
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Christopher Patnoe
Oliver Pollard
Mort Raphael
Tristan Rawlinson
Lucas Rebston
Louis Schilling
Jim Shields
Scott Sommerdorf
Ray Sullivan
Ron Szydlo
Tom Tillman
Steven Townsend
Greg Watkins
Joe Willis
Kit Wynkoop

Salome

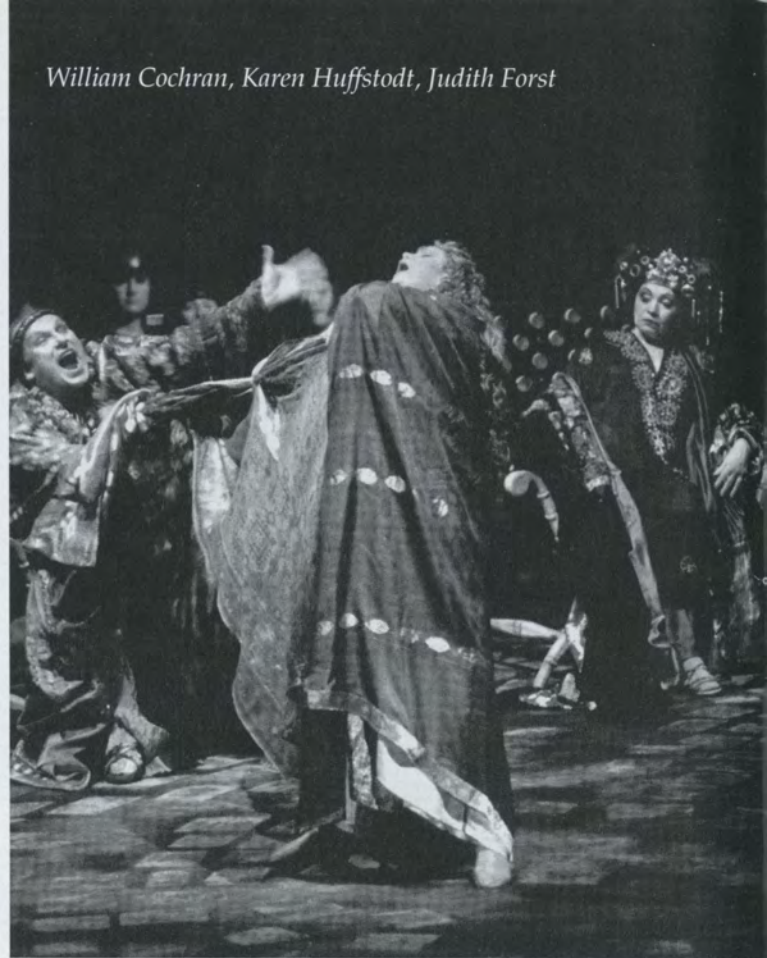
Photos taken in rehearsal by Marty Sohl



Karen Huffstodt



Judith Forst, Zheng Cao



William Cochran, Karen Huffstodt, Judith Forst

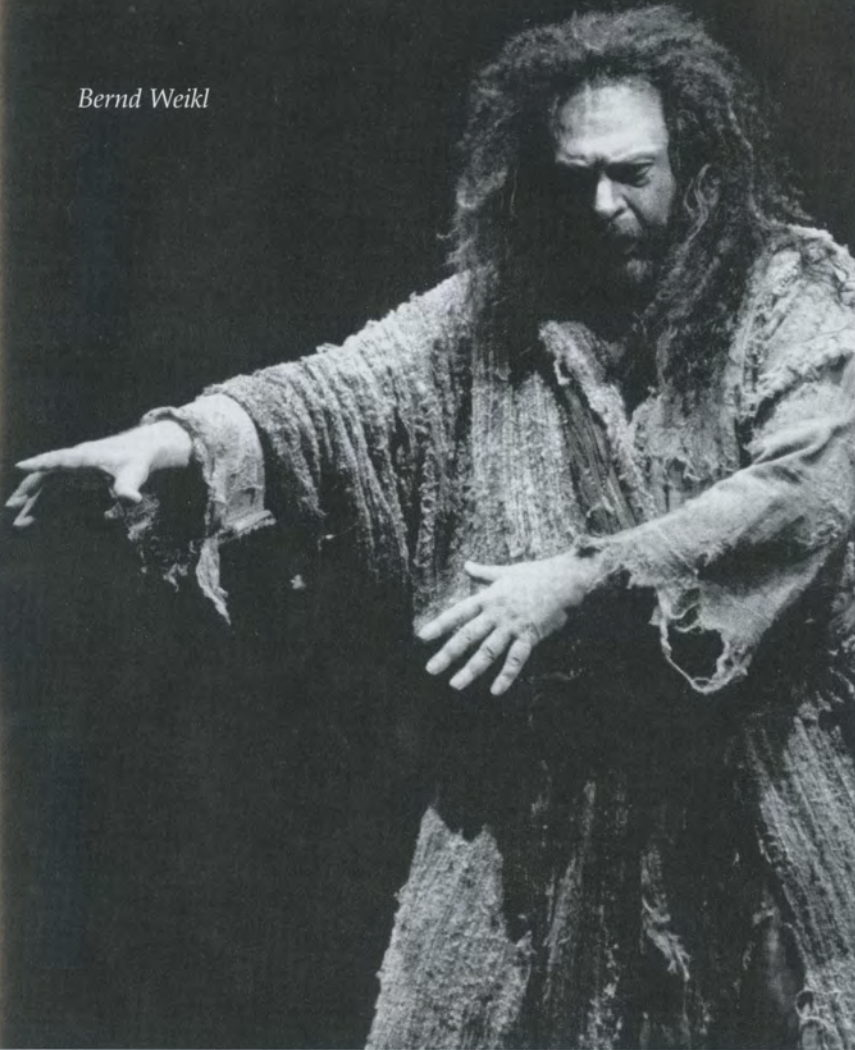


William Cochran

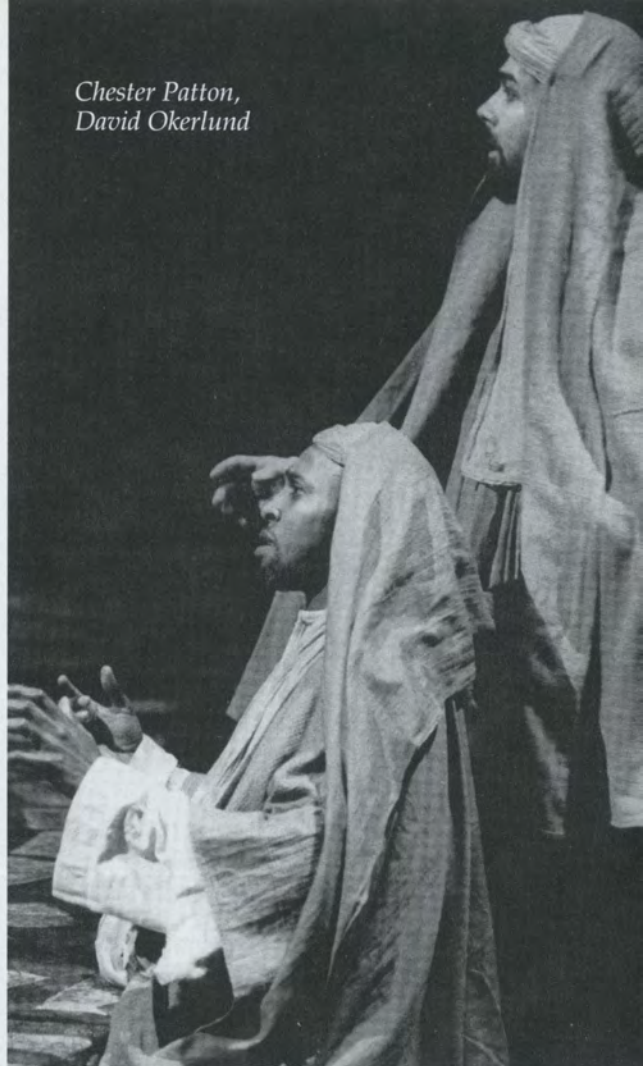
Stuart Skelton, John Mac Master, Carlo Scibelli, Marc Molomot, John Relyea



