

Rigoletto I

1997-1998

Saturday, September 13, 1997 8:00 PM

Tuesday, September 16, 1997 8:00 PM

Saturday, September 20, 1997 2:00 PM

Friday, September 26, 1997 8:00 PM

Wednesday, October 1, 1997 7:30 PM

Sunday, October 5, 1997 1:00 PM

Tuesday, October 7, 1997 8:00 PM

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75TH SEASON, 1997-98

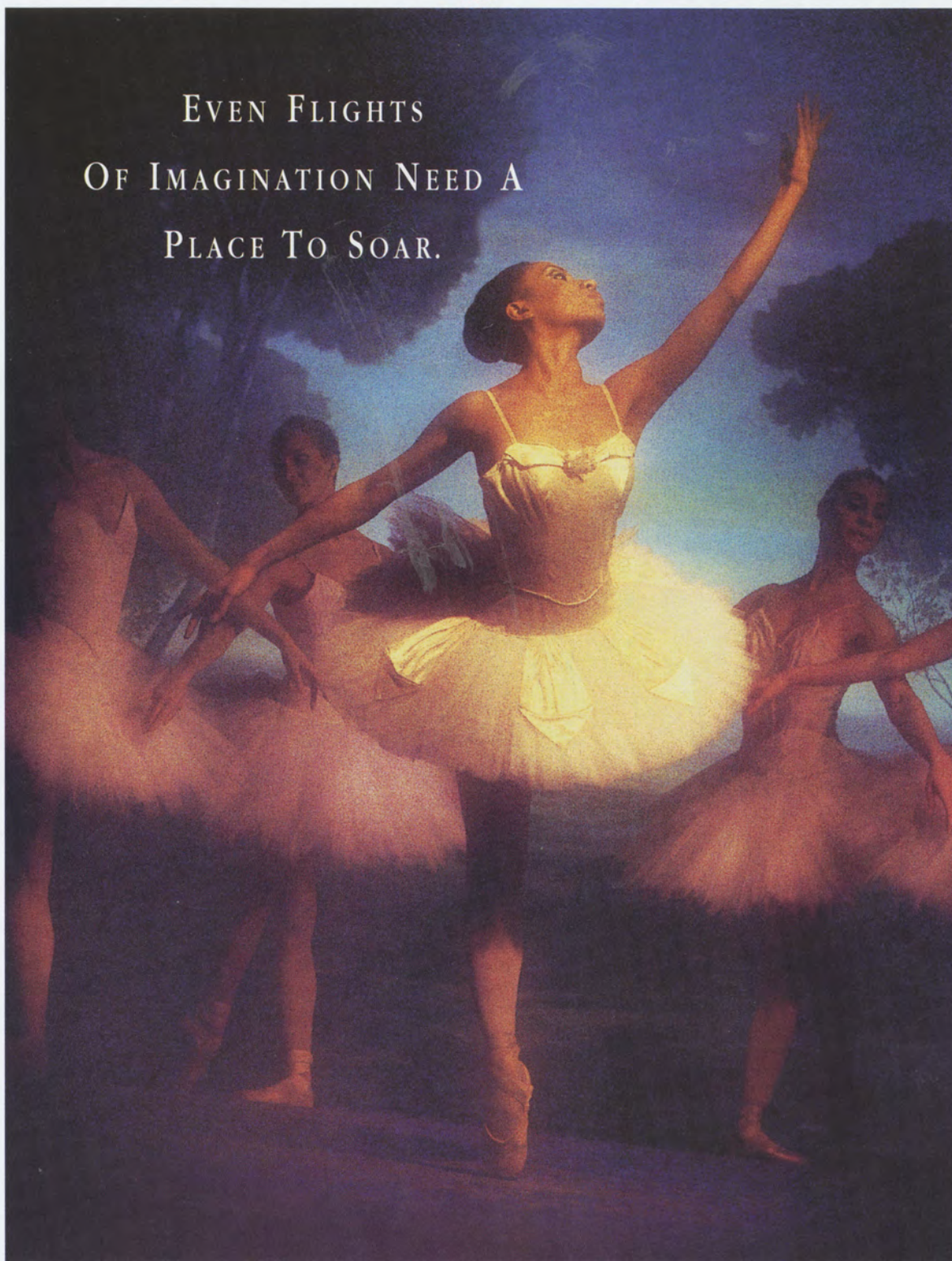
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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT, SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ASSOCIATION



On behalf of the San Francisco Opera Association, we are pleased to welcome you to our *Femmes Fatales* Festival. We spent the past two summers in different venues, presenting *La Bohème* at the Orpheum Theatre and *Madama Butterfly* at the Golden Gate Theatre. In doing so, we gained a significant number of new audience members, with approximately 25,000 first-time opera-goers at the *Bohème* run and more than 24,000 at *Butterfly*. Indeed, our opera family has grown, and we hope to continue the trend by offering you new and innovative approaches to opera while maintaining the high standards that you expect from San Francisco Opera. Right now, it is a delight to be able to welcome our summer audience to the War Memorial Opera House.

Although the Company's financial position continues to be strong, ticket prices cover only half of our production costs. Today, more than ever, support of individuals, foundations and corporations is vital to the existence of San Francisco Opera. We acknowledge with great appreciation the generosity of Mrs. Paul L. Wattis, Chevron and Madeleine Haas Russell for helping us to present our *Femmes Fatales* Festival.

Just around the corner is our 76th season, which has been expanded to 10 operas and includes the world premiere of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, a San Francisco Opera commission. An extraordinary season awaits us, and we look forward to seeing you there.

REID W. DENNIS
CHAIRMAN

WILLIAM W. GODWARD
PRESIDENT

A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR



The *femme fatale* has been celebrated in opera for hundreds of years, and our *Femmes Fatales* Festival offers you a brilliant sampler of great opera. From the exquisite, 17th-century baroque lyricism of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, to the beloved romanticism of Bizet's *Carmen* and the provocative, 20th-century music of Berg's *Lulu*, you will embark on a musical adventure through time, led by the marvelous conductors Ralf Weikert, Patrick Summers and Alberto Maria Giuri.

Our *femmes fatales* live in vibrant worlds of drama and intrigue, each brought to life in our summer productions. A fascinating new virtual reality film sequence and new costumes by the celebrated fashion designer Bob Mackie enhance our acclaimed 1989 production of *Lulu*. The elegant grandeur of ancient Rome is re-created by Robert Perdziola in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. Our massive and very popular production of *Carmen*, created for our season at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, has been refitted for the War Memorial Opera House stage.

As for singers, we'll encounter a superb group of international artists, with some in exciting debuts: Frederica von Stade performing her first Countess Geschwitz in *Lulu*; countertenor David Daniels, mezzo Lorraine Hunt and tenor Barry Banks taking Company bows in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*; and soprano Andrea Dankova making her U.S. opera debut in *Carmen*.

The power of the *femme fatale* is a force to behold—enjoy the excitement!

LOTFI MANSOURI
GENERAL DIRECTOR



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Rigoletto

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De Chirico, Giorgio (Italian, 1888-1978)
Vexations of the Thinker, 1915

Oil on canvas, 18¼ x 15 in.

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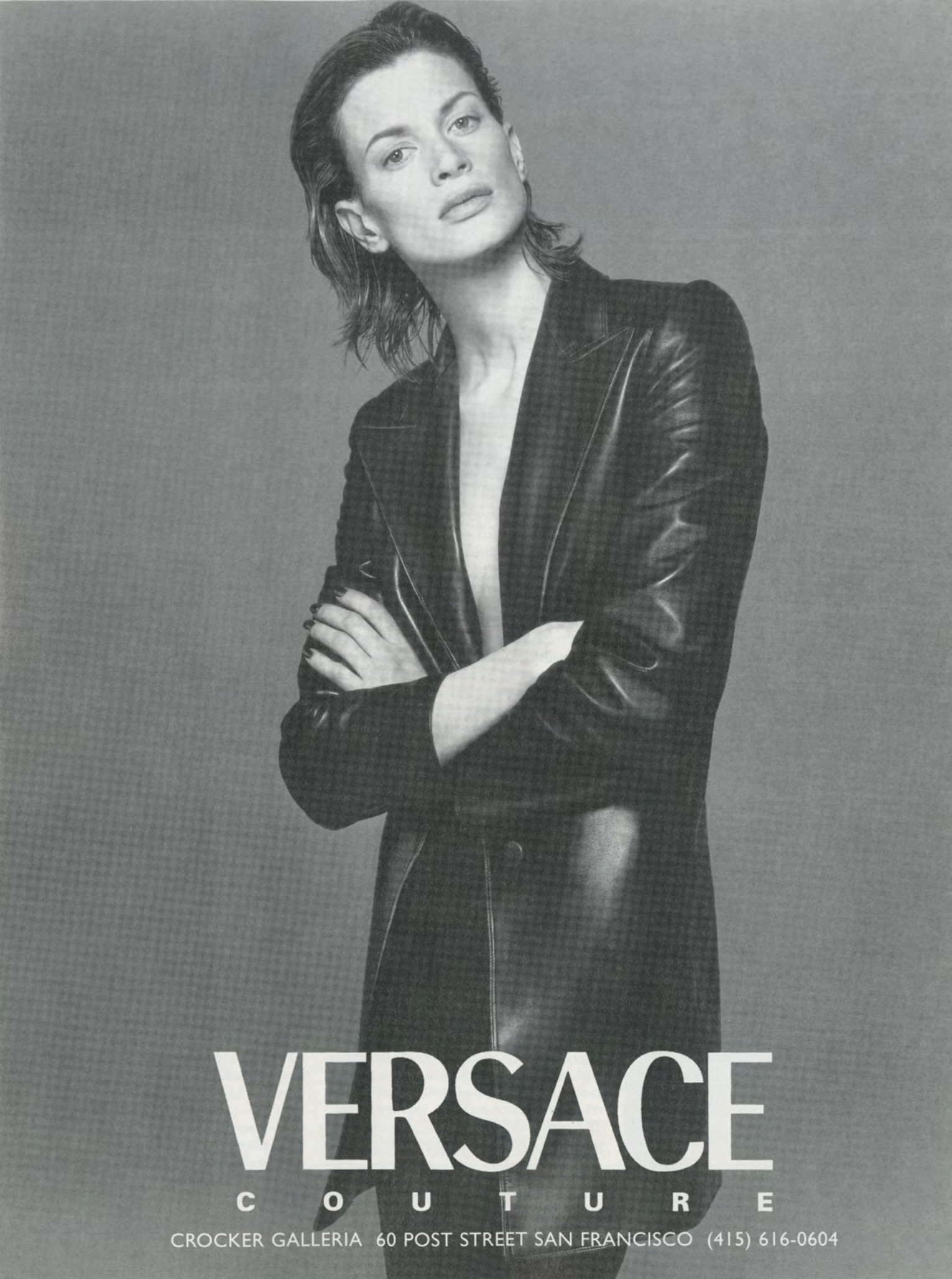
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Ahead of its Time

By JULIAN BUDDEN

A REVOLUTIONARY OPERA"—that is how Verdi would describe *Rigoletto* in the years to come after its premiere. At first sight this seems like an exaggeration.

There are no revolutions in Italian opera comparable to the one accomplished in Germany by Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, which dates from the same decade. Audiences throughout the Italian Peninsula had a set of expectations which no composer could afford to disregard. Yet within these limits Verdi's seventeenth opera did indeed blaze a number of fresh trails, thereby acquiring a stamp of modernity that remained to impress listeners even in the years preceding the Verdi renaissance of the 1920s, when the composer's reputation was at a low ebb and only *Otello*, *Falstaff* and the Requiem were thought worthy of serious attention. One of

the opera's keenest admirers was Edward Elgar.

The subject of Victor Hugo's play first occurred to Verdi in 1849, the year in which he set up as a man of property, freed from the theatrical rat race and able to write merely when he felt inclined to do so. He proposed it to Vincenzo Flauto, impresario of the Teatro San Carlo, Naples, as a possible successor to *Luisa Miller*, already scheduled for the current autumn season—"a fine drama with marvelous situations" was how he put it. His suggestion was duly passed on to Salvatore Cammarano, the theater's resident poet who, however, had his doubts ("I've

Julian Budden, internationally renowned musicologist, is the author of a landmark three-volume series, The Operas of Verdi.

read *Le Roi s'amuse* again. . . . but what about the censorship?" In such matters Cammarano was nothing if not a realist. As one who had removed the religious and political stings from Voltaire's *Alzire* and Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe* for Verdi's benefit [Luisa Miller], he realized that Hugo's piece was far more dangerous than either. After a stormy reception at its first night in 1832, the play had been suppressed by the government on the grounds of immorality. In a preface to the printed edition, the poet rebutted the charge at length. His argument may be summarized as follows: Triboulet, court jester to King François I of France, has a divided nature. As a hunchback, he is bitterly resentful of all who are not similarly deformed; his constant aim, therefore, is to set his fellow men against one another. He urges his royal master to every kind of vice so that, in Hugo's words, "in the hands of Triboulet, the king is nothing but an all-powerful puppet who destroys the lives of all those among whom his jester sets him." But there is another side to Triboulet; he has a daughter, the one being in the world whom he loves, and whom he tries to bring up in virtue and innocence. One day he mocks the nobleman, Saint-Vallier, whose daughter, Diane de Poitiers, the king had seduced. The old man raises his arms and

curses the mocker, and the curse falls on Triboulet the father, not the jester. What could be more moral than that?

