

Arabella

1998-1999

Saturday, September 12, 1998 8:00 PM
Tuesday, September 15, 1998 8:00 PM
Friday, September 18, 1998 8:00 PM
Thursday, September 24, 1998 7:30 PM
Sunday, September 27, 1998 2:00 PM
Thursday, October 1, 1998 8:00 PM
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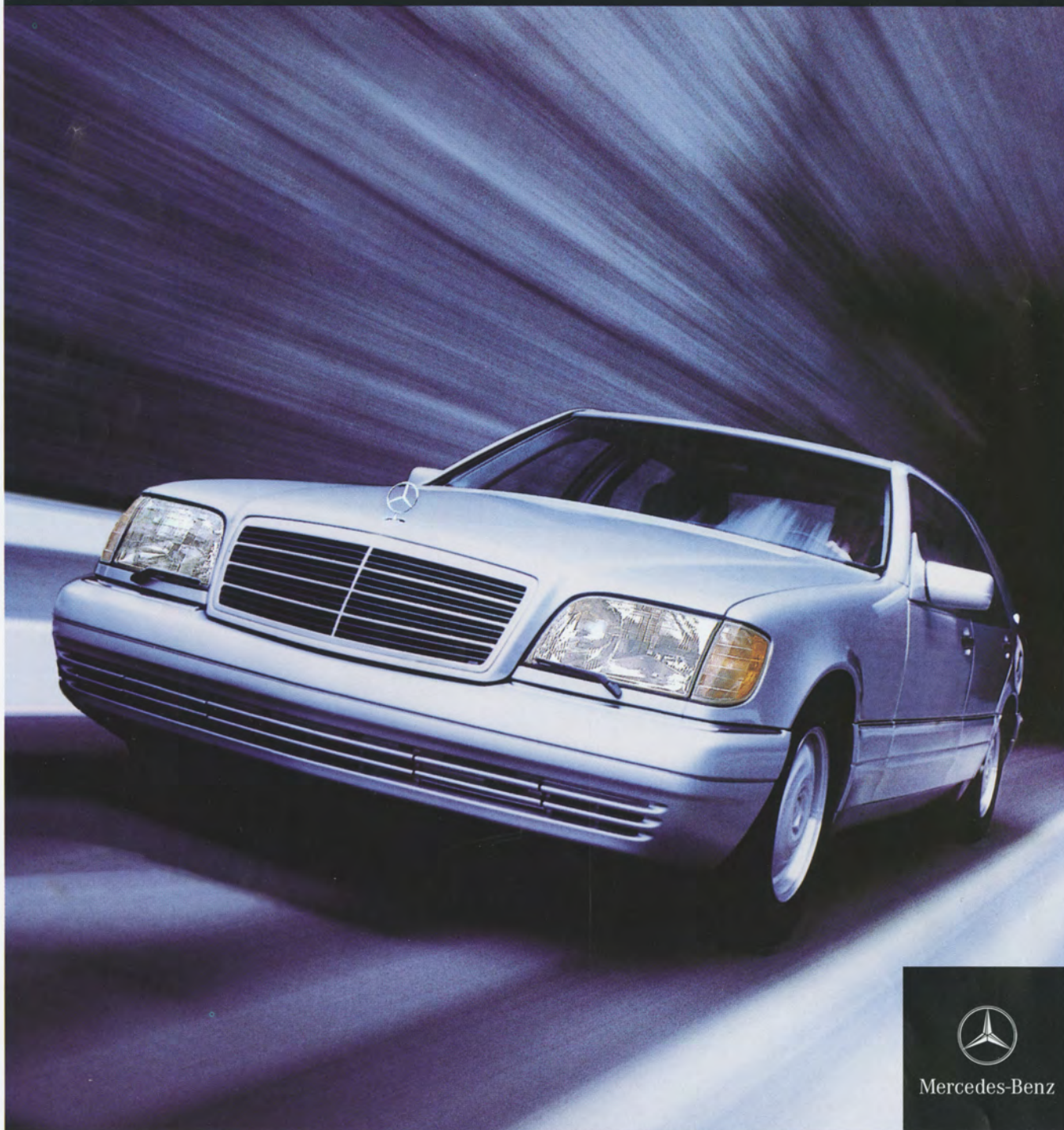
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PERFORMING ARTS®

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

Arabella

76th Season, 1998-99

Vol. 76, No. 5

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Musée des Beaux-Arts André Malraux, Le Havre
 Photographie Giraudon
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A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR



McCARTHY

It is my great delight to welcome you to San Francisco Opera's 1998/99 Season in the War Memorial Opera House. This season is quite exceptional, particularly because it contains the world premiere of an opera that has been a dream of mine for nearly 20 years: *A Streetcar Named Desire*, based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Tennessee Williams. *Streetcar* was composed by the internationally renowned composer-conductor-pianist André Previn (who conducts the first four performances), with a libretto by Philip Littell, who also wrote the libretto for the Company's commissioning of *The Dangerous Liaisons*. The production is staged by acclaimed director Colin Graham, who celebrates his 50th world premiere production with *Streetcar*; and designed by Michael Yeargan, whose wonderful sets and costumes we've enjoyed in the recent productions of *La Bohème*, *Carmen*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Rigoletto*.

We've assembled a dream cast of singers to create *Streetcar*'s iconic characters: the great soprano Renée Fleming, alternating with Susannah Glanville in her U.S. opera debut (Blanche), baritone Rodney Gilfry (Stanley), soprano Elizabeth Futral in her Company debut (Stella) and tenor Anthony Dean Griffey (Mitch). Alternate artists, as well as conductor Patrick Summers, will also be featured in *Streetcar*, which has been commissioned as part of San Francisco Opera's Pacific Visions program. This program is dedicated to creating new American operas, making the Company a fertile ground for new and lasting works while reinvigorating the existing operatic repertoire. Our 1998/99 Season not only illustrates this goal, but also includes a treasure-trove of beloved and bold operas, each brought to life in spectacular productions.

We begin the season with Puccini in legendary China, and finish with Puccini in turn-of-the-century Japan. In between, we will experience the great operas of Strauss, Wagner, Massenet, Verdi, Bellini, Britten and Prokofiev. In addition to *Streetcar*, we will present a new production of *Don Carlo*, and our dynamic collaboration with the Kirov Opera continues with the West Coast premiere of *Betrothal in a Monastery*.

The season, which contains 10 operas and will again extend through January, showcases the artistry of some of the finest singers, conductors, directors and designers in the world — some in auspicious debuts. Our distinguished music director, Donald Runnicles, will lead performances of *Arabella*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *Peter Grimes*, with the Grammy-nominated San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus on hand all season long. Additionally, the San Francisco Opera Ballet will perform in two productions this year: *Manon* and *Betrothal in a Monastery*.

"I want magic!" sings Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. San Francisco Opera provides just that in each performance of our 1998/99 Season. Enjoy!

Lotfi Mansouri
General Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ASSOCIATION



SOHL

On behalf of the San Francisco Opera Association, we are pleased to welcome you to San Francisco Opera's 1998/99 Season. As our general director illustrates, a highlight of the 1998/99 Season is the world premiere of André Previn and Philip Littell's *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The commissioning of *Streetcar* could not have been without a grant from Meet The Composer/Arts Endowment Commissioning Music/USA, with additional support from The Helen Whitaker Fund. We also acknowledge with great appreciation the sponsors of the world premiere production: Mrs. Paul L. Wattis, the Carol Franc Buck Foundation, Arthur Andersen and the National Endowment for the Arts. The much-anticipated unveiling of *Streetcar* has greater implications for San Francisco Opera, for it serves as a model of our vision to add new American works to the repertoire every year.

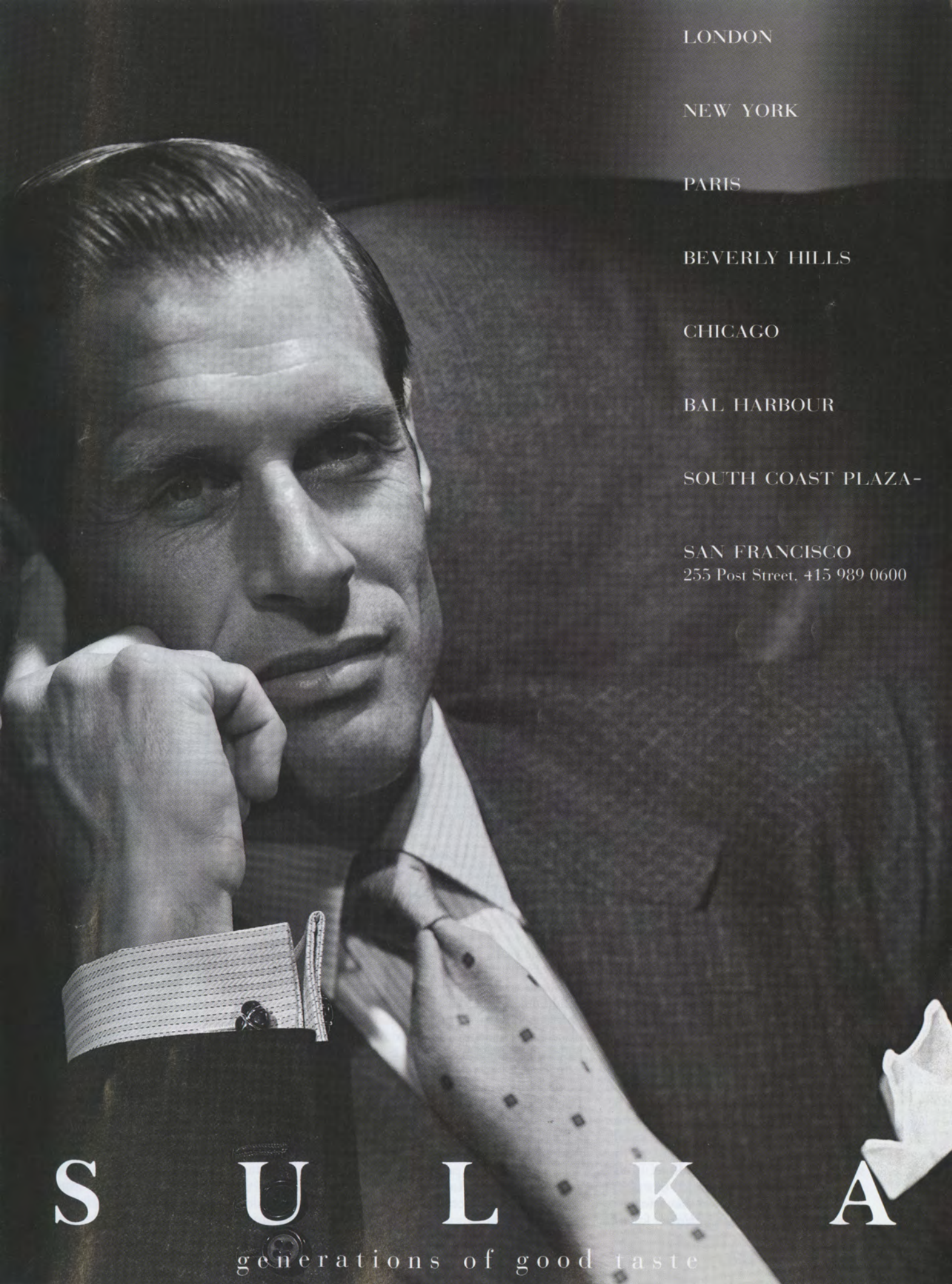
As we move closer towards the millennium, it is our mission to continue our broad programs: to present opera performances of the highest quality to the widest possible audiences, while being a leader in training, arts education, audience development and presentation of new works — new inventory for the opera world. We achieve these goals with significant support from our sponsors: Grants For The Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as our season sponsors: American Airlines, Arthur Andersen, Bank of America and R. Kassman Pianos.