Bernd Weikl



*Chester Patton,
David Okerlund*

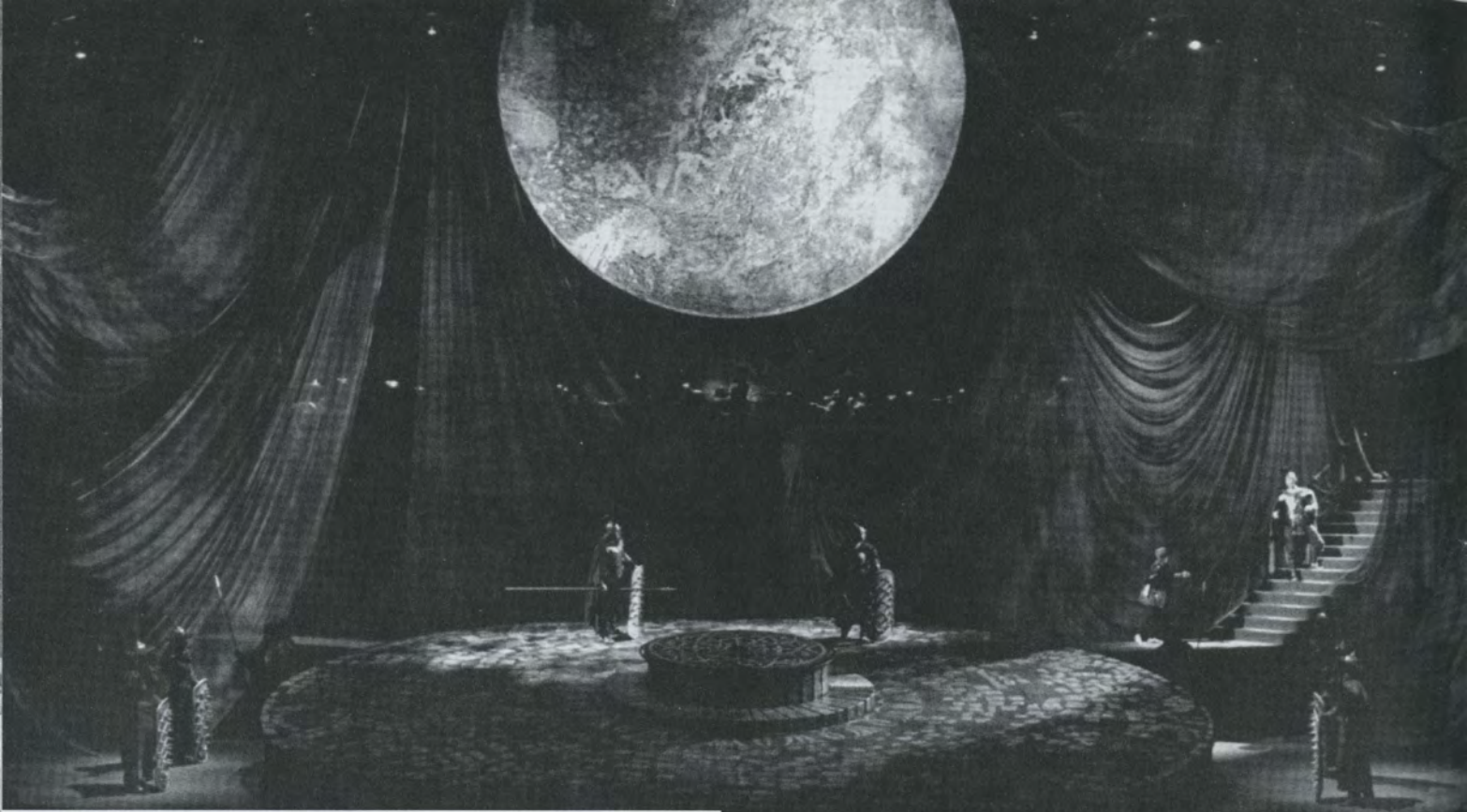


*Karen Huffstodt,
Kurt Streit*

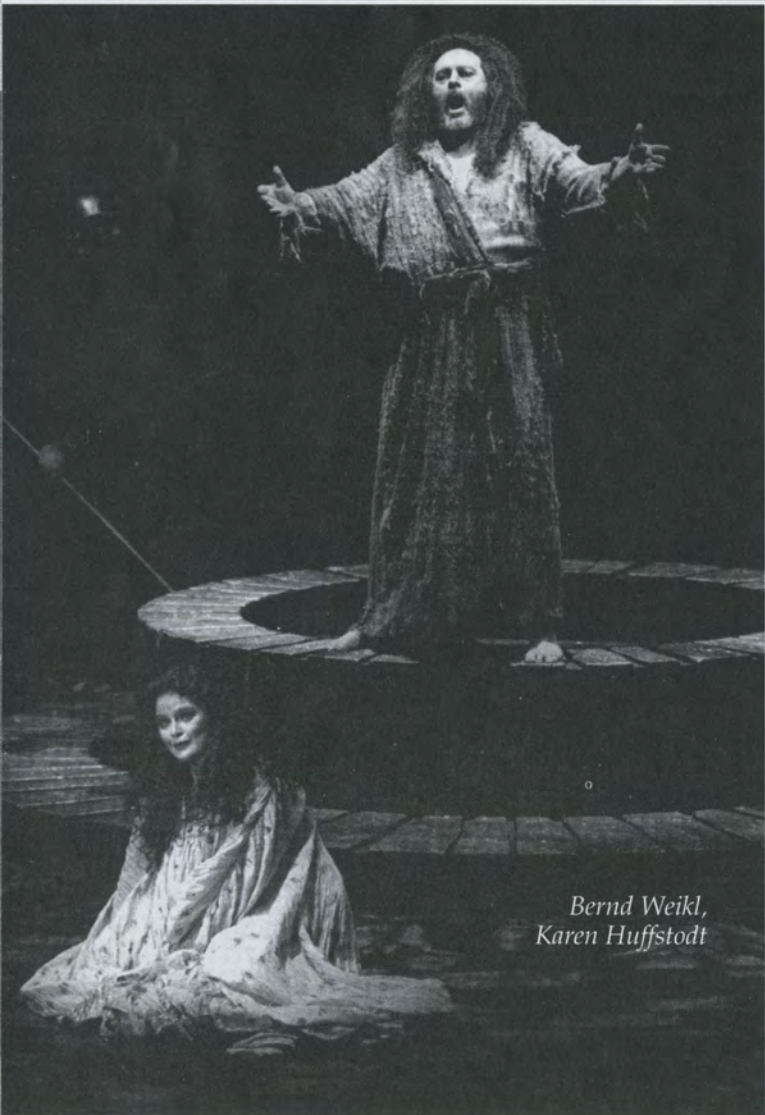


*Karen
Huffstodt*

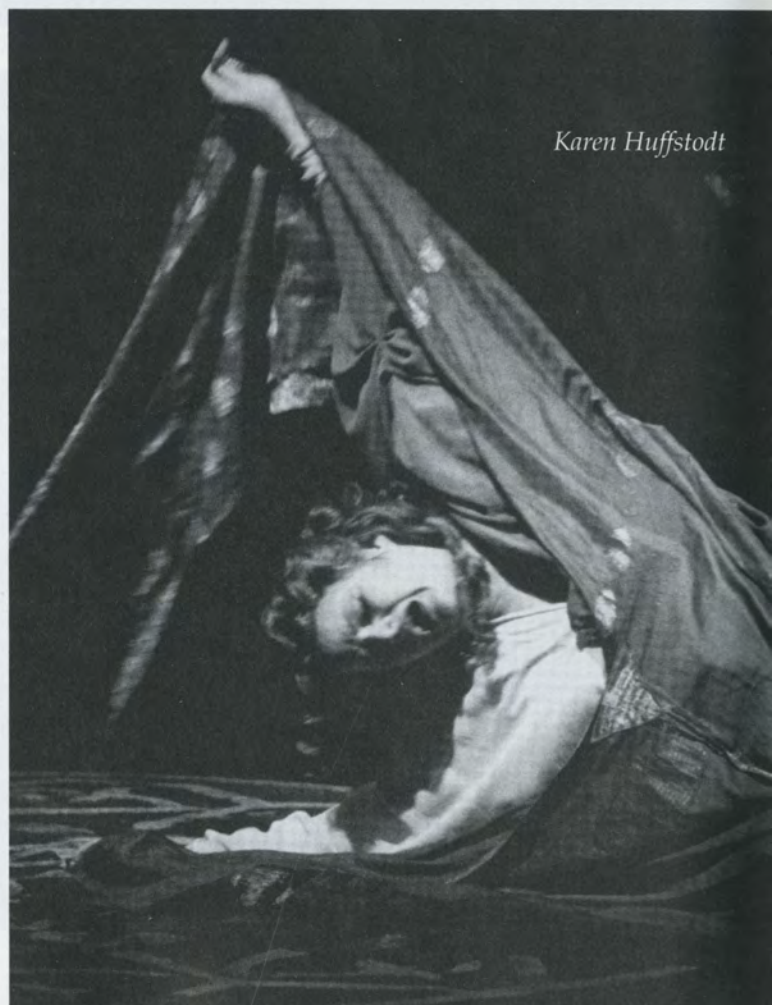




Opening Scene



*Bernd Weikl,
Karen Huffstodt*



Karen Huffstodt

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in a living situation that
would ensure I'm never
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1996-97 SAN FRANCISCO OPERA COMPANY

(continued)

Although our program magazines regularly list members of the Administration and Company (please see pages 4 and 6), 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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Karen Rodriguez
Jean Wood

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Nvard Douvalian
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Joy Harmon
Raquel Jaffe
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Irina Koroleva
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Elvira Santos
Olga Volkova

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PRESSER/LAUNDRESS

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Mireille Hyde
Tamora Pellikka

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Leo Borja

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WARDROBE

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Lisa Lorente
Margarita Pidgeon
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Stephani Lesh
Tom Mueller
Bret Reyer
Gwen Thoele
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Kenneth Ryan, *Key Man*
Chris Sanders, *Key Man*
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Asst. Key Fly Man
Dan Molnar,
Asst. Key Man
Chris Davis,
Asst. Key Man
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Edward Harris, *Guard*
Kenneth Johnson, *Guard*
Johnny Williams, *Guard*

the book

A large, ornate chair is the central focus, its entire surface covered with a dense collection of butterflies in various colors including orange, yellow, blue, and white. The chair is set on a lush green lawn. Above the chair, a single butterfly is captured in flight against a soft, out-of-focus background.

when it comes to style, we wrote the book.

