

Die Walküre
(The Ring Cycle: The Valkyrie)

1998-1999

Thursday, June 10, 1999 7:00 PM
Saturday, June 19, 1999 7:00 PM
Wednesday, June 23, 1999 7:00 PM
Sunday, June 27, 1999 6:00 PM

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Ring Festival 1999

Die Walküre

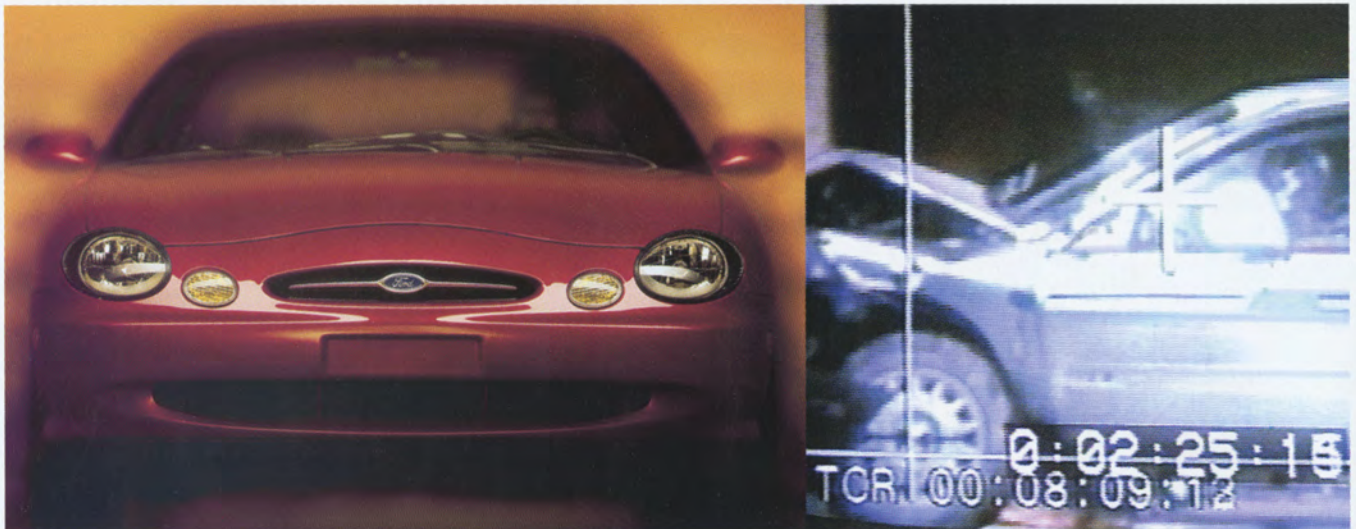


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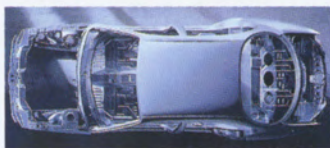
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5th Annual Los Angeles Opera Gala — September 16th to 20th, 1999

... join Sherwin for a fantastic few days in Los Angeles for opera, museums and fabulous food. Last September in addition to attending two wonderful opera productions we were able to arrange two cast parties, one with Placido Domingo, after the performances. Operatic entertainment highlighted the party at Sherwin's home beneath the Hollywood sign at which Ramon Vargas was one of our guest artists. This year Placido Domingo is with us again in *Samson et Dalila* along with Denyce Graves. We will also see *L'Elisir d'Amore* with Ruth Ann Swenson, Ramon Vargas, Thomas Allen and Rodney Gilfry. A special highlight will be an extended visit to the wonderful new Getty Museum and lunch in the beautiful gourmet restaurant overlooking the whole city.



Spectacular Autumn & the Metropolitan Opera in New York with the New York City Opera November 9th to 16th

... join Sherwin for another wonderful Autumn in New York. Our hotel is located at Central Park West, across the street from the park and 3 blocks to Lincoln Center. The operas at the Metropolitan are *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Mefistofele*, *Aida* and *Tosca*. At New York City Opera we will see *Falstaff*, *Carmen* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. A total of 7 performances and a play to be announced. Two private lectures with Patrick Smith, Editor-at-Large of Opera News and backstage visit with the artists.

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New Millennium in New York — New Year's Celebration 2000 in New York with the Metropolitan Opera December 27th, 1999 to January 3rd, 2000

... join Sherwin for this overwhelming experience and celebration of the New Millennium in New York. The operas are *Tosca*, *Rigoletto* and the World Premiere of *The Great Gatsby* culminating with the Gala New Year's evening at the Metropolitan Opera after which there will be a dinner and orchestra entertainment, a performance of the New York Philharmonic and a Broadway play. Additional enhancements will be announced as information becomes available.



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PERFORMING ARTS

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

Die Walküre

1999 Ring Festival
Vol. 76, No. 15

FEATURES

- 12 **Die Walküre** by Michael Steinberg
The author sheds light on many facets of the most frequently performed part of the *Ring* cycle: *Die Walküre*.
- 16 **Director Andrei Serban: The Challenge of the *Ring***
by Arthur Kaplan
An illuminating chat with the director of the revised staging of San Francisco Opera's *Ring*.

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 San Francisco Opera Association
21 Cast
22 Synopsis
24 Artist Profiles
39 Artist Roster
40 San Francisco Opera Orchestra
42 *Ring* Support
43 Lectures and Exhibits
44 Administration
46 Supporting San Francisco Opera
56 Bel Canto Society
57 Corporate Council
59 San Francisco Opera Center Supporters
62 Services

COVER:

Böcklin, Arnold (Swiss, 1827–1901), *The Isle of the Dead*, 1883
Oil on panel, 31 3/16 x 58 1/2 in.

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz
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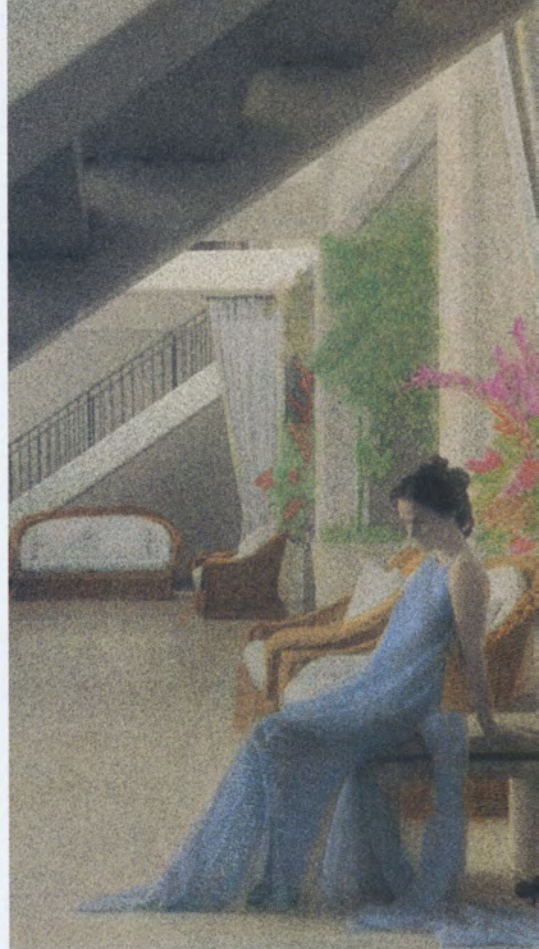
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 "Idol mio" (Idomeneo)

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A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR



SOHL

It has been almost a decade since San Francisco Opera audiences have encountered Richard Wagner's majestic *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, and I am delighted to welcome you to the War Memorial Opera House today for this long-awaited occasion. San Francisco Opera has been preparing for this moment for years, fueled by the dedication of our many artists, musicians, technicians, administrative personnel and donors. These combined efforts have resulted in the presentation of this stunning artistic achievement, and my sincere gratitude goes to everyone involved with making our 1999 *Ring* a glorious reality.

Our 1999 *Ring* Festival is dedicated to the memory of my predecessor, Terence A. McEwen, who served as general director of San Francisco Opera from 1981 to 1988. The current production of *The Ring* was created during Terry's tenure, first performed as a complete cycle in 1985 and revived in 1990.

Presenting a *Ring* Festival is a community project, involving not only our audiences and donors but groups from all over the Bay Area who augment the production with an array of ancillary events designed to help you get the most out of your *Ring* experience. Organizations including San Francisco Opera Guild, University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, the C. G. Jung Institute, San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum, the de Young Museum, San Francisco Public Library, the Wagner Society of Northern California and the Goethe Institut, have prepared numerous *Ring*-related events — lectures, films, courses, art and costume exhibits, panel discussions, receptions and much more — as engaging tributes to Wagner's genius.

Whether you have encountered *The Ring* with San Francisco Opera before or if you are exploring Wagner's momentous, four-opera saga for the first time, it is an honor to set you on the path of this infinitely fascinating journey — one which will captivate you for years to come.

Lotfi Mansouri
General Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ASSOCIATION



McCARTHY

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we welcome you to San Francisco Opera's 1999 presentation of Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Mounting *The Ring* is a landmark occasion for the opera companies who brave such a formidable task, and San Francisco Opera is extremely proud to once again present one of the most important works of Western civilization.

Following the enormous success of our first four-cycle presentation in 1990, we again offer four complete cycles of Wagner's magnum opus, featuring two casts of the finest Wagnerian singers in the world. Indeed, *The Ring* is a global event, commanding the attention of the world's music critics while creating an international, ephemeral community of music lovers — veterans and neophytes alike — here in San Francisco. Adding to this community are many Bay Area organizations which join us to celebrate *The Ring* with a complete festival of lectures, tours, previews, courses, exhibitions, films, receptions, discussions and other exciting events.

Producing four cycles of *The Ring* is an endeavor of labyrinthine proportions, with staggering demands made upon singers, musicians, designers, artisans and technicians, as well as administrative staff. Funding such a colossal project is just as challenging, and revising an existing production, which San Francisco Opera has achieved for the 1999 *Ring*, places even greater responsibilities on those involved with its mounting. When these productions were first created, we expressed our indebtedness to the BankAmerica Foundation, the Carol Franc Buck Foundation, the Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation, The L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, and an anonymous friend of San Francisco Opera for their generous financial assistance. This year we would like to extend our thanks as well to those who have joined us to make the 1999 revival possible: the Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation; the Chevron Corporation; Mr. and Mrs. Reid W. Dennis; Mr. and Mrs. Charlton H. Buckley; Mr. and Mrs. Reuben W. Hills III; Mrs. Paul L. Wat-tis; and two anonymous friends of San Francisco Opera. Our sincere thanks also goes to American Airlines; Kawai pianos, provided by San Francisco Pianoworks, Inc.; Audi of America; and Dresdner RCM Global Investors.

We would also like once again to express our gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund and Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr. for their constant support.

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DIE WALKÜRE

BY MICHAEL STEINBERG



SCHERL

MORTON



Left: San Francisco Opera's first Brünnhilde was Kirsten Flagstad; our first Siegmund — Lauritz Melchior, both seen here backstage posing for the photographer between acts of the 1935 *Walküre*. The two legendary singers were taking part in our first presentation of the complete Ring cycle that year. Above: Leonie Rysanek and James King were the *Walsung* twins in 1981. Rysanek's 1956 U.S. debut season here included the role of Sieglinde, and she repeated the role in our stagings of 1976, 1981 and 1983.

a Central Park Summer Concert with Theodore Thomas conducting (September 17, 1872) as well as being part of the Theodore Thomas Orchestra's tour repertory that winter in Saint Louis, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, and Cleveland. San Francisco Opera's first *Walküre* took place on November 4, 1935, part of the complete *Ring*, with Kirsten Flagstad as Brünnhilde, Elisabeth Rethberg as Sieglinde, Kathryn Meisle as Fricka, Lauritz Melchior as Siegmund, and Friedrich Schorr as Wotan. Artur Bodanzky conducted.

Die Walküre has always been the most popular of the *Ring* operas, and conductors have discovered that its first act is a gripping concert piece. Probably this is so because here Wagner gives us human beings dealing with a human situation on a human scale. The Act 1 love music is so compelling that we are completely caught up in the passion in which Siegmund and Sieglinde all but drown, so caught up that we do not stop to be amazed, let alone shocked, that the lovers are siblings, in fact twins. If anything, like Siegmund and Sieglinde themselves, we are seduced into feeling that their twinhood is all the more reason for falling in love on this May night.¹ Of course Siegmund and Sieglinde are not literally human — their father, after all, was Wotan — but they do not know this and they think of themselves as human. Hunding, the only other character we meet in Act 1, is very human indeed.

What great overtures Wagner invented!² *Der Fliegende Holländer's* tem-

Richard Wagner began sketching the text of *Die Walküre* (accent on the first syllable) in November of 1851 and completed the verse libretto on July 1, 1852. He began work on the music on June 28, 1854 and completed the full score in fair copy on March 23, 1856. Wagner conducted excerpts from *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at a concert at the Theater an der Wien, Vienna, on December 26th, 1862. The applause was enormous, especially for "The Ride of the Valkyries" from this work, but so was the deficit, because Wagner had insisted on the installation of a reflecting wall to improve the acoustics. Like *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre* was first given under the direction of Franz Wüllner in a performance in Munich. Wagner

was neither allowed to supervise nor to prevent it — he tried both — and he stayed away in protest. The date was June 26th, 1870. The work was next produced on August 14, 1876 as part of the first complete *Ring* cycle at the first Bayreuth Festival, with Hans Richter conducting and a cast that included Amalie Materna (Brünnhilde), Albert Niemann (Siegmund), Franz Betz (Wotan), and a future great Brünnhilde, Lilli Lehmann, as Helmwig. Wagner's niece Johanna took the part of Schwertleite. *Die Walküre* was first seen in America in a production at the New York Academy of Music on April 2, 1877, but by that time Act 1 had already been given in concert by the New York Symphony under Leopold Damrosch (November 4, 1876), and the "Ride of the Valkyries" had been introduced at

Michael Steinberg is program annotator for the San Francisco Symphony and the New York Philharmonic. His books *The Symphony: A Listener's Guide* and *The Concerto: A Listener's Guide* are published by Oxford University Press.



