

Idomeneo

1999-2000

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PERFORMING ARTS®

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MAGAZINE

Idomeneo

1999/2000 Season

Vol. 77, No. 6

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A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR



SOHL

Welcome to San Francisco Opera's newly expanded 1999/2000 Season in the War Memorial Opera House. Running from September 11, 1999 through July 2, 2000, our newly scheduled season offers you more performances to choose from over a longer period of time — allowing you to enjoy your San Francisco Opera experience with greater ease than ever before.

We have so much to look forward to this season — a repertoire of 11 brilliant masterworks, five of which are presented in spectacular new productions: Charpentier's *Louise*, Donizetti's *La Favorite*, Verdi's *Nabucco*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Wagner's *Parsifal*. Our 77th Season also features revivals of celebrated San Francisco Opera productions: Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Mozart's *Idomeneo* (co-owned with Lyric Opera of Chicago), Puccini's *La Bohème*, Berg's *Wozzeck* and Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. Additionally, some of the world's finest singers and conductors will join in music to pay tribute to a very special member of the San Francisco Opera family, mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne.

Music Director Donald Runnicles and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus will be on hand all season, joined by an illustrious group of international artists — singers, conductors, directors and designers — who will infuse each production with all the musical glory, vocal brilliance, dramatic fervor and visual splendor that grand opera has to offer.

Enjoy!

Lotfi Mansouri
General Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AND FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ASSOCIATION



MCCARTHY

Our 1999/2000 Season ushers in a new era for San Francisco Opera. Great opera is now being presented virtually all year round. This is an advantage for us all. Not only does it give our patrons more flexibility, but it also provides more opportunities to widen our audiences, develop artists, offer arts education, and enliven the operatic repertoire with new commissions and productions, thus helping to secure a vibrant future for the art form.

This season is made possible by our dedicated sponsors and contributors. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of our thousands of individuals whose support, large or small, is vital to our season. Equally important to us is the role of our year-round sponsors: Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as the James Irvine Foundation and our 1999/2000 sponsors: Bank of America, American Airlines, and Kawai Pianos, provided by San Francisco Pianoworks, Inc. Our great thanks also goes to our production sponsors: Friends in memory of Gorham B. Knowles (*Un Ballo in Maschera*), Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Wattis Littlefield and Lorna Talbot (*Louise*), Mrs. Gorham B. Knowles (*La Favorite*), The Bernard Osher Endowment Fund (*Idomeneo*), Fred and Peggy Furth and Wells Fargo (*La Bohème*).

We also wish to acknowledge San Francisco Opera Guild on the occasion of its diamond jubilee year. For 60 years, the Opera Guild has introduced hundreds of thousands of people in the Northern California community to opera, and has helped to support San Francisco Opera both financially and through the efforts of its myriad volunteers.

On behalf of the San Francisco Opera Association, we are pleased to welcome you to San Francisco Opera's 77th Season, and we thank you for joining us.

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IDOMENEO: A SPECIAL MASTERPIECE

By ANDREW PORTER



SCHERL

Final scene of our 1989 production of *Idomeneo*. Principals included Karita Mattila in the role of Ilia, Wieslaw Ochman in the title role and Hans Peter Blochwitz as Idamante.

In a great composer's oeuvre there is often an early work that seems to catch the first full force of his individual genius — a work to which he brings all the skills he has so far learned, in which his invention seems ablaze as with marvelous technique and impassioned ambition he realizes something he has long dreamed of doing, using “conventions” when they suit his purposes, transcending them in the afflatus of excited

Andrew Porter, music critic of The New Yorker 1972-92, Bloch Professor at Berkeley 1980-81, has made English singing versions of ten of Mozart's operas. The San Francisco Opera has performed his *Magic Flute* and *Marriage of Figaro* (1980 and 1982 respectively). His *Idomeneo* translation was first performed by the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

composition. With Verdi, such a work is *Nabucco*. And with Mozart, *Idomeneo*.