We also thank our production sponsors, who give so generously to San Francisco Opera: Madeleine Haas Russell and the Madeleine H. Russell Fund of the Columbia Foundation (*Turandot*); The L. J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation (*Tristan und Isolde*); Medallion Society Gold Circle members (*Manon*); and the Bernard Osher Endowment Fund and an anonymous donor (*Norma*).

Additionally, we extend our thanks to the San Francisco Opera Guild for its continued financial and volunteer support of the Opera, and for its efforts to cultivate a new generation of opera lovers by taking opera out into the schools. We also thank BRAVO! CLUB for its efforts in developing a younger audience, and the War Memorial Board of Trustees for its ongoing support and assistance.

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ARABELLA AND MR. RIGHT

BY MICHAEL KENNEDY



San Francisco Opera, 1980 — Kiri Te Kanawa portrays Arabella, while Barbara Daniels, as Zdenka, peers out of the window.

SCHERL

In 1923 Richard Strauss wrote to his librettist, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, urging him to think of a new subject for an opera. "Best of all, a second *Rosenkavalier* without its mistakes and *longueurs*. You'll just have to write that for me some day, I haven't spoken my last word in that genre yet. Something delicate, amusing and warm-hearted!" Hofmannsthal replied encouragingly. "The action would have to be laid in Vienna around 1840 or so, something good-natured, commonplace and gay at the same time... I feel that I shall get it one day. I have written some notion of a plot." But in the meantime they worked together on *Die Ägyptische Helena* for the

next four years. It was not until October 1st, 1927 that Hofmannsthal provided the first hints of *Arabella*. He was thinking of combining a comedy he had written, *The Cabbie as Count* — "the second act takes place in a ballroom" — with a story he had written in 1909 called *Lucidor*.

In *Lucidor*, a widow lives in a Vienna hotel with two daughters, Arabella and Lucile. The latter is dressed as a boy (Lucidor) because this helps the family fortunes and Arabella's marriage chances. Arabella is courted by a rich aristocrat whom she dislikes, preferring a Tyrolean gentleman farmer. Lucile writes love letters to the aristocrat under Arabella's name and eventually sleeps with him reg-

ularly, he believing she is Arabella. The aristocrat is vastly intrigued by the contrast between the coolly aloof Arabella he sees in the daytime and the passionate girl whose bed he shares. Here are the essentials of the plot of *Arabella*. The aristocrat became the officer Matteo, Lucile became Zdenka (Zdenko, when a boy), the Tyrolean farmer became the Croatian landowner Mandryka. From *The Cabbie as Count* Hofmannsthal took local color. The Cabbies' Ball was an annual Vienna event at which all social distinctions were overlooked. In the 1860s, the ball was held at the Sperl Hotel in the Leopoldstadt district and was presided over by a mascot, the Fiak-

ermilli (the German *Fiaker* = horse-drawn cab). This Vienna, Hofmannsthal told Strauss, was nearer to their own time — “more ordinary, less glamorous, more vulgar.” The characters were “tainted by vulgarity tangled up with a rather vulgar and dubious Vienna.”

The theme of *Arabella* is one of the oldest romantic tales in the world, the theme of hundreds of popular love songs. Three years before Strauss and Hofmannsthal began *Arabella*, George and Ira Gershwin wrote the song “The Man I Love” which fits *Arabella* in detail as well as in outline. “Some day he’ll come along, the man I love” — in Act I, Arabella sings “*Aber der Richtige...* the one who’s right for me, if there is one for me in the whole world, he will stand before me, all at once.” “And he’ll be big and strong, the man I love” — Mandryka, who woos and wins Arabella, is tall and elegant and arrives explaining that he has recently wrestled a bear. “Maybe Tuesday will be my good-news day” — the events of *Arabella* occur on Shrove Tuesday, the traditional day of the Cabbies’ ball.

But although the theme of *Arabella* may be the man she loves — Mr. Right — coming along, Hofmannsthal could never provide a simple plot. Love at first sight, as in *Der Rosenkavalier*, is the romantic mainspring, but there have to be complications. Some of them have been outlined above. The widow in *Lucidor* is converted into Count and Countess Waldner, too poor to launch their daughters into society, hence Zdenka’s male disguise. Zdenka nearly wrecks the Arabella-Mandryka betrothal by giving Matteo the key to Arabella’s hotel room where he makes love to — Zdenka (who loves him anyway, but is prepared to sacrifice him to Arabella). When the truth emerges, Matteo says: “The room was dark and I never heard your voice.” It takes some believing; and really it is unbelievable. But such is the overwhelming charm, the magic, of this opera that most listeners do not care a damn about credibility. This, I believe, is because of the sheer mastery of Strauss’s music. It has become almost *de rigueur* to regard Hofmannsthal’s libretto, even though unrevised after Act I, as superior to the music. I do not believe that *Arabella* would have steadily increased in popularity since 1933 — as it has — on the



In San Francisco Opera's 1980 staging of *Arabella*, Ingvar Wixell was Mandryka; Erie Mills, *Fiakermilli*.

strength of growing public appreciation of the text. No, the music, perfectly fitted to a disarming text, is what has carried this opera to success, as happens with all operas.

Few artistic partnerships have been of more compelling interest than that between the dry, practical and humorous Strauss and the obstinate, sensitive, highly-strung Hofmannsthal. Thanks to the publication of their lengthy correspondence, posterity can suffer and smile and marvel with them as they work their tortuous way towards the goal they have in sight but which often seems to go further away the nearer they come to it. Frequently the connecting-wire between them seems about to snap, but a tactful word, a joke or a swallowing of pride by one or the other and all is well again. True to form, nothing went easily during

the making of *Arabella*. Mandryka, Hofmannsthal wrote to Strauss, was the most remarkable character in the piece, “from a semi-alien world, half buffo and yet a grand fellow capable of deep feelings, wild and gentle, almost demonic.” Strauss was unconvinced. The character who “ensured victory” for *Der Rosenkavalier*, he reminded Hofmannsthal, was not Baron Ochs but the Marschallin. This Croatian, even if sung by Chaliapin, would not draw a hundred people into the theater. What the scenario lacked was “a genuinely interesting female character.” Hofmannsthal tried to reassure him: the piece was entitled *Arabella* and she was the main character.

For the next eighteen months the collaborators bickered over the plot and in particular the character of the heroine. Strauss alarmed Hofmannsthal with sug-

gestions of using folk tunes for "the Croatian gentleman" (as he eventually did) and for a big ballet in Act II. "For heaven's sake," the poet protested, "we are at the Vienna Cabbies' Ball... There can be no more question of a Croatian dance than of a Persian or an Indian one." Hofmannsthal was extremely defensive about *Arabella* and admitted he was in love with it. But Strauss's response to the draft libretto of Act I was noticeably cool. "I'm trying hard to discover what it lacks for being set to music," he wrote. It was Arabella herself who worried him. "She is not sufficiently interesting and almost unattractive." At this stage the plot hinged on the necessity of Arabella finding a rich husband. Her three aristocratic suitors, the Counts Dominik, Lamoral and Elemer, are flirts with no intention of marrying her. She is more interested in a character later excised from the opera, "the unattractive building contractor," as Strauss called him. "A new motive must be found," Strauss insisted, "that would lend Ara-

bella's new interest in Mandryka (quite apart from the financial advantages such a marriage would offer) a truly moral significance."

In November of 1928, Strauss confessed to Hofmannsthal that he had tried to compose the start of Act I, "but the thing doesn't even begin to come to music and, to be perfectly frank, the characters don't interest me in the least... above all Arabella, who does not experience the slightest psychological conflict throughout the three acts... Does she really do anything particularly exciting? She doesn't love Matteo from the start; as for her flirtation with the three Counts, I think you probably overrate its poetical effect. That she should easily switch from the building contractor to that wealthy paragon of virtue Mandryka is as natural as it is uninteresting. And then: does anything else happen between the two? Nothing at all." He suggested a tragic ending, with Mandryka shooting himself and Arabella offering the dying man a glass of water, symbol of

the village betrothal custom of which Mandryka had told her. All this criticism was a violent contrast to the genesis of *Der Rosenkavalier*, which Strauss had begun to compose as soon as he received the first draft. "It sets itself to music," he said at the time.

Hofmannsthal patiently re-wrote Act I, prodded continually by Strauss to put Arabella into stronger relief. He provided the "new motive" for her interest in Mandryka for which Strauss had pleaded. He imbued her with the romantic intuition that she would know Mr. Right, *der Richtige*, when he came along. She glances from the hotel window, sees Mandryka in the street below (where she had seen him earlier) and knows that he is the one for her. Above all, Strauss wanted the first act to end with a long soliloquy for her in the manner of the Marschallin's solos at the end of Act I of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Hofmannsthal provided the text of the aria "Mein Elemer." Strauss was delighted when he received the revision on July 14th, 1929 and



Kiri Te Kanawa and Ingovar Wixell in Arabella's final scene in 1980.



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San Francisco Opera, 1980 — Kiri Te Kanawa as Arabella in Act I.

immediately sent a telegram: "First act excellent. Many thanks and congratulations." It arrived at Hofmannsthal's home at Rodaun, outside Vienna, on July 15th, the day of the funeral of Hofmannsthal's son Franz, who had committed suicide two days earlier. As he was preparing to leave the house for the church, Hofmannsthal had a stroke and died. He had not opened Strauss's telegram.

Strauss was devastated by his friend's death. The two had often clashed, but they understood each other's virtues and failings. Writing the next day to the poet's widow, Strauss referred to "the wonderful libretto he sent me shortly before his tragic end" and said it would "remain a last glorious page in the work of this noble, pure, high-minded man." Within two months he had sketched the music for nearly the whole of Act I, but then came delays. The libretto of Acts II and III was unrevised and although it is often said that Strauss set it as it stood as a tribute to Hofmannsthal, in fact he made many slight alterations. But he refused to change the main outline of the plot. He interrupted work on *Arabella* in order to prepare his idiosyncratic version of Mozart's *Idomeneo* to mark the 150th anniversary of the opera's first performance — a task to which he had agreed

before Hofmannsthal died. The full score of *Arabella* was completed on October 12th, 1932. Those who find weaknesses in Strauss's music for this opera point to his apparent lack of sympathy with the characters and to the length of time it took him to compose it. But he often showed initial reluctance to a new enterprise. He had been scathing in his criticism of the Prologue to the revised (1916) version of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, yet he became enthusiastic about it and composed a masterpiece. Even with *Der Rosenkavalier*, he had instigated drastic changes to the libretto of Acts II and III.