LACKENBACH

Above: Birgit Nilsson made her U.S. debut with San Francisco Opera in 1956 as Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* opposite the Wotan of Hans Hotter. Right: She came back as Brünnhilde in our 1972 Ring and again in a non-Ring staging of *Die Walküre* (shown) in 1981.

pest at sea, whose electrifying string tremolando can propel us right out of our seats; the ethereal violin chords in *Lobengrin*; *Das Rheingold*'s underwater magic; the wonders still ahead in *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*, of which more in their proper places; *Tristan*, where fifteen seconds of quiet music encapsulate everything that can ever be said in this world about languishing, pining, aching; the sense of instant festivity produced by that well-nourished C-major chord that launches *Die Meistersinger*; and the muted strings with clarinets and bassoons of *Parsifal*, at once so solemn and so voluptuous — how wonderfully and how immediately Wagner can create a world through the magic of orchestral sound!

Like *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre* begins with a nature piece, but where the water music of *Das Rheingold* was an idyll in "quiet, cheerful motion," *Die Walküre* attacks us with raging winds and violently pelting rain — dangerous weather and dangerous music. It is a storm Wotan has summoned up to drive Siegmund to seek shelter in Sieglinde's and Hunding's hut, to drive Siegmund and Sieglinde into each other's arms and lives. It is not long before we hear music we remember from *Das Rheingold* as the four tubas, two by two, followed by the trombones, proclaim the call that Don-

ner, the god of storms, had so proudly blasted out: "He da! He da! Heddo!" This is a device Wagner loves and uses with enormous skill, letting us perceive a character from different perspectives. This applies particularly to the gods as they move inexorably toward their *Dämmerung* (twilight). In *Das Rheingold*, Donner is a real personage; here he is the musical essence of what he is all about, his function in the cosmos; in *Götterdämmerung*, we shall meet him again in yet another guise and see him from a different angle and distance. Wagner was proud to acknowledge the fourth movement of Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony as a model for his *Walküre* storm, and, like Beethoven, he manages the sublimity with special poetic fantasy.

Exhausted and hurt, Siegmund has staggered into the hut and collapsed in exhaustion by the hearth. Sieglinde, having heard the sound of someone entering and believing it to be her husband coming home, enters the room. In the minutes that follow, we experience the extraordinary faith Wagner placed in his orchestra's ability to speak, and in his singers' willingness and ability to let themselves be guided by the orchestra in their actions. Sieglinde brings Siegmund water and then some mead, and briefly, the two explain their situations to each other. He brings ill-fortune wherever he

SCHIERL



goes, Siegmund declares, and he must leave before this curse can bring ill-fortune to this house where he has found momentary shelter and, from this unknown woman, deep and amazing human sympathy. No, she cries passionately, "nothing can bring ill fortune to a house in which ill fortune already lives." And so Siegmund is persuaded to stay and await the return of Sieglinde's husband and his still unaware host, Hunding. Now it obviously takes some words and some singing for the Siegmund and Sieglinde to exchange this information, but the astonishing thing here — and there is no equally daring precedent — is that in this scene of 224 measures, 119 measures are for the orchestra alone. These passages are not just connective tissue; they are intensely expressive music that commands our most sympathetic attention, and even where Siegmund and Sieglinde sing, the orchestra sings with them at no less a degree of intensity. Here, the solo cello must equal the tenor and soprano in vocal eloquence. And more, this is not just powerfully expressive music but it is sensitively geared to the detailed instructions Wagner provides for the movements and the gestures of the two actors. I once heard Gré Brouwenstijn, an unforgettably affecting Sieglinde a generation ago, say that listening to the orchestra as she moved through this scene was like having an invisible pair of hands on her shoulders, the hands of a stage director of genius: one could not make a misstep.

It is another of the great conversations in the *Ring*, and it sets the tone for the

¹ As part of an only partially successful campaign to cleanse the German language as much as possible of words with Romance language roots, the Nazis proposed renaming the months, and May was to be called by the old word "Wonnemond," literally month of bliss or delight. Siegmund's song toward the end of Act 1 when the door of the hut blows open and the room is flooded with moonlight begins, "Winterstürme wichen/dem Wonnemond" — the storms of winter have given way to the month of bliss. Wagner, too, had striven to eliminate words with Romance roots from his *Ring* libretti, and there is even an English translation — as near to unintelligible as you would want to encounter — by Alfred Forman that attempts to follow Wagner on this path.

² Wagner himself preferred the word "Vorspiel," presumably because of its Germanic roots. The English translation would be "prelude," which sends us right into Latin, and I do not think we are ready to substitute it with "foreplay."

kinds of exchanges we shall find in this opera, always slower, more expansive, "grander" than those in *Das Rheingold*. Siegmund and Sieglinde, wordless, have found each other, but horns, barking and staccato, sound a new music, Hunding's music. Armed with shield and spear, Hunding enters, and Sieglinde explains the presence of the stranger. Each of the three acts thoroughly in character: Sieglinde is calm, warm, caring, firm; Siegmund is passionate as well as thin-skinned and trigger-happy in a way that makes one understand why he brings trouble wherever he goes; Hunding is ponderous by comparison with the inflamed twins; his wife is to him a possession rather than a partner, but he is also determined to observe the laws of hospitality and other proprieties.

We think of Hunding as the villain of the piece, and Wagner makes sure we do, but what does his villainy consist of? His rough ways and his unloving treatment of his wife do not endear him to us. He treats his wife the way his kinsmen and friends no doubt treat theirs, and he is not the sort to break out and think for himself. Convention and custom reassure and sustain him. He is suspicious of his somehow foreign wife. A glittering serpent shines from her eye, and now he observes that that same serpent shines from the eye of the stranger.³ He has immediately understood that his wife and the unwelcome guest are somehow allied. Unappealing as Hunding is, especially to all of us civilized and polished people who go to the opera, Hunding's real sin is that he is in Siegmund's and Sieglinde's way. Just as Wagner, always so brilliant at self-justification in life, persuades us that Siegmund's and Sieglinde's blood relationship is all the more reason they should fall in love and procreate, by sheer strength of musical characterization he persuades us that the interloper's rights are superior to those of the husband. In Act 2, the goddess Fricka, the guardian of marriage, will bring us up short by siding with Hunding — and it becomes tempting to see her as a tiresome shrew — but when the final confrontation of Siegmund and Hunding has taken place and Siegmund has been killed in the interest of family values, we are delighted when, as a postscript,

Wotan dispatches Hunding as well.

The Ring is full of story telling. We have already encountered that in *Das Rheingold*, where the Rhine Daughters foolishly tell Alberich about the gold and its powers; Loge tells Wotan about Alberich's rape of the gold; Mime tells Wotan and Loge what Alberich has done to Nibelheim since acquiring the gold and the power that goes with it. Act 1 of *Die Walküre* is a feast of such narratives. At Sieglinde's urging, Siegmund tells the story of his life thus far. Hunding tells the story of his day, which is in fact his version of the story of how Siegmund came to be wounded and arrive hurt and weaponless at Hunding's house. Later, Sieglinde tells the story of her wretched wedding and of the mysterious stranger who thrust a sword into the great ash tree. Then, Siegmund and Sieglinde do what no lovers can keep from doing, which is to tell the story of how they found each other.

In these narratives, Wagner appeals to our memory for music. In the Prelude he hopes that we hear not just powerfully shaped fanfares but an echo of the voice of Donner. Now, when Siegmund, telling his story, comes to the moment when, in battle, he has become separated from his father and finds only a wolf's pelt but no sign of the father himself, the trombones, *pianississimo*, play the solemn measures of music we heard when we first caught sight of Valhalla. It is Wagner's way of telling us that Siegmund's father has gone to Valhalla, that he is in fact Wotan. Claude Debussy, who had his own oedipal issues with Richard Wagner, made fun of the way characters, objects, and ideas presented their visiting cards whenever they appeared or were even just mentioned in Wagner's operas. This is a moment that might have made the irreverent French master chuckle. Just dropping in three bars of Valhalla is a musically primitive procedure, but Wagner was an amazingly adept learner. In every one of his operas, each act is more resourcefully and thus more powerfully composed than the one before, and thus more beautiful, and that holds true if we think of the whole *Ring* as one immense four-act opera. One of the things Wagner gets better and better at is using these themes that have been



Thomas Stewart as Wotan in San Francisco Opera's 1972 *Walküre*. Stewart was Wotan in our 1970 *Siegfried*, 1972 *Ring* (Wotan in *Rheingold* and *Walküre*, Wanderer in *Siegfried*, Gunther in *Götterdämmerung*), Wotan in *Walküre* in 1983, and Wanderer in the 1984 and 1985 *Siegfried*.

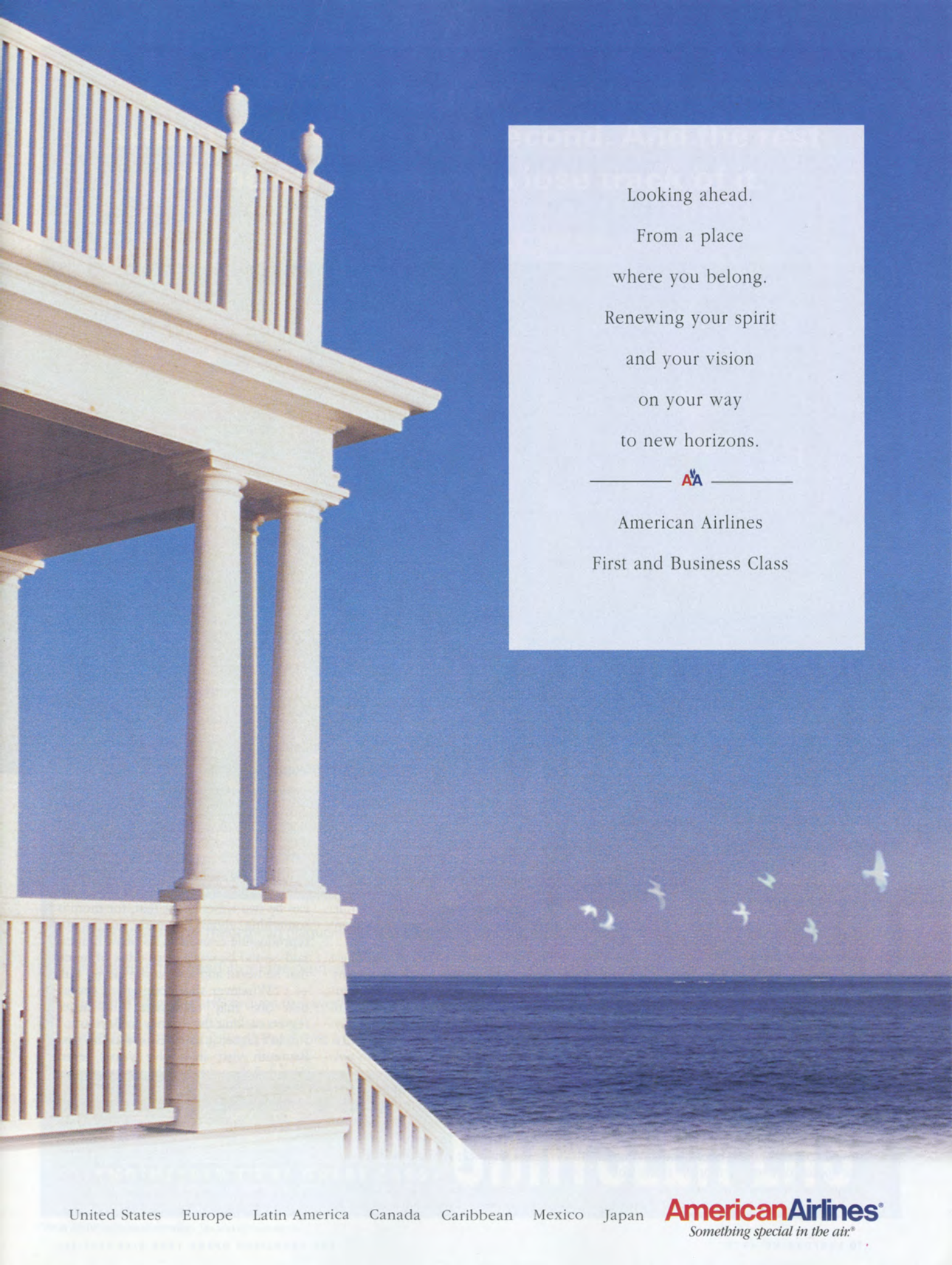
enlivened with what Thomas Mann called "the magic of association"; better, that is, both more imaginative in concept and more skillful at integrating these themes into an organically flowing and evolving symphonic texture.