Mozart composed *Idomeneo* for Munich, in 1780-81, where it was performed two days after his twenty-fifth birthday. The opera was a success in Munich but (unlike Verdi's *Nabucco*) did not go on to become an international success. In fact there was only one further production during Mozart's lifetime, and that was at a private, apparently non-professional performance in Vienna, five years later. *Idomeneo* was not altogether forgotten. There were sporadic revivals of the opera during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and a clutch of them in 1931, marking the 150th anniversary of the first performance: Richard Strauss's performing version was done in Munich (with Elisabeth

Schumann as Ilia), Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari's version was also done in Vienna, and the Italian original was revived in Basle. But only in day has *Idomeneo* joined the repertory.

Charles Rosen wrote not long ago, “As for *Idomeneo*, if it could have been saved for the repertory, it would have happened by now.” But it has happened. It happened a few decades ago. There is scarcely an opera company now that has not staged *Idomeneo*. (The San Francisco Opera first played it in 1977, then again in 1989.) Early in this century, the Mozart “canon” on the world's stages was *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *The Magic Flute*. Then *Così fan tutte* and *Die Entführung* were rediscovered. (They were rarities, not repertory pieces, in my

youth.) Next came the revelation of *Idomeneo*. And then the long-underrated *La Clemenza di Tito*, the Prague "festival" opera commissioned for a coronation, in which Mozart could return to the "serious" genre unfavored in his Vienna and, as in *Idomeneo* ten years before, write another great *opera seria* fashioned to his personal prescriptions.

Idomeneo, to be sure, had not lacked admirers and champions. Back in 1913, as the First World War loomed — and before *Idomeneo* had ever been heard in Britain — Edward Dent in his *Mozart Operas* devoted two eloquent chapters to the work. And Dent's second edition of the book, dated 1946, ends, "More than ever now, in these times of turmoil and confusion, do we need the profound and noble sincerity of *Idomeneo*." David Cairns took up the theme in 1972:

To know *Idomeneo* is to discover one of the marvels of dramatic

music; yet it is only now, two centuries after its composition, that the work's greatness is beginning to be appreciated.... Humanity may need, as never before, the sanity, the profound life-renewing laughter of Mozart's comedies, to prevent it from taking itself too seriously. But it needs, too, that handful of special masterpieces whose qualities of courage, hope, compassion, and above all honesty of vision make them its natural parables and sacred texts, from which it may learn to see the truth about itself... *Idomeneo* is one of those works.

The story of the opera's making has often been told. It bears telling again. Many different threads, musical, biographical, practical, came together in its creation. In his youth, Mozart had composed two *opere serie* for the Teatro Regio Ducale (the predecessor of La Scala) in Milan:

Ilia and Idamante in our two previous stagings of *Idomeneo*: (right) Christiane Eda-Pierre and Maria Ewing in 1977; Hans Peter Blochwitz and Karita Mattila in 1989.

SCHIERL





SCHERL



SCHERL

Elettra, about to explode: (left) Carol Neblett in 1977; Nancy Gustafson in 1989.

Mitridate, *Re di Ponto* in 1770 and *Lucio Silla* in 1772. Both of them contain great, powerful music; stirring, beautiful arias. Both have been prominently and successfully revived in our day. Five years later, in August of 1777, Mozart, accompanied by his mother, embarked upon the long tour that proved a turning-point in his life. He was twenty-one, unmarried, musically mature, and eager to break free from both the circumscribed musical life of Salzburg and his dominating father. From October to March of the following year he was in Mannheim, where he fell in love with the singer Aloysia Weber and became friendly with the singers and instrumentalists of Elector Carl Theodor's famous musical establishment. The Elector also maintained a French theatrical troupe; he had a great library, the Biblioteca Palatina, and a celebrated *Antiquensaal*; Niccolò Jomelli, Tommaso Traetta, and Johann Christian Bach had composed grand tragic operas for his large, splendid theater. When Mozart met the Elector, he said, "My fondest wish is to compose an opera for here." In February he wrote to his father, "Forget what I said not wanting to write operas. I am eager to write one...but Italian, not German, and *seria*, not *buffa*." Then three days later he wrote, "Writing

an opera is now my one burning ambition — but French rather than German, and Italian better than either."