Where Strauss's mastery is especially evident in *Arabella* is in his evocation of the sleazy Vienna of 1860, when the city was at a climacteric. Three years earlier, Emperor Franz Josef had ordered the demolition of the city walls and the building of the Ringstrasse, with its opera house, stock exchange, town hall, parliament and other great edifices. This was to be the Vienna of the artist Hans Makart. It was a Vienna living beyond its means. Mandryka came from Croatia which was then part of Hungary — not until 1867 Austria and Hungary become autonomous under a dual monarchy. Hofmannsthal would know that Croatia was loyal to Austria rather than to Buda and Pest. The Vienna of 1860 was nervous and febrile. Strauss reflects this in the music which opens the opera. On one level it depicts the Fortuneteller and her cards and the fussiness and anxiety of Arabella's mother; on another it tells of insubstantiality and unrest. Arabella is described by Hofmannsthal at one point like Bernard Shaw's St. Joan in the conscientiousness of her strength, and only when she enters, to her serene oboe melody, does the music attain the warmth and compassion which will dominate it to the end. Part of Strauss's ambivalence about her character remains but it is turned to advantage: she is unknowable, unattainable, enigmatic, whereas Zdenka is palpably straightforward and lovable. (Incidentally, when Arabella first enters, she says she has been to the opera and a quotation in the orchestra informs us she had heard Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Strauss made a slip here, for the first Vienna performance of *Lohengrin* was on May 15th, 1861, so Arabella's performance could not have taken place until February of 1862, two years after the events of the opera!)

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Some productions of *Arabella* represent the hotel in which the Waldners are living as shabby and gone to seed. This is wrong: the stage directions in the libretto state that it is "richly appointed and newly furnished." Hofmannsthal was historically accurate in Act II in introducing the cabbies' mascot, the Fiakermilli, who was based on Emilie Tureček (1846-99), a Viennese folksinger who was patron of the ball for several years. But Countess Waldner and Arabella would not have been allowed into the real ball. Although attendance was drawn from the whole social spectrum, two classes dominated — the cab drivers and their families and the aristocracy, who went in evening dress with decorations but were not accompanied by their womenfolk. The setting of a ball, of course, invites waltzes, but these are not the opulent waltzes of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Instead, Strauss provides a subtler, though no less insinuating, brand. Strauss saw the Fiakermilli as a kind of Zerbinetta, with yodeling substituted for coloratura. Clemens Krauss, who conducted the premiere of *Arabella*, always disliked the role and did his best, or worst, to persuade Strauss to alter it, especially when, in 1939, he and the Munich producer Rudolf Hartmann talked him into agreeing to cut some of Fiakermilli's part at the end of Act II and to run the last two acts together (this so-called "Munich version" is not, in my view, a success).

Even though it ends happily, *Arabella* has an elegiac feel to it. It marked the end of a great collaboration. By historical accident, too, this humane, civilized, escapist opera came to birth amid the storm clouds which were to darken and stain the last years of Strauss's life. He had promised the first performance to Dresden, where all but two of his operas had their premieres since *Feuersnot* in 1901. *Arabella* was dedicated jointly to Fritz Busch, conductor at Dresden, and Alfred Reucker, the intendant. On January 30th 1933, Hitler became German Chancellor. The Dresden Nazis soon discovered that Busch, although not Jewish, detested Nazi policies and they organized demonstrations against him. Two months later he and Reucker were dismissed. Strauss threatened to withdraw the opera if they were not reinstated, but Dresden insisted on its contract and he accepted Krauss, whom he greatly

admired, as a conductor. The first night, on July 1st 1933, was a major event, drawing its audience from all over the world. Arabella was sung by Viorica Ursuleac, the first of several Strauss heroines she created. The opera was an immediate triumph, although the critics in Vienna, London and New York were dismissive of it, regarding it as an inferior copy of *Der Rosenkavalier*. Strauss himself was taken aback by its success. "One knows least what one is capable of doing," he told Stefan Zweig. "Such bulls-eyes as the Arabella-Mandryka duet and the *Rosenkavalier* trio don't happen every day."

While Strauss was writing *Arabella*, Shostakovich was composing *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Hindemith was at work on *Mathis der Maler* and Berg on *Lulu*. He would not have considered or cared that he was out of joint with the times. He had composed his *Lulu* and *Lady Macbeth* a generation earlier. The score of *Arabella* is a wonderful, kaleidoscopic symphonic web, with melodic and harmonic detail integrated into a grand design. The orchestration is that of a master, every detail telling. The setting of the text marries words and music effortlessly and fluently. And there are the great elevating set-pieces — Arabella's duet with Zdenka in Act I, Arabella's aria at the end of Act I; her Act II duet with Mandryka in which romanticism reaches a new zenith; Mandryka's autobiographical aria in Act I; Arabella's Act III loving tribute to Zdenka (sometimes indefensibly cut); and the final duet of reconciliation and forgiveness. In spite of his misgivings, Strauss breathed life and love into the mysterious, elusive Arabella and the not-so-simple Mandryka; he fashioned an unforgettable secondary role in Zdenka; he captured the quirks and oddities of the Waldners. However unpromising this material appeared to him at first, with it he ultimately composed an opera in which a poetic, romantic, compassionate and — unfashionable word — loving view of human nature is paramount. "I can be no other, take me as I am," are Arabella's last words in the opera. The same can be said of Strauss. □

Michael Kennedy is chief music critic of the London Sunday Telegraph and has been a music critic of the London Daily Telegraph since 1950. He is the author of books on Mahler, Strauss, Elgar, and Britten, and has written biographies of Sir John Barbirolli and Sir Adrian Boult.

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THE STRAUSS/HOFMANNSTHAL WOMEN

BY PAUL THOMASON

When one thinks of the operas written by Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal, what instantly springs to mind is a woman — and for good reasons. No other composer/librettist team in the history of opera created so many riveting female characters, generated so many plum roles for female singers, or, in the process, explored the world of the feminine so thoroughly.

From 1906, when the two men began working on *Elektra*, through *Der Rosenkavalier*, two versions of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, then *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Die Ägyptische Helena*, until Hofmannsthal's untimely death in 1929 while working on *Arabella*, the creators generated one riveting stage woman after another. This is not to suggest that there are no memorable male characters in their operas: among other roles, Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier*, both Barak and the Emperor in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and Mandryka in *Arabella* have tempted numerous great singing actors through the years. But two of the greatest male roles in the Strauss/Hofmannsthal canon — Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* and the Composer in *Ariadne* — were written, not for tenors, baritones, or basses, but for a mezzo and a soprano.

When the composer wrote his librettist in 1924 to congratulate him on turning fifty, Strauss said, "It was your words which drew from me the finest music I had to give: this knowledge must fill you with deep gratification. Let therefore Chrysothemis, the Marschallin, Ariadne, Zerbinetta, the Empress, and, not least, H. [Helen, the heroine of the opera on which the two men were then working] — join me in calling on you and thanking you for all you have dedicated to me out of your life's work." Notice there is not a single male character mentioned. Surely that is not accidental, and it tells a great deal about the way Strauss, at least, felt about their works.

Over and over again, it is the soprano, in all of her many incarnations, on which Strauss lavishes his most opulent music. From dramatic sopranos (*Elektra*) through spintos (Marschallin, *Arabella*) and lyrics (Zdenka, who, incidentally, though she is a woman, is dressed as a boy throughout *Arabella*) to the rarified world of the coloratura (Zerbinetta, or



Sena Jurinac as the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* at the San Francisco Opera in 1971.

Arabella's Fiakermilli) Strauss delighted in writing music which dazzled audiences and challenged performers. In the process, *through* that often-enchanted music, he defined his female characters with a three-dimensional thoroughness and precision which is either breathtaking or tear-inducing, depending on the dramatic situation involved.

One example of the composer taking a superbly written line from his librettist, and using music to not only give that line more drama, but also to enrich the character more completely, is found in *Der Rosenkavalier*. At first, neither Hofmannsthal nor Strauss quite realized it was the Marschallin who would be the focus of their new opera, which they first entitled *Ochs*. But as work proceeded, it became clear that the emotional and psychological center of their work was, in fact, the Marschallin.

"She is the central figure for the public," wrote Hofmannsthal to Strauss in 1910, "for the women above all, the fig-

ure with whom they feel and move." A month later he reemphasized the point by adding, "True charm of speech, indeed the stronger charm of personality is all with the Marschallin."

Part of that "charm of speech" is the memorable point in Act I where the Marschallin tells her impulsive young lover, Octavian, that one day he will leave her for another woman. "Now, or tomorrow, surely, you will go from me, leave me and choose another, younger and prettier than I."

It was Strauss's thorough understanding of the Marschallin's character, and the emotional importance those words had for her, that led him to add a notation at that point in the score which increases our understanding of her, and probably our sympathy with her as well. After "die jünger" ("younger"), but before "und schöner ist als ich" ("and prettier than I") Strauss wrote two eighth-note rests for the soprano, and just to make sure the singer observed the rests, he added the

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instruction "hesitating a little." It is a very small — but hugely telling — touch. The Marschallin does not have a problem with the fact Octavian will leave her one day for a younger woman. Time passes, it is inevitable he will meet someone closer to his own age (17) than she is ("32 at the most," according to Strauss). But to admit that a younger woman might also be *prettier* than the Marschallin, that is a bit harder for her to do — and thus the poignant hesitation. Just by those two eighth-note rests, and the "hesitating a little" instruction, Strauss not only lets us know the beautiful Marschallin is still a bit vain, but also lets us know she is aware of her vanity, willing to accept the fact that her beauty will soon be eclipsed (as least in Octavian's eyes) by another, and that she has enough pride and self-respect to admit that to him, as well as to herself.

"It is the greatest gift in dramatic creation to feel the situation grow out of the very heart of the characters," Hofmannsthal once wrote. In Strauss, the librettist had a collaborator who could take the heart of Hofmannsthal's characters and convey it in music, so that it reached the heart of the *audience*, even an audience who might not understand the librettist's German words.

Throughout the Strauss/Hofmannsthal operas it is exactly those touches — hundreds, perhaps thousands, of them — that make their women so vividly alive, and which give them their astonishing power to move an audience, both emotionally and dramatically. It is what makes them ring so psychologically true.

"When every spectator becomes one with what happens on the stage, when everyone recognizes in the performance, as in a mirror, the reflection of his own true impulses, then, but not until then, success has been achieved...and those who return from the theater have experienced what was truly an experience," Hofmannsthal wrote.

Consider the range of characters the librettist and composer created in only two of their operas: *Elektra* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

In *Elektra* the stark brutality of the unconscious is conveyed so unrelentingly that 89 years after the work's premiere, even a mediocre performance of the opera is likely to leave an audience feeling shattered and disoriented — or cleansed in a cathartic way. Elektra herself is totally consumed with her dead father and obsessed with avenging his death. Everything in her life is dedicated to her obsession; it is what keeps her alive. Absolutely nothing else matters. The brutality of Elektra's inner life, its rage and madness, are reflected in her dramatic vocal line which is filled with huge leaps, sometimes ended with full-bodied, exultant high Cs. It takes tremendous power, and stamina, to sing the role of Elektra who often must battle an enormous orchestra.

By contrast, her younger sister, Chrysothemis, wants to leave the past in the past and get on with life. "I want to live!" she pleads. "I want to have children before my body shrivels up, and even if it were a peasant to whom they gave me, I would bear him children and warm them with my body on cold nights." Chrysothemis is a woman for whom the phrase *Kirche, Küche, Kinder* might have been coined. "Church, kitchen, children" are her desired world and, again, Strauss conveys her simple, harmonious nature by having her lyric vocal line move stair-step, very gradually, as well as having much of her music written in three-quarter (waltz) time.