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Joe Catalano, *Key Man*
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Norris Fong,
Asst. Board Operator
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Jim Quinn, *Asst. Head, Orpheum Theatre*
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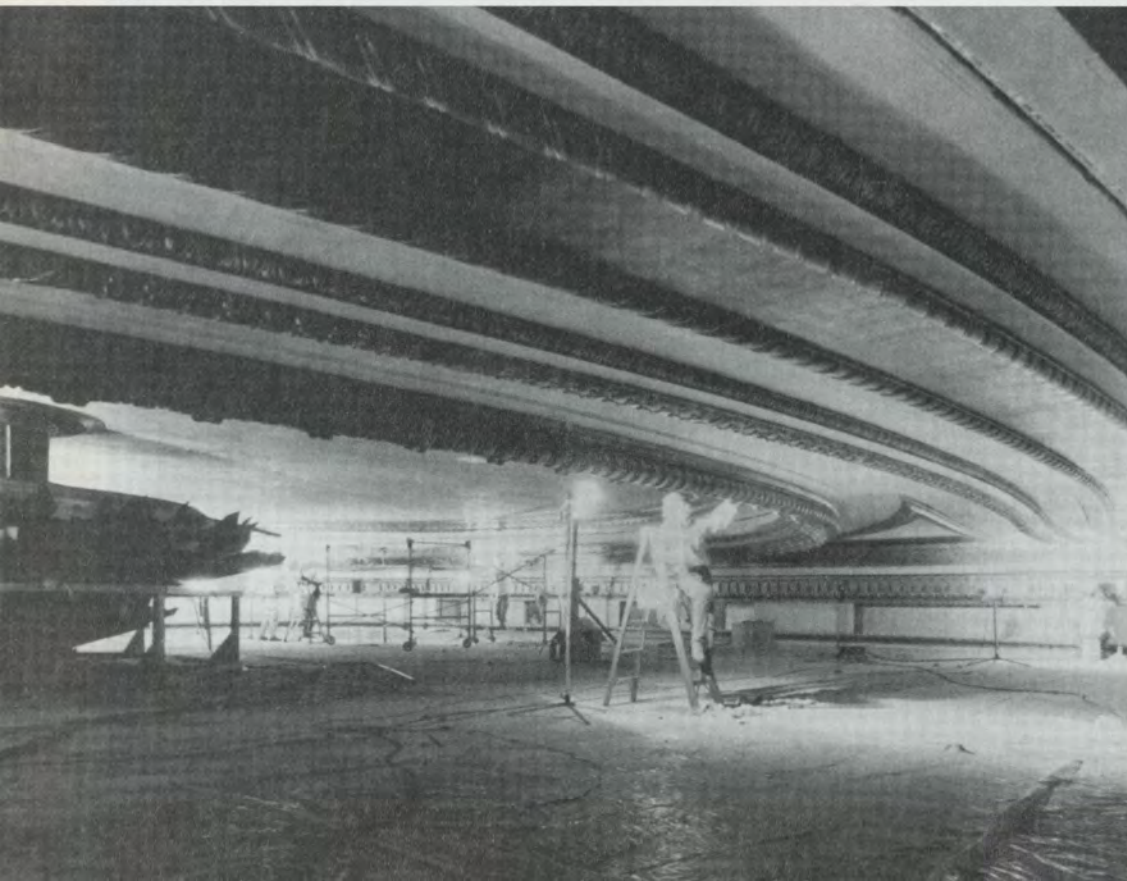

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Opera House



In this eerie picture, taken from a spot near the ceiling at the back of the Opera House auditorium, we look across at the magnificent chandelier with the steel-mesh net still hanging beneath it. Peering through the dense network of scaffolding and boards, you can see the proscenium and the lip of the stage. On either side of this photo, daylight shines through the small portals of the arched organ bays.

During the extensive War Memorial Opera House renovation, which began more than a year ago, many sights inside of San Francisco Opera's beautiful home have been rendered temporarily unrecognizable. Much of the internal space has been filled with an elaborate labyrinth of scaffolding structures, and entire areas have been covered with plywood and plastic to protect delicate surfaces and masonry. This enormous project began on January 2, 1996 and is scheduled to be completed in time for San Francisco Opera's 75th Season in September of 1997.



The scaffolding that rises to the top of the stage proscenium has been covered with a wooden floor and cloth so that workers have easy access to the ceiling. The enormous chandelier that dominates the Opera House auditorium is just to the left.

Update

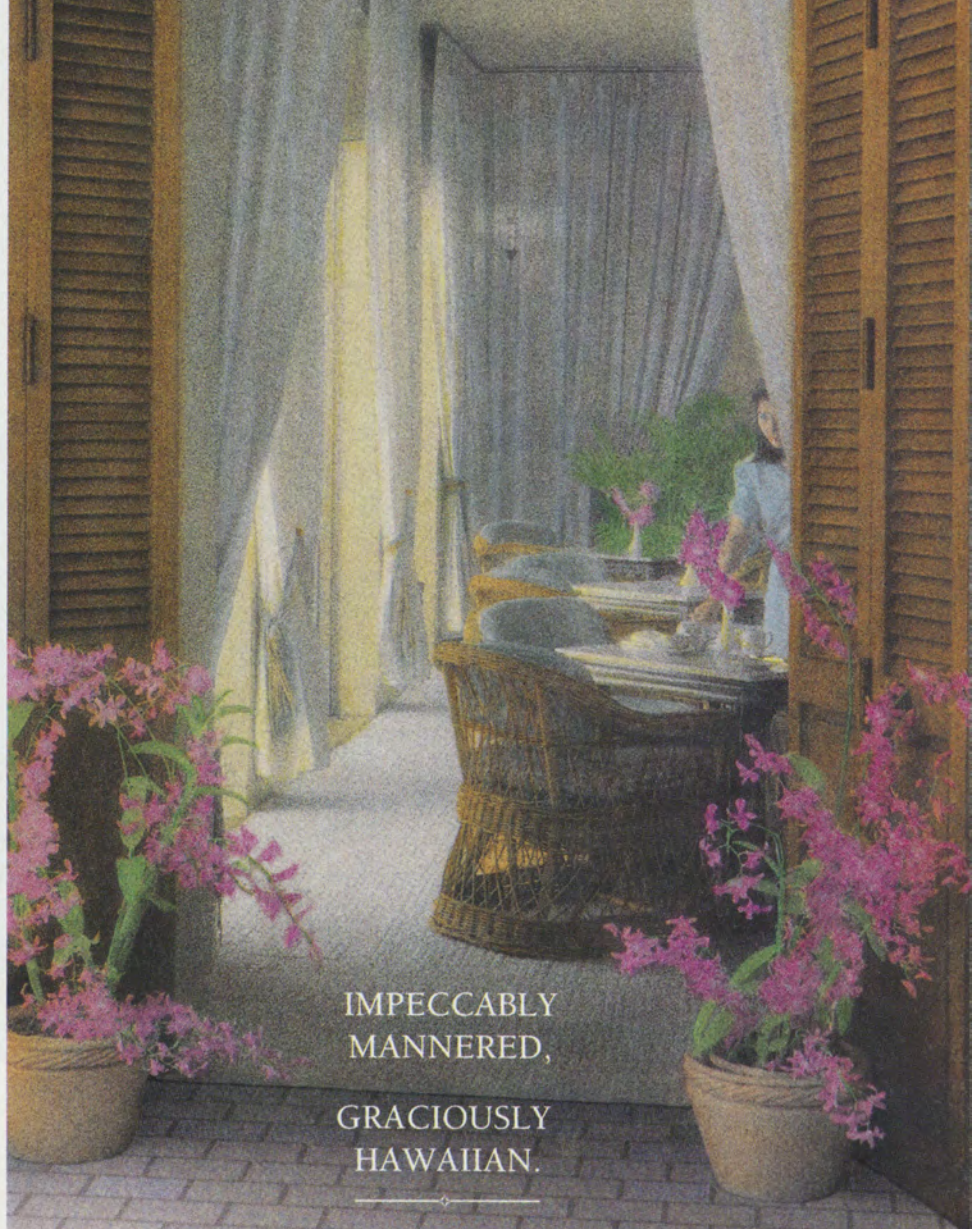


Large plywood panels cover the masonry and floor in the beautiful main lobby. Here, two large scaffoldings have been erected. Ultimately, the entire lobby was filled with scaffoldings so that workers could have easy access to the ceiling, to restore the luster and sparkle to the gold rosettes.