It is an ingenious defense, but it overlooks an important fact. Saint-Vallier curses both Triboulet and the king, but the king goes scot-free. At any rate, it is nonsense to describe François I, one of the most powerful monarchs in Europe, as a puppet. The sharp intelligence that gleams from Jean Clouet's famous portrait is enough to give such a notion the lie. The play, however, shows him behaving outrageously and irresponsibly. That such a portrait of royalty should be permitted in conservative Naples, ruled by a Bourbon monarch, especially in the years following the defeat of the 1848



Although *Rigoletto* was part of San Francisco Opera's 1923 inaugural season, photographic records don't start until the 1930s. Left: In 1935, Ezio Pinza was Sparafucile, Eva Gruninger, Madalena, and Tito Schipa, the Duke of Mantua. Above: The 1936 *Rigoletto* cast, captured backstage between acts: (left to right) Company founder Gaetano Merola, Lawrence Tibbett (*Rigoletto*), Armando Agnini (stage director and designer), Josephine Tumminia (*Gilda*), Gennaro Papi (conductor), and Charles Kullman (Duke of Mantua).

uprising, was unthinkable. Even in Venice, under the comparatively tolerant regime of the Austrians in 1844, royal dignity was jealously guarded. In Verdi's *Ernani*, another Hugo subject that had its premiere that year at the Teatro La Fenice, the character of Don Carlo [Charles V], king of Spain, had to be softened in respect of the original play. All suggestions of profligacy were removed from his wooing of Donna Elvira; nor was he allowed to hide in a cupboard! Such changes in no way damaged the opera; indeed they may even be said to have improved it, giving a certain consistency to the character of the monarch that is lacking in the verse drama. But, as Verdi was later to point out, the royal seducer of *Le Roi s'amuse* must remain an out-and-out libertine, otherwise the plot makes no sense.

Anyway, it was at Venice that he decided to stage his opera once the Neapolitan contract had fallen through, with Piave, not Cammarano, as his collaborator, to whom he waxed ever more enthusiastic. "It's a subject which, if the police would permit it, would be one of the greatest creations of modern theater. Who knows? They permitted *Ernani*; they might permit this too, and here there wouldn't be any conspiracies." And later, "Oh, *Le Roi s'amuse* is the greatest subject, perhaps even the greatest drama of

modern times. Triboulet is a creation worthy of Shakespeare!"—than which Verdi could bestow no higher praise.

What were the qualities that attracted Verdi so strongly to the play? First of all, surely, the "divided nature" of the protagonist. Up to then his leading characters had been relatively monochromatic, actuated by similar impulses throughout. Triboulet gave him the opportunity of filling out a personality in all its human contradictions. Then, too, the play is a drama of paternity, a relationship which never failed to evoke a deep response from a man who had lost both his children in their infancy; hence his long-held but ultimately unrealized ambition to write a *Re Lear*. Lastly, there was his desire, expressed earlier on, to "unite the comic with the terrible in Shakespeare's manner." The subject of a court jester would allow him to do precisely that.

But it was not all plain sailing. Piave, resident librettist and stage director at the Venice Teatro La Fenice, evidently received assurances by word of mouth (though it is not clear from whom) that the subject would meet with no objection. Accordingly, he set to work on the scenario of what Verdi insisted should be called *La maledizione di Vallier* or, for short, *La Maledizione*. This he sent off to Carlo Mazzari, the theater's pres-



The 1941 *Rigoletto* cast included Jan Peerce as the Duke of Mantua and Lily Pons as Gilda. Miss Pons portrayed the role in no less than thirteen San Francisco Opera seasons.

ident, who was less optimistic as to the outcome. Piave, however, stood firm, reiterating Hugo's arguments regarding the "morality" of the play. Verdi followed up his defense with a note to the effect that Mazzari's doubts caused him considerable embarrassment; for, though he could not claim to have begun setting music to a libretto yet unwritten, he had already pondered the subject deeply and found the appropriate "color" (*tinta*—a favorite word of his in this connection) for the music; therefore, the hardest part of his task had already been accomplished. If the subject were refused, he would be unable to compose another opera in time for the scheduled date.

The text of *La Maledizione* was duly dispatched to the Venetian authorities; and the prospect appeared sufficiently favorable for Verdi to begin the composition. Then, barely three weeks before the opening of the opera season, the blow fell. A decree from the Military Governor forbade the subject absolutely and "regretted that the poet Piave and the celebrated Maestro Verdi have not been able to choose some other field in which to exhibit their talents than one of such repellent immorality and obscene triv-

iality as is the plot of the libretto entitled *La Maledizione*." It was not to be re-submitted in any form whatsoever.

But Piave did not give up hope. He re-worked the text, preserving his original meters but changing the king into a subordinate nobleman, who would take on the opera's title. It is in *Il Duca di Vendôme* that we first encounter the names Rigoletto, Gilda, Maddalena and Giovanna. The Duke himself is single, so there is no question of adultery; moreover, he declares to his courtiers (who are understandably astonished) that he intends to give up his life of philandering for Gilda's sake. He is not enticed to Sparafucile's inn, but drops in merely to seek shelter from the coming storm. There is no sack for Gilda's body and no hump on Rigoletto's back.

Surprisingly, in view of the earlier ban, the police gave their approval. It was Verdi who objected to the elimination of Hugo's most

daring strokes, and above all to the decision not to make Rigoletto a hunchback. "I find it very fine," he wrote, "to represent this character, outwardly deformed and ridiculous, inwardly impassioned and full of love. I chose the subject precisely for all these qualities and these original features, and if they're removed I can no longer write the music. If you tell me that the notes will fit this drama just as well, I can only reply that I don't understand such reasoning, and I tell you frankly that, good or bad as my notes may be, I don't write them at random; I always manage to give them a character."

Nevertheless, the chief hurdle had been surmounted. The bones of Hugo's drama were still discernible beneath the surface trappings; and it was a short step to the definitive version in which—with a further alteration of names and locale—the original situations were restored. A cryptic remark of Piave's indicates the identity of the Duke of Mantua during the period chosen. ("Everyone knows who was reigning in Mantua at that time.") It was that notorious roué, Vincenzo Gonzaga, patron of Rubens and Monteverdi. An appropriate choice,

therefore; but it was prudent not to have him mentioned by name.

The premiere took place on March 11, 1851 and was an instant success, of which the somewhat cautious reviews in the press give very little idea. So, the opera had no difficulty in circulating. But, over the next decade, few audiences south of Lombardy-Venetia were allowed to hear the opera as Verdi and Piave had written it. Indeed, the various adaptations that prevailed make *Il Duca di Vendôme* seem a model of fidelity to Victor Hugo. In *Viscardello*, the Roman version, the Duke of Nottingham may have a roving eye, but, as he tells us in the second verse of his *ballata*, his conduct is always irreproachable. In the last act he merely pretends to flirt with Maddalena, as is clear

(continued on page 37)

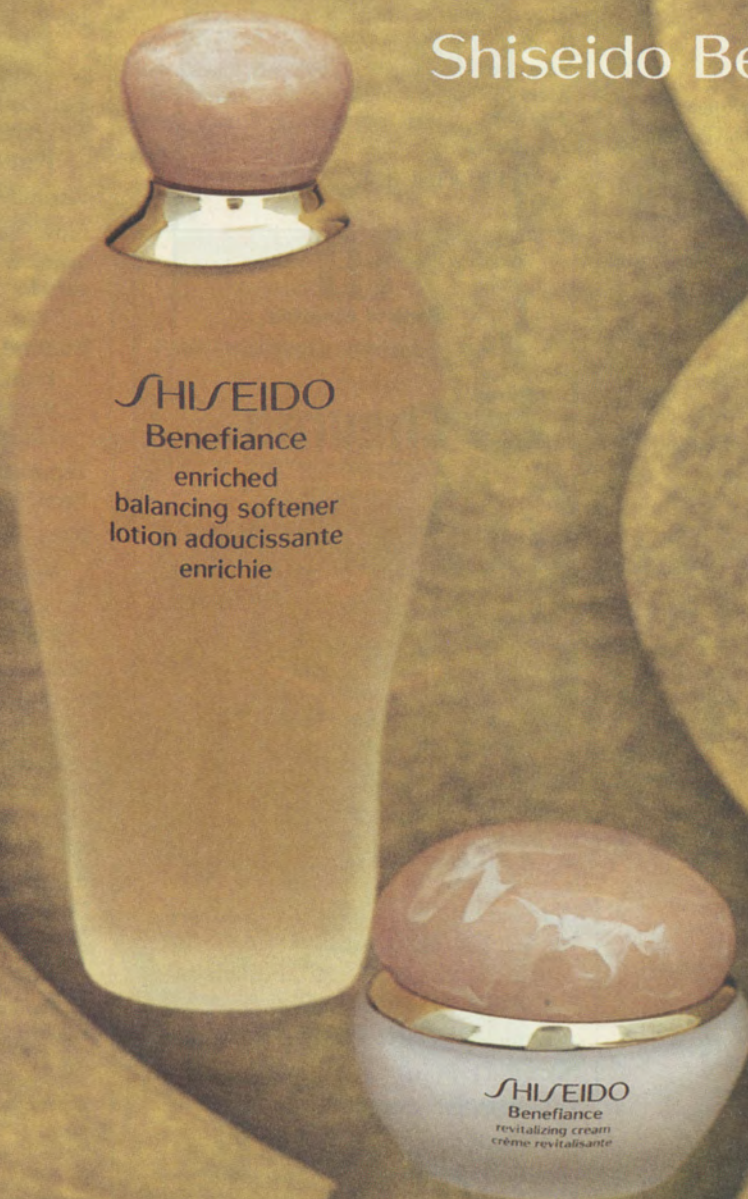
San Francisco Opera's 1943 *Rigoletto* cast included the Monterone of George London.



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Verdi

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Rossini

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Nov. 2, 7, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24

New Production

Pelléas et Mélisande

Debussy

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Tchaikovsky

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Nov. 19, 22, 25, 28, Dec. 2, 5, 7