That said, I must also say that those hushed trombones, rounding out the phrase when Siegmund has sung "den Vater fand ich nicht" — "I did not find my father," unfailingly create a moment of awe, a physical *frisson*. Wagner lets us re-experience that shudder in Sieglinde's tale of her wedding, when the same phrase, now in a richer, more complex orchestral dress, accompanies her description of the entrance of the old man in grey, and our awe is the greater because we have been prepared by Siegmund's narration. The pieces begin to fit together — Siegmund's vanished father, the old man who looked with gentleness on Sieglinde and whom she intuitively recognized, the affirmation that between Siegmund and Sieglinde there is a powerful link. This act also clears up the mystery of the trumpet call that pierced Wotan's last address in *Das Rheingold*, and Wagner makes the point so clearly that it wants no discussion here.

Act 2, which begins with Brünnhilde (another accent on the first syllable) and her jubilant war cry, brings us three of the greatest of Wagner's confrontations/conversations. The first is the argument in which Fricka makes unmistakably clear the

Continued on page 41

³ Composer Hans Pfitzner ran an opera company once and when his Beckmesser became ill at a *Meistersinger* performance, turned the baton over to his assistant, donned costume and makeup, and went on stage. He also wrote interesting essays on opera, and in one of these he makes the point that customary stagings of *Die Walküre* get it all wrong when they make Siegmund and Sieglinde blond and give Hunding a villain's black hair and beard. Hunding, he says — and I paraphrase from memory — is blond and, as such, indistinguishable from all the other burly, unthinking, fair-skinned Germanic giants lumbering about the forest, while Sieglinde and Siegmund, with the serpent glistening in their eyes, are dark and thus different, "the other," suspect and dangerous. I do not recall whether Pfitzner makes this point, but during the Ride of the Valkyries, Gerhilde refers to Siegmund as "der braune Wälsung."



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DIRECTOR ANDREI SERBAN:

THE CHALLENGE OF THE RING

BY ARTHUR KAPLAN



Rehearsing the first scene of *Das Rheingold* in the Zellerbach rehearsal facility. Inset: (l. to r.) Peter Sidhom, Suzanne Ramo, Elizabeth Bishop and Elena Bocharova.



There is no more daunting challenge for a stage director than to tackle Richard Wagner's magnum opus, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. What if you're a director who has never staged the *Ring* before, never even seen an entire *Ring* cycle before? What if you're asked to take over the revival of a successful production that is undergoing some substantial physical changes and have to stage all four operas at once rather than progressively over a three or four year period as is the case in most new *Ring* productions? And what if you have less than two months to work with two different casts of principals, 29 soloists in all, plus seven more cover artists, many of whom play multiple roles and several of whom are covering other roles as well? And what if a few of your principal artists can only arrive late in the rehearsal period and must be integrated into a complex, ongoing staging process in a minimum of time? Given such circumstances, why would an established theater and opera director choose to accept what would appear to be an extremely difficult and potentially thankless assignment?

"I like the challenge," answered

Romanian-born Andrei Serban (pronounced Sherbahn) proffering a smile. "Somehow this is an impossible undertaking and in a perverse way I like the impossible."

A month before the first cycle is to have its premiere, Serban can be found directing parts of all four *Ring* operas during a single 8-10 hour rehearsal day. In addition, between rehearsals there may be an occasional visit to the Costume Shop to check on the progress of costume building — to see, for example, whether Fricka's costume sufficiently matches Wotan's, if it will suit both mezzo sopranos who are to sing the role, and if its look is not too specifically nineteenth century in feeling. Or there may be meetings with the technical department to discuss, for example, the mechanical functioning of the new apparatus for the giants.

During a pause in his busy rehearsal schedule, Serban explains how he became involved in San Francisco Opera's 1999 *Ring* production. "I was in the middle of rehearsing the revival of my *Elektra* production in 1997 when both [general director] Lotfi [Mansouri] and [artistic administrator] Christina [Scheppelmann] were looking for a way to bring me back. I said to them, 'I wish and hope the next time it will be for a new production.' I'm not sure how from that you now see me

doing the *Ring* revival, which is anything but a new production. At first I was puzzled because I had never before stepped into anyone's shoes, never encroached on anyone's territory. But then I thought, 'How often does one get the chance to come to grips with the *Ring* through the experience of working on it?' It would give me the opportunity of finding my own way to direct the *Ring* if ever I should do my own production in the future. Also, it would be a way to bring a new energy, a more dynamic quality, if possible, to this long saga that I hope may suggest both a life-like and a dream-like experience."

After accepting the offer, Serban, along with the members of his production team, began by looking at John Conklin's set models for the 1985 *Ring* and by viewing the videotapes of the original production staged by Nikolaus Lehnhoff. With two enthusiastic designers, John Coyne, responsible for the set revisions, and Bob Ringwood, who drew up sketches for an entire series of new costumes, "...we tried to refresh the existing concept. We started by deciding not to add anything to it, since we did not know how to approach it differently, but with a desire to simplify it, to purify it, so to speak. We discovered that certain scenes might be approached with fewer scenic elements, to give it a cleaner, fresher look. This always with the idea in mind to tell this very long and complex story to the audience — what the music and drama are conveying — in a way that is very natural. We wanted to get away from the artificial mannerisms of 'grand opera' that are not really

Arthur Kaplan, former co-editor of the San Francisco Opera magazine, currently directs opera tours for Dailey-Thorp Travel.

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Director Andrei Serban during a break and (right) in a Siegfried rehearsal.

portrayed in the drama and written in the score...to get rid of all the old clichés of operatic singing where bearded Vikings in blond wigs go marching around the stage, for example...the overblown pomposity of the expression, the exaggerated emotionalism which can easily fall into sentimentality. I feel that we can make the drama as organic as possible and bring to it an expression of purity and strength that will best correspond to the music."

Anyone who has seen Serban's productions of such arch-romantic operas as *I Puritani* (presented at San Francisco Opera in 1993) or *Lucia di Lammermoor* can attest to the anti-sentimental approach he favors. His initial encounter with the old-fashioned school of opera staging was distinctly off-putting. "When I was in drama school in Bucharest," he relates, "I went to the Romanian Opera House and saw a production of *Traviata*. Since I didn't come from a musical background, I was interested in seeing what was taking place on stage from a theatrical point of view. I was so horrified by what I saw. It was such deadly theater, the relations between the characters were so unalive that it made me run away from opera for 10 years."

Serban is firmly opposed to what he calls the Wagnerian tradition. "There is a kind of conventional ideology attached to the *Ring* that certain Wagner fanatics would call 'The Master's Wish,' although I doubt that Wagner would have wanted it that way. That tradition expects a primitive state of the world at the beginning — a state of pure nature, the purity of the Rhinegold — a perfect harmonious universe which is then polluted by Alberich's curse on love. The more modern view, starting perhaps with Wieland Wagner, who was the first to

really challenge the tradition of the *Ring*, and continuing with Patrice Chéreau, who influenced all modern productions of the *Ring* from the '70s on, including the present one, postulates that nature is polluted to begin with and is already in a stage of decay and corruption at the start of *Rheingold*. The academic view that the world has become sinful because of love denied, allows for the hopeful possibility that at the end of *Götterdämmerung* there is resurrection, a chance of renewal, a return to universal harmony through love. The more pessimistic view shared by modern directors is that at the end of *Götterdämmerung* one finds a confused, corrupt and lost human society facing a kind of apocalypse. The conservatives would say that the characters in the *Ring* are the expression of cosmic forces imprisoned by their mistakes in a kind of timeless destiny without specific reference to any society; the new fashion is to view the mythological characters as humans having their own personal agendas and self-interests, gods living in a world of material ambition and lust for power, just like our own."

Traditional Wagnerians, he continues, "would contend that the drama is expressed first and foremost through the music. For any *Ring* production there will always be a part of the audience that wants to listen to the Funeral March with their eyes closed without anything visible to disturb the purity of the music. The "new" view is that the music is inextricably connected to the physical action taking place on the stage. But already in the 19th-century Wagner created a revolution by demanding that music and drama be interconnected. So the "news" that what happens on the stage is a continuation of what takes place in the orchestra — is no news at all. But, at the end of the 20th century, we are still debating the old point..."

Serban is clearly a director who believes in the physicality of movement as a dramatic and psychological necessity in the theater. Whether it is choreographing the boisterousness and playful cruelty of the Valkyries womanhandling the dead warrior heroes as they drag them off to Valhalla in *Die Walküre* or the anxious movements of the three Norns as they caressingly pass the golden rope of fate back and forth in the Prelude to *Götterdämmerung*, or the languid movements of the gods as their strength slowly ebbs when the giants take Freia hostage in *Das Rheingold*, the director strives to implement a dynamic visual realization of Wagner's music.

"I've discovered to my great surprise in staging Wagner for the first time, how incredibly logical and clear the music is,



in relation to movement," asserts Serban. "Much more so than even in Verdi and Mozart. It invites one to make an inevitable blending of the visual image and the musical sound."

Raised and trained in his native Bucharest, Serban first came to the States on a Ford Foundation grant to work with the La Mama Experimental Theatre Company of New York, where he directed an evening of fragments from three Euripides plays (*Medea*, *Electra* and *The Trojan Women*) along with works by Shakespeare, Chekhov and Brecht. It was a production of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* at Lincoln Center that brought him to the attention of Welsh National Opera's director Brian McMaster who, sensing that Serban's handling of actors was very musical, encouraged him to undertake opera and invited him to direct a new production of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* for WNO in 1980.

With *Onegin* Serban found that staging opera was not essentially different from staging a play. "I felt immediately at home," he states. "I told the singers that I didn't have any preconceived plan of the staging. They were a little bit frightened of me at first because they were used to being told exactly where to stand and when to move. I told them that I think we have to discover this together in rehearsal and that I always work from the people I have in front of me. They were very pleased because it seemed like they could make their own contribution to the piece that they were creating together with me. I am not the kind of director who puts singers into a mold, into a concept. That usually creates a kind of factory opera, full of old and new clichés and mannerisms with very little life and spontaneity."

The words "spontaneity," "improvisation," "instinct" and "intuition" recur

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Jane Eaglen photo by Allen MacWeeney

like leitmotifs in the director's description of his *modus operandi*. Watching him work with the *Ring* cast in rehearsal, one senses a flexible and collaborative approach. "There was very little discussion at the beginning of the rehearsals," he says. "Opera singers know their scores inside out and come ready to be told what to do. I just tell them to improvise a bit, which scares them at first. Then after I let them improvise — sometimes they do it badly, sometimes well — I make observations about what I've seen them do and I give them suggestions."

During the *Ring* rehearsals, when he observes something not going quite right, he will bound up from a seemingly passive and pensive seated position and stride forward with a Jacques Tati-like lope to demonstrate a possible adjustment or correction. The singers respond to this enthusiastically and a feeling of mutual respect is quickly established.

For the opening scene of *Die Walküre*, Serban offers detailed suggestions for movement and body position to Mark Baker as Siegmund, Kristine Ciesinski, who is covering the role of Sieglinde as well as playing Gerhilde, Gutrun and the Third Norn, and Reinhard Hagen as Hunding. The emotional intensity is almost palpable. The attraction between the Walsung twins is instantly apparent and increases in fever pitch to become nearly uncontrollable. When Hunding enters with his four henchmen, his suspicions are immediately aroused. The rest of the scene plays like a triangular cat-and-mouse game with each movement and gesture heightening the tension.

"My approach to staging an opera," he explains, "is to go in not knowing enough but wanting to discover what is in the music and the text by the experience in rehearsal. So I'm very open to adapt myself to what the singers do and how they move. I will often change some of the physical movements according to the different casts. For example, the Jane Eaglen Brünnhilde may perhaps be a different interpretation from the Frances Ginzer Brünnhilde; or Alan Held's Wotan may be radically different from the more traditional interpretation of James Morris — though I would be suggesting for both singers a kind of clarity of vision in telling the story, which is my responsibility as a director in both cases. Anyone seeing both casts will notice slight changes from one cycle to another and maybe from one evening to another."

For the past half-year, Serban, who is currently director of the Drama Department at Columbia University, has been meeting regularly, both in New York and in San Francisco, with San Francisco Opera's production team for the *Ring*.



Frances Ginzer rehearsing Brünnhilde's awakening in Siegfried.

Although they were basically adhering to the physical design of the Lehnhoff/Conklin *Ring*, detailed discussions with the technical department were necessary to implement the proposed modifications and revisions. The idea for these changes originated primarily from Serban himself.

"We carefully planned every single change because almost every set has some modifications and in certain cases — Act I of *Die Walküre*, for example — the visual aspect is totally different. In fact, there is very little left completely intact from what there used to be."

A month before opening, some of the innovations are still considered "works in progress" and are being initially tested in the confines of the rehearsal facilities in an annex behind Davies Symphony Hall. A few of the major changes occur in *Das Rheingold*. A large, monolithic sculpted head, dubbed Erda's rock, signals the Earth Mother's appearance and figures in the Norns' scene as well. "Like Erda," Serban explains, "it comes from the earth and is sculpted of solid, earth-like material. It was inspired by my compatriot [Constantin] Brancusi and has a metaphysical and almost luminous quality about it." Since the rehearsal facility has no trap doors, the actual raising and lowering of the head must be worked out later on the War Memorial stage.