Not content with drawing two sisters of such opposite natures, *Elektra's* creators also gave us a truly horrifying woman in Klytemnestra, their mother. "Klytemnestra should not be an old hag, but a beauti-

Continued on page 42

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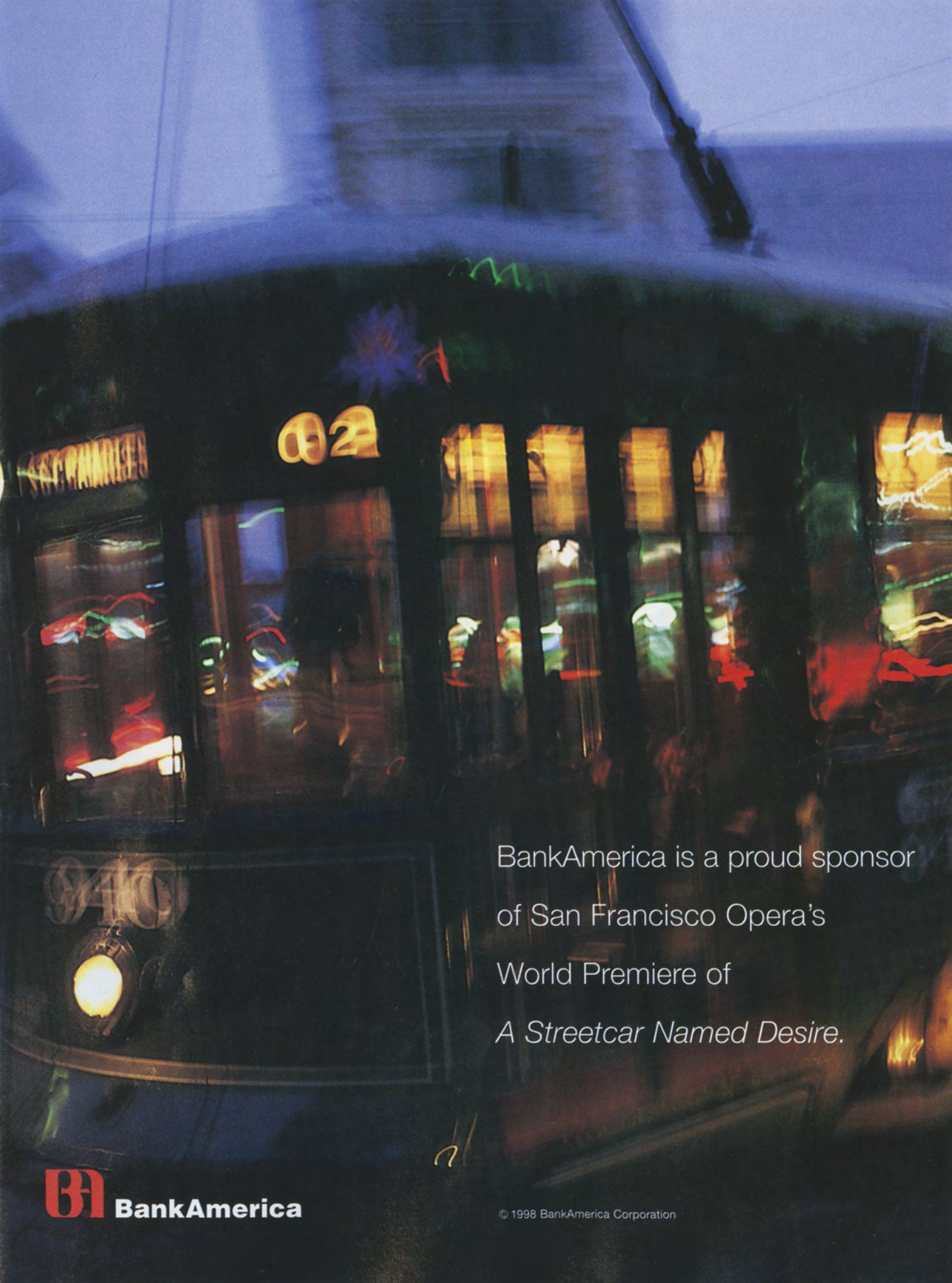
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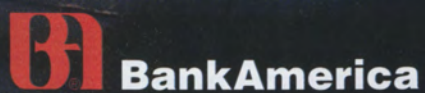
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(in German)

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Donald Runnicles

Stage Director
David Edwards*

Designer
Peter Rice*

Lighting Designer
Michael Whitfield

Chorus Director
Ian Robertson

Musical Preparation
Peter Grunberg
Marilyn Barnett
Philip Eisenberg

Prompter
Philip Eisenberg

Supertitles
Christopher Bergen

Assistant Stage Directors
Laurie Henley
Gina Lapinski

Stage Manager
Gretchen Mueller

Production from the Royal
Opera, Covent Garden

First performance:
Dresden, July 1, 1933

First San Francisco Opera
performance: October 29, 1980

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Countess Adelaide Waldner Judith Forst

A fortuneteller Catherine Cook

Zdenka, Arabella's sister Mary Mills

Matteo, a young officer David Kuebler

Arabella, elder daughter of the Waldners Janice Watson

Count Elemer, one of Arabella's suitors Stuart Skelton

*Count Theodor Waldner,
a retired cavalry officer* Donald McIntyre*

A waiter Jere Torkelsen

Mandryka, a Croatian landowner Franz Grundheber*

Welko, servant to Mandryka Frederick Matthews

Count Dominik, another suitor to Arabella Jochen Schmeckenbecher*

Count Lamoral, a third suitor to Arabella John Autry

The Fiakermilli, belle of the Coachmen's Ball Laura Claycomb

Djura, servant to Mandryka Daniel Harper

Jankel, servant to Mandryka David Kekuewa

Three card players Henryk DeRewenda
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Valery Portnov

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*San Francisco Opera debut

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ACT II A public ballroom, evening

INTERMISSION

ACT III The hotel lobby, late at night

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ARABELLA SYNOPSIS

ACT I

Countess Adelaide Waldner has summoned a fortuneteller to her hotel suite in order to allay her worries about a financial crisis in the family. Zdenka, Adelaide's younger daughter (disguised as a boy, "Zdenko," to avoid the expenses of suitably presenting two girls in Viennese society) is warding off the creditors. The fortuneteller sees in the cards a rich marriage for Arabella, the beautiful elder daughter of the Waldners. Matteo is a young officer, passionately in love with Arabella. She, however, does not love him. Zdenka, who Matteo (and everyone else) believes is Arabella's brother, protects him from the truth by forging letters from Arabella in order to keep his hopes alive. Zdenka loves Matteo herself, but in her masculine guise cannot confess it. Arabella returns from a walk to find gifts from her other three suitors, Elemer, Dominik and Lamoral. Zdenka begs her sister to favor Matteo but is told that the right man has not yet appeared. Arabella has, however, been impressed by a stranger she saw opposite the hotel. Count Elemer begs her to join him in a sleigh ride, and she leaves to get ready. Count Waldner (Arabella's father) arrives, depressed by his bad luck at cards and his many debts. He tells his wife that as a last resort he has sent a letter and a photograph of Arabella to an old friend and fellow officer, Mandryka. A stranger is introduced who turns out to be Mandryka's nephew of the same name. Bewitched by the photograph, he has sold an entire forest from his estate in order to make this trip and plead for Arabella's hand. He tells about himself with intense sincerity and wins Waldner's heart by giving him a rather large loan. Having been promised an introduction for later, Mandryka exits, leaving Waldner quite bedazzled. Arabella, unaware of these events, reappears for her sleigh ride. She is indifferent to Matteo and Elemer but is still moved by the sight of the stranger she has not yet met. But tonight she must choose the "right man" for her bridegroom. In any case, she has been chosen as the Queen of the Coachmen's Ball which that evening will celebrate Mardi Gras.

ACT II

Waldner is with Mandryka at the entrance of a public ballroom, waiting to introduce him to Adelaide and Arabella. Mandryka, deeply attracted, tells Arabella of his being widowed, his vast

possessions and his emotions. She recalls her longing for "the right man." The two confess their love, but Arabella requests and is granted a last evening of liberty at the dance. The coachmen's favorite, Milli, declares Arabella queen of the ball. Mandryka informs the ecstatic Waldners that Arabella has accepted him, and orders a celebratory supper for them, plus champagne for the entire company. Arabella takes leave for the last time of the three suitors who have been closest to her. Matteo finds Arabella's radiance bitterly painful since it is not directed at him. Zdenka sees his desperation and urges him to accept an envelope from her. It contains, she says, the key to Arabella's room. He is to leave the ball immediately and go to her, where she will grant all he desires. Unfortunately, this exchange is overheard by Mandryka, who is stung into a fury of disbelief, jealousy and humiliation. Seeing that Arabella is nowhere to be found, he cynically (and drunkenly) flirts with the Fiakermilli, invites everyone assembled to drink all his champagne, horrifies the Waldners with sarcastic barbs about their daughter's Viennese morals, and reels back to the hotel with them to ascertain the facts.

ACT III

The key actually was for Arabella's room, but with Zdenka inside! Matteo emerges from that room thinking that it is to Arabella he has been making love. His amazement at finding her only five minutes later, fully dressed in the hotel foyer, is quickly superseded by frustration and rage at her complete lack of tenderness toward him. The Waldners and Mandryka return from the ball. In spite of Arabella's denial, Mandryka is convinced of her guilt, and matters deteriorate when Matteo attempts to protect her. Finally, since Arabella refuses to satisfy the question of honor by agreeing to marry Matteo, Mandryka agrees to a duel. Suddenly Zdenka, no longer disguised as a boy, rushes downstairs in terror and confesses all. Mandryka begs forgiveness of Arabella and in a great outburst of feeling asks Waldner to give Zdenka to Matteo. Mandryka remains in the foyer cursing his failure to trust Arabella. His heavy heart is lightened when Arabella emerges from her room and, in traditional Croatian manner, brings him a glass of water to set the seal on their betrothal.

The performance of September 12th is designated in honor of
Ms. Annette Campbell-White and Dr. Ruediger Naumann-Etienne's membership in the Triple Platinum Circle.

The performance of September 15th is designated in honor of
Mr. and Mrs. John Bryan's membership in the Triple Gold Circle.

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ARTIST PROFILES



Soprano **JANICE WATSON** made her first operatic appearance in the United States singing the title role of *Daphne* during San Francisco Opera's 1993 Celebration of Strauss Festival. With the Welsh National Opera her many roles include Fiordiligi, Pamina, Tatyana, Adèle (*Le Comte Ory*), Marguerite (*Faust*) and the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. She has sung Musetta at the Royal Opera, Covent

Garden; Pamina at the Bastille; Countess Almaviva with Lyon Opera; Vitellia for the Flanders Opera; and both Daphne and Arabella at Santa Fe Opera. Her roles at the English National Opera include Liù, Micaëla, Countess Almaviva, Gilda and Pamina. Watson's concert engagements include appearances with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic and Boston Symphony. Earlier this year she gave concerts in Amsterdam, Lisbon, Zurich, Vienna and London. A regular soloist at the BBC Promenade concerts and the Edinburgh Festival, she has also given recitals throughout Great Britain and in Paris. Recordings include *Carmina Burana*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Howells's *Missa Sabrinensis*, George Lloyd's *John Sycamore* (Sybil), *Peter Grimes* (Ellen Orford, Grammy Award-winner), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena). Her future operatic engagements include *Idomeneo* (Elettra) in Santa Fe, *Carmen* in Chicago, *Peter Grimes* for the Vienna State Opera, Welsh National Opera and the Netherlands Opera, Gerhard's *The Duenna* (Luisa) at Covent Garden, and *Die Zauberflöte* at the Bavarian State Opera. The British artist was a student at the Guildhall School of Music and first came to prominence as winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Award.