Foland, Tarasova, Rubtsova,
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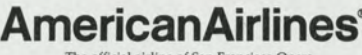
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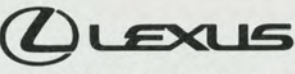
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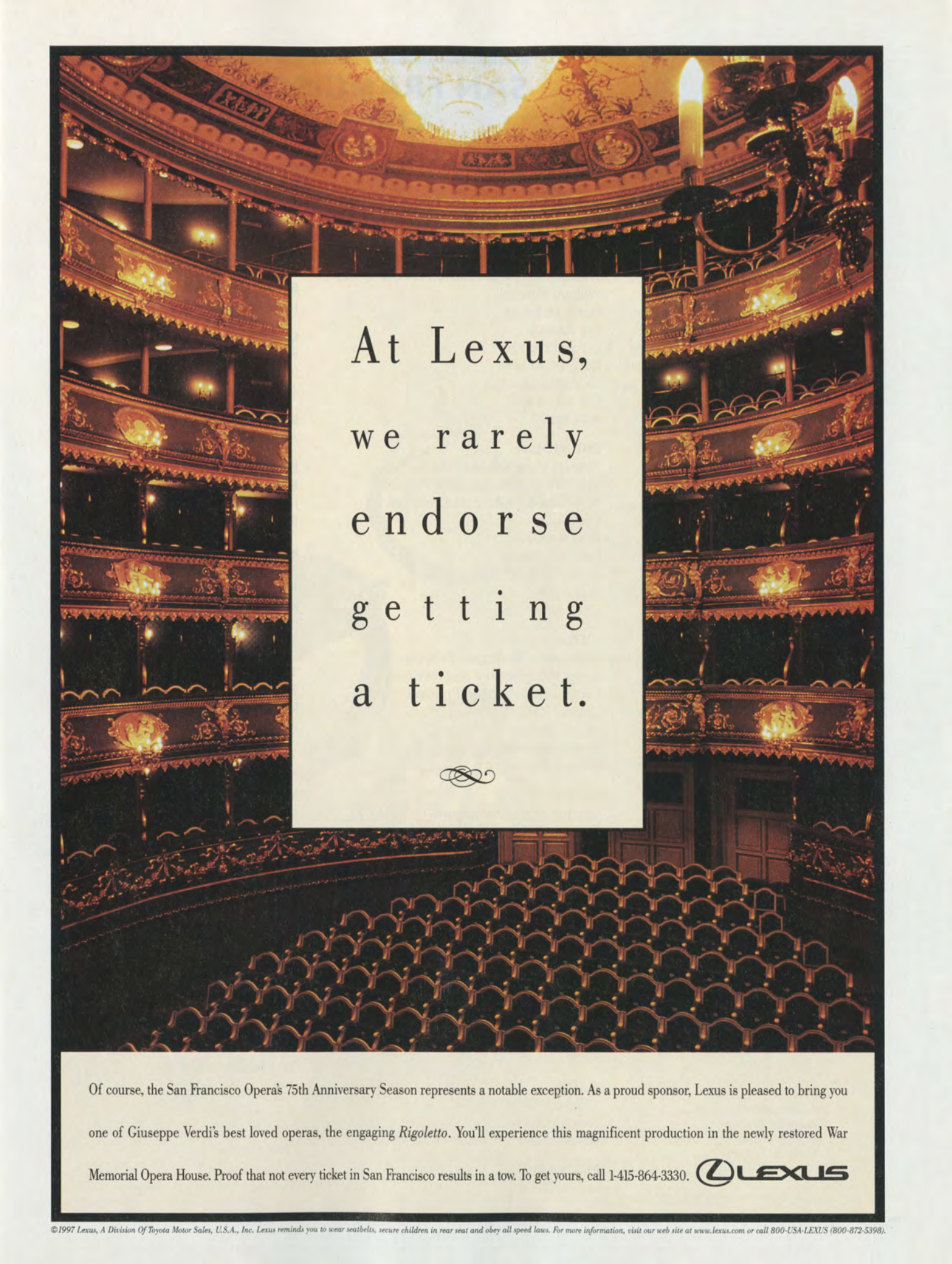
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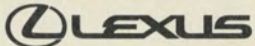
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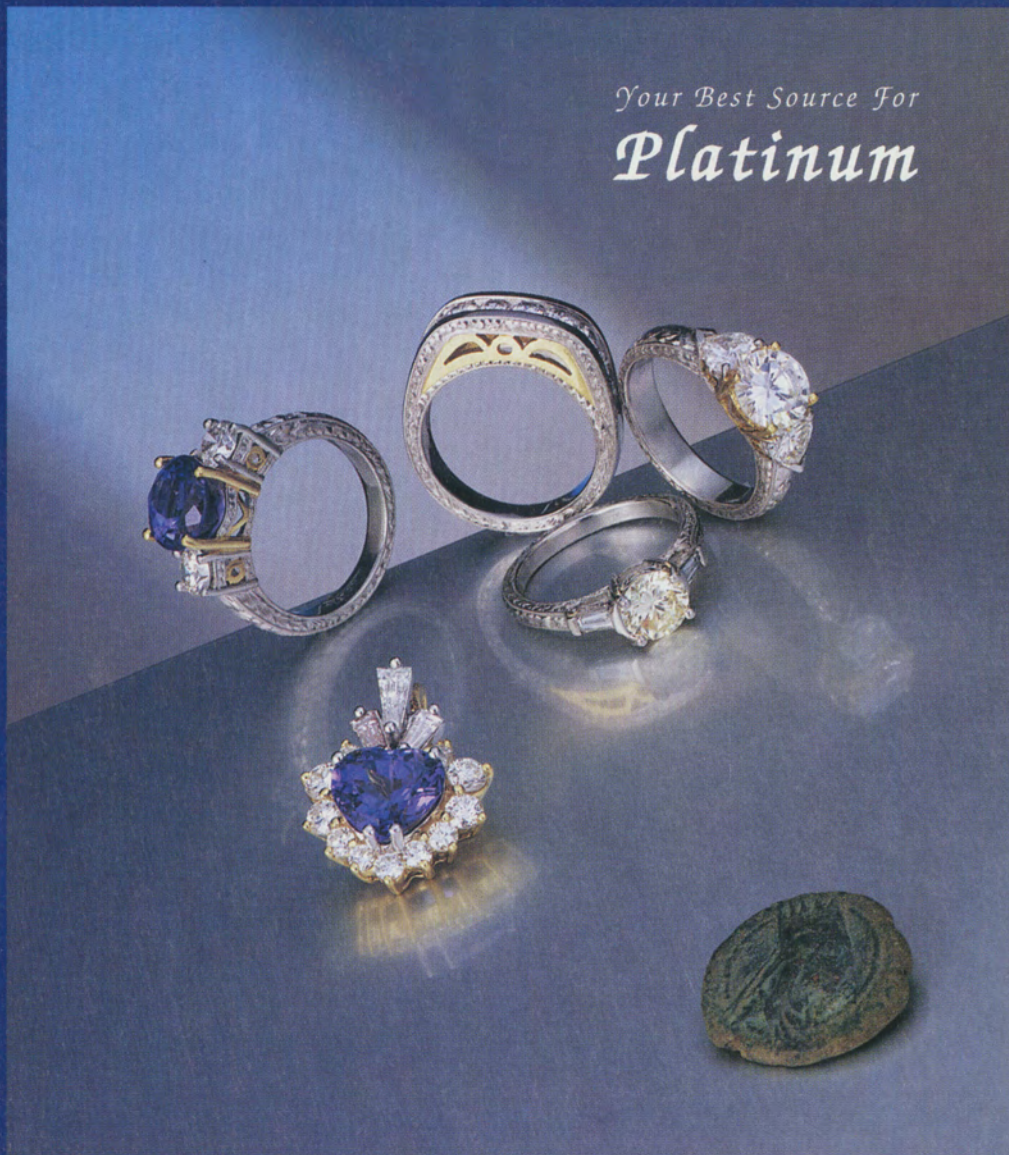
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Opera in three acts by GIUSEPPE VERDI

Libretto by FRANCESCO MARIA PIAVE

After the play *Le Roi s'amuse* by VICTOR HUGO

Rigoletto

(in Italian)

Conductor

David Robertson

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Constance Hoffman*

Lighting Designer

Pat Collins*

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 AT 8:00

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 AT 2:00

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 AT 8:00

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1 AT 7:30

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5 AT 1:00

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7 AT 8:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>The Duke of Mantua</i>	Carlo Scibelli Tito Beltrán (10/1, 5, 7)
<i>Borsa</i>	Stuart Skelton†
<i>Countess Ceprano</i>	Alison Buchanan†
<i>Count Ceprano</i>	Jay Baylon*
<i>Rigoletto</i>	Paolo Gavanelli
<i>Marullo</i>	John Autry†
<i>Monterone</i>	Scott Wilde
<i>Sparafucile</i>	Anatoli Kotchergera**
<i>Gilda</i>	Ruth Ann Swenson
<i>Giovanna</i>	Josepha Gayer*
<i>A page</i>	Laura Decher
<i>An usher</i>	Mel Ulrich†
<i>Maddalena</i>	Elena Zarembo

Courtiers, nobles, guards

**United States opera debut *San Francisco Opera debut †1997-98 Adler Fellow

TIME AND PLACE: 16th century; Mantua and vicinity

ACT I

Scene 1 The Duke's palace

Scene 2 A street

INTERMISSION

ACT II

A room in the ducal palace

INTERMISSION

ACT III

Sparafucile's inn

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

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

The performance will last approximately three hours.

SYNOPSIS

Rigoletto

ACT I

Scene 1—The Duke of Mantua surveys his court to choose a woman with whom to pass the night and selects the Countess Ceprano. She is flattered but nervous; her husband is present. This leads to an impasse. Marullo enters with news for his fellow courtiers that Rigoletto, the jester, has a mistress in town. The Duke then discusses his dilemma with Rigoletto, who suggests the following alternatives for Ceprano: prison, exile or beheading. Ceprano and the courtiers are outraged and swear vengeance on Rigoletto. Monterone, an old nobleman, comes to denounce the Duke and his dissolute court. With the Duke's consent, Rigoletto mocks the old man and his dishonored daughter. Monterone curses both Rigoletto and the Duke for laughing at a father's grief. Rigoletto suddenly fears for the safety of his own daughter, whom he has kept carefully hidden from the court.

Scene 2—Later that evening, Rigoletto is accosted by Sparafucile, who offers his services as a killer. Rigoletto spurns his offer and then reflects on their encounter. He sees Sparafucile as his alter ego: one kills with a sword, the other with words. Monterone's curse continues to haunt him.

Scene 3—Rigoletto returns home and greets his daughter, Gilda, declaring that she means the world to him. She reciprocates his feelings but questions why he has kept her concealed. He fears the courtiers and warns the nurse to guard Gilda carefully. Hearing a noise in the street, he goes out to investigate. The Duke, disguised as a student, enters and is astonished to discover that the girl he had seen in church is Rigoletto's daughter. He and Gilda declare their love. Then, fearing Rigoletto's return, he leaves. Left alone, Gilda rhapsodizes on the "student's" false name, Gualtier Maldè, while outside the courtiers gather to kidnap the woman they believe to be Rigoletto's mistress. To exact their revenge on the jester, they will present the girl to the Duke. Rigoletto returns to find the courtiers near his house, but they fool him into thinking they have come to abduct the Countess Ceprano, who lives next door. Too late, Rigoletto discovers the trick.

ACT II

The Duke, unaware of what has occurred, laments the fact that when he returned to Gilda's house he found it deserted. The courtiers describe how they kidnapped Rigoletto's mistress, and the Duke leaves to find her. When Rigoletto enters, a remark from the page alerts him to Gilda's whereabouts. He rages at his tormentors, but is soon reduced to begging them for pity. When Gilda bursts onto the scene, Rigoletto orders the courtiers to leave him alone with his daughter. She explains how she met the Duke, whom she had taken to be a student, at church. Rigoletto comforts her. Monterone, on the way to his beheading, laments that no one has yet struck down his daughter's seducer. Rigoletto promises to do so. Gilda begs mercy for the Duke.

ACT III

Rigoletto has brought Gilda to Sparafucile's inn to show her the real nature of the man she loves. The Duke, once again incognito, flirts with Sparafucile's sister, Maddalena. Gilda laments his faithlessness, but still continues to love him. Rigoletto sends her home and hires Sparafucile to kill the Duke. Maddalena urges her brother to spare him, and he agrees, provided another victim can be found as a substitute so that he can keep his pact with Rigoletto. Gilda, unable to follow her father's orders, returns and, overhearing the conversation, presents herself as the victim. Rigoletto returns to collect his victim and is given a body. Hearing the Duke's voice in the distance, he quickly uncovers the wraps and finds the dying Gilda. Monterone's curse has been fulfilled.

The performance of September 13th is designated in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Gianluca Rattazzi's membership in the Triple Gold Circle.

The performance of September 20th is sponsored by Pacific Music Enterprises LLC/Tadao and Yoshiko Terajima.

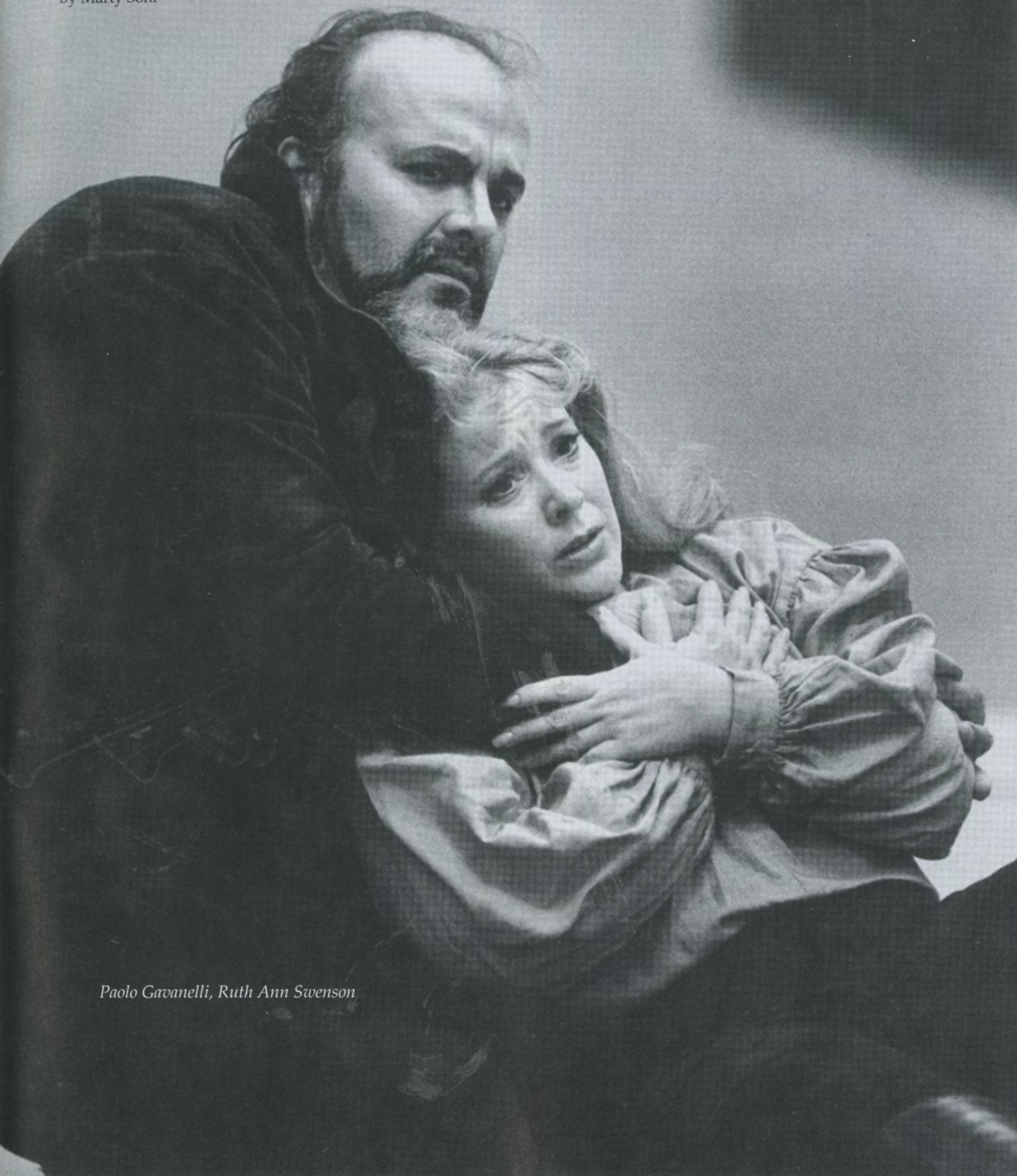
The performance of September 26th is sponsored by Spuntino.