Chivvied by his father (who required progress reports back to Salzburg every few days, and replied to them with advice, exhortation, and admonishment), Mozart moved on to Paris. Here he was able to witness the greatness of Gluck's tragic operas, so different both in temper and technique from Italian *opera seria* unreformed (yet not so far from a great scene in Mozart's own *Lucio Silla*). On July 3rd his mother died, and in the small hours of the morning, after her five-hour death agony, he wrote the remarkable letter to his father in which he says only that his mother is desperately ill, rattles on at length about his new symphony and its performance, and then talks about his opera plans: "It is very difficult to find a good libretto. The old ones, which are the best, are not adapted to the modern style, and the new ones are all quite useless." Then on July 31st: "I must write a grand opera or none at all" — adding that the Mannheim musical establishment is about to be moved to Munich (where Carl Theodor had succeeded to the Wittelsbach throne), and that Aloysia Weber may become a prima donna there.

In September he left Paris, making his way back to Salzburg in slow stages, by way of Mannheim and Munich. In late December he reached Munich, where he renewed acquaintance with the Mannheim musicians — and learned that Aloysia had jilted him. In January he was back in the Salzburg he detested. The flood of letters ceases, to be resumed only in November of 1780, when Mozart went to Munich to complete *Idomeneo* and bring it to the stage.

For five years — the longest opera-less period of his career — Mozart had not written an opera. *La Finta Giardiniera*, an *opera buffa* that he invested with episodes of keenest psychological poignancy, and *Il Re Pastore*, a masterly Metastasio setting, had both appeared in 1775; *Zaide*, a German *Singspiel* begun in 1779, was left unfinished. *Idomeneo* had a long genesis. It was born from Mozart's discoveries, during those five months in Mannheim and six months in Paris, of what a serious musical drama, composed for and executed by a stable, well-rehearsed company might be; from Gluck's grandeur (but suffused, dare one say, with Mozart's more copious invention); from the desire to create for and with the "Mannheimers," both

Continued on page 52

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PART II – THE PLAYERS

BY STEPHANIE SALTER

"You conductors who are so proud of your power! When a new man faces the orchestra — from the way he walks up the steps to the podium and opens his score, before he even picks up his baton — we know whether he is the master or we."

— Franz Strauss, father of Richard



(L. to r.) Subjects of this article, Rufus Olivier, Nora Pirquet and Timothy Wilson, captured in the Opera House basement lounge before a performance.

Night after night, they sit down there in the deep twilight of the orchestra pit, their faces barely visible in the amber glow of music stand lights. Wearing black gowns, satin pantsuits or white tie and tails, they are not unlike the sea: deceptively uniform and docile — on the surface. Underneath, a different world exists. Populated by six-or-seven-dozen highly trained, widely experienced, uniquely complex individuals, the sea roils and swirls with the energy, history and strong will of every single player.

Woe to the baton-wielding man or woman who enters their midst unprepared or poor in talent and presumes to lead. Special woe to the inadequate ones whose hubris prevents them from recognizing and respecting the power beneath the placid surface.

"Sometimes, we just have to take over," says Rufus Olivier, the principal

bassoonist for the San Francisco Opera Orchestra. "We realize, 'This guy doesn't know what he's doing and this is going to be a mess.' So we just have to take over. We'll literally play past the conductor. It's like, 'Go ahead, just wave your little stick.'"

Principal trumpet Timothy Wilson concurs: "There are times when that has to happen. Some conductors have really good concepts but they can't communicate it with the stick. You have to take over, and he really isn't in control."

And when that happens, says cellist Nora Pirquet, there's almost no reversing the engines. "I always find it fascinating how a conductor can keep or lose the respect of an orchestra instantly. Once he's lost it, it's really hard to get it back," she says.

Fortunately, according to Olivier, Wilson and Pirquet, mutiny is a rare occurrence in the War Memorial Opera House. Under

the baton of Music Director Donald Runnicles, it is a non-occurrence.

"Maestro Runnicles has done good things for this orchestra. He's very personally oriented and tries to find out what works with you as a person as well as a player," Olivier says. "There's a lot of trust going on here among us; I think he trusts us a lot, and we trust him. And he has raised the level of personnel to the point that, as a player, you're so inspired by the people around you. The orchestra has never been as good as it is under him."