Soprano **MARY MILLS**, a former (1990-91) Adler Fellow with the Opera Center, made her acclaimed 1994 Metropolitan Opera debut as Zdenka in *Arabella* and returned to the Met the following season as Mimì in Franco Zeffirelli's staging of *La Bobème*. Additional engagements include her debut with the Paris Opera/Bastille in the title role of *Manon*; the title role of Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and

Micaëla in *Carmen* at the Washington Opera; Poppea in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Florida Grand Opera; Gilda in *Rigoletto* in Miami and Costa Rica; Mimì in *La Bobème* in Detroit, Antwerp, Geneva, and Santiago, Chile; Juliet in *Roméo et Juliette* in Antwerp; and Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in Santiago. Among her most recent engagements are *The Dangerous Liaisons* with the Washington Opera; her first Marguerite in *Faust* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis; *Le Nozze di Figaro* for her Seattle Opera debut; and *Bobème* in Strasbourg. The artist made her professional debut as Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Houston Grand Opera and made her 1989 San Francisco Opera bow in *Lulu*. She has appeared in Company productions of, among others, *Rigoletto*, *Don Quichotte*, *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *War and Peace*, *Don Carlo*, *The Dangerous Liaisons* (a 1994 world premiere in which she created the role of Cécile de Volanges), *La Bobème* and *Carmen*. A native of Dallas, Mills graduated from the University of Cincinnati College — Conservatory of Music, and received a master of

music degree from Yale University. Upcoming engagements include *Die Zauberflöte* (Pamina) at Florida Grand Opera, *La Bobème* (her first Musetta) with the Dallas Opera, *Eugene Onegin* (role debut as Tatyana) with Michigan Opera Theatre, *Bobème* (Mimi) at the Met, and the title role of *Susannah* with Washington Opera.



LAURA CLAYCOMB, an Adler Fellow from 1991 to 1993, made her 1990 San Francisco Opera debut in *Suor Angelica*. She subsequently performed here in *Die Zauberflöte*, *Carmen*, *Boris Godunov*, *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *The Dangerous Liaisons*. Highlights of the young soprano's career have included her European debut as Giulietta in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* in Geneva; a debut at the Paris Opera/Bastille, also in

I Capuleti; Gilda in *Rigoletto* for both the Teatro Municipal in Santiago, Chile, and for New Israeli Opera; Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at the Netherlands Opera; Norina in *Don Pasquale* at New York City Opera; and Serpetta in *La Finta Giardiniera* for Washington Opera. She made her debut at the Salzburg Festival last season in Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre* and joined the production when it was again presented by the Châtelet earlier this year. Recent appearances have also included Adina in *L'Elisir* in Lausanne; Marie in *La Fille du Régiment* in Rome; Fiorilla in *Il Turco in Italia* for Bordeaux; and the title role of Donizetti's *Linda di Chamounix* at Milan's La Scala. Among her future engagements are *I Capuleti* for Los Angeles Opera, *Rigoletto* at the Bastille, the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* with New Israeli Opera, and Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* at the Opéra de Montpellier. Claycomb has performed in concert with the San Francisco Symphony, Trondheim Symphony, Sacramento Ballet (*Carmina Burana*), and most recently joined the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment for a Mozart program which included a performance of *The Impresario*.



Canadian mezzo-soprano **JUDITH FORST** has been acclaimed for her operatic and concert performances throughout North America and Europe. Her appearances with San Francisco Opera 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*), 1994 (Madame de Volanges in the world premiere of *The Dangerous Liaisons*) and during the 1996-97 season (Gertrude in *Hamlet* and Herodias in *Salome*). 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 Kostelníčka 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. Recent engagements include *Jenůfa* in Vancouver, *The Dangerous Liaisons* for Washington Opera, her first Kabanicha in *Katya Kabanova* at Dallas Opera, and a role debut as Jocasta in Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* in Toronto.

Upcoming are *Salome* in Vancouver and Montreal, *Jenůfa* in Cincinnati, and the world premiere of Randolph Peters's *The Golden Ass* with the Canadian Opera Company. A renowned concert artist and recitalist, Forst is also one of Canada's most widely respected performers and as such was the subject of two CBC television portraits. As a result of her artistry, she was inducted into The Order of Canada. Her disc of operatic arias was released in 1988.



Since her 1991 debut season in *War and Peace* and *Elektra*, **CATHERINE COOK** has appeared with San Francisco Opera in *Boris Godunov*, *Christophe Colomb*, *The Makropulos Case*, *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, *Faust*, *Die Walküre*, *Prince Igor*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. A 1990 Merola Opera Program participant and 1991-92 Adler Fellow, the mezzo-soprano's credits for the Opera Center include the title role of *Ariodante*, Meg Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and a highly acclaimed Schwabacher Debut Recital. A native of Chicago, the artist made her 1994 Lyric Opera of Chicago debut as the Innkeeper in *Boris Godunov*, followed by Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, a role which was the vehicle for her 1995 Portland Opera debut as well. Among her most recent engagements are a return to Chicago in *Peter Grimes* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*, her Lincoln Center debut in Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* with L'Opéra Français de New York, *Andrea Chénier* at Florentine Opera, and *The Love for Three Oranges* (Fata Morgana) with Portland Opera. Cook has sung in concert (Toledo Symphony, San Francisco Symphony Pops, Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra), and can be heard on a recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Cincinnati Philharmonia. She will make her Metropolitan Opera debut later this season in *Katya Kabanova*.



FRANZ GRUNDHEBER, a native of Germany, studied in Hamburg and at Indiana University with Margaret Harshaw. He began his career at the Hamburg State Opera and is still a permanent guest there as well as at the Vienna and Munich State Operas. Performances in opera and concert have taken the eminent bass-baritone to most of the world's major houses and concert halls. He has performed at, among many others, the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, La Scala in Milan, the Monnaie in Brussels, the Opéra and Châtelet in Paris, Dresden's Semperoper, Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, Chicago Lyric Opera, Los Angeles Music Center Opera, Salzburg Festival, as well as in Barcelona and Madrid. He has been acclaimed for his portrayal of the title roles of *Wozzeck*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Cardillac*, *Rigoletto*, *Macbeth* and *Simon Boccanegra*, as well as for his Mandryka (*Arabella*), Scarpia (*Tosca*), Amfortas (*Parsifal*), Barak (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Iago (*Otello*) and Amonasro (*Aida*). The artist's most recent engagements include a new staging of *Wozzeck* at La Scala; *Aida* at the Arena di Verona; *Rigoletto* at London's Royal Opera; *Macbeth* in Hamburg; and *Parsifal* at this summer's Salzburg Festival. Later this season he sings the title roles of *Rigoletto* and *Wozzeck* at the Metropolitan Opera. His discography includes *Arabella* (Mandryka, with Kiri Te Kanawa in the title role), two recordings of *Wozzeck*, *Don Giovanni*

(title role), *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Werther* (Albert), *Der Rosenkavalier* (Faninal), *Hänsel und Gretel* (Peter) and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Grundheber was awarded the title of "Kammersänger" by the Hamburg and Vienna State Operas.



Each season, the career of tenor **DAVID KUEBLER** spans the major music centers of North America and Europe. His broad repertoire ranges from Monteverdi and Handel, through Mozart and bel canto, to Wagner and Strauss, and on to Berg and Hans Werner Henze. In the U.S., he has appeared with San Francisco Opera (1993 debut, *Flamand in Capriccio*), the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Seattle Opera, among others, and at the Wolf Trap, Saratoga, Grant Park, Mostly Mozart and Ravinia Festivals. He has performed at many European opera houses including those of Vienna, Zurich, Munich, Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Sydney, Bern, Venice, Rome, Parma, and the festivals of Salzburg, Glyndebourne, Edinburgh, Bayreuth, Bregenz, as well as the International Rossini Festival in Pesaro. Highlights from his most recent engagements include *Les Vêpres Siciliennes* (Henri) for the Rome Opera; *Capriccio* at the Met; *Lulu* (Alwa) at Glyndebourne and for his Paris Opera debut; *Lucio Silla* (title role) and *Katya Kabanova* (Boris Grigorievich) at the Salzburg Festival; as well as *Jenůfa* (Števa) for the Netherlands Opera. Among his future plans are the title role of Zemlinsky's *Der Zwerg* in Paris (Bastille) and Florence, *Wozzeck* at the Metropolitan Opera, and a return to Salzburg for *Lulu*. His performances can be seen on videos of the Met's *Arabella* and Glyndebourne's *Lulu*, and he can be heard on recordings of Blitzstein's *Regina* and Weill's *Street Scene*, both conducted by John Mauceri, *Fidelio* led by Georg Solti, as well as the recent *Der Zwerg* and *Eine Florentinische Tragödie* led by James Conlon. The native of Detroit graduated from Elmhurst College which bestowed him with an honorary Doctorate of Music.



New Zealand native **DONALD MCINTYRE** made his British debut with Welsh National Opera in *Nabucco* and subsequently became a member of Sadler's Wells Opera. In 1967 he made his Royal Opera at Covent Garden debut as Pizarro in *Fidelio* and has since enjoyed a long association with that company. His many roles there included Wotan in the *Ring* cycle, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*, Telramund in *Lohengrin*, Barak in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, and Kaspar in *Der Freischütz*. After making his debut at the 1967 Bayreuth Festival as Telramund, the bass-baritone returned many times, most notably as Wotan in the centenary production of the *Ring* which was both recorded and televised. In addition to regularly performing in Australia and New Zealand, he has appeared in all the major opera houses worldwide, including the Metropolitan Opera and La Scala in Milan. Additional roles have included Hans Sachs (*Die Meistersinger*), Mandryka (*Arabella*), Rocco (*Fidelio*), Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*), King Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*), Gurnemanz (*Parsifal*), as well

as the title parts of *Der Fliegende Holländer* and Hindemith's *Cardillac*. McIntyre also has an active concert career and has worked with many of the world's leading orchestras. In addition to the Bayreuth *Ring* (which is available on video), his other recordings include *Parsifal* led by Reginald Goodall. Current and future plans include *Peter Grimes* in Munich, *The Rake's Progress* in Amsterdam, and *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in Brussels. In 1989, the distinguished artist was awarded the Fidelio Medal by the International Association of Opera Intendants in recognition of his long association with the Royal Opera House. Sir Donald McIntyre was knighted in 1992.



1996-97 Adler Fellow STUART SKELTON most recently appeared in the Company's *Femmes Fatales* Festival stagings of *Lulu* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. He 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*. Roles performed for the Company

last season included Borsa in *Rigoletto* and Rodolphe in *Guillaume Tell*. First-prize winner of last 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's 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 Périochole* 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 Opera Australia to sing the role of Alfredo in *La Traviata*.