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Rigoletto

Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

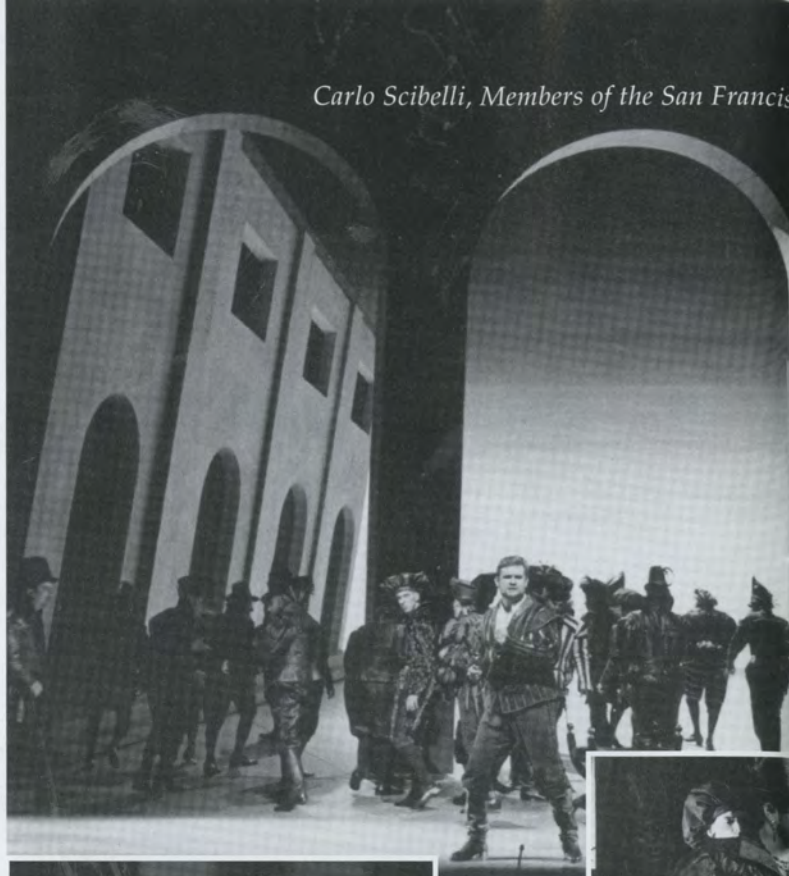


Paolo Gavanelli, Ruth Ann Swenson

*Carlo Scibelli,
Ruth Ann Swenson*



Carlo Scibelli, Members of the San Francisco



John Autry



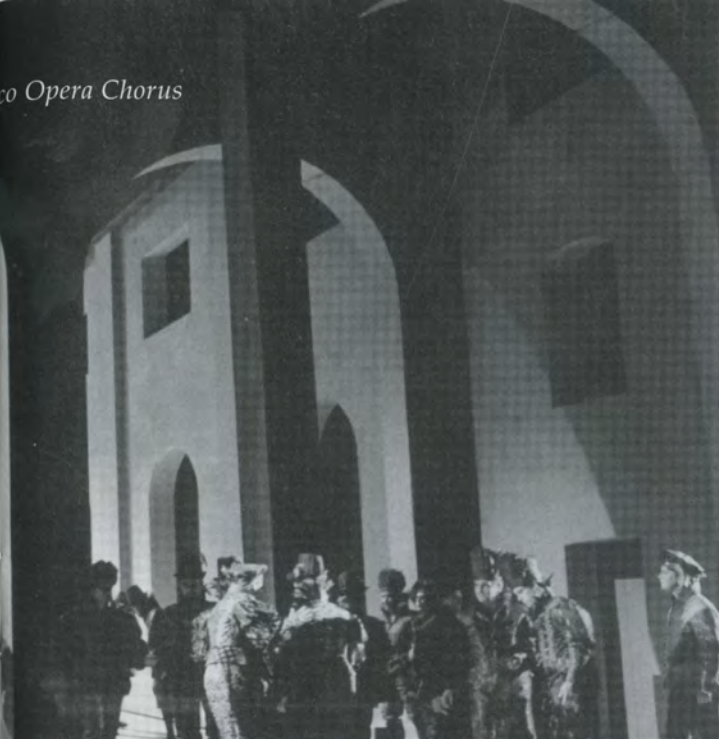
Stuart Skelton, Jay Baylon



Ruth Ann Swenson



co Opera Chorus



Ruth Ann
Swenson

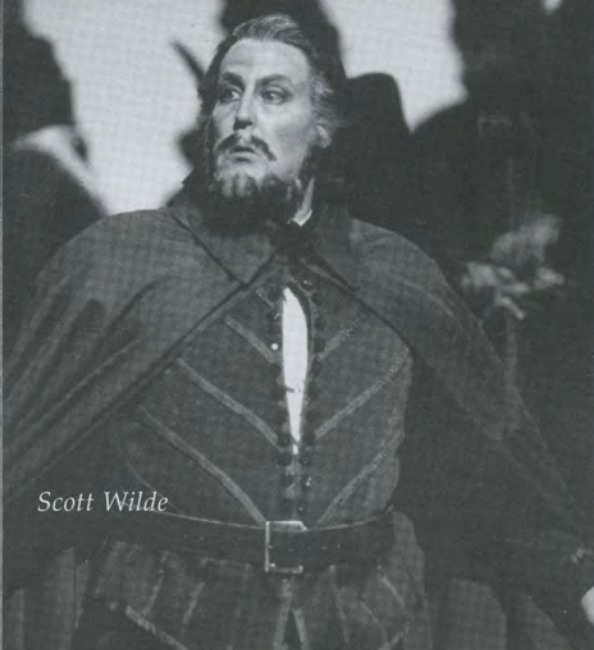


Paolo Gavanelli



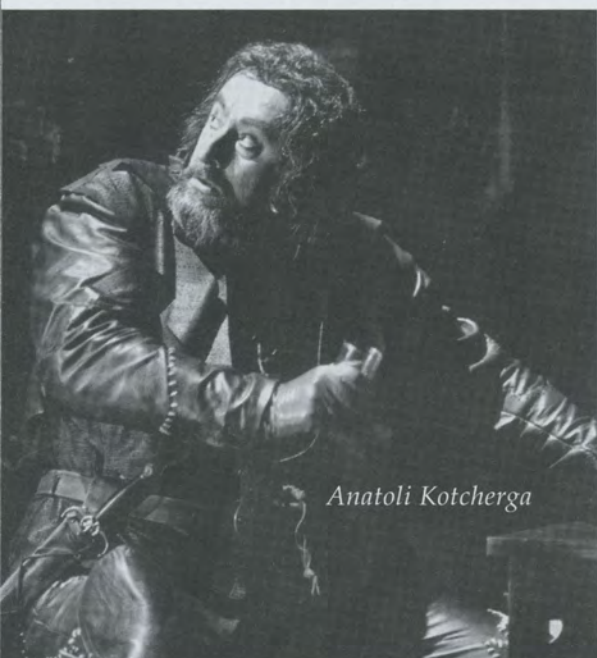
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(More photos on page 46)

ADVENTURE IN THE ARTS

Opera Tours

Cecilia Bartoli & Autumn & Opera In New York at the Metropolitan Opera and New York City Opera with Sherwin Sloan November 3rd to 10th

...our annual Autumn in New York opera program with 4 operas at the Met: Tannhauser with Jeannine Altmeyer, La Cenerentola with Cecilia Bartoli, Don Giovanni and Il Barbiere di Siviglia. At New York City Opera Handel's Xerxes, Macbeth and Don Pasquale. Broadway play and after the performance parties. Central Park, across the street from our hotel, will provide a splendid setting for this Fall foliage week. Lectures, Welcome dinner at our favorite restaurant with invited artists.

The Fifth Annual Christmas and Nine Operas In Prague, Vienna and Bratislava with Sherwin Sloan December 14th to 26th, 1997

...there are no more charming and exquisite towns than these at the height of the Holiday Season. In Vienna the 60-foot Christmas tree is in a splendid setting at the hotel in the heart of activities....you are invited to join Sherwin for 4 operas in Prague. At the State Opera, Lohengrin, Faust and Eugene Onegin. And La Boheme at the National Opera. In Vienna, at the jewel-like Volksopera, Hansel and Gretel, and The Magic Flute Christmas afternoon. At the Staatsoper, Les Contes d'Hoffmann, Rienzi and Don Giovanni, for a total of 9 major opera performances at the most splendid time of the year. There is nothing to compare to Christmas Season which is one of the most beautiful times of the year-we have had snow the past two years-and with spectacular sightseeing and walking tours in Prague and Vienna based on the previous six opera programs. Day excursion to Baroque Bratislava with a performance at the lovely Slovak National Opera. Full day to the most stunning monastery in Austria with our private guide from previous years. Lunches, dinners and private tours of the art galleries.

The Chaliapin Festival in St. Petersburg with Helsinki Opera January 28th to February 8th, 1998 with Sherwin Sloan

...join Sherwin for 3 days in Helsinki before going on to St. Petersburg and Don Carlo, a Concert of the Russian Imperial Andreiev Orchestra with Galina Gorchakova, The Rite of Spring by Stravinsky, Boris Godunov and other performances to be announced. Then back to Helsinki for 2 relaxing days. Performances in Helsinki to be announced. There will be a special Gala Reception and much more.

The Arizona Ring in the Mountainous Countryside of Northern Arizona at Flagstaff with Sherwin Sloan from May 31st to June 8th, 1998

The Arizona Opera is going to present a second consecutive Ring in the beautiful setting of Flagstaff. The scenic projections of Amy Shock which were so extraordinary last year, will again be used in this production. Includes best Orchestra Center seating. Welcome private dinner with Glynn Ross, General Director, a private coach trip to nearby Sedona with dinner and entertainment at a friend's home (a highlight from last year). Farewell Gala dinner. It will bring together many friends from previous Rings, and much more.

The Adelaide Ring in Australia November 15th to November 25th, 1998

(limited to 30 members)

... join Sherwin for this wonderful Ring conducted by Jeffrey Tate. This is the Chatelet production done in Paris in Autumn, 1994. The Ring Program includes a deluxe hotel, Orchestra Center Seating, full day to Kangaroo Island. Also, 3-day extensions to Melbourne and Sydney.

For a copy of the itineraries call

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1997-98 OPERA PREVIEWS

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

PRE-PERFORMANCE LECTURES

The popular pre-performance lectures will take place in the War Memorial Opera house one hour prior to curtain time and will last approximately one-half hour. Lectures feature noted scholars and artists and are presented free of charge to patrons with tickets to the corresponding performance. The lecture schedule is as follows:

Rigoletto—Oct. 1, 7; Dec. 4, 6

Der Fliegende Holländer—Oct. 8, 12, 17, 21, 25

Le Nozze di Figaro—Oct. 14, 22, 24; Nov. 1; Jan. 9, 11, 14, 17

Elektra—Oct. 23, 31; Nov. 4, 8, 13

Guillaume Tell—Nov. 7, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24

Pelléas et Mélisande—Nov. 14, 20, 23; Dec. 3

Eugene Onegin—Nov. 22, 25, 28; Dec. 2, 5

Tosca—Jan. 10, 13, 16

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD — INSIGHTS

Renowned artists and personalities from the world of opera share their insights and experiences during informal interviews. Complimentary to Guild members. \$5.00 to non-Guild members. All Opera Guild Insights will be held from 6 to 7 p.m. in Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco.

October 20	<i>Guillaume Tell</i>
November 7	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
November 17	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD — PREVIEWS

Opera Guild Previews are scheduled in communities throughout the greater Bay Area by local Guild chapters (East Bay, Marin, San Francisco, Sonoma, South Peninsula and the San Jose Opera Guild). Previews are given by renowned musicologists who may feature recordings, slides and/or handouts to familiarize the audience with an opera from the current season.

TOPIC	SPEAKER
<i>Der Fliegende Holländer</i>	Simon Williams
<i>Elektra</i>	D.B. Greene
<i>Guillaume Tell</i>	Robert Glick
<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>	David A. Grayson
<i>Eugene Onegin</i>	Richard Taruskin

EAST BAY CHAPTER—SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

Lectures held at 8:00 p.m., preceded by complimentary refreshments. Orinda Community Church, 10 Irwin Way, Orinda. Admission: \$8.50; Series: \$28.00. Reservations required. For reservations or information call, Annette Clute (510) 527-1846 or Silvia Lin (510) 838-9255.

Oct 15	<i>Elektra</i>
Nov 5	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Nov 19	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>

MARIN CHAPTER—SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

Lectures held at 8:00 p.m., preceded by complimentary refreshments. Mt. Tamalpais United Methodist Church, 410 Sycamore Avenue, Mill Valley. Admission: \$7.00 - adults, \$6.00 - students and seniors. Series: \$35.00 - adults, \$30.00 - students and seniors. For information call, Verna Parino (415) 388-6789.

Oct 13	<i>Elektra</i>
Oct 27	<i>Guillaume Tell</i>
Nov 3	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Nov 17	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

Lectures held at 12:00 noon, Koret Auditorium, Lower Level, New Main Library, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco. Admission: Free. For information call, David Clover (510) 652-3799.