Olivier has a sufficient number of years in his chair to make such a statement with authority. In 1980, already a member of the San Francisco Symphony, he auditioned for Kurt Herbert Adler, got

Stephanie Salter is a thrice-weekly opinion columnist for the San Francisco Examiner and a veteran supernumerary for the San Francisco Opera.

the principal bassoonist's job and has been in the Opera House pit ever since. During the San Francisco Ballet's season, he plays bassoon for their orchestra.

"I live here," he jokes of the War Memorial.

In truth, Olivier lives in Fremont with his wife and two children, ages 14 and 21. A native of Los Angeles, he grew up in that city's Watts district and began playing the saxophone as a child. (His father was a sax player, too; his mother played piano.) The bassoon came along in junior high. "Our school did a production of *The Sound of Music*, and I couldn't be in it — there were no saxes," he recalls. "But I just loved that sound so, the day after I saw the show, I told the band instructor, 'I want to play an instrument that can get me into an orchestra.' He said, 'Play the oboe.' But when I went to the store to get an oboe, the guy behind the counter said, 'We're all out of oboes. Take this.' It was a bassoon. As soon as I heard it, it just clicked with me."

With his best friend, also a bassoonist, Olivier played a variety of classical and jazz gigs all through his high school years. Once, as a member of the Santa Monica Civic Opera Orchestra, "I remember doing *Carmen* for a dinner party in someone's living room in Beverly Hills. A whole orchestra in a living

room! Another time we did *Aida* and got \$25 and dinner at the Brown Derby."

Six months into his freshman year at L.A. City College, "this really fine instrument fell into my lap" and Olivier decided "I'm cutting out of here." But the school's music director didn't want to lose him so "he made me a 'professional expert' and I started teaching Wednesday nights." In 1977, just a few courses shy of his degree, he left for good: Edo de Waart, then conductor of the San Francisco Symphony had hired him. [Until 1981, the year Davies Symphony Hall opened, San Francisco Opera and the San Francisco Symphony shared the same players.]

Like Olivier and most of the SFO Orchestra musicians, Nora Pirquet also began to play as a child. "I heard the cello when I was about 5 or 6 and I really liked the sound of it," she says. "So, that Christmas, I asked for a cello and a horse. I got neither." While the horse would continue to elude her, her musically inclined parents did soon find a pint-size cello for their daughter, and Pirquet began to play it at age 7. After high school in her native Boston, she spent a year at the Curtis Institute of Music, then enrolled in Harvard University, majoring in — comparative religion.

"I didn't play while I was at Harvard,"

SOHL



Rufus Olivier

she says. "I wasn't sure I was going to be a musician." But upon graduation, Pirquet fell in with a string quartet and began to play professionally. She heard about a job with another quartet in — of all places — Sioux City, S.D., headed west and got the position. By 1981, however, "I couldn't see staying in Sioux City, so I moved to San Francisco. I don't think I had an idea of where I was going to end up at all."

In 1983, Pirquet began playing as an "extra" musician with the San Francisco Opera. While extras are contracted ahead of time for operas that require larger-than-usual orchestras (think Wagner), the job is also about plugging last-minute, emergency personnel holes. "You get a call at 7 o'clock in the evening from someone asking, 'Are you free?', and you come in and play something you may never have seen," says Pirquet. "Some operas were very difficult to do that with. I remember sight-reading *Billy Budd*. Britten! You'd have a headache when it was over."

In January of 1990, Pirquet said goodbye to the 7 o'clock phone calls forever and joined the San Francisco Opera Orchestra full-time as part of the seven-person cello section. These days, most of her spontaneous challenges come from a different source: She and her husband, a percussionist with the San Francisco Symphony, have two children, ages 2 and 4. "I spend a lot of time shuttling them around," she says.

Trumpeter Timothy Wilson's kids are 8 and 10 and already play the piano, clarinet and melophone. Home is San Rafael where Wilson's wife of 19 years rounds out the family. Wilson himself grew up in Santa Cruz and began playing the



Nora Pirquet

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piano at age 3. Four years later, he added the trumpet to his repertoire but did not seriously consider concentrating on it as his dominant instrument until his senior year of high school.