more photos on page 34

1996-97 Season

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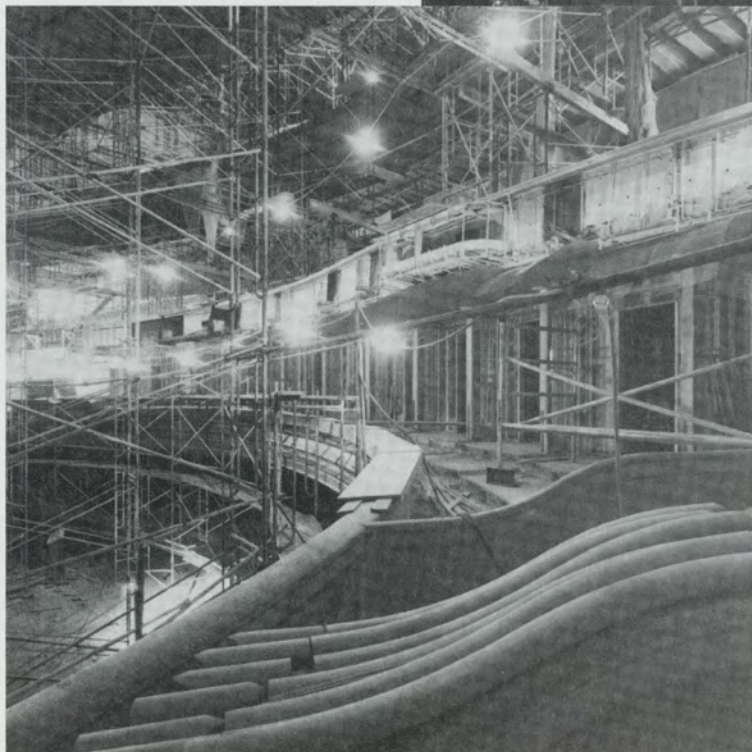
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Opera House Update

The San Francisco Fire Department responded immediately to the emergency call when the fire broke out on May 2, 1996. The four-alarm blaze was put out quickly. Smoke, fire and water damage to the building was most significant on the box level, but affected many peripheral areas. However, the damage has not delayed the renovation project, and the Opera House is still scheduled to reopen as planned.



Photos courtesy of CROH

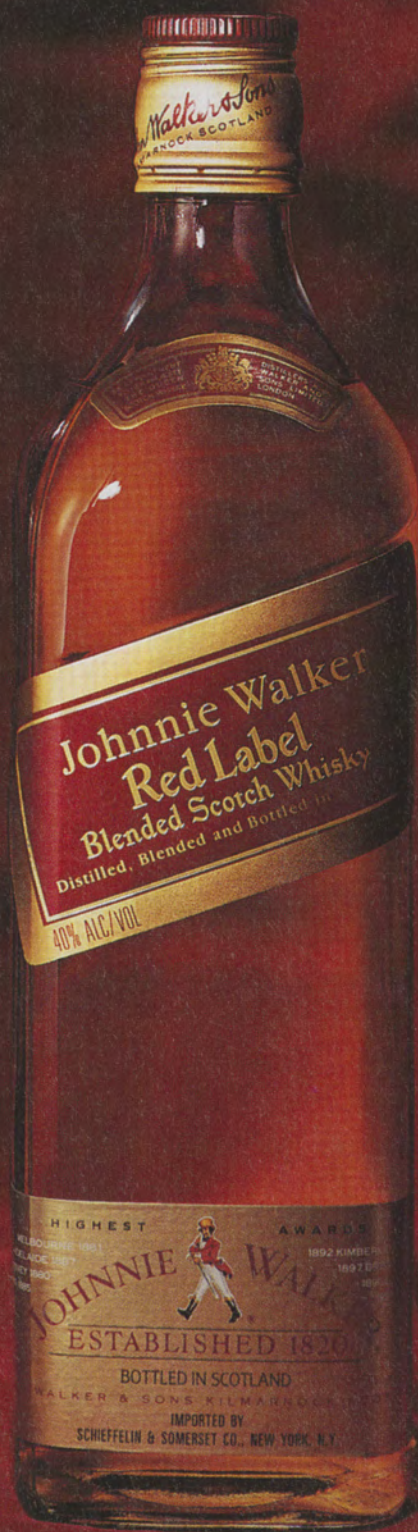
Several of the central boxes were completely destroyed. This picture shows the scaffolding and construction work that will eventually restore those sections to their original splendor.



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In 1993, Leonie Rysanek, our 1974 Salome, returned in the role of Herodias, shown here with the Herod of Robert Tear.

SOHL

Holies. The Jews wail in misery. Slumped listlessly on his throne and drained of all energy, Herod can hold out no longer: "Give her what she wants," he mutters and does not even notice when Herodias removes the ring of death from his finger and passes it to a Soldier to give to the Executioner.

Herod suddenly realizes that the ring has been taken and grows wild, then shudders at the expectation of disaster. Salome kneels at the edge of the cistern. She listens for any indication that her wish is being fulfilled, urging the Executioner on. Strauss introduces a weird, jabbing, unearthly sound⁷ which, the composer noted, should be taken "as the stifled sighs and groans of a woman."⁸ It can be interpreted differently. Then, Jokanaan's severed head is handed up from the cistern on a silver platter, exactly as Salome demanded, and the last part of the opera consists of the macabre love-scene between her and the gruesome object, token of the body for which she had conceived such a fiercely erotic desire. "Ah! You would not let me kiss your mouth, Jokanaan!" she drools over his head, "Well,

I will kiss it now, I will bite it with my teeth."

In this long episode, Salome dwells on the tragedy for them both: Jokanaan had not looked at her long enough, she believes, otherwise he would have loved her: "...the mystery of love is greater than the mystery of death." The assembled gathering is horrified and even Herod tells Herodias "She is a monster, your daughter." He calls out to everyone to conceal themselves in shame, and shouts "Put out the torches, hide the moon,⁹ hide the stars!" But Salome has kissed Jokanaan's mouth and is exulting in it. Herod orders his soldiers: "Kill that woman!" and "crush her beneath their shields" they do—exactly as Jokanaan had prophesied.

While the many moments of horror and perversity are expressed to the full in Strauss's score, there are many other times when you can hear very beautiful melodies; when Jokanaan is talking about Jesus, for instance, and again relating to Salome herself when she showed a sympathetic side of her nature. It is possible to argue her case in a number of ways: that she was "set up" by

her mother; that she did what she did out of spite for Herod's advances; or that it was an advanced effect of sexual frustration caused by her age (though girls mature early in the Middle East). When you hear the music and become well acquainted with its relationship to Salome, are there many true alternatives to the one with which Strauss clothed Wilde's words?

The "Dance of the Seven Veils" is the only orchestral excerpt that the score offers: it is an oddity in itself. Strauss seems to have composed the last scene first, then the rest of the opera without the Dance. Evidence from Gustav Mahler and his wife relates that when Strauss played over his score to them in a Strasbourg piano shop, the Dance was a yawning gap. Mahler asked whether it wasn't risky to write it later "when you're not in the same mood." Strauss laughed and replied light-heartedly: "I'll soon fix that!"¹⁰ The Dance appears in the score with its own separate rehearsal numbers, and while you may think it has a slightly different atmosphere from its surrounding pages, it certainly gets played far more often than they do! ♦

⁷ Four double bass players pinch the upper string high up with thumb and forefinger of the left hand, rather than pressing it on the fingerboard, then giving the string sharp strokes with the bow. Quoted by Norman Del Mar, p.274 of his *Richard Strauss*, Vol. I, Cornell 1986.

⁸ Quoted by Norman Del Mar, *idem*.

⁹ At this point, dark clouds obscure the moon completely and it is not seen again. (At a performance of *Salome* this writer attended in 1943, there was an astronomical disaster when the moon fell out of the sky with a crash.)

¹⁰ *Richard Strauss—The Master Musicians*, p.44, by Michael Kennedy. J.M.Dent, London 1976.