Perhaps the most striking innovation will be immediately visible at the first entrance of the giants. Their previous costumes, made partially of rubber, had rotted away and needed to be replaced in any case. Serban wanted the giants to appear much larger than before and as

lifelike as possible. For once, Fafner and Fasolt will seem truly gigantic. Fifteen and seventeen feet tall, approximately the same height as Michelangelo's David and with powerful hands to match, the framework for the giants represents a real team effort in construction and manipulation. With articulations at the neck, shoulders, waist, elbows and wrists, they will require five people to operate. Three members of the Opera's corps de ballet, dressed completely in black and functioning much like the "kuroko" attendants in Japanese kabuki plays, will be responsible for the precise and elaborate hand and arm movements. A member of the prop department, positioned on a lower platform behind the giants' robes, will move the huge figures around the stage. Eric Halfvarson and Reinhard Hagen, as Fafner and Fasolt, will stand on an upper platform within the construct and will be responsible for the movement of their characters' upper body and head as well as their music. As Freia, Nicolle Foland, who has been affectionately nicknamed the Fay Wray of the *Ring*, will have to be especially agile or risk being squeezed and squashed by these formidable colossi.

As for the costumes, they have been almost entirely rethought by British designer Ringwood and built by costume director Jennifer Green and her staff. In accordance with Serban's wishes, they are much less specific to the 19th century and are more mythical and legendary in feeling than the former costumes. The only characters to be clad exactly as they were in 1985 are the men's chorus in *Götterdämmerung*.

Will all these changes constitute a new concept? Not so, insists Serban. "I took the concept from Lehnhoff. But I am not an intellectual director, which is a big difference between myself and Lehnhoff. So I can't entirely follow his approach, which was executed beautifully, because I'm very intuitive by temperament and I'm throwing myself into this with deliberate naiveté. I'm not trying to say anything on my own, to make any personal statement about the work. There is already so much symbolism, so many dramatic and musical themes inherent in the *Ring* that you don't need to put the director's commentary on top of what Wagner has created. All I'm trying to do is to bring a new life, a fresh energy and clarity to the narrative, which was sometimes missing during revivals — to tell the story in a way that makes it exciting for an audience of today. In a way, I'm as innocent as Siegfried entering this world, but I hope a little more victorious," he concludes with a smile. □

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(in German)

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Designs by
John Conklin

Revised Set Designs by
John Coyne

Revised Costume Designs by
Bob Ringwood

Lighting Designer and
Special Effects

Thomas J. Munn

Projections

Ron Scherl, Tom Janus

Sound Designer
Roger Gans

Musical Preparation

Bryndon Hassman,
Eric Weimer
Robert Morrison
Marilyn Barnett
Susan Webb, Peter Grunberg
William Lacey, Jonathan Khuner

Prompter

Jonathan Khuner

Supertitles

Jerry Sherk
Francesca Zambello

Assistant Stage Directors

Zoe Pappas
Brad Dalton

Stage Manager
Jerry Sherk

Scenery constructed in San
Francisco Opera Scenic Studios

Costumes executed by San
Francisco Opera Costume Shop

First performance:
Munich, June 26, 1870

First San Francisco Opera
performance: November 4, 1935

CAST

(in order of appearance)

<i>Sieglinde</i>	Deborah Voigt
<i>Siegmund</i>	Mark Baker Wolfgang Schmidt (6/27)
<i>Hunding</i>	Reinhard Hagen
<i>Wotan</i>	James Morris Alan Held (6/23)
<i>Brünnhilde</i>	Jane Eaglen Frances Ginzer (6/23)
<i>Fricka</i>	Marjana Lipovšek Elena Zarembo (6/23)
<i>Ortlinde</i>	Nicolle Foland
<i>Schwertleite</i>	Ellen Rabiner*
<i>Waltraute</i>	Alexandra Hughes
<i>Gerhilde</i>	Kristine Ciesinski*
<i>Helmwige</i>	Claudia Waite
<i>Siegrune</i>	Elizabeth Bishop
<i>Grimgerde</i>	Kathryn Cowdrick
<i>Rossweisse</i>	Catherine Cook

Hunding's men

*San Francisco Opera debut

San Francisco Opera's 1999 *Ring* Festival is dedicated to the memory of the late
Terence A. McEwen, Company general director from 1982 to 1988.

ACT I	Hunding's dwelling INTERMISSION
ACT II	Scene 1 Inside Valhalla Scene 2 A clearing in the forest INTERMISSION
ACT III	A remote mountaintop

*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 four hours and thirty-five minutes.*

THURSDAY, JUNE 10 AT 7:00
SATURDAY, JUNE 19 AT 7:00
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23 AT 7:00
SUNDAY, JUNE 27 AT 6:00

DIE WALKÜRE SYNOPSIS

Wotan, wandering the earth disguised as a human Wälse, has fathered twin children by a mortal woman: the Wälsungs Siegmund and Sieglinde. To prepare Siegmund for his task, Wotan separated the twins in their youth, leaving Sieglinde to enter a loveless marriage with Hunding, while putting Siegmund through endless trials. Siegmund, who calls himself Webwalt ("Woeful"), went to the aid of a woman who was being forced into marriage by her brothers. In his struggle to save her, Siegmund lost his weapons but managed to kill several of the woman's brothers. As he fled, Wotan created a mighty storm to separate Siegmund from the brothers' pursuing kinsmen.

ACT I

Exhausted from his flight, Siegmund seeks shelter from the storm in a house built around a great ash tree. Collapsing unconscious on the floor, he is discovered by Sieglinde, who offers him water and mead. She reveals only that the house is Hunding's and that she is Hunding's wife. As they talk, an overpowering attraction for each other takes hold of them.

When Hunding returns and hears the stranger's history, he reveals that he is himself one of the pursuing kinsmen. The laws of hospitality demand that he offer strangers shelter for one night; but in the morning Siegmund must be prepared to fight him. Sending his wife to prepare him a drink, Hunding leaves Siegmund alone. Siegmund then recalls that Wälse had vowed to provide his son with a sword in his hour of need.

Sieglinde, after drugging her husband's drink, returns to Siegmund and tells him of a one-eyed stranger who appeared at her wedding feast and thrust a sword deep into the ash tree, saying that only a great hero would retrieve it. Many had tried and all had failed to pull the sword from the tree. Still ignorant of their identities, Wälse's children give way to their passionate love. Magically, the walls open up and spring moonlight streams in on the embracing lovers. Sieglinde now understands that he is her brother and she calls him by his true name, Siegmund. Seizing the sword, Siegmund names it *Nothung*, the Needed One. Drawing it from the tree, he presents it as a bridal gift to Sieglinde. From her response he, too, understands that they are brother and sister, united in love and in blood.

ACT II, SCENE 1

Wotan, his plans developing just as he intended, instructs his favorite Valkyrie, Brünnhilde, to ensure that Siegmund kills Hunding in the impending fight. But no sooner has Brünnhilde left than Fricka, Wotan's wife and goddess of marriage vows, arrives, angrily protesting the sacrilege of Sieglinde's incest and infidelity. Fricka argues that in *Nothung* Siegmund has an instrument of the gods and is therefore not an innocent. She then

demands that Siegmund die for her honor. Wotan, who must abide by the laws and contracts engraved on his spear, reluctantly pledges to withdraw his protection of Siegmund. Brünnhilde's exuberant return is cut short by the tension between Wotan and his wife. Utterly downcast, Wotan now foresees only the end of the gods. Revealing to Brünnhilde the whole story of the Ring, he commands her to withdraw *Nothung's* power. When Brünnhilde protests, Wotan angrily instructs her to ensure Siegmund's death in the fight. Miserable over her obligation, Brünnhilde nonetheless goes off to do her duty.

ACT II, SCENE 2

After a flight through the forest, Siegmund and Sieglinde come upon a clearing. Exhausted, frightened and guilt-ridden, Sieglinde sinks to sleep in her brother's arms. Brünnhilde approaches Siegmund and tells him he must die, but that she will take his soul to join the heroes of Valhalla. Siegmund, learning that Sieglinde can never join him there, refuses, saying he would rather kill himself and his sister than allow anyone else to touch her. His devotion arouses such pity in the Valkyrie that she vows to disobey Wotan. Experiencing feelings of love for the first time, she prepares to protect Siegmund as Hunding's hounds are heard in the forest nearby. But Wotan's purposes are not so easily deflected. Furious at Brünnhilde's disobedience, he appears in the middle of the fight and shatters *Nothung* with his spear. Brünnhilde flees with Sieglinde and the broken pieces of *Nothung*.

ACT III

On a remote mountaintop, Brünnhilde's sisters are assembling with newly slain heroes they have gathered for Valhalla's guard as the fleeing Brünnhilde brings Sieglinde to them. When her warrior sisters refuse their help, Brünnhilde reveals that Sieglinde is carrying Siegmund's child, destined to become the greatest of heroes and to bear the name of Siegfried. Giving Sieglinde the shattered *Nothung*, Brünnhilde sends her into the forest to escape Wotan's wrath. Sieglinde has hardly left before Wotan arrives. Shielded at first by the other Valkyries, Brünnhilde faces her angry father. Wotan tells her she has forfeited her rights as a demi-god; she shall be cast into a deep sleep on a rock, prey to any man that finds her. Her pleading softens Wotan's anger, and he finally agrees to her request: only the greatest of heroes shall be able to take her. Sadly, Wotan bids farewell to his favorite daughter. He tells her she shall be surrounded by a wall of flame, and with a final kiss he removes her divine attributes. Gesturing with his spear, he commands Loge, the spirit of fire, to encircle her with flames.

SUPERNUMERARIES

Nancy Huie

Gary Cramer

Karl Fischer

John Giosso

Rick Gydesen

Frank Jorgensen

Steve Lavezzoli

Sherman Lee

Charlie Lichtman

Jason Mayo

David Ransom

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ARTIST PROFILES



JANE EAGLEN is internationally recognized for her outstanding achievements on the opera stage and concert platform. The English soprano made her first San Francisco Opera appearance as Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* during the 1995 season. One of her signature roles, she has performed Brünnhilde to great acclaim at Milan's La Scala, in Chicago (her first complete *Ring* cycle), Vienna and Costa Mesa. Similarly,

her performances in the title role of *Norma* have been praised at the Ravenna Festival, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, the Paris Opera/Bastille and Scottish Opera. Among her other recent operatic performances are Isolde in *Tristan und Isolde* in Seattle; the title role of *La Gioconda* in Chicago; Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* in Los Angeles, Vienna and at the Metropolitan Opera; the title part of *Turandot* at the Met, in Seattle, Madrid, San Diego and Bologna; and Amelia in *Un Ballo in Maschera* at the Bastille. Equally at home in concert, her recent engagements include the Verdi Requiem with Simon Rattle; Mahler's Eighth Symphony under Klaus Tennstedt; the title role of *Tosca* with the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra; Act 3 of *Götterdämmerung* led by Bernard Haitink; *Nabucco* in Ravenna with Riccardo Muti; and *Norma* at Carnegie Hall. Her first solo album — arias by Wagner and Bellini — was released last year, and her second, arias by Strauss and Mozart, this spring. On records, she can also be heard as *Tosca*; as *Norma* under Muti; as *Medea* in *Medea in Corinto*; and in Mahler's Eighth led by Zubin Mehta. Future plans include complete *Ring* cycles for the Met, Seattle Opera and again in Chicago; *Tristan und Isolde* in Chicago and at the Met; *Turandot* at the Met, the Bastille and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; *Norma* at the Met; as well as concerts and recitals in Chicago, Madrid, Barcelona, Minneapolis, New York, London and Berlin.



FRANCES GINZER is fast becoming one of opera's most sought-after sopranos in the dramatic repertoire since her first performance of the title role of *Turandot* in 1993. Since then the young artist has added the roles of Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the title roles of *Tosca* and *La Gioconda*, as well as Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* to her expanding repertoire. A native of Calgary, Alberta, Ginzer achieved her earliest success in the

role of Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with the Canadian Opera. She has been a guest soloist at such major European opera centers as Hamburg, Zurich, Cologne, Munich, Stuttgart, Bonn, Frankfurt and London. In the 1996–97 season she made her Metropolitan Opera debut in *Rusalka*, *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung*, also singing Leonore in *Fidelio* (role debut) in Baltimore, Bern and Düsseldorf. Among her engagements during the 1997–98 season were Elsa in *Lobengrin* in Tokyo, her San Francisco Opera debut as Chrysothemis in *Elektra*, *Turandot* in Dallas, *Fidelio* in Düsseldorf, as well as her fifth season at the Bayreuth Festival as Helmwig in *Die Walküre* and the Third Norn in *Götterdämmerung*. This season she appeared in *Die Walküre* (Brünnhilde) in Trieste and Cincinnati, *Fidelio* in Düsseldorf, and *Tristan und Isolde* (Isolde) at the Washington Opera. In addition to her opera appearances, the soprano has performed as soloist with the Toronto Symphony, Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Edmonton Symphony and the Calgary Philharmonic. She has also recorded for EMI and London/Decca Records. After receiving her bachelor of music degree from the University of Calgary, Ginzer earned her master of music degree from North Texas State University. She has studied with Evelyn Dalberg since 1991.