"I played it in the All-State Band Conference and ended up placing No.1 in the rankings," he said. "That was my first indication that, 'Hmm, you may have a special gift here.'" A piano major at San Jose State University — "I'm grateful for that piano training. I learned shadings and voicings in a way you can't on a single instrument" — Wilson says he never really had time to develop a soloist's attitude about the horn. (For many orchestral players, making the adjustment from bright solo spotlight to collective semi-obscure is a stretch.)

"I started taking serious trumpet lessons shortly before my 17th birthday. Shortly before my 18th birthday, I was named second trumpet in the San Jose Symphony. So, no, I never had to adjust to thinking of myself as one element of a collective voice," he says. If anything, Wilson may be more team-oriented than many of his colleagues. As the musicians' union steward, he is deeply involved in the orchestra's health, welfare and working conditions. Come contract time, he is among the negotiators for labor.

"This last contract, we settled a year-and-a-half ahead of schedule," he says. "Since then, I think there's been a developing of mutual understanding between the orchestra and management of one another's needs. That early settlement set up a really healthy labor-management dynamic, and I'd like to see that continue." A great portion of that mutual understanding, says Wilson, involves the Opera management's recognition that well-rested musicians not only play better, they have fewer sick days and longer lasting careers.

"The biggest impediment to getting the job done is fatigue," Wilson says. Consequently, each musician is guaranteed one opera off per season. Apparently, no one is a bigger supporter of this policy than Music Director Runnicles.

"I remember him looking at me once and saying, 'Rufus, you just look so tired,'" says bassoonist Olivier. "He sees things like that because he pays attention to each individual. We play more hours than any other opera orchestra in the country — the Met has two orchestras — and Maestro understands that rest is

good for a performer. In the last two years I've been able to take off two operas each season. Since he's been here, I haven't had one sick day or personal leave — in five years! It's because I've had time off."

As a string player, Pirquet has not been quite so lucky. Chronic tendinitis in her right thumb would take a lot longer to cure than the run of one production. "Many of us work with it," she says, gesturing to a blue elastic brace on her hand. "Once you're injured, it's hard to get well. You really can't totally rest your hand, even if you don't work. I've done everything — Feldenkrais, acupuncture, physical therapy, ice, whatever. You just try to control it. It's either that or find a new career."

That is a prospect neither Pirquet, Wilson nor Olivier cares at all to contemplate. In a previous interview, Runnicles said he will "always remain perplexed that (musicians) could be insensitive" to "what a phenomenal profession this is and what a privilege it is to be in it." Pirquet, Wilson and Olivier share his perplexity.

"Other than being independently wealthy and never having to work at anything again, there is nothing else I'd want to do," says Wilson. "I find it challenging and rewarding. In opera, you're never really on auto-pilot because anything could happen — on any beat, on any measure. In this orchestra, there is a very nice work ethic and dynamic. I feel very fortunate to work with these people around me. Do I see myself doing this for years and years? Yes, yes, unequivocally yes!"

Pirquet couldn't agree more. "There aren't that many of these jobs in the country. Yes, the hours are long, but I feel fortunate to have this job. When it's all working out there, it's a real high, really an event," she says.

As for Olivier: "For me, an opera orchestra is like this stealth submarine with Maestro as the captain and us as crew. You're down there — maybe the most vital part of the Navy — but nobody knows it. In the last few years, this orchestra has really grown together. I listen to us all the time — I sit in a good place to do that — and I'll hear one of my colleagues do this incredible solo and I think, 'Wow. That's my buddy. She's making all of us look good.'"

Speaking of looking good, how about



Timothy Wilson

critics' reviews? Does any of the stealth submarine crew live and die by them? The answer: an unanimous and resounding "No."

"I really don't have time to read them," says Pirquet. Besides, "If somebody's been really great, I already know it."

"I find that the assessment that's made in a review hasn't much relevance for me," says Wilson. "I'm the leader of the trumpet section — to be quite frank, I don't hear anything else but what's beside me — so I have to make my assessment and judgments of what I should do differently or the same again from *that* vantage point. I try to indicate by example as opposed to saying, 'Do this, do that.' Rather than ask for hard work, you just live hard work."