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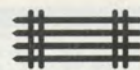
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ARTIST PROFILES



KAREN HUFFSTODT has been applauded in such leading opera houses as La Scala in Milan, the Vienna State Opera, Bastille Opera, Berlin Staatsoper, Hamburg Staatsoper and many others. The soprano has received outstanding acclaim singing the title role of *Salome*, a part she has not only performed extensively, but also recorded (in the French version based upon the original text of Oscar Wilde) with Kent Nagano and the Opéra de Lyon. The Illinois native has also been praised for roles as varied as

Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, the title parts of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Tosca* and *Thais*, and Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. In 1993, she opened the Scala season under Riccardo Muti as Giulia in a new production of Spon-tini's *La Vestale*, recorded for future telecast and release on CD. During the 1995-96 season she added two new roles to her repertoire: Marie in *Wozzeck* at the Grand Théâtre de Genève and Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer* for the Netherlands Opera. The same season saw her as the Mother in concert performances of Dallapiccola's *Il Pri-gioniero* led by Zubin Mehta at the Florence May Festival and in concert presentations of Schoenberg's *Erwartung* at La Scala, as Salome at the Vienna and Hamburg State Operas as well as in Genoa, as Chrysothemis in a new staging of *Elektra* under Lorin Maazel for her Salzburg Festival debut, and as Leonore in *Fidelio* in Bonn and Berlin. Miss Huffstodt is equally at home on the concert platform in repertoire which includes Strauss's *Four Last Songs*, Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*, and Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*. Among the artist's future plans are Chrysothemis with the Washington Opera and her first Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in Geneva. Other new roles in her developing repertoire and scheduled for the future include Brünnhilde in the *Ring* cycle, Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde*, Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West*, Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*, and the title role of Catalani's *La Wally*.



Canadian mezzo-soprano **JUDITH FORST**, acclaimed for her operatic and concert performances throughout North America and Europe, portrays Gertrude in the Company premiere of *Hamlet* and Herodias in *Salome*. Her previous San Francisco Opera appearances have been in 1974 (Flowermaiden in *Parsifal*, Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*), 1979, 1986 and 1992 (Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino*), 1980 (Suzuki), 1981 (Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*), 1984 (Giovanna Seymour in *Anna Bolena*), 1990 (Marie in *Wozzeck*), 1991

(Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*) and 1994 (Madame de Volanges in the world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons*). Miss Forst's extensive repertoire also includes Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, the title roles of *Carmen* and *La Cenerentola*, Charlotte in *Werther*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Adalgisa in *Norma*, and Kostelnička in *Jenůfa*. She was offered a Metropolitan Opera contract following her audition in the national semifinals and she went on to perform at the Met for several seasons in a number of major roles. Her most recent portrayal there was the role of Mother Marie in *Les Dialogues des Carmélites*. Additional engagements during her 1994-95 season included a debut at the English National Opera as the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and a return to Dallas Opera as Alla Nazimova in Argento's *The Dream of Valentino*. A renowned concert artist and recitalist, Miss Forst is also one of Canada's most widely respected performers and as such was the subject of CBC television portraits in 1987 and 1990. As a result of her artistry, she was inducted into The Order of Canada. Her disc of operatic arias was released in 1988.



ZHENG CAO, a 1995-96 Adler Fellow, made her San Francisco Opera debut when she stepped in for an ailing colleague to sing two performances as Siebel in the 1995 production of *Faust*. The mezzo-soprano also performed in stagings of *Die Walküre* (Grimgerde), *Rusalka* (Kitchen Boy) and the student matinee performances of *La Cenerentola* (Tisbe) during the Company's 1995 Fall Season. Her most recent engagements have included Sonia in the Opera Center's Showcase '96 production of *The Aspern Papers*;

Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* with the San Francisco Ballet and a performance of the same work as part of the Schwabacher Debut Recital series; in addition to the role of Hansel in the Opera Guild's holiday presentation of *Hansel and Gretel*. A native of Shanghai, the young artist sang the role of Suzuki in the 1995 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 *Le Nozze di 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. As a member of the 1994 Merola Opera Program, Miss Cao performed the role of Dorabella in *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.



A 1996-97 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, **PEGGY KRIHA DYE** appears in several roles in the West Coast premiere of *Harvey Milk*, as Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, and as a Slave in *Salome*. The soprano made her Company debut this summer as Musetta in *La Bohème* and appeared as Olimpia in the Showcase '96 production of Argento's *The Aspern Papers*. Miss Kriha Dye recently completed her second year as a member of the Juilliard Opera Center where she appeared as Etain in Rutland Boughton's *The Immortal Hour*. As a participant in the 1993 Merola Opera Program, the young artist sang the roles of Nannetta in *Falstaff* and her first Adele. Last year she appeared as Barbarina in the Merola Program staging of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, repeating the part and singing the role of Susanna on the subsequent Western Opera Theater tour of the same production. A native of Brainerd, Minnesota, Miss Kriha Dye received her undergraduate degree in music from St. Cloud University and completed two years of graduate work at the Manhattan School of Music. While attending the M.S.M., she appeared in many new productions, performing the roles of Charlotte in Ronald Perera's *The Yellow Wallpaper* and Berenice in Rossini's *L'Occasione fa il ladro*. Additional engagements include a 1993 San Francisco Symphony Pops concert and the leading role of Trung in the world premiere of Conrad Cummings's *Tonkin* at Opera Delaware.

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ARTIST PROFILES



Following his Metropolitan Opera debut during the 1968-69 season in *Die Meistersinger*, **WILLIAM COCHRAN** began a long and successful career in Germany where he performed leading tenor roles—ranging from Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* to the title role of *Otello*—for the Frankfurt Opera. Since then, the American artist has performed with many European and North American companies such as the

Royal Opera at Covent Garden, the State Operas of Vienna and Berlin, as well as in Zurich, Munich, Paris, Moscow, Prague, Brussels, Budapest and Warsaw. He made his 1969 bow with San Francisco Opera as Froh in *Das Rheingold* in Los Angeles, and returned to sing the role of Tikhon in our 1977 premiere production of *Katya Kabanova*. Cochran's repertoire today includes such roles as the principal tenor leads of *Die Walküre*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Tannhäuser* and *Siegfried*, in addition to character parts in the operas of Henze, Nono, Zimmermann, Stravinsky, Berg, Britten, Schönberg and Janáček. Recent highlights include the title role of *Peter Grimes* at the Monnaie in Brussels, *Jenůfa* (Laca) and *From the House of the Dead* (Skuratov) in Frankfurt, *Der Prinz von Homburg* (Elector) for the Zurich and English National Operas, *Salome* (Herod) at the Hamburg Staatsoper, and *Palestrina* for the Deutsche Oper Berlin. Among the tenor's recordings are *Die Walküre*, Hindemith's *Mathis der Mahler*, Busoni's *Doktor Faust*, Mahler's Ninth Symphony, as well as Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*.



Regarded as one of the most prominent opera and concert singers in the world today, **BERND WEIKL** regularly appears at numerous major opera houses and festivals. Since the early 1970s, the Viennese baritone has been a frequent guest at the Metropolitan Opera, London's Covent Garden, Vienna State Opera, and has sung more than 200 performances at the Bayreuth Festival, giving him an international

reputation as one of the finest interpreters of Richard Wagner's operas. (He made his 1993 San Francisco Opera debut singing one of his signature roles, Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger*.) With a repertoire that encompasses the baritone roles of Verdi, Mozart, Wagner and Richard Strauss, as well as the music of French, Russian and contemporary composers, he has performed over 120 roles in five languages under the world's foremost conductors. In recent years, lieder recitals have increasingly become of great importance in Weikl's schedule. His numerous recordings, television appearances, as well as opera and concert films reflect his diverse talents and great popularity. The artist has been awarded the title of "Kammersänger" from the State Operas of Vienna, Munich and Hamburg, was named an honorary "Professor" by the German government, and earned a doctorate in Economic Sciences. Future engagements are scheduled for Berlin, Vienna, Hamburg, Munich, Florence, New York and Tokyo, among others.

ARTIST PROFILES



The American artist **KURT STREIT** is currently regarded as one of the leading lyric tenors of the day. A member of the 1986 Merola Opera Program, he made his 1990 San Francisco Opera debut as Belmonte in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and has since returned here to sing Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1992) and Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* (1995). A prominent interpreter of the works of Mozart, one of his signature roles is Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, which he has performed at the Metropolitan

Opera and Covent Garden, and in Vienna, Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, Geneva, Buenos Aires and Los Angeles. Roles performed in *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte* and *Die Entführung* have met with similar success at these important venues, and have also taken him to the opera houses of Zurich, Brussels, Milan, Madrid and Rome, and on a tour of Japan with the Royal Opera. In addition to *La Cenerentola*, Streit's expanding repertoire now includes *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Don Pasquale*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Strauss's *Capriccio* and *Salome*, as well as Britten's *The Turn of the Screw*, which have led to further engagements in Berlin, Chicago, Munich, Barcelona and at La Fenice in Venice. His most recent appearance at the Met was in their new production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has appeared in concert with many of the world's leading orchestras (led by such conductors as Riccardo Muti, Zubin Mehta, Lorin Maazel, Nikolaus Harnoncourt and John Eliot Gardiner) and is a regular guest at major music festivals including Glyndebourne, Salzburg, Schwetzingen and Aix-en-Provence. Most recently, he has begun to explore the lieder repertoire with recitals in London, Vienna, Zurich and at the Edinburgh Festival. His opera recordings include *Così fan tutte* under Daniel Barenboim, *Die Zauberflöte* led by Arnold Östman, *Die Entführung* with Bruno Weil, and *The Yeomen of the Guard* conducted by Neville Marriner. Future releases include a second recording of *Così* led by Simon Rattle.