JOCHEN SCHMECKENBECHER, a German baritone and former student of Kurt Moll and Richard Cross, won several European competitions before joining the theater in Hagen. As a member of that ensemble he performed a wide variety of roles including Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, the Count in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*. In 1992 he sang his first Papageno in *Die*

Zauberflöte in Düsseldorf, a part that has since become one of his signature roles. He has sung Papageno in Karlsruhe, Frankfurt, Vienna, Munich and at the Komische Oper Berlin, where he was a member for two years. There, he was also acclaimed as Dandini in *La Cenerentola*, Silvio in *Pagliacci* (also performed at that company's tour of Japan) and Albert in

Werther. Schmeckenbecher has also performed at the Châtelet and Opéra Bastille in Paris, Palm Beach Opera (1995 U.S. opera debut as Mozart's Count), as well as in Geneva, Bonn, Klagenfurt, Hannover and Nancy, where he was applauded as Billy Budd in the first staging of Britten's opera in France. A regular guest at the Hamburg Staatsoper, his most recent appearance there was as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*. Last year, he traveled to Tel Aviv to sing Schaunard in *La Bohème* in televised concert performances with the Israel Philharmonic, while earlier this season he was seen as Papageno in Dallas, Miami and Berlin. The baritone has given recitals and concerts throughout Europe, and can be heard on several recordings.



JOHN ROBERT AUTRY 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*. After receiving critical acclaim for his portrayal of Sharpless in our 1997 production of *Madama Butterfly*, the baritone returned last season to perform in *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, and *Guillaume Tell* (Leuthold). The 1997-98 Adler Fellow portrayed Morales in *Carmen* during the *Femmes Fatales* Festival. Additional credits include the role of the Father in the Opera Guild 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, Ping in *Turandot* with Palm Beach Opera, and debuts with Opera Pacific (Marcello in *La Bohème*) and Michigan Opera Theatre (Lescaut in *Manon*). A 1994 National Winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the native of Atlanta, Georgia, 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.



Music Director of San Francisco Opera since 1992, **DONALD RUNNICLES** is highly regarded as one of the finest conductors active today, with a distinguished series of international triumphs to his credit. The native of Edinburgh has conducted over 20 operas for the Company, highlights of which include televised productions of *Capriccio*, *Turandot*, and the 1994 world premiere of Susa and Littell's

The Dangerous Liaisons; the North American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam* with the S.F. Opera Center; and the 1996 West Coast premiere of Wallace and Korie's *Harvey Milk*. He has led the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus for two recordings, the Grammy-nominated *Orphée et Eurydice* and *Harvey Milk*. His first commercial recording was Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*, and his most recent is a CD of *Ring* excerpts with the Dresden Staatskapelle. During the Company's 1997-98 season, he led performances of *Death in Venice*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*, as well as the 75th Season Gala Celebration which was telecast on PBS.

Elsewhere, he has conducted opera productions at the Bayreuth Festival, the Salzburg Festival, New York's Metropolitan Opera, Milan's La Scala, Bastille Opera, Berlin Opera, Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Royal Opera Copenhagen, Zurich Opera, Netherlands Opera and the Vienna Volksoper. Symphonically, Maestro Runnicles has led the Orchestre de Paris, Israel Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony, Berlin State Opera Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. In North America, he has conducted the symphony orchestras of San Francisco, Chicago, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Seattle, Toronto, Miami and Cleveland. The maestro remains an active pianist, appearing regularly in a series of concerts with members of the San Francisco Opera Orchestra. In 1995, Runnicles was recognized for his achievements by the University of Edinburgh, from which he received an honorary doctorate of music. He will return to the War Memorial podium next summer for three cycles of the Company's *Ring* Festival.



Born in London and educated at Cambridge, **DAVID EDWARDS** has worked regularly for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Productions there have included *Attila*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Stiffelio*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Fedora*, *Arabella*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Die Walküre* and *Katya Kabanova*. For Glyndebourne Touring Opera he has staged *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. Additional assignments include *Boccanegra* in Bologna, *Attila* in Houston, *Stiffelio* in Milan (La Scala), Vienna and Los Angeles, where he also directed *Fedora* last year. Earlier this year he wrote and directed *Verdi in Venice* for the Covent Garden Festival and staged two productions for the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall: *Porgy and Bess* and the British premiere of Kurt Weill's *Propheten*. His productions of *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *Carmen* are currently being performed in the Channel Islands and France. Later this year he directs *Fedora* for the Washington Opera.



PETER RICE began his career designing the sets and costumes for the Opera School at London's Royal College of Music while still a student at the Royal College of Art. This led him to his first assignment for Sadler's Wells Opera early in the 1950s — *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. An acclaimed production of Busoni's *Arlecchino* at Glyndebourne prompted Frederick Ashton to ask him to design *Rinaldo* and *Armida* for the Royal Ballet. He subsequently designed two more Ashton ballets, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Sinfonietta*. He also designed *Giselle* for Dame Ninette de Valois, founder of the Royal Ballet. Many plays, musicals and revues followed. He has worked internationally and recently traveled to Tokyo to design Handel's *Ottone*; Holland for *Madama Butterfly*; Hong Kong for *Così fan tutte* and *Carmen*; and to Copenhagen for the Royal Danish Ballet staging of *Romeo and Juliet*. He has also had several assignments in the U.S. and Canada. Rice most recently created the designs for a new production of *Die Fledermaus* in London. His current project is a new musical, *The Kissing Dance*, staged for the Edinburgh Festival this fall.



Lighting designer **MICHAEL WHITFIELD**'s San Francisco Opera assignments have been the 1989 (and 1998) presentations of *Lulu*; *Wozzeck* (1990); the new staging of *Macbeth* (1994); *Anna Bolena* and *Don Giovanni* (1995); as well as the new staging of *Carmen* during the 1996-97 season and the Company premiere of *Death in Venice* last year. The Canadian-born artist received his training at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, and continued at Pennsylvania's Villanova University and the University of Illinois at Urbana. Associated with the Stratford Shakespearean Festival since 1974, he has been resident lighting designer there since 1978. At the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto, he has designed lighting for over 50 productions, including several Canadian premieres, working with an impressive list of stage directors such as John Copley, Jonathan Eaton, Nikolaus Lehnhoff, Brian Macdonald, Lotfi Mansouri and Elijah Moshinsky, among others. Additional opera engagements include those at the Netherlands Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Los Angeles Music Center Opera, New Orleans Opera, Vancouver Opera and Welsh National Opera. Whitfield is also active in the areas of Canadian regional theater, ballet, television production and teaching.

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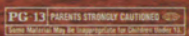
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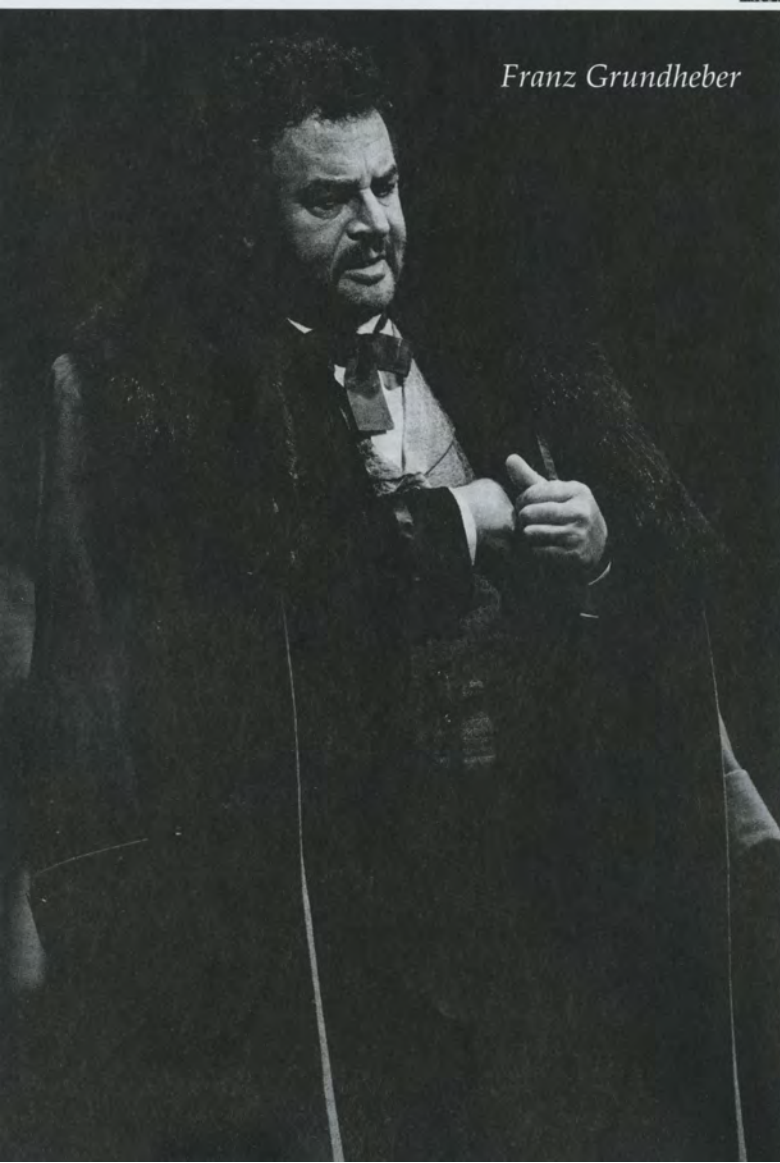
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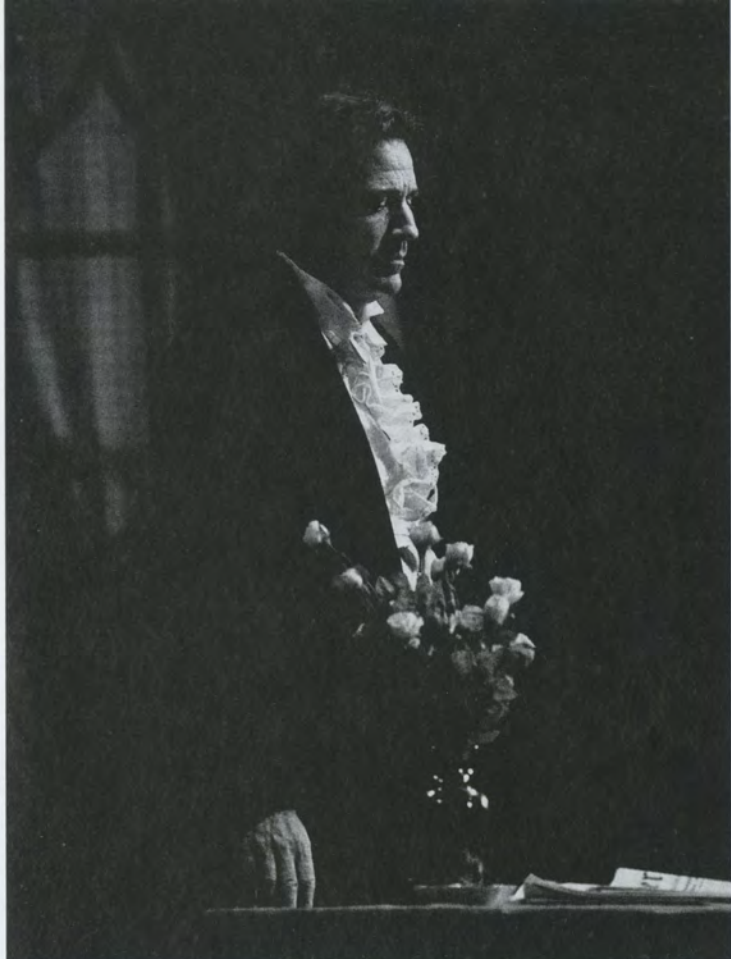
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STRAUSS/HOFMANNSTHAL
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ful proud woman of fifty, whose ruin is purely spiritual and by no means physical," Strauss wrote, but then he lavished some of his most psychologically descriptive music on the part. The composer does not spare us from looking into her soul and seeing the rot which is literally eating her alive. For example, when Klytemnestra tells her oldest daughter, "Between day and night when I lie awake with eyes open, something crawls over me," the way Strauss has the tubas and contrabasses in the orchestra depict "crawling" is often quite difficult for the audience to take because the music is so vividly ugly, though absolutely on target.