Says Olivier: "I'm not avoiding reviews, I just don't think about them. Sooner or later somebody tells me anyway. I really play off the audience more than anything. And when I hear cheering and screaming on an opening night, and then there's a bad review and they aren't cheering and screaming at the next performance, I know, 'Hey, something's going on.'"

So critics don't threaten a musician's emotional or mental stability. What about Life Itself? How hard is it to come through the stage door with a broken heart, anxiety attack, major depression, grief or the stinging words of a recent argument in your head and — as Pirquet puts it — "honk out your 100th *La Bohème*"?

In Part I of this orchestra profile,
Continued on page 51

ADVENTURE IN THE ARTS

Opera Tours

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6th Renaissance Italy Opera Program Cernobbio – Venice – Milan – Bologna – Florence – Rome March 22nd to April 8th

This is a tour of the great opera houses of Italy. We request Category One seating to all performances including La Scala. This opera program combines the most remarkable sightseeing and walking tours to the greatest museums, cathedrals and villages along with some excellent cuisine. As of this writing the performance in March at La Scala will be *Tosca*.

Spectacular Spring & Opera at the Metropolitan Opera in New York & the New York City Opera April 9th to 16th

Spring in New York with walks through Central Park to the Metropolitan Museum of Art staying in our charming hotel on Central Park West and only 3 blocks to Lincoln Center. We will attend performances at the Metropolitan Opera of *Rigoletto*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *La Bohème*. At New York City Opera, *Platée* and the New York Philharmonic, Bach's *St. John Passion*. A total of 5 operas, 1 concert and a Broadway play to be announced. Also, backstage visit with the artists.

13th Ring Program Der Ring des Nibelungen at the Metropolitan Opera in New York April 30th to May 7th

Spring in New York with walks through Central Park to the Metropolitan Museum of Art staying in our charming hotel on Central Park West and only 3 blocks to Lincoln Center. There will be special events planned by Sherwin including after-the-performances parties. A chance to see many friends from previous Ring programs as well as new Wagner friends. The cast includes James Levine conducting and Plácido Domingo, Jane Eaglen, James Morris and Deborah Voigt. The remainder of the cast will be announced.

Spring and Opera in the Royal Town of Dresden and Berlin, the new monumental capital of Germany May 9th to 20th

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14th Ring Program Der Ring des Nibelungen in Helsinki June 5th to 17th

...you are invited to join Sherwin for this first ever performance of the Ring at the all new Helsinki Opera House and see friends among past Ring Alumni and reminisce about our many shared experiences. This is the first time the Ring cycle will be produced at the ultra-modern Finnish National Opera, which sits in a lovely park setting. The opera's cutting-edge stage technology provides set and lighting designers with everything they could conceivably need to create visually stunning productions. There will be spectacular sightseeing and day trips from Helsinki based on the experience of our groups since 1989. There will be 4 after-the-performance parties.

6th Annual St. Petersburg Opera and Ballet Program The White Nights Festival in St. Petersburg with The Hermitage and The Savonlinna Summer Opera Festival on a Lake in Finland June 22nd to July 8th, 2000

This is an extensive 16-day opera vacation with only the most spectacular sightseeing, walking tours, and a total of 9 opera and ballet performances. This summer we spent two days with a private guide at The Hermitage and visited palaces including the Summer Palace. In Finland we attended operas in the courtyard of Olavinlinna Castle, a 13th century castle in a lake setting, among many other experiences.

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Oct. 3

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Dahl (10/12, 15, 17, 21, 23, 26, 11/6)/
Swenson (10/24, 29, 11/3)/Richardson*
(10/30); Vargas/Beltrán (10/23, 26,
30, 11/6), Michaels-Moore/
Robertson (10/23, 11/3, 6),
Hagen/Relyea (10/23, 11/6)/
Coliban (10/26, 30)

Bonynge/Bernhard/Howland/Toms/
Munn/Hill*

Oct. 12, 15, 17, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30
Nov. 3, 6

WOZZECK Berg
Behrens; Held, Lundberg*, Riegel/
Petersen (9/5, 7, 9), Eder**, Lincoln
Boder/Mansouri/Levine/Whitfield