In less than a decade, **DEBORAH VOIGT** has established herself as one of the world's most accomplished dramatic sopranos. Since her 1986 San Francisco Opera debut in *Don Carlos*, the former Adler Fellow and Merola Opera Program participant has appeared here in *Jenůfa*, *Macbeth*, *The Magic Flute*, as Amelia in the 1990 performances of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and as Elisabeth (role debut) in the 1994

staging of *Tannhäuser*. She was also featured in the Company's 75th Anniversary Gala Concert in 1997. A prominent artist at the Metropolitan Opera (where she was most recently acclaimed as Chrysothemis in *Elektra*, Elsa in *Lobengrin*, in the title role of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, as Sieglinde — with Plácido Domingo as Siegmund — in *Die Walküre*, and as *Ballo's* Amelia), she is also in demand as a recitalist and concert soloist with the leading conductors and orchestras of the world. Career highlights include her first Ariadne in Boston followed by debuts in Munich and Vienna in the same role; Chrysothemis at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; her first Elsa in Robert Wilson's new production of *Lobengrin* at the Met; Senta in *Der Fliegende Holländer* in Berlin, Florence and New York; as well as the Leonoras of both *Il Trovatore* and *La Forza del Destino* at the Met. Her most recent triumphs include the title role of *Die Ägyptische Helena* which she sang under Christian Thielemann with London's Royal Opera and at the Baden-Baden Festival; Cassandra in *Les Troyens* at the Teatro São Carlos in Lisbon; in addition to the Empress in *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in Berlin. Among the artist's future engagements are new stagings of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in Vienna, Barcelona and New York, as well as *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Bastille in Paris. Her growing operatic discography now includes *Elektra*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Fidelio*, *Oberon* and the Grammy-winning *Les Troyens*. Gold medalist of the 1990 Tchaikovsky Competition and first prize-winner of Italy's Verdi Competition, the native of Illinois currently makes her home in Florida.



Highly regarded as a versatile and gifted singer in the opera, oratorio and lieder repertoires, mezzo-soprano **MARJANA LIPOVŠEK** made her 1995 San Francisco Opera debut as Fricka in *Die Walküre*. Born into a musical family in the Slovenian capital of Ljubljana, she completed her studies at the Music Academy in Graz and was immediately invited to join the Vienna State Opera and subsequently the Ham-

burg State Opera. Her roles in Hamburg included Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Marina in *Boris Godunov* and Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera*. She then performed more of the repertoire's great dramatic roles at Munich's Bavarian State Opera — Marie in *Wozzeck*, Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino*, Gaea in *Daphne*, and Fricka. Her first Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* at the Bregenz Festival was a spectacular success which led to reprises of the role in Berlin, at Spain's Perelada Festival, at the Vienna State Opera and at the Paris Opera/Bastille. Her first *Carmen*, also at the Bregenz Festival, was a similar triumph. Lipovšek has also appeared as Klytemnestra in *Elektra*, the Nurse in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde*, Amneris in *Aida*, Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Marfa in *Khovanshchina*, and Eboli in *Don Carlos* at many of the leading opera houses of the world. She has performed numerous times on radio and television, and can be heard on a wide variety of recordings. The artist was awarded the "Grand Prix du Disque" for her recording of Frank Martin's *Der Cornet* (1989), the "Prix Spécial du Jury" of the "Nouvelle Académie

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du Disque Français" (1993), as well as the Gustav Mahler Gold Medal (1996). Marjana Lipovšek has been honored with the Bavarian and Austrian title of "Kammersängerin."



Since her 1991 San Francisco Opera debut as Hélène Bezukhova in *War and Peace*, **ELENA ZAREMBA** has appeared with the Company as Ratmir in *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1995), Konchakovna in *Prince Igor* (1996), Maddalena in *Rigoletto* (1997), and in the title role of *Carmen* (1998 *Femmes Fatales* Festival). In the years since she came upon the international scene, the mezzo's command of the principal roles in

the Russian repertoire is supported by her interpretation of such Verdian and Wagnerian roles as Azucena in *Il Trovatore*, Ulrica in *Un Ballo in Maschera* (a part she will sing for the Company this fall) 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, Paris Opera/Bastille, 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 major theaters worldwide. Zarembo's 1997-98 season has included *Alexander Nevsky* with the London Philharmonic; Verdi's Requiem with the Pittsburgh Symphony; *Carmen* in Hamburg and Bilbao; her staged debut in the role of Dalila for New Israeli Opera's *Samson et Dalila*; *Eugene Onegin* for the Bastille Opera; and a concert of works by Prokofiev and Shostakovich in Brussels. She made her Metropolitan Opera debut earlier this year as Azucena in *Il Trovatore*. 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*, Mussorgsky's cantata *Joshua*, and a Shostakovich song cycle. Born in Moscow, Elena 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.



KRISTINE CIESINSKI's 1997-98 season included performances of several of the great operatic heroines with which she has become identified, highlighted by such roles as Emilia Marty in *The Makropulos Case* with the Glyndebourne Touring Opera and the title part of *Salome* with San Diego Opera. The American soprano has also appeared as Queen Roxana in Szymanowski's *King Roger* in Stuttgart and performed with the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in a concert presentation of Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*. Other engagements in recent seasons include the title role of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at Milan's La Scala, the Paris Opera/Bastille and the Frankfurt State Opera; *Salome* at Munich's Bayerische Staatsoper, Dresden's Semperoper and Genoa's Teatro Carlo Felice; Marie in *Wozzeck* for the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Spoleto Festival in Italy, English National Opera and Frankfurt State Opera; as well as *Lady Macbeth* in *Macbeth* which she first performed in Vichy, France, and subsequently with the English National Opera and on that company's tour to Moscow and St. Petersburg. Additional roles with which the soprano is associated are the title roles of *Tosca*, *Medea* and *La Wally*, in addition to Cassandre in *Les Troyens* and Renata in *The Fiery Angel*. A veteran of numerous concerts and recitals, she made her debut at London's Promenade Concerts in Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* under Simon Rattle, and particularly enjoys giving duo recitals

with her sister, mezzo Katherine Ciesinski. Kristine Ciesinski was featured in a BBC film entitled *The Secret Life of Alban Berg* and appeared as Marie in ENO's televised presentation of *Wozzeck*. A Delaware native, the artist first gained international recognition when she won both the prestigious Geneva International Competition and the Salzburg International Opera Competition.



Soprano **CLAUDIA WAITE** made her 1994 San Francisco Opera debut in *Macbeth* and sang Leonora in three performances of *Il Trovatore*. The 1993-94 Adler Fellow has also been seen with the Company as Helmwig in *Die Walküre* and the Foreign Princess in *Rusalka* (1995), as well as the Overseer in *Elektra* (1997). A member of the 1993 Merola Opera Program, the young artist's credits for the

Opera Center included two tours of the Pacific islands of Guam, Saipan and Pohnpei, Merola Opera and Western Opera Theater performances as Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*, and Hecuba in the North American premiere of Tippet's *King Priam* as part of the Opera Center's Showcase Series. She has also appeared with the San Francisco Symphony Pops Series, S.F. Gay Men's Chorus and San Mateo Masterworks Chorale. The soprano's most recent engagements include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony under Seiji Ozawa at the Opening Ceremonies of the 1998 Winter Olympics in Japan (telecast worldwide); her debut season at the Metropolitan Opera in *Die Zauberflöte* (First Lady) and *Elektra* (Overseer); Fata Morgana in *L'Amour des Trois Oranges* with Opéra de Lyon and at Italy's Ravenna Festival; a debut with Dallas Opera in *Die Walküre*; in addition to a concert presentation and subsequent recording of Robert Nelson's new operatic setting of Forster's *A Room With A View*. Among her future assignments are *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Berta) at the Met, as well as *Elektra* at the New Israeli Opera and at Finland's Savonlinna Festival. A California native, Waite received her bachelor of music education degree from Angelo State University in Texas and a master of music degree from Florida State University. She was the first place winner in the professional division of the 1996 MacAllister Awards.



ELIZABETH BISHOP, a 1994-95 Adler Fellow, was featured in four operas of San Francisco Opera's 1994 Fall Season, which included the role of Emilie in the world premiere production of *The Dangerous Liaisons*. (She sang the leading role of Marquise de Merteuil from the same opera for the Washington Opera last year.) In 1995, she was seen here as Flora in *La Traviata*, Tisbe in *La Cenerentola*, Siegrune in *Die Walküre*, and as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*. After appearing with the Company during the 1996-97 season as in *Harvey Milk* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, she returned the following season for *Butterfly* and *Elektra*. The artist most recently appeared here as the Arts Patroness in the *Femmes Fatales* staging of *Lulu*. The mezzo has numerous credits for the Opera Center, among them the title role of Handel's *Ezio*, Helen in Tippet's *King Priam*, Meg Page in *Falstaff*, and Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*. Elsewhere, she has appeared in *The Ghosts of Versailles* at the Metropolitan Opera after having made her Met debut in the 1993 production of *Death in Venice*. Among her most recent credits are her first Adalgisa in *Norma* and Suzuki for Opera Memphis, Ma Moss in Copland's *The Tender Land* with Virginia Opera, the Hostess in Wolf-Ferrari's *Sly* at Washington Opera, and Gertrude in *Hamlet* for Washington Concert Opera. In addition to being a featured soloist in the San Francisco Symphony Pops Concerts from 1992-95, Bishop has performed with other prominent

orchestras singing such diverse repertoire as the Bach *Magnificat*, Ligeti's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Mahler's Eighth Symphony, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. A native of South Carolina, the mezzo earned a master of music degree from The Juilliard School and is the recipient of two grants from the Singers Development Foundation.



A winner of the prestigious 1997 ARIA Foundation Award, **NICOLLE FOLAND** is establishing herself as a leading soprano in many prominent theaters. Associated with San Francisco Opera for many seasons, the former Adler Fellow won praise for her performance as Musetta in San Francisco Opera's 1996 production of *La Bohème* and was applauded the following year as Kate Pinkerton in the

Company's new staging of *Madama Butterfly*. She also scored successes during our 1997-98 Season as Tatyana in a performance of *Eugene Onegin* and as the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Last year, during the *Femmes Fatales* Festival, she was seen as Micaëla in *Carmen* and Virtue in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. Foland made her Company debut in 1995 as Kate Pinkerton, also performing that season in stagings of *La Cenerentola*, *Die Walküre* and *Rusalka*. During San Francisco Opera's 1996-97 season, she was seen in *Carmen*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Aida* and the West Coast premiere of *Harvey Milk*. In addition, she appeared as soloist in a concert with Plácido Domingo and made her San Francisco recital debut as part of the Opera Center's 1997 Schwabacher Debut Recital series. Other Opera Center credits include Adele and Rosalinda in the 1993 production of *Die Fledermaus*; Donna Anna in the 1994 staging of *Don Giovanni*; and Tina in the 1996 Showcase production of Argento's *The Aspern Papers*. Last season she made debuts with Los Angeles Opera, Seattle Opera and Spain's Opera Bilbao as Musetta, and also was seen as Micaëla in Cincinnati, the First Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) in Los Angeles, and in the title role of *La Traviata* at Festival Opera of Walnut Creek. So far this season she has made debuts with Boston Lyric Opera (Mozart's Countess), Minnesota Opera (her first Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello*), as well as with the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Houston Grand Opera (*Traviata's* Violetta). In the future she will sing Musetta and Donna Anna for San Francisco Opera and the Countess for the Opera Company of Philadelphia. A native of Des Moines, Foland received a master of music degree from the University of Northern Iowa and currently resides in San Francisco.



KATHRYN COWDRICK, a Merola Opera Program graduate and a former Adler Fellow, has performed numerous roles with the Company in over 12 productions since her 1985 debut. They include Meg Page in *Falstaff*, Paulina in *The Queen of Spades* and Siebel in *Faust*. Applauded for her portrayals of Rossini heroines, the mezzo-soprano made her European debut at the Netherlands Opera as Rosina in

Dario Fo's staging of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and has subsequently performed the role for Scottish Opera, Vancouver Opera, Cologne Opera, Ottawa's National Arts Centre, Marseilles Opera and on tour with the New York City Opera. She has also been praised in the title role of *La Cenerentola* and as Isabella in *L'Italiana in Algeri*. Cowdrick has appeared at the Spoleto Festival (Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*), Wexford Festival (Gluck's *Return to Mecca*), Washington Opera (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*), Carmel Bach Festival (*L'Orfeo*, *L'Ormino*), Virginia Opera (*Tales of Hoffmann*, *Anna Bolena*), Los Angeles Music Center Opera (*Katya Kabanova*) and Tulsa Opera (*The Crucible*).

The mezzo was most recently seen as Rosina at Munich's Bavarian State Opera and as Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* in Tokyo. In the future she will appear in Argento's *Postcard from Morocco* with the Opera Festival of New Jersey, as well as in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Eugene Onegin* with Arizona Opera. She can be heard as Charmian on the 1985 Grammy Award-winning recording of Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra*, and as Karolka in *Jenůfa* recorded live at Carnegie Hall. A native of Pennsylvania, the artist received her master's and doctorate degrees from Columbia University in speech therapy and the education of the deaf.