Elektra's dark, assaultive, cathartic world (with its huge orchestra), its violence, bloodbaths, and death could hardly be more different from the sunny comedy of *Ariadne auf Naxos* (and its chamber-size orchestra). Both operas are based on Greek mythology, both have three large, memorable roles for female singers, but whereas *Elektra* might be summarized as "shattering," *Ariadne* is "enchanted."

Even the fact that Ariadne longs for death because she has been abandoned on the island of Naxos by her lover, Theseus, cannot detract from the overall playful quality of the opera. Just as the sisters Elektra and Chrysothemis conveyed very different ideas of what gives meaning to life, so Ariadne and Zerbinetta convey completely opposite ideas of how to deal with men.

In Ariadne's great aria, "Es gibt ein Reich," she longs for the purity of the Realm of Death; her broad, solemn, classical vocal line giving her music almost a religious feeling. Ariadne's life is over; her one love has left her; only death remains. It is an astoundingly beautiful aria which builds oh-so-slowly to the climax where Ariadne tells death, "I will lose myself entirely in you, with you Ariadne will abide." Once again Strauss shows his psychological acumen by the frankly erotic music he wrote to accompany the frankly erotic words. ("Methinks the lady doth protest too much," might have been his motto for that moment.) We in the audience get the eroticism of Ariadne's lament; she is blind to it.

So it is up to one of the *commedia dell'arte* troupe, Zerbinetta, to enlighten Ariadne to the fact that — far from life being over — it's time to play. "Are we not all women underneath, and does there not beat in every breast an unfath-

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omable heart?" Zerbinetta asks Ariadne. "Where is the woman who has not suffered? Forsaken! In despair! Yet I have never learnt to curse men." In the first version of *Ariadne*, Zerbinetta's show-stopping aria lasts 15 minutes (longer than Ariadne's aria) and has more than one high F-sharp above high C. In the revised version of the opera, the one most often given in theaters today, the aria is modified slightly, but its vocal pyrotechnics are still fearsomely difficult, unrelenting, and thoroughly enchanting — as is Zerbinetta's "love'em and leave 'em and enjoy it, sister" message.

Not only was Strauss brilliant in providing the musical equivalent of Ariadne's and Zerbinetta's characters in their arias; he also seized the opportunity to write affectionate parodies of arias (in Ariadne's case, it was of a great Gluckian lamentation; for Zerbinetta it was of a bel canto mad scene) while, in the process, writing one of the best examples of the genre.

It was during the composition of *Ariadne* that Strauss and Hofmannsthal had one of their most bitter arguments. The librettist was already unhappy about Zerbinetta being a coloratura and stealing the limelight from the more "spiritually pure" Ariadne. But, despite the fact it had been Hofmannsthal himself who first suggested that Octavian in *Rosenkavalier* be played by a female, he became positively enraged when Strauss decided "(since tenors are so terrible)" to write the role of the Composer for a soprano.

"The idea of giving the part of the young Composer to a female performer goes altogether against the grain," Hofmannsthal wrote in April of 1916. "To prettify this particular character, which is to have an aura of 'spirituality' and 'greatness' about it, and so to turn him into a travesty of himself which inevitably smacks of operetta, this strikes me as, forgive my plain speaking, odious. Oh Lord, if only I were able to bring home to you completely the essence, the spiritual meaning of these characters."

Strauss was merciless. "I am not going to budge on this point, for artistic as well as for practical reasons. That's final." And Strauss was right. Who does not look forward to the end of the Prologue when a great soprano or high mezzo

Continued on page 45



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Above left: *San Francisco Opera*, 1989 — Gwyneth Jones as Barak's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

Above: *San Francisco Opera*, 1979 — Leonie Rysanek as Chrysothemis in *Elektra*.

Left: *San Francisco Opera*, 1965 — Reri Grist as Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

STRAUSS/HOFMANNSTHAL continued from page 43

soars above the staff in the Composer's aria, praising the sacred art of music? Can one imagine a tenor at that point? No more than one can imagine a tenor (or a countertenor) successfully portraying Octavian.

Which brings up a crucial point to all of Strauss's operas: his inability to write a truly satisfying love duet for tenor and soprano. His parenthetical comment to Hofmannsthal "(since tenors are so terrible)" is a bit puzzling considering what tenors were in their prime during the years Strauss and Hofmannsthal were creating their operas: Caruso, Gigli, Schipa, Lauri-Volpi, Pertile, Tauber, Slezak, and young Melchior, Völcker, Lorenz, and Rosvaenge. In other words, most of the greatest tenors of the century.

The only two love duets between a male singer and a female singer from the Hofmannsthal/Strauss operas which truly work, both musically and psychologically, are those between Barak and his wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (Act III) and *Arabella's* Mandryka/Arabella (Act II). When tenors get involved — the end of *Ariadne* or Menelaus/Helen in *Ägyptische Helena* — the results sound far from inspired. Yet how completely different, how eminently more satisfying are the love duets between Octavian and Sophie in *Rosenkavalier*, from the ravishing Presentation of the Rose, through their final, ecstatic duet which closes the opera.

There is a good reason for that: in Strauss's operas, the masculine element is not conveyed so much by the tenors, baritones, and basses on stage, as by the orchestra in the pit. Strauss's most erotic music, and his most successful music, was almost always for soprano and orchestra, or some combination of female voices and orchestra. Helen's great aria "Zweite Brautnacht" which opens the second act of *Die Ägyptische Helena* is not only intensely erotic

Continued on page 46

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STRAUSS/HOFMANNSTHAL

continued from page 45

because of Hofmannsthal's words, but by the fact that once Strauss gets Helen's vocal line above the staff, he entwines his orchestra about her voice rapturously.

Again and again it was the French horn to which Strauss turned at such crucial moments. The horn riffs at the climax of the final scene of *Salome* (the opera he wrote right before joining forces with Hofmannsthal) are probably the most explicitly orgasmic in music. The vivid orchestral opening of *Rosenkavalier* represents an encounter between the Marschallin (the strings) and Octavian (the horns) in bed. When one remembers that Strauss's father, Franz, was a member of the Munich Court Orchestra and one of the most famous horn players in the world, one understands even more fully why the composer would naturally gravitate to the horn at such times.

Another reason for Strauss's fixation on writing erotic music for sopranos and orchestra is the fact that his wife, Pauline, was herself a singer who appeared in leading roles at Bayreuth and in other prestigious German theaters before retiring. They met in 1887, married seven years later, and she outlived him by less than a year, dying in 1950. By all accounts she was also one of the most difficult women in the world. And it was on Pauline Strauss that Hofmannsthal (who seems to have been terrified of her) drew for inspiration while writing the part of the Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

"It is a magic fairy tale with two men confronting two women," Hofmannsthal wrote his collaborator, "and for one of the women your wife might well, in all discretion, be taken as a model...she is a *bizarre* woman [the italics are in the librettist's original] with a very beautiful soul, au fond; strange, moody, domineering and yet at the same time likeable." A few years later, once Strauss was in the thick of composition, he apparently forgot Hofmannsthal's original description of the Dyer's Wife and complained that he could not get a handle on the character. His letter drew a rather ironic response. "I am surprised that, of all the characters, it is the figure of the Dyer's Wife that gives you trouble and I must say it would go somewhat against the grain if I had to comment on a character whose sharp and definite contours speak for themselves," Hofmannsthal replied. "You yourself have repeatedly expressed the desire to depict in

music the capricious, flighty aspects of such a basically good woman. I would prefer not to say more than this and have no doubt it will work out."

It did work out. The delineations of the Empress and the Dyer's Wife, as well as the changes — both externally and internally — both women undergo during the course of what would turn out to be the most ambitious opera the two men would write, are some of the best work either man did. One only has to see a great soprano in either role to be haunted by the power of the character for days. And just to make sure no one took their female characters for granted, in *Frau ohne Schatten* the two men also wrote one of their most puzzling, ambivalent characters: the Nurse, the Empress's confidante. It is not at all clear if she is a force of good or evil. Nor is it clear why, after all she has done for the Empress, the Nurse is finally exiled to the world of men which she loathes.

It was in their last opera, tonight's *Arabella*, that Strauss and Hofmannsthal seem to sum up much of their work together: in creating a title character who knows her own mind, who alone of everyone in the opera stands on firm ground. Though Arabella does get her romantic, instant-love match, she (like Helen in *Ägyptische Helena*) also knows that this love will have to be re-created on a more lasting basis. It is in this opera that Strauss gave us two very different duets for the same character: the first one, "Aber der Richtige" is sung by Arabella and her sister Zdenka, yet another example of the composer making time stand still while two soaring soprano voices intertwine with each other and his glittering orchestra. "The [man] who's right for me...he will stand before me, all at once, his eyes upon me, mine on him, and no more doubting will remain," they sing — (clearly the operatic equivalent of the Gershwins' "The Man I Love," written five years earlier).

The other duet is in Act II, as Arabella and Mandryka meet and fall in love. Arabella's earlier, fantasy-love actually happens in reality, and the music of this second duet, inspired by Mandryka's baritone voice (as opposed to Zdenka's high soprano), reflects the difference.

But by the end of the opera, Arabella has not only grown from the fantasy-world duet of Act I, through the real-life Act II duet of falling in love with a flesh-

and-blood man, she has remained true to herself throughout a serious misunderstanding which threatens to rob her of this love. "And you'll always be as you are?" asks Mandryka. "I cannot be another — take me as I am," Arabella replies in the opera's final words.

What a wonderfully realistic, and healing, way to end the Strauss/Hofmannsthal partnership, with one of their best scenes of reconciliation, between a strong, vibrant woman, and the man with whom she can share true love. □

Paul Thomason lives in San Francisco where he often writes and lectures on opera.

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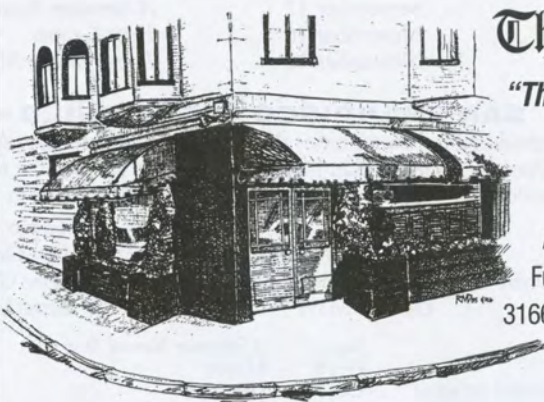


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PRE-PERFORMANCE LECTURES

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 authorities and are presented free of charge to patrons with tickets to the corresponding performance. The lecture schedule is as follows:

Turandot — Sept. 17, 20, 22; Oct. 3; Nov. 29; Dec. 1, 4, 9
Arabella — Sept. 15, 18, 24; Oct. 1
A Streetcar Named Desire — Sept. 29; Oct. 2, 4, 8, 11
Tristan und Isolde — Oct. 14, 21, 26, 30; Nov. 6
Manon — Oct. 17, 23, 25, 29; Nov. 1

Don Carlo — Oct. 27, 31; Nov. 5, 11
Norma — Nov. 10, 15, 18, 21, 24
Peter Grimes — Nov. 22; Dec. 2, 5, 11, 13
Betrothal in a Monastery — Nov. 27; Dec. 3, 6, 10
Madama Butterfly — Jan. 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17

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.