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Nov. 2, 5, 7, 9, 13, 17

IDOMENEO Mozart
Bonney*/Netrebko (12/1, 5, 11),
Vaness, Kasarova*; Winbergh
Runnicles/Copley/Conklin/Stennett/
Munn

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Nov. 14, 16, 19, 23; Dec. 1, 5, 11

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Collaboration with Teatro Bellini di Catania

Nov. 24, 27, 30; Dec. 3, 6, 10, 12

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Joel/Feldman/Yeargan/Mahoney/
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Dec. 4, 7, 9, 11

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Foland/Netrebko (1/9, 12, 14, 16);
Lima/Todorovich** (1/8, 11, 13, 15),
Okerlund/Westman (1/9, 12, 14, 16),
Relyea/Ames (1/15, 16), Daza/
Gama (1/9, 12, 14, 16), Trempont
Joel/Feldman/Yeargan/Mahoney/
Munn

Jan. 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Volkwijn, Jenkins; Geer, Westman,
Ames, Gama, Trempont
Lacey*/Feldman/Yeargan/Mahoney/
Munn

Jan. 15mat

New Production

DON GIOVANNI Mozart
Colonna**/Foland (6/17, 28), Vaness,
Netrebko/Kriha Dye (6/17, 28);
Hvorostovsky/Okerlund (6/17, 28),
Bros*/Shankle (6/28), Antoniazzi
Beckwith*/Mansouri/Sciutti/
Bosquet/Coyne/Whitfield

June 3, 7, 11, 13, 17, 22, 28; July 1

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Evans; Very, Terfel, Asawa, Travis
Stenz/Cox/Hockney/Munn

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June 10, 16, 20, 23, 25, 29

New Production

PARSIFAL Wagner
Malfitano; Ventris**, Grundheber,
Moll, Fox, Hagen
Runnicles/Lehnhoff/Bauer*/
Schmidt-Futterer*/Göbbel*

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Opera in three acts by WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Text by GIANBATTISTA VARESCO

After *Idomenée* by Antoine Danchet

Idomeneo

(in Italian)

Conductor

Donald Runnicles

Production

John Copley

Set Designer

John Conklin

Costume Designer

Michael Stennett

Lighting Designer

Thomas J. Munn

Chorus Director

Ian Robertson

Musical Preparation

Adelle Eslinger

Bryndon Hassman

William Hobbs

William Lacey

Ernest Fredric Knell

Prompter

Jonathan Khuner

Continuo

Adelle Eslinger, harpsichord

David Kadarauch, cello

Joseph Lescher, bass

Supertitles

Christopher Bergen

Assistant Stage Directors

Brad Dalton

Roy Rallo

Stage Manager

Jerry Sherk

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First performance:

Munich, January 29, 1781

First San Francisco Opera

performance: September 10, 1977

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16 AT 8:00

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 8:00

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23 AT 7:30

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1 AT 7:30

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 AT 2:00

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 AT 8:00

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Ilia Barbara Bonney*
Anna Netrebko
(12/1, 5, 11)

Idamante Vesselina Kasarova*

Elettra Carol Vaness

Arbace Norman Shankle†

Idomeneo Gösta Winbergh

Two Cretan maidens Virginia Pluth
Rachel Perry

Two Trojan men Richard Walker
Jere Torkelsen

The High Priest of Neptune Todd Geer†

The Voice of the oracle John Ames†

People of Crete, Trojan prisoners, priests

*San Francisco Opera debut †1999–2000 Adler Fellow

PLACE AND TIME: Crete, after the Trojan War

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

SYNOPSIS — IDOMENEO

The Trojan War is over and Idomeneo, King of Crete, is on his way home to be reunited with his son Idamante, who has grown to manhood during his father's absence and who now rules as regent.

ACT I

Ilia, a Trojan princess and King Priam's daughter, has been taken prisoner in Crete. Alone, surrounded by captured Trojan plunder, she struggles with her guilt at loving Idamante, son of the king who conquered her homeland. Idamante approaches and tells Ilia that his father's fleet has been sighted. In honor of this joyful day, and because of his love for Ilia, Idamante frees all the Trojan prisoners. As the Cretan people and liberated Trojans rejoice, Elettra, the daughter of Agamemnon, enters. She has been living in exile on Crete after the murder of her mother Clytemnestra. She objects to the liberation of the Trojan prisoners. As Idamante defends his actions, Arbace, Idomeneo's chief counselor, arrives with the news that Idomeneo has drowned at sea. Idamante departs, overwhelmed with grief. Left alone, Elettra fears that if the king is dead, her hopes of wedding Idamante will die with him.