Bass **CHESTER D. PATTON** appears in three roles: Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, the First Nazarene in *Salome*, and the King of Egypt in *Aida*. An Adler Fellow with the S.F. Opera Center from 1993-95, he made his Company debut in *Salome* during the 1993 Strauss Festival, returning that fall for the Mandarin in *Turandot* (televised on PBS and issued on videocassette and laserdisc) and Lord Walton in *I Puritani*. During the 1994 season, he portrayed the Doctor in *Macbeth*, Raimondo in the student matinee perfor-

mances of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and last fall appeared as Alidoro in the student matinee presentation of *La Cenerentola*. He was seen as Colline in this summer's new staging of *La Bohème*. Opera Center credits include the title role in the North American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam*, Colline, and a 1995 Schwabacher Debut Recital. Elsewhere in the Bay Area, he has performed with West Bay Opera, Opera San José, Pocket Opera, and Berkeley Contemporary Opera. Recent engagements include his debuts at Opera Pacific as Don Basilio, Opéra de Lyon as Pizarro in *Fidelio*, and the Paris Opera as the High Priest in *Nabucco*. He also appeared as Ferrando in *Il Trovatore*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* and Colline at Hawaii Opera Theater. Future engagements include a debut at Vancouver Opera as Timur in *Turandot* and a return to the Paris Opera for a revival of *Nabucco*. A native of Columbia, Mississippi, Patton earned his master of music degree at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.



Canadian tenor **JOHN MAC MASTER** began his career with Toronto's Canadian Opera Company, also performing at Niagara-on-the-Lake's Shaw Festival and with Winnipeg's Rainbow Stage. In addition to his operatic and musical theater engagements, he has performed as an actor in drama, film and television. As resident artist with New York's AmorArtis Orchestra and Choir since 1989, he has performed as soloist in, among others, Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ*, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, the *Stabat Mater* by

Rossini and Caldara, the Saint-Saëns *Christmas Oratorio*, the U.S. premiere of Donizetti's *Miserere*, the Saint-Saëns Requiem, and Johannes Somy's cantata *A Ballad of God and His People*. The last two works were recorded and released on CD. Recent highlights include Verdi's Requiem and Britten's *War Requiem* in New York with AmorArtis and his European debut singing the title role of Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* with AmorArtis and the Brno State Philharmonic on tour in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary. Among his performances last season were *Carmina Burana* with the Taghanik Chorale, Finzi's *Farewell to Arms* with AmorArtis, a recording of Handel's opera *Berenice* with the Brewer Chamber Orchestra, and a continuing engagement as Ubaldo Piangi in the Toronto company of *Phantom of the Opera*. Later this season Mac Master will portray the Prince in Toronto's Opera in Concert production of *Rusalka*, and will appear as a soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with L'Orchestre Symphonique de Québec.



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 Marriane 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 *Susannah*, 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 Pêrichole* 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*.

ARTIST PROFILES



Tenor **CARLO SCIBELLI** made his New York City Opera debut as Vladimir Igorevich in *Prince Igor*, and has since been heard with that company as Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Camille in *The Merry Widow* (telecast by PBS in a "Live from Lincoln Center" special), and Alfredo in *La Traviata*, a role he first sang at Santa Barbara Grand Opera last year. Prior to his City Opera debut, Scibelli spent two seasons as Principal Artist-in-Residence with Opera San José where he sang much of the standard tenor repertoire. Recent

engagements have included the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier* for Portland Opera, the Duke in *Rigoletto* for Cleveland Opera, and a debut at Fort Worth Opera as Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Upcoming are the title role of *Faust* for Fort Worth Opera, and a bow with the Los Angeles Music Center Opera in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. The tenor makes a cameo appearance as an "opera-singing neighbor" in Barbra Streisand's recent film, *The Mirror Has Two Faces*.



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 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, as well as Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* to inaugurate the New National Theatre of Tokyo.



Australian bass **DANIEL SUMEGI**, a 1993-94 Adler Fellow with the San Francisco Opera Center, made his Company debut during the 1992 season as Mathieu in *Andrea Chénier* and Snug in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has subsequently appeared with S.F. Opera in *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Capriccio*, *Die Meistersinger*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Il Trovatore*, *Tannhäuser*, *The Fiery Angel*, and in this summer's new staging of *La Bohème*. A member of the 1991 Merola Opera Program, his Opera Center credits include Dr. Grenvil

in *La Traviata* (U.S. debut), a 1993 tour of Japan and the U.S. in Western Opera Theater's production of *Bohème*, and the title role in the North American premiere presentation of Tippet's *King Priam*. His 1995-96 engagements included *Aida* (Ramfis) and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Basilio) at the Australian Opera; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (The-seus) at Turin's Teatro Regio; *Eugene Onegin* (Prince Gremin), *Don Giovanni* (Commendatore) and Ramfis for Victoria State Opera; *Faust* (Méphistophélès) at the National Reisopera of the Netherlands; *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* (Seneca) for Glimmerglass Opera at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; *Billy Budd* (Ratcliffe) at the Paris Opera Bastille; and *Il Guarany* (Don Alonso) at the Washington Opera. A finalist in the 1992 Pavarotti Voice Competition, Sumegi was a winner of the 1994 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a finalist in Plácido Domingo's Operalia '95 competition. He was also the recipient of a 1995 grant from the William Matheus Sullivan Musical Foundation. Future engagements include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Hunding in *Die Walküre* with Australian Opera, Banquo in *Macbeth* with Houston Grand Opera; and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* for the Bonn Opera.



A graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, **DAVID LANGAN** sang in the telecast inaugural production of *Aida* for the Wortham Theatre, as well as in stagings of *Salome*, *Falstaff*, *Boris Godunov*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Otello*. As a member of the Texas Opera Theatre and the 1986 Merola Opera Program, he sang the role of Colline in *La Bohème*. The bass-baritone's recent engagements include Méphistophélès in *Faust* in Kansas City, Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Austin Lyric

Opera, Lodovico in *Otello* for Milwaukee's Florentine Opera, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* at Chautauqua, Tommaso in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Truffaldino in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly* for Washington Opera, as well as additional *Butterfly*s with Vancouver and New Jersey State Operas. While performing for three seasons in Osnabrück, Germany, the young American artist sang Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Count Walter in *Luisa Miller*, Surin in *The Queen of Spades*, and Dikoy in *Katya Kabanova*.

ARTIST PROFILES



JOHN RELYEA performs roles in *Hamlet*, *Lohengrin*, *Harvey Milk*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Salome*. A 1996-97 Adler Fellow, he recently made his San Francisco Opera debut as Colline in *La Bohème* and appeared as Barelli in the Opera Center's Showcase '96 production of *The Aspern Papers*. The artist made his 1991 operatic debut in *Die Zauberflöte* with Opera Atelier of Toronto (the bass-baritone's native city), and subsequently appeared as the Police Sergeant in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Vancouver Opera. At the age of 24, he

has already been a featured soloist with many of Canada's major symphony orchestras including the Toronto Symphony, Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, and the Calgary Philharmonic. As a member of the 1995 Merola Opera Program, Relyea portrayed Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (the role he also sang on Western Opera Theater's national tour) and was the recipient of the prestigious Schwabacher Family Award at the Grand Finals Concert. He recently completed his bachelor of music degree at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, where he performed roles in *Die Fledermaus*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*.



In his debut season with San Francisco Opera, **MARC MOLOMOT** sings multiple roles in *Harvey Milk*, Dr. Blind in *Die Fledermaus*, and the Fourth Jew in *Salome*. The tenor recently made his first New York City Opera appearance in *Der Rosenkavalier* and made his bow with L'Opéra Français de New York as Ménélas in *La Belle Hélène*. This spring he was also heard as soloist in the Mozart Requiem with Westchester Choral Society and in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with Ithaca Opera. Past engagements have included Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with the National Symphony Orchestra of Bolivia, as well as the roles of Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* and the title part of *Albert Herring* with Orlando Opera. As a 1995 member of the Merola Opera Program, he was applauded as Don Pedro in *La Périchole* at Stern Grove, and as Don Basilio/Don Curzio in Western Opera Theater's national tour of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Molomot was also a member of the Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program in 1994 and 1996. The native of Poughkeepsie earned a bachelor of music degree from the Eastman School of Music and a master of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music.

included Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with the National Symphony Orchestra of Bolivia, as well as the roles of Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* and the title part of *Albert Herring* with Orlando Opera. As a 1995 member of the Merola Opera Program, he was applauded as Don Pedro in *La Périchole* at Stern Grove, and as Don Basilio/Don Curzio in Western Opera Theater's national tour of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Molomot was also a member of the Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program in 1994 and 1996. The native of Poughkeepsie earned a bachelor of music degree from the Eastman School of Music and a master of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music.