ALEXANDRA HUGHES has performed extensively throughout the United States and Europe in a wide variety of roles. The mezzo-soprano made her San Francisco Opera debut as Flosshilde in the 1985 presentation of the *Ring* cycle and subsequently began a long relationship with Seattle Opera, appearing there for five seasons in their *Ring* cycle. Previous to her most recent Seattle roles (Waltraute in *Die Walküre* and Fricka in *Das Rheingold*), she appeared as Olga in *Eugene Onegin*, Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* and in the title part of *Carmen*. Among her other North American engagements were *Der Rosenkavalier* (Octavian) with Montreal Opera, *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Dryade) with Santa Fe Opera, and *Carmen* with New Orleans Opera. Hughes made her European debut with Geneva Opera as Varvara in *Katya Kabanova* and subsequently completed four seasons with Freiburg's Städtische Bühnen during the tenure of Donald Runnicles. While there, she sang *Carmen*, Octavian, Charlotte (*Wertber*), the Composer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), and the Muse/Nicklausse (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*). Other European highlights include *Albert Herring* (Nancy) in Geneva, Lausanne and Bonn; and *Samson et Dalila* (her first Dalila) in Denmark with the Odense Symphony. Among the mezzo's most recent appearances are a debut with New York City Opera as Mrs. Grose in *The Turn of the Screw*; a bow with Marseilles Opera as Maddalena in *Rigoletto*; her Carnegie Hall debut in Mahler's Eighth Symphony; her first Gertrude in *Hänsel und Gretel* for her Canadian Opera Company debut; and a bow with Dallas Opera in *Das Rheingold*. Forthcoming are *Götterdämmerung* and *Wozzeck* (her first Margret) at the Aspen Music Festival, as well as Brangäne (role debut) in Hawaii Opera Theater's new staging of *Tristan und Isolde*. The New York native is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music where she earned both bachelor's and master's degrees.



CATHERINE COOK has been featured in a wide range of roles with leading companies throughout the United States. Since her 1991 debut season in *War and Peace* and *Elektra*, the mezzo-soprano 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*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*,

Arabella and *Peter Grimes*. 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. She was also recently featured as Dorabella in the 1999 Showcase production of *Così fan tutte*. 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 bow at the Metropolitan Opera in *Katya Kabanova*, a return to Chicago in *Peter Grimes* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*, her Lincoln Center debut in Poulenc's *Les*



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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. In the 1999–2000 season she will appear in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (The Fox) with Portland Opera, *Faust* (Marthe) with Los Angeles Opera, and *Louise* (Gertrude) with San Francisco 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.



Contralto **ELLEN RABINER** made her 1994 Metropolitan Opera debut in *Elektra* and has returned to that house to sing in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Die Walküre* and, most recently, the Met's premiere of *Moses und Aron*. The New York native has also appeared with, among others, the New York City Opera (Suzuki/*Madama Butterfly*, Konchakovna/*Prince Igor*); San Diego Opera (Isabela/U.S. premiere of Daniel Catán's

Rappaccini's Daughter), Santa Fe Opera (Gaea/*Daphne*), Michigan Opera Theater, Dallas Opera and the Washington Opera. In concert Rabiner has performed Mahler's *Rückert Lieder* and Third Symphony, Bach's *Magnificat*, Falla's *El Amor Brujo*, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*, Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. She made her recording debut as the Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas* with Nicholas McGegan and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. Recent engagements include *Il Trovatore* (Azucena) in West Virginia, *Aida* (Amneris) in Sioux City, *Der Rosenkavalier* (Annina) in Nashville, and the title role of Vivaldi's *Arilda* in New York. Among her upcoming assignments are a recording of the Bach B Minor Mass with Martin Pearlman and the Boston Baroque, in addition to a return to the Met for their forthcoming *Ring* cycle and a reprise of *Moses und Aron*.



Tenor **MARK BAKER** made his 1990 San Francisco Opera debut as Froh in *Das Rheingold*, and has since appeared with the Company as Grigory/Dimitri in *Boris Godunov* (1992), Narraboth in *Salome* (1993), and Vladimir Igorevich in *Prince Igor* (1997). Born in Oklahoma and raised in Florida, he first came to national attention as a winner of the 1986 Metropolitan

Opera National Council Auditions and made his Met debut during the 1986–87 season in *Roméo et Juliette*. He has subsequently appeared in more than 20 different Met productions. Baker also appears regularly with such companies as the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera and the Dallas Opera in roles such as Don José in *Carmen*, Siegmund in *Die Walküre*, Florestan in *Fidelio* and Samson in *Samson et Dalila*. His extensive European credits include *Der Fliegende Holländer* with the Netherlands Opera, Opéra de Lyon and at Catania's Teatro Bellini; *Salome* at the Paris Opera/Bastille; *Wozzeck* in Berlin and Spoleto, Italy; as well as the title roles of *Peter Grimes* and *Parsifal* with Opéra de Nantes, among others. In South America he has appeared in *Walküre* and *Jenůfa* in Santiago, Chile, as well as in *Wozzeck* at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. His most recent engagements include *Samson et Dalila*, *Katya Kabanova* and *Wozzeck* at the Met; the world premiere of Anthony Davis's *Amistad* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago; Florestan in *Leonore* in Bonn; in addition to *Jenůfa* in Cincinnati and Santiago. The tenor has made recordings of *Das Rheingold* and *Wozzeck*, and he has been seen throughout Europe in telecasts of *Jenůfa* from Glyndebourne and *Wozzeck* from the Berlin State Opera. He is a graduate of Indiana University where he received his bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance, as well as a master's degree in Counseling and Counseling Education.



WOLFGANG SCHMIDT is celebrated in many of the world's leading opera houses as one of today's leading exponents of heroic German tenor roles. He has performed two of them for San Francisco Opera: the title part of *Tannhäuser* for his 1994 San Francisco Opera debut and Tristan in *Tristan und Isolde* last fall. Born in Kassel, he studied in Frankfurt and, while still a student, started appearing in opera and concert throughout Germany, as well as in Poland, Romania, Mexico and Venezuela. By now, his career has accumulated a number of high points, including the opening of the 1992 Bayreuth Festival in the title role of *Tannhäuser* (conducted by Donald Runnicles), his 1993 Metropolitan Opera debut as Siegfried in *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* and the same two roles in the 1994 Bayreuth *Ring* production led by James Levine. A member of the Deutsche Oper am Rhein in Düsseldorf since 1988, he has also been regularly featured at the Vienna Staatsoper since 1991. Through his career, Schmidt has been heard as Tristan, Max in *Der Freischütz*, Hün in *Oberon*, Florestan in *Fidelio*, Erik in *Der Fliegende Holländer*, the Emperor in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Siegmund and Siegfried in the *Ring* cycle, as well as in the title roles of *Otello* and *Lobengrin*. Among the artist's most recent assignments are *Siegfried* at Milan's La Scala and at the Met; *Götterdämmerung* at La Scala; *Die Walküre* (Act I) with the London Symphony Orchestra; *Tannhäuser* at the Met; *Tristan und Isolde* at the Paris Opera/Bastille and in Dresden; in addition to *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* at the 1998 Bayreuth Festival. Schmidt's future engagements include a new staging of the *Ring* cycle at Bayreuth next year.



Master of a remarkable repertoire that spans the opera stage, festivals, concert and recital halls, **JAMES MORRIS** made his 1981 San Francisco Opera debut as Assur in *Semiramide*. The renowned bass has since appeared here as Wotan in the 1985 *Ring* Festival (singing the *Rheingold* Wotan for the first time), Scarpia in *Tosca* (another career first) and Claggart in *Billy Budd* (1985), the four villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (1987), the *Ring* cycle again in 1990, the title role of *Boris Godunov* in 1992 (singing the part in Russian for the first time), Procida in *I Vespri Siciliani* (1993), the title role of *Macbeth* (1994), Wotan in *Die Walküre* (1995), Scarpia and in the title role of *Der Fliegende Holländer* (1997), as well as Philip II in *Don Carlo* (1998). Born and educated in Baltimore, Morris became the youngest male singer on the Metropolitan Opera roster at the age of 23, and at 27 was on the Met stage as Don Giovanni, a role he has sung in numerous seasons there and in other opera centers of the world. His Metropolitan Opera record consists of over 50 roles, sung since his debut there in 1971 (he celebrated his 25th season at the Met in 1996 singing his first Iago in *Otello*). He most recently performed at the Met in *Tosca*, *Don Carlo* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. The artist is in constant demand internationally for his opera roles, which range from Mozart to Wagner to Britten, as well as for concert appearances and recitals. His extensive discography includes two complete *Ring* cycles, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Maria Stuarda*, *Le Roi de Lahore*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *Così fan tutte*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Aida*, *Parsifal*, *Salome*, Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Beggar's Opera*, Haydn's *The Creation*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the Requiems of Mozart and Fauré, as well as a recording of arias by Wagner and Verdi.