Oct 15	<i>Elektra</i>
Oct 29	<i>Guillaume Tell</i>
Nov 5	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Nov 19	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>

SAN JOSE OPERA GUILD

Lectures held at 10:00 a.m. (*) Followed by no-host luncheon (\$7.00). Los Gatos History Club, 123 Los Gatos Blvd., Los Gatos. Admission: \$7.00 (Free to San Jose Opera Guild members). For information call, Joy Hulme (408) 741-1331 or Margaret Boddy, (408) 354-7525.

Oct 16	<i>Elektra*</i>
Oct 30	<i>Guillaume Tell</i>
Nov 6	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Nov 20	<i>Eugene Onegin*</i>

SONOMA CHAPTER—SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

Held at various locations and times. For information call, Lotte Klugman (707) 938-2432 or Marsha Vas Dupre (707) 528-7146. Admission: \$8.00; Series: \$40.00 - Sonoma Chapter members, \$48.00 - non-members.

Oct 13	<i>Elektra</i>
Oct 29	<i>Guillaume Tell</i>
Nov 3	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Nov 21	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>

SOUTH PENINSULA CHAPTER—SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD

Lectures held at 8:00 p.m., at Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant Street, Palo Alto. Admission: \$6.00 - adults, \$5.00 - students; Series: \$30.00 - adults, \$15.00 students. For information call, Ramona Rockway (415) 941-3890.

Oct 14	<i>Elektra</i>
Oct 28	<i>Guillaume Tell</i>
Nov 4	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Nov 18	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>

The following is an additional list of lectures and previews that are available to the public.

MERRITT COLLEGE OPERA LECTURE SERIES

Held on Tuesday evenings in Room A-117, 7 to 10 p.m., Introduction to Opera (Music 13A) is based on the operas of the 1997-98 season. The College is at 12500 Campus Drive (off Redwood Road in the Oakland hills). Information: (510) 436-2430

ROBERT GOODHUE'S OPERA PREVIEWS

Held at the Holiday Inn, 480 Sutter St., San Francisco, mostly Monday evenings, 6:00-8:00 p.m. Information: (415) 956-1271

SAN FRANCISCO CITY COLLEGE PREVIEWS

A music course of opera previews will deal with all operas of the 1997-98 season. Taught by Marvin Tartak on Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 5 p.m., it takes place at the College, 50 Phelan Ave., Creative Arts Building, Room A-135 in San Francisco. Classes began August 20 and continue for 17 weeks. Information: (415) 239-3641

SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC EXTENSION DIVISION

Oct. 6 - Nov. 10, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
The Operas of Richard Strauss: Series of six Monday classes, held by Paul Thomason. San Francisco Conservatory of Music, 1201 Ortega St., San Francisco. Information: (415) 759-3429

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Given by Michael Barclay, director of OEI. Lectures start at 7:30 p.m. at 400 Yale Ave (at Vassar) in the Kensington part of the Berkeley hills. Series began on Sept. 8; lectures are \$15 at the door. Information: (510) 526-5244

Oct. 6	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i>
Oct. 13	<i>Eugene Onegin</i>

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Meet the Champions



ART & CLARITY

James Schwabacher congratulates Thomas Hampson on receiving the Merola distinguished Alumni Award at a special reception this year.

Sponsors fill a supporting role in the development of Opera Center singers

By JAKE HEGGIE

WE ALL NEED THEM. The people who will be there for us through thick and thin, good and bad times, no questions asked. They might be friends, family, a teacher or a colleague... whatever the official title, they are our champions. For young opera singers, there is a need for a very special kind of champion: a sponsor. A person who will put the money down to make it possible for an artist to focus

entirely on the craft: building technique, learning languages, repertoire, acting, and all of the myriad elements needed to build a career. A person who might even help to purchase concert attire and lend a friendly ear every now and then. Somebody who will do all of this because they believe in you and where you are going, plain and simple.

Over the years, the San Francisco Opera Center (under the direction of Richard Har-

rell since 1996) has built a special family of sponsors to fill the "supporting role" that makes it possible for the young singers to flourish, including the Adler Fellows—the young resident artists of San Francisco Opera—and the young singers of the Merola Opera Program. In providing this support, wonderful relationships develop and a variety of careers are nurtured.

Many Opera Center alumni return each year to perform in the Company's main sea-

Jake Heggie is an award-winning composer whose music is performed internationally. He serves as associate manager of public relations at San Francisco Opera.

son. For example, *Rigoletto* features performances by Ruth Ann Swenson, Catherine Keen and Kevin Langan. Conductor Patrick Summers (who went through the apprentice coach program and became the Opera Center music director from 1989 to 1994) leads the final four performances of *Rigoletto* and the production of *Guillaume Tell* which features Patricia Racette and other alumni. Recent participants Zheng Cao, Nicolle Foland, Anna Netrebko and David Okerlund are featured in the January production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* with current Adler Fellow John Relyea in the title role.

"I became a sponsor last year, and it's one of the great joys of my life," says Pat Beresford. "It has energized me incredibly. I'm going to be 70 this year and people think I'm 55... my energy comes from this. You could say that these young singers have become my extended family. I have a son who lives with his wife and family in Ohio and I don't get to see them very often, so this fills a wonderful place in my life.

"I sponsored Peggy Kriha Dye last year, and now I'm co-sponsoring her along with John Autry and Mel Ulrich. Peggy and John just amazed me in the Showcase production of *Ezio* this year, and Mel made his Company debut as Yamadori and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* [at the Golden Gate Theatre] during the summer. I was just beaming with pride. And you know, his mother came up to me, gave me a big hug and said 'I'm so glad Mel has another mother down here!'

"I also sponsored Armando Gama in this summer's Merola Opera Program—he was Alidoro in the Stern Grove production of *La Cenerentola*. I think I'm becoming the baritone mom! [Autry, Ulrich and Gama are all baritones.] When you hear these phenomenal young people sing, you feel so good knowing that you've had something to do with their development. I mean, they are such incredible talents, and they are the 'alive' part of opera."

Beresford has chosen to take a very active role in her sponsorships. "Not all spon-

sors want to get as involved as I do, but then, I'm a born actress and I love being in the middle of it all." Indeed she does. In 1995 she became a supernumerary in *Faust* as "one of the dead ladies that Sam Ramey called up from the underworld." Since then, she has "supered" in a number of operas, sometimes with the very singers that she sponsors as in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, *Aida*, and last summer in *The Elixir of Love* at Stern Grove.

During *Barbiere*, she became friends with acclaimed mezzo-soprano Jennifer Larmore, who sang Rosina. "If an international career is what a young singer wants, then you have to be willing to go for it 100%," says Larmore. "This means total dedication and, for a while, at least until you are solidly on your way, total focus. With a sponsor, you can worry more about what to sing at your next audition than what time you have to report to the restaurant to wait tables. I had two sponsors in Georgia and the most wonderful thing was that they believed in me enough to invest

in me financially. It made it 10 times easier to concentrate on my music and I didn't have to work two jobs just to make ends meet."

James Schwabacher, one of the pillars of the Opera Center who himself enjoyed a successful career as a singer, has sponsored countless singers over several decades and has created additional performance opportunities through the Schwabacher Debut Recital Series.

"In a way, it feels like a continuation of my own career," he states. "I think it's terribly important to give these young people every opportunity to develop their gifts. And we're able to do that here with a very high standard. The happiest moments of my life have been on the stage and it's fantastic to be able to pass that along."

Schwabacher's 1997 recital series featured soprano Sari Gruber, baritone Kamel Boutros, soprano Nicolle Foland and bass-baritone John Relyea. It was the most heavily subscribed season since the series was founded 15 years ago.

Legendary soprano Régine Crespin with soprano Nicolle Foland, a recent Adler Fellow.





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MEET THE CHAMPIONS



Adler Sponsor Patricia Beresford (center) at a birthday party she gave for soprano Peggy Kriha Dye (right), pictured here with soprano Alison Buchanan. Both singers are 1997/98 Adler Fellows.

"The song recital must be preserved," he states emphatically. "Think of the great repertoire there is . . . and there's only one way it's going to stay alive. It's wonderful training for singers, too, because I maintain that there's nothing more challenging than giving a full recital. I'm very proud of the programming we've had on the series . . . spanning the important traditional repertoire and the new works that keep it fresh."

He continues: "Of course, there's no substitute for role models in singing. I was lucky to have great people who inspired me through my singing career: Gaetano Merola, Kurt Herbert Adler, Povla Frijsch, Martial Singher, Jan Popper . . . real legends in this field. These were people who really pushed me forward and made me want to work harder and achieve more."

Recognizing the importance of role models in singing, the Opera Center brings in a number of master teachers each year. During the summer, the great soprano Régine Crespin came for her 15th season with the Merola Opera Program. Over a three-week period, she worked with the Merola singers and the Adler Fellows every day. Additional teachers included director Lotfi Mansouri, pianist and opera coach Warren Jones, director Colin Graham, vocal teacher Marlena Malas, and many others.

Without sponsors, these young artists most likely would not have the opportunity to work with such master teachers or the extraordinary coaches on the Opera's musical staff.

Prior to her Schwabacher recital this year, Nicolle Foland (who completed her Adler Fellowship this year) singled out mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade as a role model. "She's a beautiful singer. There's a freshness to her singing, a giving, the way she communicates with the audience. Just the way she moves and acts onstage." Von Stade is an inspiration to legions of young singers, and this year she will be the honorary chairman for Front and Center, the Opera Center's annual benefit. "It's the easiest role I've ever had!" the mezzo says with a laugh.

"The Opera Center is extraordinary," von Stade continues, "and the reason is, it's my impression, that there is an incredible organization behind these kids. They are really nurtured and get good training, plus they get so many performance opportunities. I mean when it comes to performing, how you do it is—you do it!"

"I didn't have anybody like Jim Schwabacher or Annette Campbell-White around when I was going to school, so I had to find jobs the whole time. I did temp work and sang a lot of church and synagogue jobs. I was very lucky because I happened to be in the right place at the right time. There had been a strike at the Met and they suddenly needed a lot of comprimario singers. It was just good timing.

"I have strong associations with many of the singers who have come through the Opera Center, like Tom Hampson and Brian Asawa, so I was delighted to be asked to help out with the benefit." The evening,

which takes place on December 7, features dinner and a concert by the Adler Fellows—usually filled with unexpected surprises and a lot of humor.

Countertenor Brian Asawa, an Opera Center alumnus who is enjoying an international career, remembers the sense of security he felt from his sponsors: Reid and Peggy Dennis, and Michael and Rusty Roland. "Without sponsors who are willing to put down thousands of dollars to build your career, it would be impossible. A young singer just can't afford to pay for all of the things you need, from housing and a living stipend to coachings and so on."

Pat Beresford says that the reason she became a sponsor was a conversation with Deborah Voigt, a soprano of international acclaim and a Merola Opera Program and Adler Fellowship alumna.

"We got to know each other about five years ago," Beresford says. "I remember driving back from a fun evening we spent with the Opera Standees Association—yes, I'm a member of that, too—and she turned to me and said, 'You know, Pat, I see how enthusiastic you are about the young singers coming along and let me tell you, I don't know what I would have done if I hadn't had the support I got when I was here in Merola and as an Adler Fellow, both financially and emotionally. I think that's the way you should go. And you'll find that you will get so many rewards . . . it will absolutely blow your mind.'

"And you know what?" Beresford asks. "She's right." ♦

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from the indications "ironico . . . ridendo . . . con caricatura." Nor does he behave arrogantly towards Sparafucile; instead, like the perfect English gentleman that he is, he converses with him and his sister about the weather:

Duke: And then . . . Boston is far away. . . A storm is threatening.

Sparafucile: Indeed.

Maddalena: It looks like it's clearing up.

Duke: I don't think so.

(It is, of course, Boston, Lincolnshire, but might just as well be Massachusetts . . .)

In *Clara di Perth*, written for Naples by Leone Emanuele Bardare, who would later complete Cammarano's libretto for *Il Trovatore*, the Duke of Rothesay (the name taken from Walter Scott's *The Fair Maid of Perth*) is even more virtuous. In the Act III quartet, far from chatting up Maddalena on his own account, he is trying to persuade her to look kindly on an absent suitor. It is not his fault if Clara and her father, looking on from a distance, misunderstand the situation. In both versions, the heroine is saved from death, leaving the jester to exclaim, "You live? Oh, merciful heaven!" Was the mode of the concluding bars changed from minor to major? If so, one can sympathize with Verdi's observation that when certain theaters perform his works they ought to print under the title "Words and music by" . . . and fill in the name of the censor. "How would you like it," he wrote to his friend, the sculptor Vincenzo Luccardi, "if someone tied a black ribbon around the nose of one of your statues?"

Fortunately, the unification of Italy put an end to censorship, thereby allowing *Rigoletto* to make its full effect. With Verdi, new and unusual situations never failed to provide new musical solutions. To convey the full range of the jester's character he has recourse to a recitative ("Pari siamo") which has all the importance of an aria, while encompassing a far wider variety of mood. *Rigoletto*'s own formal solo ("Cortigiani, vil razza dannata"), the opera's centerpiece, is in one movement only, articulated in three sections. In the first, he inveighs passionately against the courtiers who have abducted his daughter with his own unwitting connivance; in the second, he pleads with one of them; in the last, he throws himself on their mercy; and it is just at this moment of abject humiliation that the music carries him to heights of nobility that make us forget his deformity, both moral and physical.