Austrian conductor **RALF WEIKERT** has served as music director and principal conductor of the Mozarteum Orchestra in Salzburg, Zurich Opera, Frankfurt Opera and the City Theater in Bonn. His impressive career has included performances at the Vienna State Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Bavarian State Opera and the Metropolitan Opera. He is a regular guest at the Salzburg and Bregenz Festivals as well as the festivals in Aix-en-Provence and Verona. He has made guest

appearances, both as conductor of opera and concert, at most of the important music centers in Austria, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Holland, Greece, Scandinavia, Japan and the U.S. In recent years he has been highly praised for his performances in Amsterdam (*Die Fledermaus*), Athens (*Fidelio*), Berlin (*Elektra*, *Der Freischütz*), and Zurich (*Katya Kabanova*), as well as for leading numerous concerts with the Dresden Philharmonic. Earlier this season he began a highly successful tour of *Die Zauberflöte* with the English Chamber Orchestra which will bring him to all the major European music centers. Maestro Weikert has 1997 engagements in Vienna, Munich, Zurich, Catania, Genoa, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Berlin and Tokyo. His video and CD recordings include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Die Walküre* and *Tancredi*, as well as opera aria and duet collections with Francisco Araiza, James Morris, Eva Lind, Peter Seiffert, Dagmar Schellenberger and Luana DeVol.



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 1995 Fall Season, the number of Mansouri productions at San Francisco Opera reached 57—and during our 1996-97 season, that number grows to 60

when he directs the 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.

ARTIST PROFILES



WOLFRAM SKALICKI designed the settings for the newly revised staging of *Die Fledermaus* and for the new productions of *Salome* and *Aida*. The internationally acclaimed artist's long association with San Francisco Opera began in 1962 with his sets for the Company premiere of *The Rake's Progress*. Additional Skalicki designs seen here have been the complete 1967-72 Ring cycle, *Aida*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* (Katerina Ismailova), *L'Africaine*, *Andrea Chénier*, and the 1990 presentation of *Die Fledermaus*. A native of

Vienna, he is a professor at the University for Music and the Performing Arts in Graz, and is associated with the Staatsoper, Burgtheater and Volksoper in Vienna. With his wife, costume designer Amrei Skalicki, he has collaborated on productions in Vienna, Lyon, Marseilles, Toronto, Munich, Geneva, Buenos Aires, Hamburg, Miami, Athens and Bogotá. They include designs for *Lulu*, *Giovanna d'Arco*, *Boris Godunov*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *Death in Venice*, and *Hérodiade*. Recent set designs have been seen at the Metropolitan Opera (*Andrea Chénier*), Pittsburgh Opera (*Boris Godunov*), Canadian Opera Company (*Falstaff*), Los Angeles Music Center Opera (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), the Teatro Municipal in Santiago, Chile (*The Queen of Spades*), and Seattle Opera (*Elektra*). Additionally, his work has been exhibited in Vienna, Zurich, Bayreuth, New York and San Francisco.



Costume designer **MARIA-LUISE WALEK** made her San Francisco Opera debut in 1977 with Janáček's *Katya Kabanova*, returning in 1994 for the Company premiere of Massenet's *Hérodiade*. Born in Vienna, she studied there at the Academy of Arts, later becoming a frequent collaborator with set designer Günther Schneider-Siemssen. Her work with him and other designers took her to Salzburg, Berlin, Munich, Karlsruhe, Düsseldorf, Vienna (Staatsoper, Volksoper and Burgtheater), Stuttgart, Stockholm, Barcelona,

Nice, Nancy, Lyon, Strasbourg, Welsh National Opera and New York's Metropolitan Opera, where she made her U.S. debut with *Jenůfa* in Günther Rennert's 1975 production. Since 1985, Miss Walek has designed regularly for the Opéra de Nice, where her work included costumes for *Fidelio*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Carmen* and others, as well as Lotfi Mansouri's 1987 staging of *Hérodiade*. Her most recent projects include the Vienna Staatsoper (*Lulu*, among others), Bregenz Festival (*Maria Stuarda*), and the Deutsche Oper Berlin (*Samson et Dalila*). Future engagements include *Roberto Devereux* at the Zurich Opera and *Faust* in Beijing.

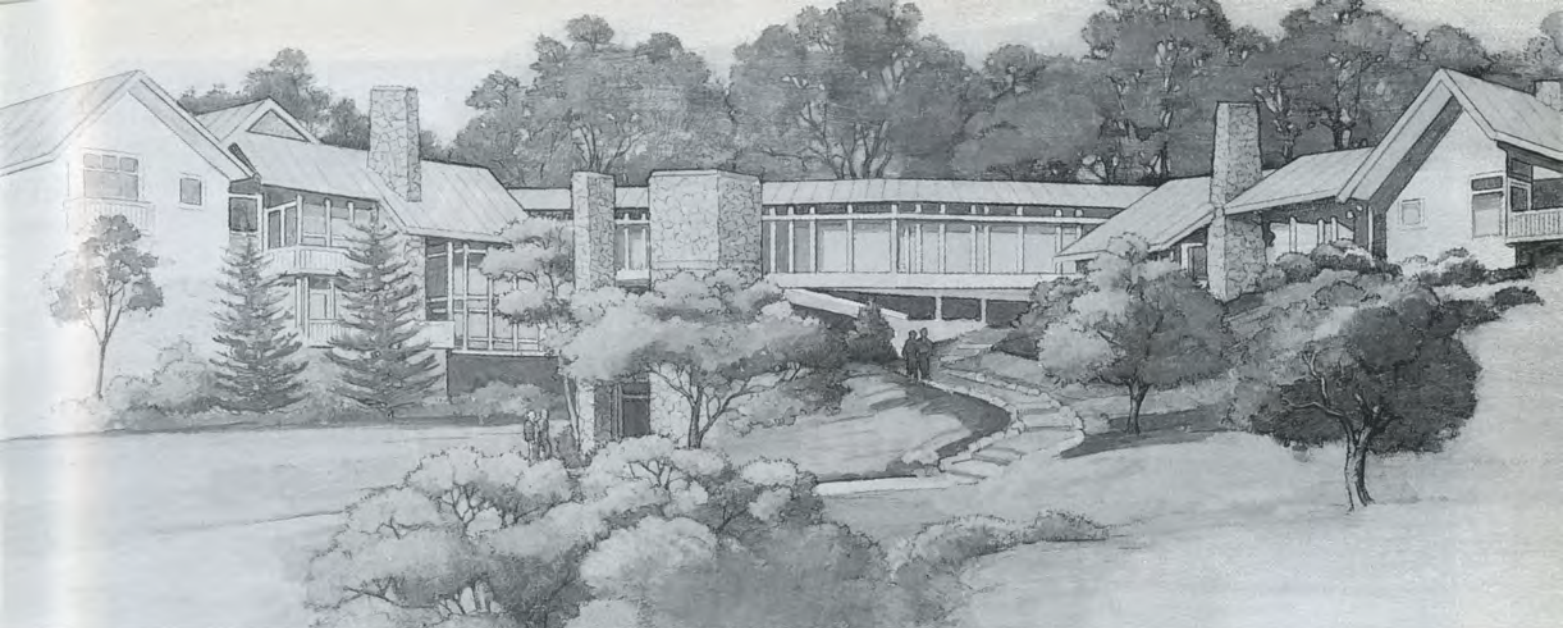


VICTORIA MORGAN, who staged the dance sequences for *Carmen* and *Salome*, is in her ninth year as Resident Choreographer for San Francisco Opera. She has previously created the dances for the Company's stagings of *Don Quichotte* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1990), *War and Peace* (1991), *Andrea Chénier* (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 restaged 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.



Lighting Director and Design Consultant for San Francisco Opera since 1976, **THOMAS J. MUNN** created the lighting for *Prince Igor*, *Lohengrin*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Salome* and *Aida*. He has designed the lighting and special effects for more than 155 productions for the Company, including the recent *La Bohème* and last fall's stagings of *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, *La Traviata*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Cenerentola*, *Faust* and *Die Walküre*. As scenic adviser, he has designed scenery for SFO productions of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Billy Budd*, *Nabucco*, *Don Giovanni* and *Christophe Colomb*. In addition to his work for the San Francisco Opera, Munn has designed scenery and lighting for Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theater, ballet, industrials and films. His television and video credits include San Francisco Opera productions of *La Gioconda*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Aida*, *L'Africaine*, *La Bohème*, *Orlando Furioso*, *Mefistofele*, *Capriccio*, *Turandot* and *The Dangerous Liaisons*. Credits for other companies include work for the Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Washington Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera, Netherlands Opera and Hartford Ballet. Recent credits include lighting for the Dallas Opera's production of *La Cenerentola*, scenery and lighting for Ballet Arizona's staging of *Coppélia*, as well as art direction and lighting for the video "The Universe Story." He continues to serve as consultant/designer of the War Memorial's new renovated and computerized lighting system.