Continued on page 36

Die Walküre

Photos taken in rehearsal
by Marty Sohl

Frances Ginzer





Elena Zaremba



Deborah Voigt, Mark Baker



Reinhard Hagen

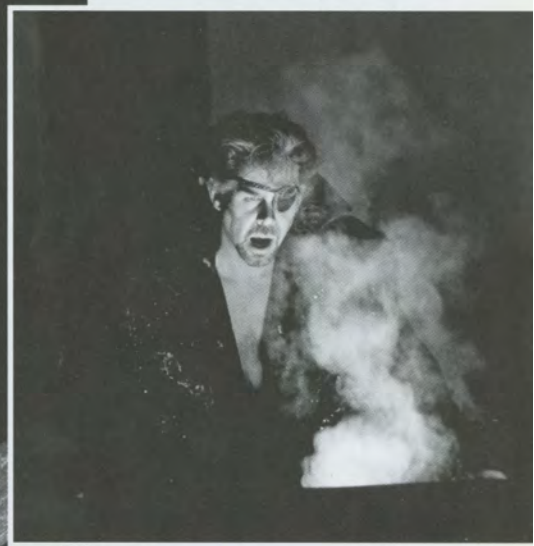


James Morris, Jane Eaglen



James Morris

Jane Eaglen, Deborah Voigt

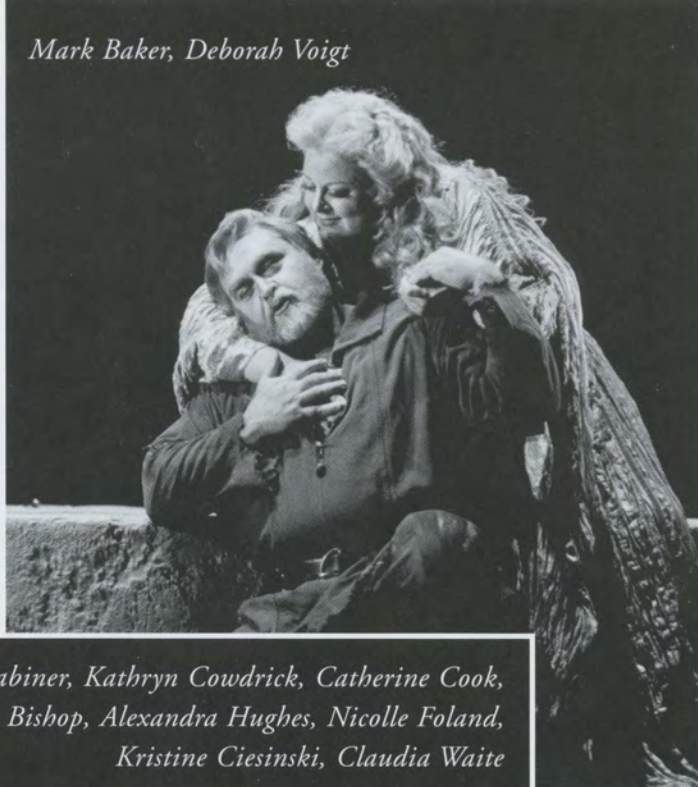


Alan Held

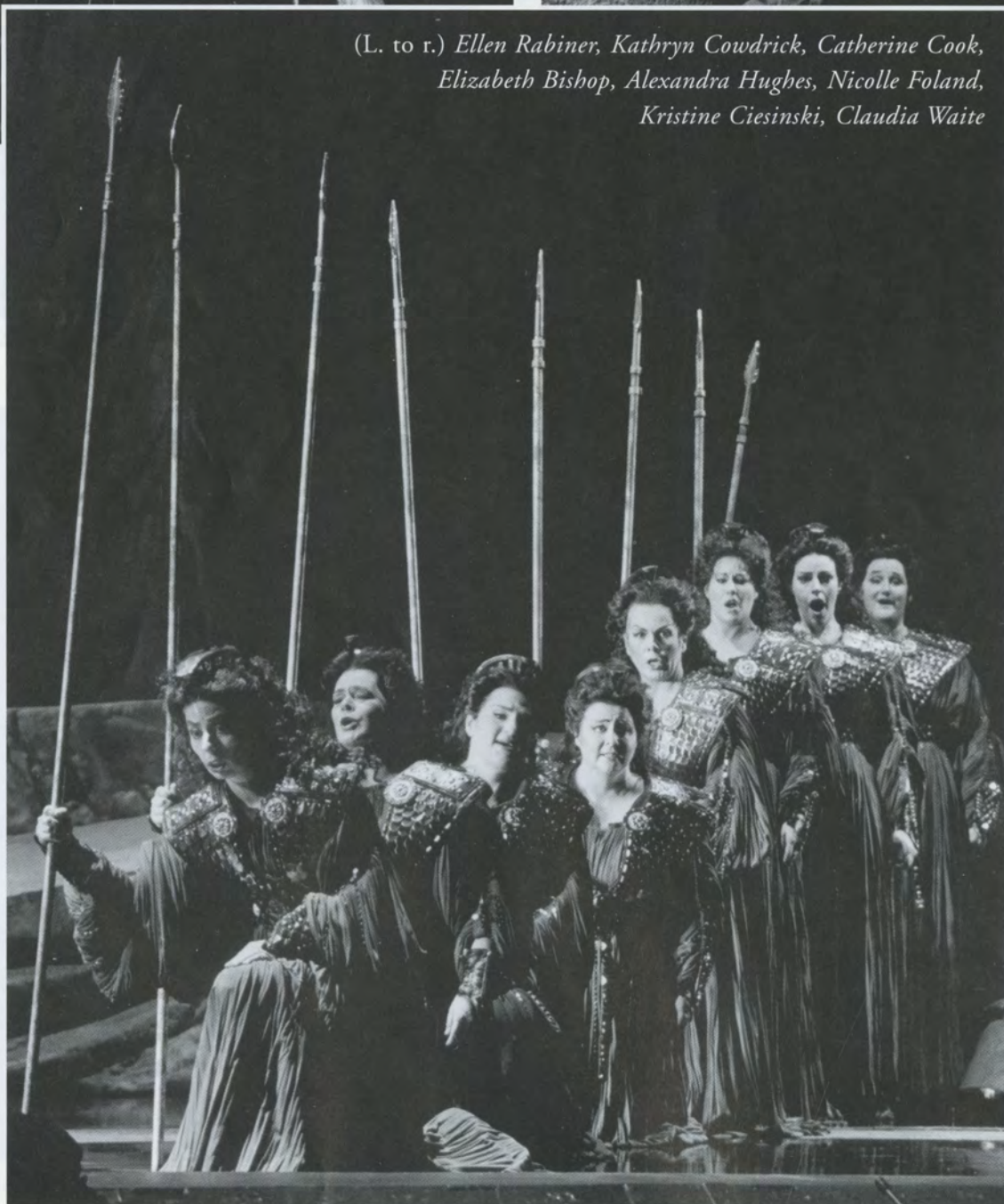
Alan Held, Frances Ginzer



Mark Baker, Deborah Voigt



(L. to r.) *Ellen Rabiner, Kathryn Cowdrick, Catherine Cook,
Elizabeth Bishop, Alexandra Hughes, Nicolle Foland,
Kristine Ciesinski, Claudia Waite*





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ALAN HELD returned for his third season with San Francisco Opera last year to perform the role of Balstrode in *Peter Grimes*, a part he had previously sung at the Metropolitan Opera and for Vancouver Opera. The bass-baritone first appeared with the Company in 1992 (*Tosca*, *Boris Godunov*, *Fidelio*), and was praised here in 1997 as Orest in *Elektra*. Winner of the 1991 Birgit Nilsson Prize, Held has made several important debuts and performed in many of the world's most prestigious opera houses. Since his 1989 debut at the Metropolitan Opera in *Billy Budd*, he has returned there to sing in numerous productions including *Die Zauberflöte*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, the *Ring*, *Fidelio*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Peter Grimes*, *Tannhäuser*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Samson et Dalila* and *Boris Godunov*. A specialist in the German repertoire, he has been featured in *Ring* cycles in Munich, Chicago, London, Frankfurt and Brussels. He is also at home in the music of Mozart, having sung Leporello in *Don Giovanni* in Chicago, Frankfurt and Munich. Over the past few seasons the artist has been a regular with the Royal Opera/Covent Garden, appearing there as Orest, Gunther in *Götterdämmerung*, Colline in *La Bohème* and Cardinal Borromeo in a new staging of *Palestrina* which was also presented at the 1997 Lincoln Center Festival in New York. His repertoire encompasses over 50 roles, ranging from Rossini and Gounod to Argento and Berg. The native of Illinois, a graduate of Millikin University and Wichita State University, is the winner of numerous awards including two Richard Tucker Music Foundation Career Grants, a Richard Gold Award from the Shoshana Foundation, an Opera Index Award and a prize from the Musicians Emergency Fund. Among his future engagements are *Don Giovanni* (Leporello, opposite Bryn Terfel) in London; *Tristan und Isolde* in Chicago and Amsterdam; *Der Ring des Nibelungen* in Munich; and the title role of *Wozzeck* for the Company this coming season.



Bass **REINHARD HAGEN**, who made his U.S. debut with San Francisco Opera last season in *Don Carlo*, is quickly becoming a regular guest artist at many of Europe's leading opera houses and with numerous leading orchestras. Following studies in Karlsruhe, the young German artist won several important international singing competitions and began his professional career in Dortmund. Since 1994, he has been a regular member of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, where he has appeared in such roles as Tituel in *Parsifal*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Pogner in *Die Meistersinger*, Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Ramfis in *Aida*, and the Watchman in Enescu's *Oedipe*. Elsewhere, Hagen has performed at, among others, the Aix-en-Provence Festival, Hamburg State Opera and Munich State Opera (*Zauberflöte*), in Seville (the Landgraf in *Tannhäuser*), Geneva (Friar Laurence in *Roméo et Juliette*), and Venice (his first Rocco in *Fidelio*). Equally at home on the concert platform, he has appeared with the Bavarian Radio Symphony under Lorin Maazel, Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig led by Herbert Blomstedt and Marek Janowski, and the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by James Levine. He recently completed a European concert tour led by Neville Marriner. Works he has performed include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*, Shostakovich's Fourteenth Symphony, and Haydn's *Creation*. Forthcoming engagements include Raimondo in San Francisco Opera's 1999 staging of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, his San Diego Opera debut as King Heinrich in a new production of *Lobengrin*, and concerts with the Bavarian Radio Symphony under Maazel.



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 25 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 Tippett'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 are a CD of German Romantic opera arias with tenor Ben Heppner. During the Company's 1998-99 season, he led performances of *Arabella*, *Tristan und Isolde* and *Peter Grimes*. 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, Danish Radio Orchestra, 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, Atlanta, 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 for the 1999-2000 season to conduct *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Idomeneo* and a new staging of *Parsifal*.



MICHAEL BODER made his U.S. opera debut leading San Francisco Opera's new staging of *Der Fliegende Holländer* during the 1997-98 season. A native of Darmstadt, he began his conducting studies at the College of Music in Hamburg. After assisting Carlo Maria Giulini with his 1979 recording of *Rigoletto*, he continued his studies at the Teatro Comunale in Florence, where he worked as a coach/conductor and was assistant to Riccardo Muti and Zubin Mehta. After conducting several productions at the Frankfurt Opera from 1984-1988, he was appointed music director of the Basel Opera where he led 15 new productions including *Tristan und Isolde*, *Wozzeck*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Don Giovanni*, and the Swiss premiere of Müller-Siemens's *Die Menschen*. He now conducts new stagings at leading European houses, including the Cologne Opera, Hamburg Staatsoper, Stuttgart Opera and the Royal Opera at Covent Garden. In addition to his operatic activities, Maestro Boder is a frequent guest conductor with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, Stuttgart Radio Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Orchestra, Danish National Radio Orchestra, Hamburg Philharmonic, Bastille Opera Orchestra, and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, among others. Recent opera highlights include *Wozzeck* for his debut at

the Vienna State Opera; Henze's *Der Junge Lord* and the world premiere of Manfred Trojahn's *Was Ihr Wollt* at the Bavarian State Opera; as well as *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Berlin State Opera. In the future, Boder will conduct *Wozzeck* for the Company, *Elektra* in Stuttgart, in addition to *Wozzeck*, *Elektra* and a new production of *Lulu* at the Vienna State Opera.



ANDREI SERBAN made his 1991 San Francisco Opera debut with his production of *Elektra* and repeated the assignment here during the 1997–98 season. The director was born in Romania and studied at the Theater Institute in Bucharest. His earliest productions included several plays, culminating in an acclaimed staging of *Julius Caesar*, which led to a Ford

Foundation grant to work with New York's La Mama Experimental Theater Company. In New York he met Peter Brook, who invited him to work with him in Paris. Serban's productions in the U.S. have included the classical Greek trilogy, *The Trojan Women*, *Electra* and *Medea*, as well as *The Good Woman of Szechuan*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Umbrellas of Cernbourg* and *Agamemnon* in New York, and several plays at Yale University. Currently director of the Drama Department at Columbia University in New York, he has directed *Cymbeline* and *Hamlet* for the New York Shakespeare Festival, as well as *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merchant of Venice* for the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, MA. Since his first opera production, *Eugene Onegin* for the Welsh National Opera, he has returned to Cardiff for *I Puritani* (a production also staged here in 1993), *Rodelinda*, *The Merry Widow* and *Norma*. His acclaimed production of *Turandot* had its premiere at the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival in Los Angeles before opening the 1984–85 season at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Among the noted artist's most recent stagings are *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *The Merry Widow* at the Vienna State Opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor* in Chicago, Los Angeles and Paris (Bastille); *Elektra* and *Thaïs* in Nice; *Don Carlo* in Bologna; and *L'italiana in Algeri* in Paris. Future projects include Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes* for the Paris Opera and Molière's *The Miser* for the Comédie-Française in Paris.



NIKOLAUS LEHNHOFF conceived the original production of Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung* which was presented at San Francisco Opera in the summer of 1985. His most recent Company assignment was in 1987, when he recreated his acclaimed production of *Salome*, first seen here during the 1982 season. He began his career as an assistant director at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin and at the

under Wieland Wagner. This led to a contract at the Metropolitan Opera where he served as assistant director from 1966–1971. He made his directorial debut at the Paris Opera with the 1972 production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Lehnhoff first came to San Francisco Opera to direct *Salome* in 1974 and returned here two years later to stage *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, a work he re-created here again in 1980. Highlights of his distinguished career include a new staging of the complete *Ring* cycle in Munich, *Katya Kabanova* and *Jenůfa* at the Glyndebourne Festival, a new staging of *Salome* at the Metropolitan Opera, Henze's *Der Prinz von Homburg* in Munich and Zurich, in addition to a highly praised new production of Pfitzner's *Palestrina* for the Royal Opera at Covent Garden. The German director's most recent engagements include a new staging of *Der Freischütz* for the Berlin State Opera; a repeat of *Palestrina* at New York's Lincoln Center Festival (marking the Royal Opera's first visit to the U.S.); the *Ring* cycle in Munich; *Tosca* for the Netherlands

Opera; *Katya Kabanova* at Glyndebourne; *Eugene Onegin* in Baden-Baden (the inaugural production sponsored by the European Union Opera); as well as a new mounting of *Parsifal* for the English National Opera which he will restage for the Company this coming season.



JOHN CONKLIN created the original designs for the four operas of Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*, which were unveiled in 1983 (*Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*), 1984 (*Siegfried*), and 1985 (*Götterdämmerung*). He also served as production consultant for our 1990 *Ring* presentation. His first Company assignment was the 1977 *Un Ballo in Maschera* (also mounted here in '82, '85 and '90). Additional SFO credits have been *Don Pasquale*, (1980, '84); *La Traviata* (1987, '91, '95), *Idomeneo* (1989); and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1992). Spring Opera Theater audiences first saw his work in productions of *Orfeo* (1972), *Death in Venice* (1975 and '79), and *Julius Caesar*. (1978). Elsewhere in the U.S., his designs have been seen at the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dallas Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis and Santa Fe Opera, among others. On the other side of the Atlantic, Conklin has been responsible for production designs for the Holland Festival, Scottish Opera, and the Munich Opera. Among the highlights from his 1997–98 season were *Norma* and *Idomeneo* in Chicago; Antheil's *Transatlantic* for Minnesota Opera; *Falstaff*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Of Mice and Men* and Handel's *Partenope* at Glimmerglass Opera; Susa's *Transformations* in St. Louis; *The Turn of the Screw*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Macbeth* for City Opera; Gluck's *Orfeo et Euridice* for the English National Opera; as well as *Carmen* in Cincinnati and Colorado Springs. Conklin's designs have also been seen in numerous ballet and legitimate theater productions.



In his relatively short career in professional theater, **JOHN COYNE** has designed sets for over 40 productions including *A Little Night Music*, *First Lady*, *Tartuffe*, *Night Mother*, *Fallen Angels*, *Godspell*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*. His designs have been seen at theaters across the country such as Dallas Theatre Center, Santa Fe Stages, Yale Repertory Theatre, Capital Rep, Syracuse Stage and the Juilliard School. A recent graduate of the Yale School of Drama and a recipient of the Donald M. Oenslager award for excellence in design, Coyne studied under Ming Cho Lee and Michael Yeargan and has assisted the latter on numerous opera designs including *Carmen* (San Francisco Opera), *Madama Butterfly* and *The Ballad of Baby Doe* (Dallas Opera), in addition to *Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci* (Welsh National Opera). Prior to his work for the stage, he established himself as a licensed architect, designing buildings, residences, interiors and furniture on projects as diverse as the Milwaukee School of Architecture and the interior of a 125-ft. custom yacht. He has been honored with a number of awards for his architectural work including a prize from the American Academy in Rome.