(continued on page 41)



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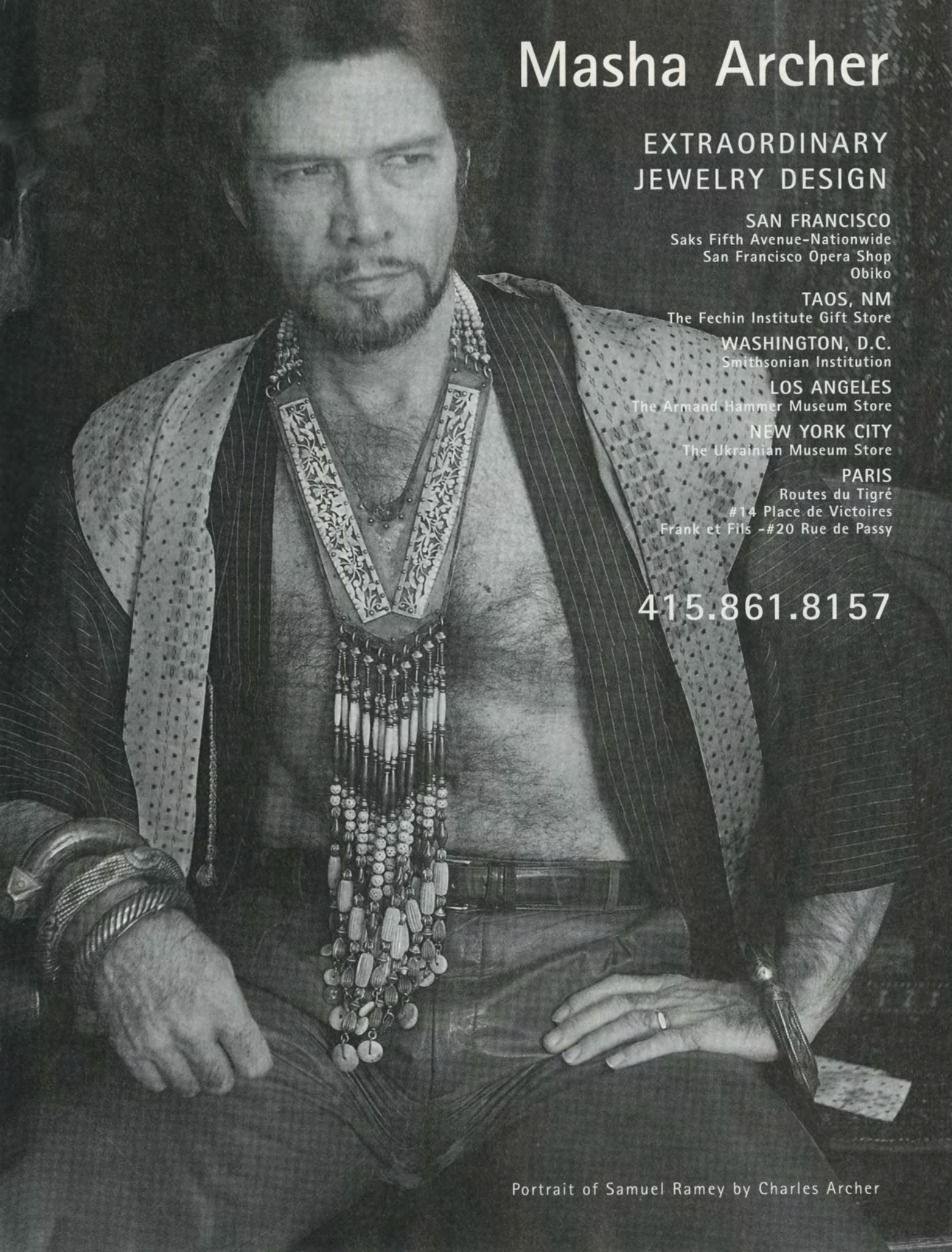
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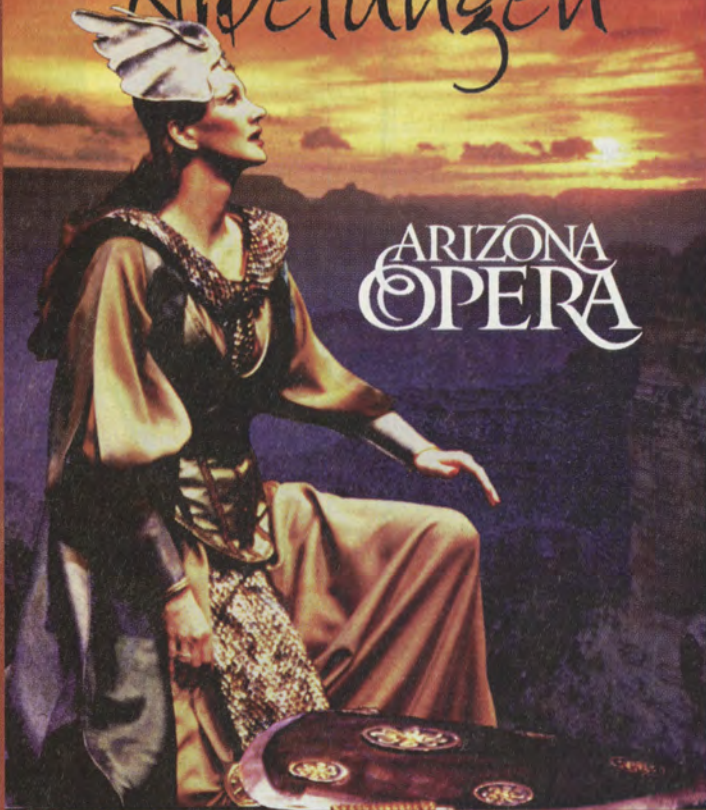
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Certain of the opera's innovations are foreshadowed elsewhere. The duettino between Rigoletto and Sparafucile, during which neither sings together, has a precedent in that of the two spies in Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* (Hugo again, with another unappealing protagonist); but the strange, phosphorescent scoring gives it a sinister quality all its own. The use of a wordless chorus to portray the moaning of the wind can be found in Auber's comic opera *Haydée*, but merely as background to a lighthearted refrain. Where *Rigoletto* most notably breaks fresh ground is in its treatment of time. Occurrences of the "expanded moment," so common in Italian opera of the time, during which the action freezes just where one expects it to move forward, are here reduced to two only: the general dismay (brief enough) following Monterone's curse, and the Duke's cabaletta ("Possente amor mi chiama") with its conventional repeat. No model exists for the design of Act III, in which the drama never halts for a moment. Even during the famous quartet ("Bella figlia dell'amore") we are aware of the passing of time. Can we say the same of similar ensembles: "Mir ist so wunderbar" (*Fidelio*), "A te, o cara" (*I Puritani*) or even "Selig, wie die Sonne" (*Die Meistersinger*)? Most certainly not. In Italian opera of the past, storms have been either preludes (as in *I Puritani*, Act III) or interludes (as in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *La Cenerentola*). The storm in *Rigoletto* develops concurrently with the action, interspersed with "cut-away shots" of the singers, who then join with the orchestra to reinforce the climax in the terzetto, "Se pria ch'abbia il mezzo." No Italian composer had created so powerful a fusion of tone-painting and drama. The ploy of using a song (the king's "Souvent femme varie") as a dramatic prop belongs, of course, to Hugo. The problem lies in giving it the same force in a context in which everything is sung. Verdi solves it by devising a popular, catchy melody ("La donna è mobile") which stands out from the surrounding music, while never jarring with its basic idiom. Nothing is more chilling than the moment when it impinges on the ear of the avenging father.

Such, then, are some of the qualities that set *Rigoletto* well ahead of its time. Some years later Verdi, when asked which he considered his best opera, is said to have replied, "Speaking as an amateur, *La Traviata*; speaking as a professional, *Rigoletto*." Intending no disparagement to the former, we can see what he means. ♦

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ARTIST PROFILES



Soprano **RUTH ANN SWENSON** has won critical accolades internationally in such theaters as the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opéra National de Paris, Cologne Opera, Munich State Opera, Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Berlin State Opera, Grand Théâtre de Genève, Hamburg State Opera, Vienna State Opera and San Francisco Opera. A 1983-84 Adler Fellow, she made her Company debut as Despina in the 1983 season production of *Così fan tutte*, and has since been applauded here for a variety of roles including

Dorinda in *Orlando*, Aennchen in *Der Freischütz*, Nannetta in *Falstaff*, Inès in *L'Africaine*, Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and her first Ophélie in *Hamlet*. Since her 1989 Met debut as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Miss Swenson has been heard each subsequent season in several roles which have included Gilda, Adina, Juliette, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Elvira in *I Puritani*. Recent highlights include three major debuts: with the Berlin State Opera as Gilda in a new staging of *Rigoletto*, with the Vienna State Opera as Constanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, and with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden in the title role of Handel's *Semele*. Engagements during the 1997-98 season include Liù in her first staged performances of *Turandot* and Adina at the Metropolitan Opera, in addition to the title role of *Manon* in Paris. The American artist's growing discography includes Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, a recital disc with Plácido Domingo and Thomas Hampson, an album of art songs, *I Carry Your Heart*, as well as a solo recording of coloratura arias, *Positively Golden*.



Since her 1991 San Francisco Opera debut as Hélène Bezukhova in *War and Peace*, **ELENA ZAREMBA** has appeared with the Company in the trouser role of Ratmir in *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1995), and as Konchakovna in *Prince Igor* (1996). In the five years since she came upon the international scene, the mezzo's command of the principal roles in the Russian repertoire became balanced by her interpretation of such Verdian and Wagnerian roles as Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Erda in the *Ring* cycle. Her appearances in San

Francisco, at Milan's La Scala and with the Bolshoi Opera at the Metropolitan Opera have received critical acclaim and have led to engagements at such theaters as the Vienna State Opera, Bastille Opera, the Bregenz, Edinburgh and Salzburg Festivals, and with such ensembles as the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, and the Cleveland Orchestra. She has been particularly praised for her appearances in the title role of *Carmen*, which she has performed at the Bavarian State Opera, Arena di Verona, Royal Opera at Covent Garden, and in Birmingham, Dortmund and Gothenburg. Miss Zarembo's 1996-97 season has included *Un Ballo in Maschera* in Brussels, *Boris Godunov* in Vienna and Salzburg, *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* in Vienna, Marfa in *Khovanshchina* in Brussels and Hamburg, Fenena in *Nabucco* at Covent Garden, as well as *Carmen* in Munich, Brussels, Vienna, Paris, and at the Arena di Verona. Her artistry has been documented on videocassettes or audio recordings of *Prince Igor*, *A Life for the Tsar*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Boris Godunov*, *Das Rheingold*, *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Christmas Eve*, and Mussorgsky's cantata *Joshua*. Born in Moscow, Miss Zarembo attended the Gnessin State Music Institute and, while still a student, was invited to be a soloist by the Bolshoi Theatre, where she sang roles in many of the prominent Russian operas, as well as parts such as Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Maddalena in *Rigoletto*.



One of America's most accomplished mezzo-sopranos, **JOSEPHA GAYER** has been applauded in opera and concert throughout North America. In recent seasons, she has received critical acclaim as the Old Lady in Bernstein's *Candide* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Natassja in the U.S. premiere of Hans Krása's *Verlobung im Traum* and the Old Baroness in *Vanessa* at the Washington Opera, and Mrs. McClain in *Susannah* for her Houston Grand Opera debut. Engagements during the 1996-97 season have included her first appearances with Santa Fe Opera as Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, Mrs.

Bass in the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *Emmeline* (a performance telecast on PBS), and the Fortuneteller in *Arabella*; her debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as the Mother in *The Consul* (a role she has also sung with L'Opéra de Monte Carlo and Florentine Opera); the Marquise in *La Fille du Régiment* for Cleveland Opera; and her debut with Vancouver Opera as Katisha in *The Mikado*. With New York City Opera Miss Gayer has also sung Katisha, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Emma Jones in *Street Scene*, and Mama in Oliver Knussen's *Where the Wild Things Are*. Among the artist's future plans are Augusta Tabor in *The Ballad of Baby Doe* with Boston Lyric Opera, Gertrude in *Roméo et Juliette* with the Washington Opera, and a reprise of the role of Mrs. Bass for New York City Opera. In concert, the mezzo has performed with the Manhattan Philharmonic (Menotti's *O Pulchritudo*), and in oratorio performances with, among others, the Cleveland Orchestra, Spokane Symphony, Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia, San Antonio Symphony, and the Orchestra Society of Philadelphia. Miss Gayer attended Temple University and received a bachelor's degree in music from Carnegie-Mellon University.