September 17
 November 16
 November 18

A Streetcar Named Desire
Peter Grimes
Betrothal in a Monastery

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). The format features a renowned musicologist who may feature recordings, slides and/or handouts to familiarize the audience with an opera from the current season.

Topic
Arabella
A Streetcar Named Desire
Manon

Speaker
 Robert Glick
 Christopher Haley
 Desirée Mays

Topic
Don Carlo
Peter Grimes
Betrothal in a Monastery

Speaker
 Mary Anne Smart
 Perry Lorenzo
 Richard Taruskin

East Bay Chapter —

San Francisco Opera Guild

Lectures held at 8:00 p.m., preceded by complimentary refreshments. St. Mark's Methodist Church, 451 Moraga Way, Orinda. Admission: \$8.00. Series: \$24.00. Reservations required. For reservations or information call Annette Clute (510) 527-1846 or Silvia Lin (925) 838-9255.

Sep 16 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Oct 21 *Don Carlo*
 Nov 4 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 18 *Betrothal in a Monastery*

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.

Sep 14 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Oct 5 *Manon*
 Oct 19 *Don Carlo*
 Nov 2 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 16 *Betrothal in a Monastery*

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.

Sep 16 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Oct 7 *Manon*
 Oct 21 *Don Carlo*
 Nov 4 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 18 *Betrothal in a Monastery*

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.

Sep 17 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Oct 8 *Manon*
 Oct 20 *Don Carlo*
 Nov 5 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 19 *Betrothal in a Monastery*

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.

Sep 18 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Oct 7 *Manon*
 Oct 22 *Don Carlo*
 Nov 2 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 20 *Betrothal in a Monastery*

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 (650) 941-3890.

Sep 15 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Oct 6 *Manon*
 Oct 20 *Don Carlo*
 Nov 3 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 17 *Betrothal in a Monastery*

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) emphasizes the operas of the 1998–99 season. The College is at 12500 Campus Drive (off Redwood Road in the Oakland hills). Information: (510) 436-2430

OPERA EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Given by Michael Barclay, director of OEL. Lectures are held from 7:15 to 9:30 p.m. at 400 Yale Ave. (at Vassar) in the Kensington section of the Berkeley hills. Series began on September 7; lectures are \$15 at the door. Information: (510) 526-5244

Sep 14 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Sep 28 *Tristan und Isolde*
 Oct 5 *Manon*
 Oct 19 *Don Carlo*
 Nov 2 *Norma*
 Nov 9 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 23 *Betrothal in a Monastery*
 Dec 14 *Season Review*

FRIENDS OF THE KENSINGTON LIBRARY

A free lecture on Bellini's *Norma* will be given by Michael Barclay on October 22 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Avenue, Kensington. Information: (510) 524-3043

SAN FRANCISCO CITY COLLEGE PREVIEWS

A music course of previews will deal with all operas of the 1998–99 season. Taught by Marvin Tartak on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., it takes place at the College's Castro/Valencia campus, 450 Church St., in San Francisco. Classes began August 20 and continue for 17 weeks. Information: (415) 239-3641

ROBERT GOODHUE'S OPERA PREVIEWS

Held at Marines Memorial Club, 609 Sutter St., San Francisco, mostly Monday evenings, 6:00–8:30 p.m. (9/28, 5:45–9 p.m.) Series began August 31. Lectures are \$15 per session. Information: (415) 956-1271

Sep 14 *A Streetcar Named Desire*
 Sep 28 *Tristan und Isolde*
 Oct 5 *Manon*
 Oct 13 *Don Carlo*
 Oct 26 *Norma*
 Nov 2 *Peter Grimes*
 Nov 9 *Betrothal in a Monastery*
 Jan 4 *Madama Butterfly*

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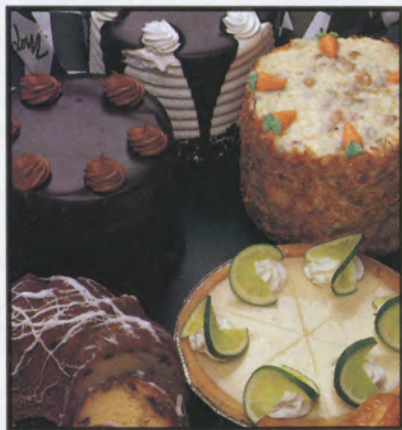
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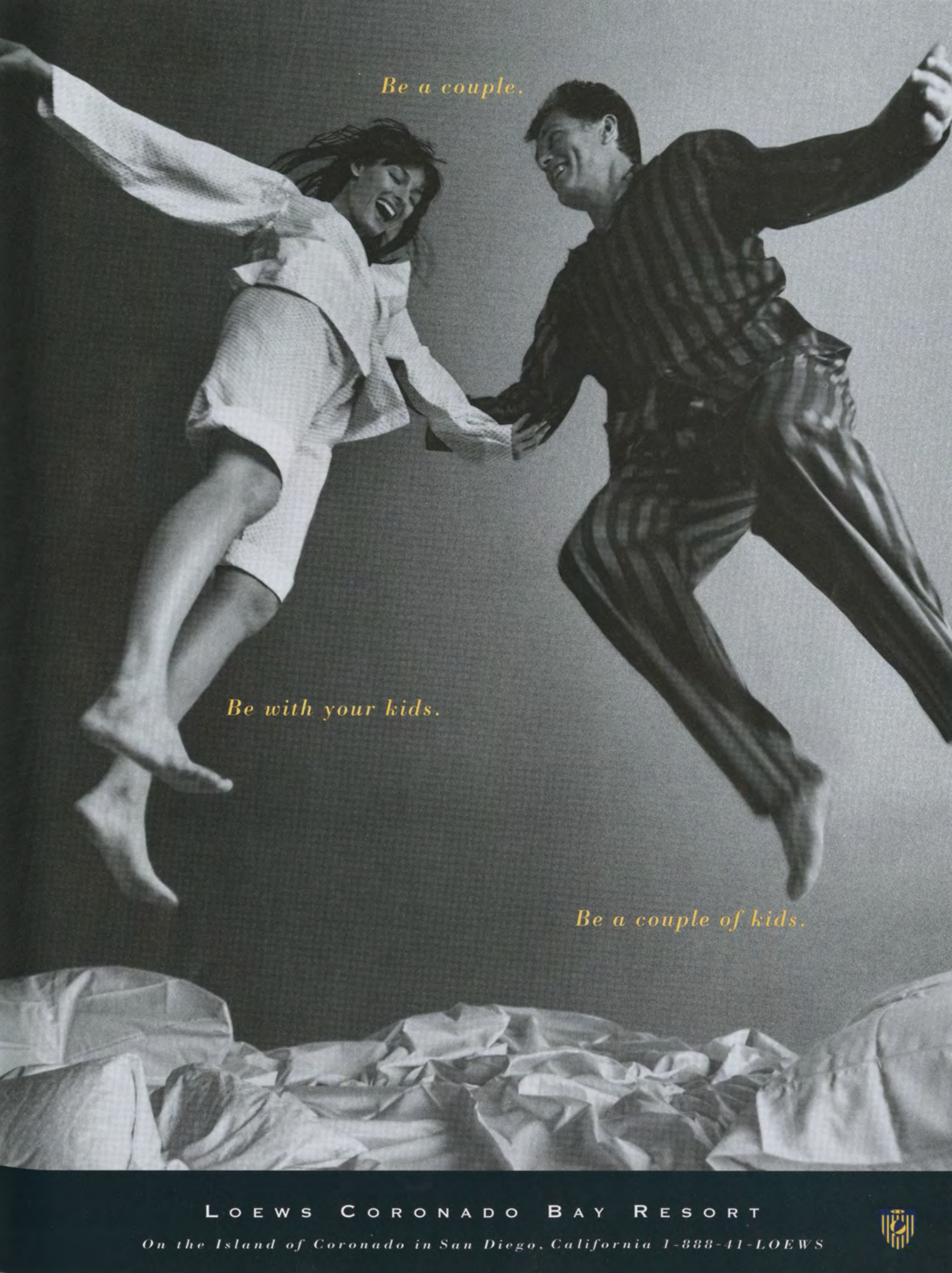
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For more information, contact Bethany Dickinson, Assistant Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations, at (415) 565-3206.

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TICKET INFORMATION. Opera Box Office, 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 Box Office — (415) 864-3330 — for more information.

On permanent display in the Opera House lower bar:

A CELEBRATION OF SINGERS

Great artists at San Francisco Opera, 1962-1997

Stage photography by Robert Cahen

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.

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.

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

OPERA HOUSE TOURS

Sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild, house and backstage tours of the War Memorial Opera House will be conducted every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on weekdays and on Saturday; and every half hour from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Sundays on the following dates:

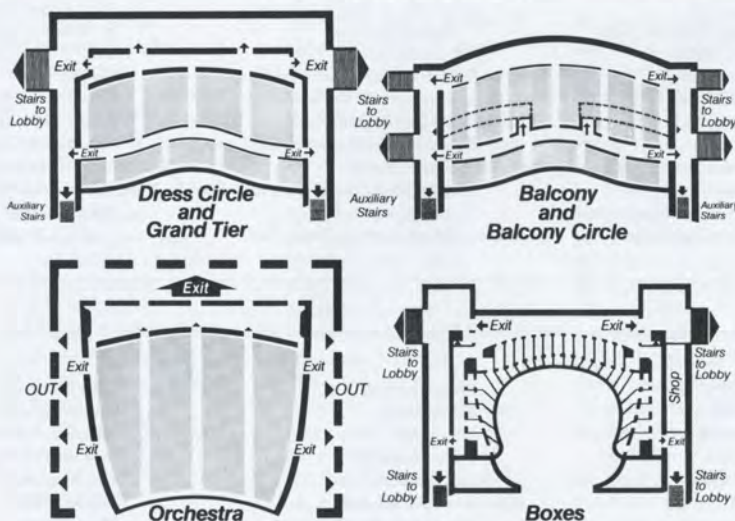
Tuesday, September 22
Tuesday, October 13
Saturday, October 24
Thursday, October 29
Sunday, November 1
Thursday, November 12
Sunday, November 15
Thursday, November 19
Friday, November 27
Sunday, November 29
Saturday, December 5
Saturday, January 9
Saturday, January 16

Tickets for Guild members, \$2; non-members \$5. Reservations required. Information: (510) 524-5220.

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER TOURS.

Tours of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center include the War Memorial Opera House, Davies Symphony Hall and Herbst Theatre and take place as follows: Mondays, on the hour between 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Special group tours of Davies Hall only may be scheduled on Wednesdays and Saturdays by request two weeks in advance. All tours leave from the Grove Street entrance of Davies Symphony Hall. There are no tours on holidays. General \$5; seniors/students \$3. Information: (415) 552-8338.

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



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



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