British designer **BOB RINGWOOD**, currently residing in Los Angeles, studied under Ralph Koltai at London's Central School of Art and Design and after graduation began his career at the Citizens' Theater in Glasgow. He has since designed sets and costumes for numerous works seen around the world: over 150 opera, theater and ballet productions, as well as some 20 major feature films. He is perhaps best known in the United States for his work in film: He created the costumes for Steven Spielberg's *Empire of the Sun* (for which he was nominated for an Academy Award); the *Batman* movies directed by Tim Burton; *Excalibur* for John Boorman; the science fiction epic *Dune* for David Lynch; in addition to *Demolition Man*, *Alien 3* and *Alien Resurrection*. He served as production designer for Peter Greenaway's film *The Draughtsman's Contract*. Ringwood has also created designs for *Norma* at Covent Garden's Royal Opera; the world premiere of Tennessee Williams's *The Red Devil Battery Sign* in London's West End; Howard Barker's *Stripwell* at the Royal Court Theatre; *The Heilword* for the Hamburg Ballet; *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *The Way of the World* at the Théâtre Royal du Parc in Brussels; *The Duchess of Malfi* at the Théâtre de Poche in Brussels; as well as *Swan Lake* and *Raymonda* for the Asami Maki Ballet in Tokyo. *Supernova*, a space movie which will be released later this year, features the designer's latest Hollywood costume creations.



THOMAS J. MUNN continues to serve as lighting director for San Francisco Opera, a position he has held since 1976. He most recently created the lighting for *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and *Carmen* during our *Femmes Fatales* Festival, and last season added new designs to productions of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (projection and lighting design), *Don Carlo*, *Peter Grimes* and *Betrothal in a Monastery*, as well as for revivals of *Turandot* and *Tristan und Isolde*. Design credits for our 1997-98 season included the 75th Anniversary Gala (stage and television), *Tosca*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and *Eugene Onegin*. During his tenure with the Company, he has created the lighting and special effects for over 180 productions. Scenic design credits include productions of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1979), *Billy Budd*, *Nabucco*, *Don Giovanni* and *Christophe Colomb*. His television credits for the Company include *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *Turandot*, the Emmy-Award winning *La Gioconda*, *Aida*, *Samson et Dalila*, *La Bohème*, *Mefistofele*, *Orlando Furioso*, *L'Africaine* and *Capriccio*. Munn has also designed productions for the Netherlands Opera, Opéra de Nice, Sendai Opera, Houston Grand Opera and Dallas Opera. Recent assignments include work for the Washington Opera (*Dangerous Liaisons*), New York City's Mary Anthony Dance Theatre, the PBS television production of *Emmeline*, and Ballet Arizona (scenery and projections for a new staging of *The Nutcracker*). Lighting system consulting projects include San Francisco's renovated War Memorial Opera House and Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

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A special exhibit, featuring historic images of early San Francisco performances of Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*, along with recent San Francisco Opera *Ring* photography by Robert Cahen, is on display in the 4th floor hallway.

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DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN 1999

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Scott Bergeson Conductor
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MEROLA AT COLLEGE OF MARIN

July 31 at 8 pm
Rossini's *The Italian Girl in Algiers*
Sung in English

William Lacey, Conductor
David Edwards, Director
Presented at the College of Marin
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MEROLA AT STERN GROVE FESTIVAL

August 8 at 2 pm
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DIE WALKÜRE

continued from page 14

falsity of Wotan's moral position. Defeated and in his deepest dejection, Wotan unburdens himself to Brünnhilde, his most beloved daughter, his other self, and in that unburdening, he tells her how events over which he has no control have brought him to his desperate plight. People who understand nothing about Wagner like to complain that characters, especially in *The Ring*, are constantly and at great length telling us what we already know, in this instance because we have seen *Das Rheingold* and Act 1 of *Die Walküre*. Indeed, it is this soliloquy of Wotan's — a soliloquy that is nonetheless a conversation because it could not happen without Brünnhilde's loving encouragement — that is most often singled out as The Awful Example of narrative redundancy.⁴

But if we listen carefully to what Wotan is saying — and the same applies *mutatis mutandis* to the other story tellers in *The Ring* — we discover a fundamental truth about the telling of stories: the teller colors the story according to his needs. In this instance, we may know many of the facts that Wotan imparts to Brünnhilde, but their psychological burden is new in his telling. Beyond that, Wotan tells her — and us — much that we do not yet know. This long passage is a fabulous achievement in varied declamation, most of it achieved with utmost economy, but with two shattering climaxes. One occurs when Wotan cries about his distress and shame, and comes to a realization, into which he was prodded by Fricka, that in Siegmund and Sieglinde he has not succeeded in creating the free beings for which he had hoped. The other: when he admits that he now wants only one thing, "das Ende," and then adds, after a frightening silence, that Alberich will take care of that. With a Wotan who understands suffering, a Brünnhilde who knows how to listen (one of the most treasurable and rarest of stage skills), and a worthy audience, this scene is one of the greatest in musical theater.

Just as miraculous is the fact that Wagner can equal, perhaps even surpass it in the scene between Brünnhilde and Siegmund, the scene in which she reveals to him that only those mortals destined for death are granted sight of her; that he will die in combat, slain by Hunding because the magic power of his sword has been withdrawn, and that he will be

Continued on page 49

⁴ By chance, on the day I wrote this paragraph I found precisely this complaint in the diary of the passionately Wagner-loving nineteen-year-old Alma Schindler (later Alma Mahler).



Francis Bacon

A Retrospective Exhibition

12 June - 2 August
1999

Provocative and complex, his art was influenced by Picasso and surrealism. Talented and tormented, his life (1909-1992) was the recent subject of the film "Love is the Devil." He was British painter Francis Bacon—one of the most important figurative artists of the 20th century. Explore his art in the first U.S. retrospective in more than a decade. Fifty-eight paintings from museums and private collections around the world—many on public view for the first time—are featured.

Francis Bacon was organized by The Trust for Museum Exhibitions. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. Funding from ArtPoint has made the exhibition possible in San Francisco. Photo by Jane Bowen, courtesy of Marlborough Gallery, London. Above painting: *Portrait of George Dyer Talking*.



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Featured artists and personalities from San Francisco Opera's production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* share their insights and experiences during two informal panel discussions. Complimentary to Guild members; \$10 for general admission. Insights will be held from 6 to 7 p.m. in Herbst Theatre, Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco.

Monday, June 14 *An Insider's View from the Production Team*

Monday, June 21 *A Singer's Perspective*

PRE-PERFORMANCE LECTURES

Pre-performance lectures take place one hour prior to curtain time in the orchestra section of the War Memorial Opera House. Free of charge to patrons with tickets to the corresponding performance.

Cycle one performances *Speaker: Simon Williams*

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EXHIBITIONS

San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum

Retrospective exhibit June 9 through July 3, recalling the history of *Ring* performances given in San Francisco and highlighting the legendary artists who performed here. PALM Gallery, 401 Van Ness Ave., 4th floor. For more information, call (415) 255-4800.

War Memorial Opera House

Historic photo exhibition in the foyer of the Opera House, curated by San Francisco Opera.

De Young Museum Costume Exhibit

Exhibit of costumes from San Francisco Opera's 1990 production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park ends June 27.

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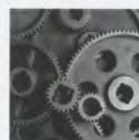
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Celebrates Bravo Award

On May 8, Arthur Andersen was awarded the prestigious BRAVO Award for support of the San Francisco Opera, particularly its World Premiere production of André Previn and Philip Littell's *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The award is presented annually by OPERA America to outstanding corporations that support opera and opera companies.

"Arthur Andersen has shown tremendous commitment to the arts and to the cultural life of this community," said San Francisco Opera General Director Lotfi Mansouri.

In addition to the grant for *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Arthur Andersen has been involved in other aspects of the San Francisco Opera including young audience development and strategic consultation.

Founded in 1913, Arthur Andersen is a multidisciplinary professional services firm, providing information and applying knowledge to help its clients improve business performance and achieve a competitive advantage. The company offers clients insights and innovative problem-solving capabilities to improve decision-making, increase profitability and productivity, lower cost of capital and decrease business risk. The Northern California practice of Arthur Andersen has been in operation for almost 70 years and employs more than 1,200 people in San Francisco, San Jose and Sacramento.

"We are honored to receive this award and pleased to have been part of this unique part of American culture," commented Larry J. Gorrell, managing partner for the Pacific Northwest region of Arthur Andersen. "We are confident our collaboration with truly creative artists such as André Previn and Lotfi Mansouri will stand the test of time, so that this production will enjoy the long and prosperous life it so deserves."

A Streetcar Named Desire is scheduled to be performed at the New Orleans Opera in March 2000 and at the San Diego Opera in April 2000.



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DIE WALKÜRE

continued from page 41

taken to Valhalla. One would like to say that Siegmund is the only wholly noble character in *The Ring*, though unfortunately this requires one to overlook his annexation of Hunding's wife.⁵ Be that as it may, in this scene Siegmund acts with a nobility that no one else in these dramas approaches. He asks questions about Valhalla. Brünnhilde tells him about Wotan and the company of heroes he will find there and assures him that he will also meet his father, and yes, there are "Wunschmädchen," wish-maidens (the phrase suggests celestial Playboy Bunnies), that she herself will serve him his drink, but finally, no, Sieglinde cannot accompany him there. At this point Siegmund realizes that the kitsch paradise Brünnhilde has described holds no charms for him, that, dead or alive, he wants to be with his sister/bride. Here we are at the ethical center of *The Ring*: for once, someone has seen the choice between love and the trappings of power, and has chosen love. Of course neither he nor Sieglinde are rewarded for their choice as the tragedy, set in motion so long ago by their father, runs its inevitable course.

Finally, Act 3 brings another great confrontation — Wotan and Brünnhilde again, but now the dissident Valkyrie pleads with her enraged father to be forgiven for having made the choice that reflects his most authentic self, the choice — futile in the event — to defend Siegmund in his fight with Hunding. In conceding Brünnhilde's plea for a ring of fire to surround her sleep, Wotan at least approaches choosing love over power. His love for Fricka has long grown cold, he has had to bring about the death of his son, and Brünnhilde is now his deepest love. As he kisses her divinity away, both he and Brünnhilde know that this farewell is forever. For a moment, Wotan is stripped, someone we recognize as a human father, and one whose heart is breaking. But his last words — to Loge, the fire god, and to all who might contemplate penetrating the ring of fire — are words of command.

Another ending that is not an end: you cannot just leave the heroine asleep on a mountaintop and finish with a threat. Two more dramas will conclude the tale, and Wagner has given us a whole new arsenal of themes whose further recurrences and developments will lend richness and depth to what is yet to come. □

⁵ This is of course a preview of Wagner's annexation of Cosima von Bülow, and his justification would be the same: he and Siegmund need and deserve their trophies more than Hans von Bülow and Hunding.



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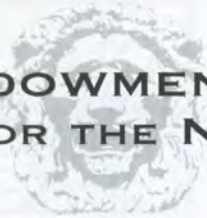
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- * VIP tours for your corporate employees and special guests.
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For more information, contact our Corporate Council Hotline at (415) 565-3264.

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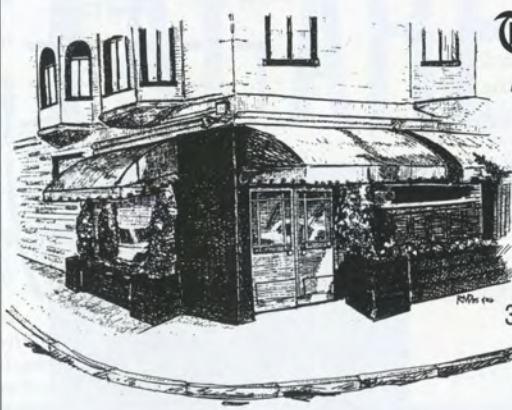
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DIGITAL WATCHES, PAGERS, CELL PHONES. Please switch them OFF before the performance begins.

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. 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.

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For the safety and comfort of our audience, all large parcels, backpacks, luggage, etc., must be checked at the Opera House cloakrooms (north and south ends 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.

On permanent display in the Opera House lower bar:

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Great artists at San Francisco Opera, 1962-1997

Stage photography by Robert Cahen

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.

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 south end of the main lobby.

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 Saturdays; and every half hour from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Sundays.

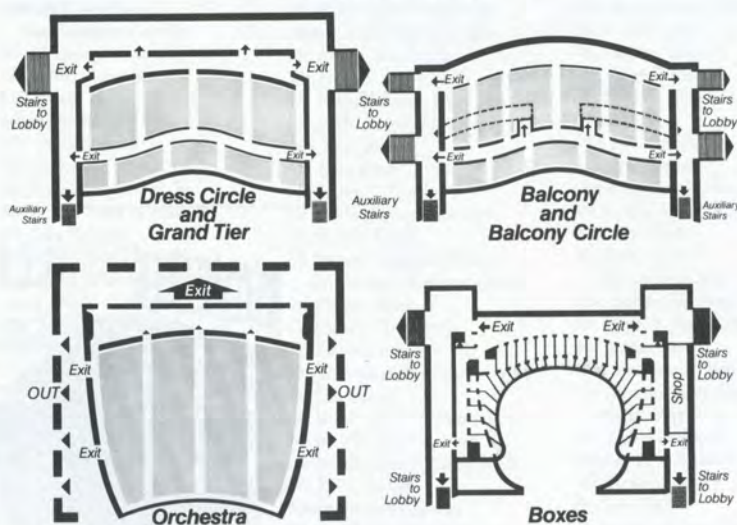
Tickets for Guild members, \$2; non-members \$5. Reservations required. Information: (510) 524-5220.

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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.

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).

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



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San Francisco Opera
June 19, 1999

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