In her second year as an Adler Fellow, **ALISON BUCHANAN** made her 1996 San Francisco Opera debut as Mimì in *La Bohème*, returning for the Company's 1996-97 season to appear in *Harvey Milk* and *Aida*. Originally from Bedford, England, she graduated from London's Guildhall School of Music where she won many prestigious awards. She was a winner of the Maggie Teyte Prize in 1991 and sang in recital at the Royal Opera House Crush Bar as a result of the award. Shortly thereafter, the young artist received a Wingate scholarship and a

Countess of Munster Award, enabling her to study at the Curtis Institute of Music where she completed her master of music degree. Miss Buchanan was also a prize winner of the Mario Lanza Competition, Luciano Pavarotti Competition, Ferrier Competition, and was a finalist in this year's International Belvedere Competition. Her roles include the Countess (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Rosalinda (*Die Fledermaus*), Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Madama Cortese (*Il Viaggio a Reims*), Fortuna (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*) and Musetta (*La Bohème*). As a member of the 1995 Merola Opera Program, the soprano appeared in *La Périchole* and replaced an ailing colleague to sing the role of Mozart's Countess, subsequently repeating this part on Western Opera Theater's national tour of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Opera Center credits also include a critically acclaimed Schwabacher Debut Recital, the role of Juliana in the '96 Showcase production of *The Aspern Papers*, and the part of the Mother in the Opera Guild's holiday presentation of *Hansel and Gretel*.

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PAOLO GAVANELLI, one of the most highly regarded artists in opera today, appears regularly at the leading music theaters of the world. Since his first professional engagement in 1985 as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* in Brescia, the Italian baritone has made several successful debuts:

at Milan's La Scala (1989, Giorgio Germont in *La Traviata*); Liceu in Barcelona (1987, Valentin in *Faust*); Metropolitan Opera (1990, Count di Luna in *Il Trovatore*); Bavarian State Opera (1991, Renato in *Un Ballo in Maschera*); Vienna State Opera (1992, *La Traviata*); San Francisco Opera (1992, Carlo Gérard in *Andrea Chénier*); in addition to the Arena di Verona and Berlin State Opera (1993, Amonasro in *Aida*). He most recently appeared with the Company in 1994 as the Count di Luna. Among the artist's recent engagements are *Un Ballo in Maschera* for his Deutsche Oper Berlin debut; his first appearance at the Bastille Opera in the title role of *Rigoletto*; a bow with the Royal Opera at Covent Garden as Iago in *Otello*; Tonio in *Pagliacci* at the Met; *Andrea Chénier* at the Vienna State Opera; the title role of *Macbeth* in Munich and Bologna; *Aida* at the Berlin State Opera; *Rigoletto* and *Andrea Chénier* at Rome's Teatro dell'Opera; Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* at the Ravenna Festival; as well as *Rigoletto* and *Aida* at the Verona Arena. Future plans include the title role of *Nabucco* at the Bastille, *Cavalleria Rusticana*/*Pagliacci* at the Berlin State Opera, concert performances of *Simon Boccanegra* at Covent Garden, in addition to *La Traviata*, *Macbeth*, *Nabucco*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Tosca* in Munich. Gavanelli can be heard on recordings of *La Bohème* as Marcello and Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* as Filippo. He will soon be in the studio to record the title role of *Simon Boccanegra*.



CARLO SCIBELLI made his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1996-97 season, portraying Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* and the Second Jew in *Salome*. He was most recently seen with the Company this summer as Pinkerton in the new staging of *Madama Butterfly*. The young lyric tenor made his 1994

bow with New York City Opera as Vladimir Igorevich in *Prince Igor*, and has since been heard with that company as Pinkerton, Camille in *The Merry Widow* (telecast by PBS in a *Live from Lincoln Center* special), and Alfredo in *La Traviata*. Recent engagements include the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier* for Portland Opera, the Duke in *Rigoletto* for Cleveland Opera, Madison Opera and Santa Barbara Opera, Telemaco in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* for the Los Angeles Music Center Opera, as well as a debut at Forth Worth Opera as Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and in the title role of *Faust*. Other season highlights include the Verdi Requiem with the National Symphony under the baton of Zdenek Macal, his Carnegie

San Francisco Opera

ARTIST PROFILES

Hall debut with the Brahms *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, and a gala concert with Frederica von Stade and the Santa Barbara Symphony. Among his future plans are Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at Fort Worth Opera's new theater, *Rigoletto*'s Duke for the Harrisburg Symphony and Syracuse Opera, Alfred in *Fledermaus* for Opera Hamilton, concert performances with the San Diego Chamber Orchestra, and an appearance at the Prague Festival. Scibelli recently made his film debut as "The Opera Singer" in the Barbra Streisand movie *The Mirror Has Two Faces*.



Chilean-born tenor **TITO BELTRÁN**, a finalist in the 1993 Cardiff Singer of the Year competition, received his musical training at Sweden's Göteborg Academy of Theatre and Opera. He began his early career singing the roles of Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* and Rodolfo in *La Bohème* in Sweden; Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for the Icelandic Opera; the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier* for Copenhagen's Royal Danish Opera; and Ruggero in *La Rondine* for Opera North. Since then, the artist has performed the

roles of Rodolfo at San Francisco Opera (summer 1996 debut), the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, Hamburg State Opera, in Toulouse, Rio de Janeiro and Detroit; the Duke in Monte Carlo, Geneva, Toulouse and Detroit; Ismaele in *Nabucco* in Santiago, Chile; as well as Macduff in *Macbeth* and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* in Toulouse. Current and forthcoming engagements include *Rigoletto*'s Duke in Santiago, Genoa (Italian debut) and Portland, Oregon; Rodolfo in Toulouse and Bordeaux; Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* at Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice; Nemorino for Pittsburgh Opera; and Arvino in *I Lombardi* in Santiago. In addition to his operatic activities, Beltrán gives many concerts and recitals in Europe, frequently broadcasts for the BBC London, and has made two solo recordings of arias and songs.



Ukrainian bass **ANATOLI KOTCHERGA**, a graduate of Kiev's Tchaikovsky Conservatory, was a prize-winner of the Glinka Competition and the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. After several seasons singing prominent bass roles with the Kiev Opera, he began his international career in 1989 at the Vienna State Opera, where he portrayed Shaklovity in *Khovanshchina* led by Claudio Abbado. He was soon performing at the Bregenz Festival, Netherlands Opera, Paris Opera, Milan's La Scala and the Deutsche Oper Berlin.

In recent seasons, his portrayal of the title role of *Boris Godunov* has been applauded at Salzburg's Easter and Summer Festivals, at La Fenice in Venice, on a tour to Japan with the Vienna State Opera, as well as in Montpellier and Turin. Another Mussorgsky portrayal, that of Dosifei in *Khovanshchina*, received critical acclaim at the Monnaie in Brussels last season, while earlier this year he sang Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* at the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam. Among his recordings are *Boris Godunov*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Mazeppa*, Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death*, Shostakovich's Thirteenth Symphony, and the soon-to-be-released Verdi Requiem. Kotchergera's future engagements include his debut at the Metropolitan Opera in the title role of *Boris Godunov*, Pistola in *Falstaff* for the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, and *Boris* at the 1998 Salzburg Easter Festival.



In his fifth season with San Francisco Opera, bass **SCOTT WILDE** made his first appearance with the Company in 1992, singing roles in *Boris Godunov*, *La Forza del Destino*, *Andrea Chénier* and *Christophe Colomb*. After appearing here in 1993 as Roberto in *I Vespri Siciliani*, he has returned to portray Reinmar in *Tannhäuser* and a Peasant in *The Fiery Angel* (1994), as well as Lord Rochefort in *Anna Bolena* and Dr. Grenvil in *La Traviata* (1995). A native of Wisconsin and a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, he continued his studies as a member of

the Juilliard Opera Center and several other prominent artists' programs. Last season the young artist joined the Dresden State Opera where he was featured in *Don Giovanni*, *Der Freischütz*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *La Cenerentola*. He most recently scored a triumph in Majorca as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*. Career highlights include *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Un Ballo in Maschera* and *Madama Butterfly* at the Washington Opera; *Il Trovatore* at New Mexico's Opera Southwest; *Falstaff* at Long Beach Opera; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Don Giovanni* at the Opera Theatre of St. Louis; *The Rake's Progress* and *La Traviata* at the Opera Festival of New Jersey; *Don Giovanni* at Dublin Grand Opera; in addition to numerous productions at the New York City Opera.



The winner of the 1996 George London-Kirsten Flagstad Memorial Fund Award, bass-baritone **JAY BAYLON** has performed a broad range of operatic and concert repertoire, from the cantatas of J.S. Bach to the music dramas of Richard Wagner. In recent seasons he has frequently appeared with the Washington Opera in productions which include *The Bartered Bride*, *Madama Butterfly* and Argento's *Dream of Valentino*. Baylon has also appeared with Washington Concert Opera in *Andrea Chénier* and with the Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia as

Gualtiero in Puccini's *Edgar*. On the concert platform he has performed as soloist with the Washington Bach Consort, Cathedral Choral Society, New Dominion Chorale, Mendelssohn Choir and the Baltimore Choral Arts Society. The native of Cleveland, Ohio, a 1995 regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, received a degree in music from Youngstown State University.



JOHN ROBERT AUTRY recently received critical acclaim for his portrayal of Sharpless in San Francisco Opera's 1997 production of *Madama Butterfly*. In his second year as an Adler Fellow, the baritone made his 1996 Company debut as Schaunard in *La Bohème*, returning for SFO's 1996-97 season to sing roles in *Hamlet*, *Lohengrin*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, *Harvey Milk* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. Additional recent credits include the role of the Father in the Opera Guild's holiday presentation of *Hansel and Gretel*, and Emperor Valentiniano in the

West Coast premiere ('97 Showcase) of Handel's *Ezio*. In 1995, he made his New York City Opera debut as Figaro in that company's national touring production of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Other engagements include Dr. Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* with Birmingham Opera Theater, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Shreveport Opera, and Ping in *Turandot* with Palm Beach Opera. A 1994 National Winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Autry has also won awards at vocal competitions in Palm Beach, Birmingham and Mobile. Most recently, he was the recipient of career grants from the Shoshana Foundation, Opera Index and the Richard Tucker Foundation. Next season, the native of Atlanta, Georgia, will make debuts at Opera Pacific as Marcello in *La Bohème* and at Michigan Opera Theatre as Lescaut in Massenet's *Manon*.

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Carlo Scibelli,
Ruth Ann Swenson



Carlo Scibelli



Paolo Gavanelli,
Ruth Ann Swenson



Laura Decher



ARTIST PROFILES



1996-97 Adler Fellow **STUART SKELTON** performed a number of roles for San Francisco Opera during his 1996-97 debut season, appearing in *Hamlet*, *Lohengrin*, *Carmen*, *Harvey Milk*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Salome* and *Aida*. First-prize winner of this year's prestigious International Belvedere Competition, 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 important competitions, the Marianne Mathy Award and the McDonald's

Aria Award, he made his 1993 Australian Opera debut in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Skelton completed his master of music degree from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music where his credits included Sam Polk in *Susannah* and Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*. Concert engagements include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Marin Symphony, the Coronation Mass with the S.F. Midsummer Mozart Festival, as well as Verdi's Requiem with the Lubbock Symphony Orchestra and the San Mateo Masterworks Chorale. San Francisco Opera Center credits include Piquillo in *La Périchole* as well as Don Basilio and Don Curzio in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for the 1995 Merola Opera Program; the reprisal of his *Figaro* roles for Western Opera Theater's 1995 national tour; Aspern in the 1996 Showcase production of *The Aspern Papers*; and the role of Massimo in the '97 Showcase presentation of Handel's *Ezio*. Next season, Skelton will return to the Australian Opera to sing the role of Alfredo in *La Traviata*.



1997 Adler Fellow **MEL ULRICH** recently made his first San Francisco Opera appearance, singing the roles of Sharpless and Prince Yamadori in the new staging of *Madama Butterfly*. The baritone, a native of Seattle, WA, received his bachelor of music and bachelor of arts degrees from the University of Washington, as well as an Artist Diploma from the Oberlin Conservatory. A finalist in this year's International Belvedere Competition, his additional competition victories are the Seattle Civic Opera Competition, the Brechemin Scholarship, and a two-year fel-

lowship with the Singers' Club of Cleveland. In addition, the young artist was a national finalist in the MacAllister Awards (1994) and a Sullivan Award Winner (1997). His appearances with Seattle Opera include Napoleon in *War and Peace*, Amantio di Nicolao in *Gianni Schicchi* and Brühlmann in *Werther*. Ulrich also performed with Wolf Trap Opera as Prodocimo in *Il Turco in Italia*, Pantalone in Mozart/Griffith's *The Jewel Box*, and the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte*. During the 1995-96 season he was a Principal Resident Artist with Opera San José where he performed the title roles of *Don Giovanni*, *Tartuffe* and *Eugene Onegin*, as well as *Figaro* (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Escamillo (*Carmen*), Germont (*La Traviata*), Zurga (*Les Pêcheurs de Perles*) and Dr. Falke (*Die Fledermaus*). A member of the 1996 Merola Opera Program, the young artist sang *Figaro* in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and repeated the role on the subsequent Western Opera Theater 30th-anniversary tour of the same production.