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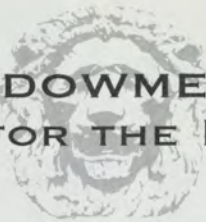
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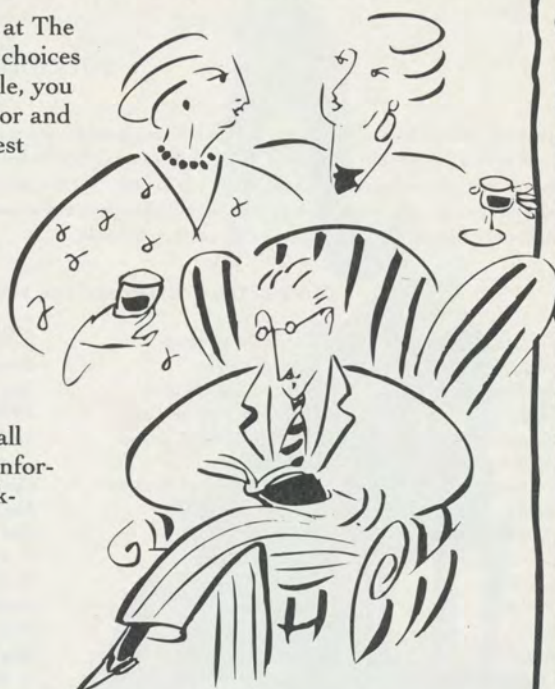
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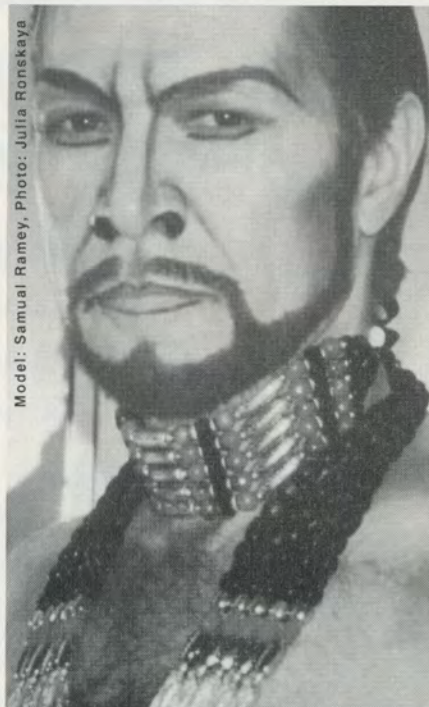
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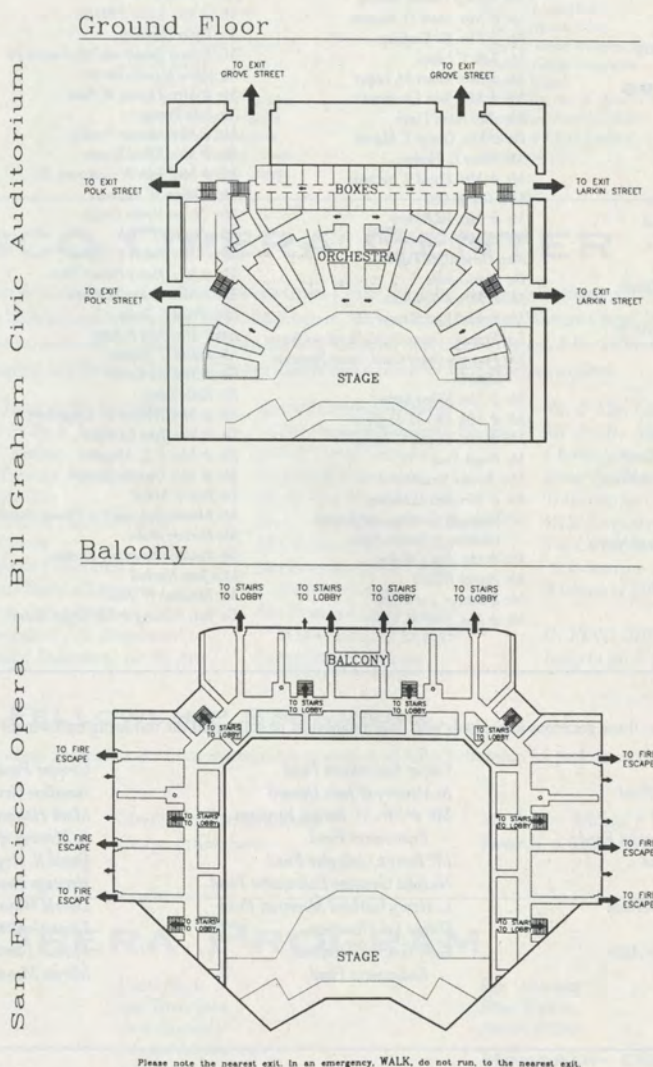
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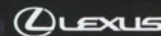
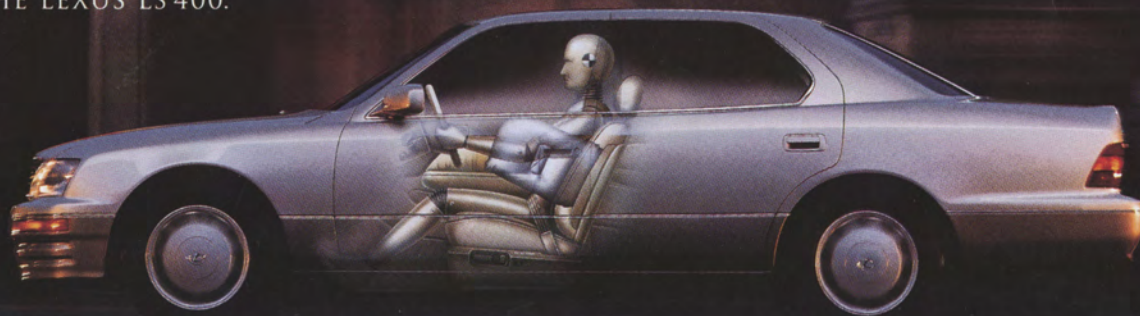
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The Latest Development

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the supplemental restraint system already in place, the steel reinforced cabin and the energy absorbing front and rear crumple zones, Lexus has once again demonstrated a never-ending commitment to safety. After all, there's only one thing more important than keeping our customers happy and that's keeping our customers customers.

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Always wear seatbelts. Always secure children in rear seat.

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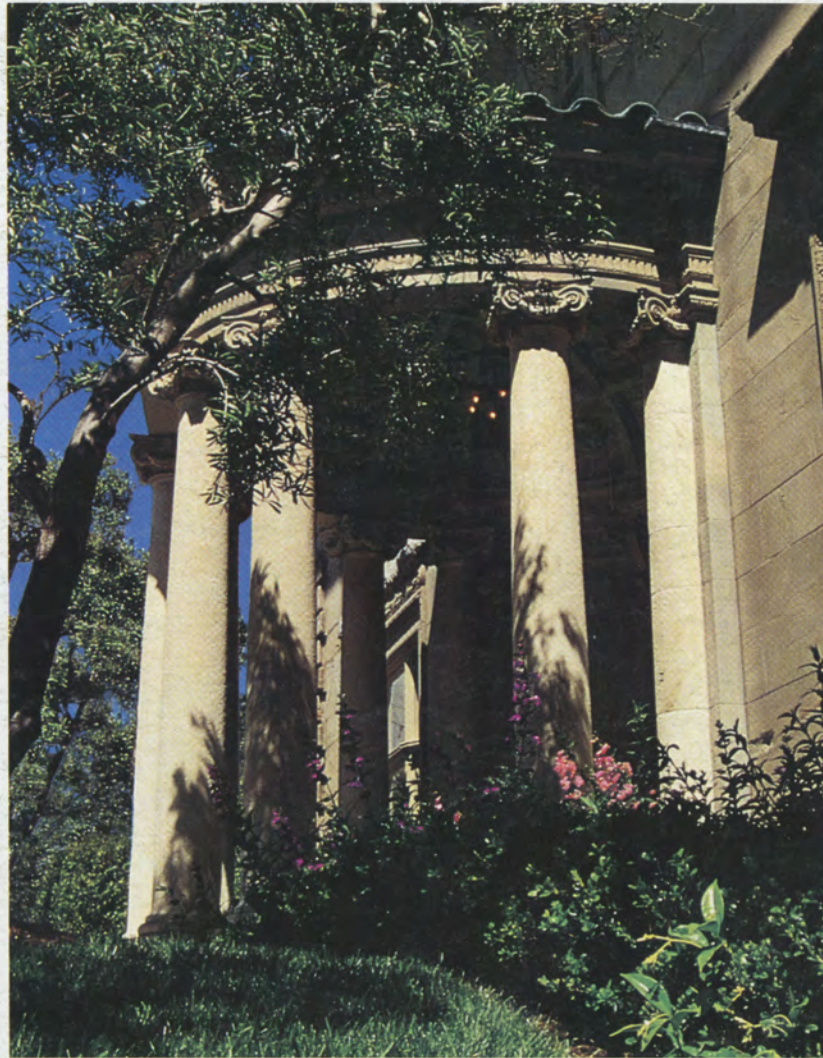
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