Since his 1992 appointment as music director of the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris, **DAVID ROBERTSON** has gained international recognition for his affinity with both twentieth-century music and a broad operatic repertoire which comprises over 30 works. He is now a regular guest of the leading orchestras and opera houses in Europe and North America. In the 1996-97 season, the conductor led two operatic world premieres, Luciano Berio's *Outis* at Milan's La Scala and Philippe Manoury's *60th Parallel* at the Châtelet in Paris,

in addition to *Die Zauberflöte* at the Monnaie in Brussels and *La Bohème* at the Opéra de Lyon. His orchestral activities included concerts with the London Symphony Orchestra in London, Glasgow and Daytona Beach; the BBC Symphony in a London Proms concert; the Orchestra of St. Luke's for his Caramoor Festival debut; and appearances with the Monte Carlo Philharmonic, the RAI Orchestra of Turin, and the Aspen Festival Orchestra. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut during the 1995-96 season conducting that company's first production of *The Makropulos Case*. In the same season he appeared with the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Orchestre de Paris. In June of 1995, the maestro made his San Francisco Opera debut in a concert with Marilyn Horne to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. Engagements during the 1997-98 season include his Hamburg Opera debut with a new staging of *La Cenerentola*, as well as concerts with the San Francisco Symphony, Orchestre National de Lyon, Berlin Staatsoper Orchestra and the Finnish Radio Orchestra. Robertson's prize-winning recordings include works by Milhaud, Lalo and Silvestrov. The native of Santa Monica was educated at London's Royal Academy of Music and studied with Kiril Kondrashin in Holland and Rafael Kubelik in Switzerland.



Stage director **MARK LAMOS** has been artistic director of the Hartford Stage Company since 1980. During his tenure there, he has directed premieres of new plays by Tom Stoppard, Tony Kushner, Simon Gray and Lanford Wilson, as well as an acclaimed series of Shakespeare productions. In 1989 he accepted a Tony Award for the company. Elsewhere, he has staged productions for Canada's Stratford Festival, Moscow's Pushkin Theater, the La Jolla Playhouse, the California Shakespearean Festival (where he was artistic director), and

the Old Globe, among others. He received a Tony nomination for his Broadway directing debut (*Our Country's Good*) and the Lortel Award for best revival with his Lincoln Center production of *Measure for Measure*. His work in opera began with the 1979 premiere of John Harbison's *Winter's Tale* as part of San Francisco Opera's American Opera Project. Since then he has created new productions for the Metropolitan Opera (*Wozzeck*, *I Lombardi*), New York City Opera (*The Turn of the Screw*), Dallas Opera (the world premiere of Dominick Argento's *The Aspern Papers*), Canadian Opera Company, Washington Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Theater of Saint Louis, Sweden's Gothenburg Opera, the Munich Biennale, and Glimmerglass Opera, where he recently staged a new production of *Madama Butterfly*. Last season saw his new staging of *La Bohème* at the Orpheum Theatre for San Francisco Opera. He has also acted on- and off-Broadway, at many regional theaters, and he made his film debut in *Longtime Companion*. Lamos holds honorary doctorates from three universities: Trinity, Connecticut College and the University of Hartford. His upcoming schedule includes a revival of Edward Albee's *Tiny Alice* next year, and the world premiere of Harbison's *The Great Gatsby* during the Metropolitan Opera's 1999-2000 season.

ARTIST PROFILES



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. Since his San Francisco Opera debut with the 1993 staging of *I Puritani*, his designs have been seen here in new productions of *La Bohème* (summer 1996), *Carmen* (1996-97), and *Madama Butterfly* (summer 1997). 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*), Virginia Opera (*Anna Bolena*, *Così fan tutte*, *Porgy and Bess*), and Glimmerglass Opera (*La Finta Giardiniera*), 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 at London's West End.



CONSTANCE HOFFMAN has created costume designs for numerous operas and theater works across the country. In New York City, she designed the costumes for *Henry VI, Parts 1, 2, and 3* at the Public Theatre, as well as *Measure for Measure*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Green Bird* and *Henry VI* at Theatre for a New Audience. Works designed for regional theaters include *Richard III* (directed by Mark Lamos) for the Hartford Stage Company, in addition to *Day of Absence* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for The Center Stage. She has also created costume designs for Glimmerglass Opera (*Madama Butterfly*, *Lizzie Borden*, *Paul Bunyan*), Los Angeles Music Center Opera (*Der Fliegende Holländer*), Virginia Opera (*Julius Caesar*), and the Manhattan School of Music (*Mahagonny Songspiel*, *The Tsar Has His Photograph Taken*). Upcoming engagements include *La Traviata* directed by Christopher Alden at the New Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv, *Tosca* at Glimmerglass Opera, in addition to *Richard II* and *Richard III* at Theatre for a New Audience.

Lighting designer **PAT COLLINS** has extensive international credits in opera, ballet and theater. On Broadway, she has created the lighting for, among others, *An American Daughter*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *The Sisters Rosensweig*, *Conversations with my Father*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *I'm Not Rappaport* (Tony Award), *Execution of Justice* (Drama Desk Award), *Ain't Misbehavin'*, and *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Her lighting schemes at Lincoln Center have been seen in *The Threepenny Opera*, *The Floating Lightbulb* and *Measure for Measure*. She also designed the lighting for The Royal Ballet's production of *The Sleeping Beauty* and American Ballet Theater's staging of *Othello*. Operagoers have seen her designs at the Metropolitan Opera (*Lucia di Lammermoor*, *I Lombardi*), Royal Opera House (*Katya Kabanova*, the Ring cycle), English National Opera (*Rienzi*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Mazeppa*), Opera North (*Don Giovanni*), Scottish Opera (*Die Walküre*), Netherlands Opera (*Der Fliegende Holländer*), Vlaamse Opera (*La Fanciulla del West*), Glyndebourne Festival (*Così fan tutte*, *Peter Grimes*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*), Munich's Bavarian State Opera (*Tannhäuser*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*), and the Maggio Musicale in Florence (*Die Zauberflöte*). Additionally, she has designed for the opera companies of Los Angeles, Boston, Houston and Washington, D.C.

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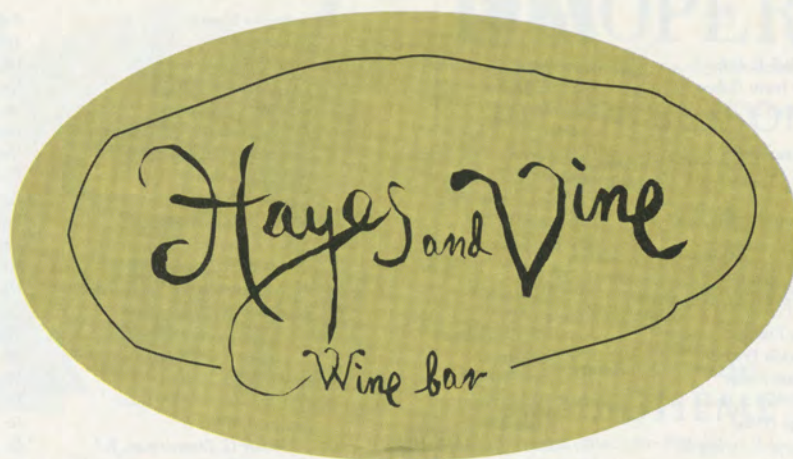
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We are grateful to all donors who have made memorial & honorary contributions between October 1, 1996 & July 24, 1997.

In Memory Of: Gladys L. & Jean E. Bennett ~ Sandra Cono ~ Dr. Eugene N. Davie, Jr. ~ Robert Hawes ~ Emma & Mitchel L. Mitchell ~ Diana Gottdienger Oakes, M.D. ~ George Otto ~ Frances Richardson ~ Marie Louise Rosenberg ~ Nathan Schwartz ~ Dr. Ben Shenson ~ Zef Shllaku ~ Joseph Silveira ~ Lucille Stevens ~ Giovanna & Battista Verrellino ~ Edward P. Wells ~ Harriet Wertsch ~ Marydee Wimbish **In Honor Of:** Richard & Darla Bastoni ~ Richard Goldman ~ Suzanne Hauer ~ Silvia Lin ~ J. Patterson & Susie McBaine ~ Robert Otsea ~ Jerry Rosenstein ~ James H. Schwabacher ~ Dr. Sam Thal ~ Jaymes Mark Williams

SERVICES

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

DIGITAL WATCHES, PAGERS, CELL PHONES. Please switch them OFF before the performance begins.

For **LOST AND FOUND** information, inquire at the cloakroom at the south end of the main lobby or call (415) 621-6600, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Monday through Friday.

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

MAKE A VALUED CONTRIBUTION TO SAN FRANCISCO OPERA. You can make an important contribution to San Francisco Opera by returning any tickets you cannot

use to the Box Office for resale. These ticket returns are of great value to S.F. Opera and to other patrons who may be unable to obtain tickets to sold-out performances. If you are unable to use your tickets or exchange them for another performance of the same opera, you may make a full-value, tax-deductible contribution of your tickets to the Box Office or call (415) 864-3330, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Unfortunately, we are unable to apply the donations towards membership benefits.

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

For the safety and comfort of our audience, all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at the Opera House cloakroom (south end of main lobby). No cameras or tape recorders are permitted in the Opera House. Children of any age attending a performance must have a ticket.

OPERA GLASSES are available in the cloakroom at the north end of the main lobby.

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

ACCESS FOR DISABLED PATRONS

Wheelchair seating positions are located in the orchestra, mezzanine, and dress circle levels. Aisle seats with swing-up armrests are located in the orchestra, dress circle, balcony circle, and balcony levels. Contact the S.F. Opera Ticket and Patron Services Center—(415) 864-3330—for more information.

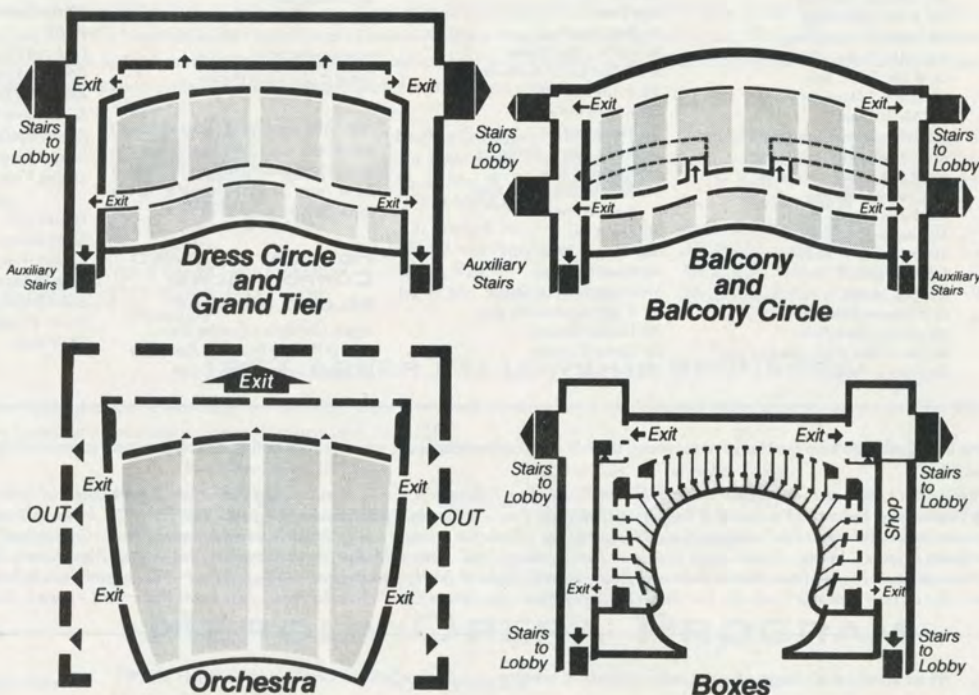
Accessible restrooms are located on all floors except the orchestra (1st floor) and balcony (5th floor) levels.

Accessible public telephones are located on the orchestra, mezzanine, grand tier (2nd floor), and dress circle (3rd floor) levels. Public telephone with "TDD" is located on the orchestra level in the northeast corner of the lobby.

Accessible drinking fountains are located on all floors except the balcony level.

The Opera House is equipped with a Sennheiser Infrared Listening System. Patrons may obtain wireless headphones or induction devices in the cloakroom at the north end of the main lobby.

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



Patrons, Attention Please! Fire Notice: Please note the nearest exit. In an emergency, WALK, do not run, to the nearest exit. Disabled patrons proceed to nearest elevator lobby and await assistance.

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San Francisco Opera

September 13, 16, 20, 26, 1997

The role of the Duke of Mantua in these performances of *Rigoletto* will be sung by Martin Thompson in his San Francisco Opera debut.



Since he first came to international attention with his portrayal of the title role of Mozart's *Mitridate, re di Ponto* at the Wexford Festival, **Martin Thompson** has become a leading lyric tenor at prominent theaters throughout the United States and Europe. In the U.S., the artist has performed a number of his most prominent roles with the New York City Opera, including Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, and the Duke of Mantua. Additional American engagements include his Dallas Opera debut in the title role of Argento's *The Voyage of Edgar Allan Poe* and a return to Dallas for his portrayal of the Duke, a role he repeated for Seattle Opera; Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* for the Opera Company of Philadelphia; the title roles of *Peter Grimes* and *Mitridate* for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis; in addition to Rodolfo at Santa Fe Opera and in his hometown of Portland with the Portland Opera. Highlights in Europe include Verdi's Duke in London, Hamburg, Berlin, Amsterdam, Lausanne, and Vienna; Orombello in Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin; Rodolfo in Amsterdam, Munich and Stuttgart; Lensky in *Eugene Onegin* at the Glyndebourne Festival; Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Cardiff and Munich; as well as Alfredo in *La Traviata* in Stuttgart. In addition to his acclaimed concert performances, Thompson can be heard on recordings of *Beatrice di Tenda* and Cherubini's Mass in D minor. He appears as Lensky in the Glyndebourne video of *Eugene Onegin* directed by Graham Vick and conducted by Andrew Davis.