Idomeneo's fleet has been overcome by a storm and driven onto the rocks. Miraculously, Idomeneo and some of his men have survived. After coming ashore, the men leave Idomeneo alone to reflect on the vow he made to Neptune in exchange for his protection from the storm: to sacrifice to the god the first person he encounters on land. Idamante enters, having sought solitude to ease his grief. He fails to recognize the stranger and offers him shelter. When Idomeneo finally learns that the young man is his son, he reveals his own identity. Appalled by the situation, Idomeneo recoils from his son's embrace and departs, forbidding Idamante to follow him. Idamante is inconsolable at his father's rejection.

The storm has now abated and the Cretan populace gather to praise Neptune and celebrate the king's safe return.

ACT II

Idomeneo tells Arbace of his vow to Neptune, and decides that for Idamante's safety, he will send him to Argos with Elettra. Ilia appears and tells Idomeneo of her happiness at finding a new homeland in Crete and a new father in Idomeneo. After she is

gone, he realizes that she loves his son, and he leaves, overcome by the pain and suffering his vow will cause. Elettra enters and expresses her pleasure in having Idamante to herself.

The boat which will take Elettra and Idamante to Argos is ready to set sail, and the people of Crete assemble. All look forward to a safe voyage. Idomeneo arrives to bid farewell to Elettra and Idamante. As the couple are about to embark, a storm suddenly arises. The frightened people realize that someone has offended the gods and they demand to know his name. Idomeneo tells them that he is the guilty one, and as the storm continues, the crowd flees in terror.

ACT III

Ilia can only think of her unhappy love for Idamante. He tells her that he will fight the terrible monster Neptune has sent to plague the island and that he may never return. They reveal their love for each other. Idomeneo and Elettra interrupt the lovers. Idamante begs his father to reveal the reason for his harsh behavior, but when Idomeneo cannot answer, the prince sadly departs.

The High Priest of Neptune demands from Idomeneo the name of the one to be sacrificed to placate the god. Idomeneo at last names his son. The crowd is horrified and the priest asks for mercy for the innocent man.

Solemn prayers are offered to the god. A victory celebration is heard nearby, and Arbace enters with the news that Idamante has slain the monster. The young hero returns, knowing his father's vow and ready to sacrifice himself to the angry god. As the ceremony is about to begin, Ilia intervenes, offering herself in place of her lover. The entire situation is resolved by an oracular pronouncement: Idomeneo is to renounce the throne, which Idamante is to ascend and there be united with Ilia. At this unexpected announcement, Elettra is left with her worst fears realized and leaves in a rage. Idomeneo presents Idamante to the people as their new king, and is hailed by the populace.

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Carolyn Waugh

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Patrick Hamilton
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ARTIST PROFILES



Soprano **BARBARA BONNEY** is considered one of the primary interpreters of the roles of Mozart and Strauss and is widely recognized as one of the finest recital and concert artists of her generation. She appears regularly at the Vienna State Opera, Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, the Paris Opera/Bastille, and at the houses of Munich and Hamburg. Among her celebrated roles, her interpretations of Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* from Vienna (under Carlos Kleiber) and London (led by Georg Solti) have both been released on video, as have her performances in *Falstaff* and *Ariadne auf Naxos* from the Met. Her most recent operatic engagements include *Der Freischütz* (Agathe), *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Adina) and *The Merry Widow* (Hanna Glawari) at the Vienna State Opera; *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Susanna) and *Rosenkavalier* at the Bastille; *Die Zauberflöte* (Pamina) and *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Met; as well as Rameau's *Les Boreades* (Alphise) in London and Salzburg. Bonney also performs throughout the world in concert and recital with leading orchestras, conductors and accompanists. Her wide-ranging discography (over 60 recordings) includes sacred music, complete opera recordings, major choral works, and several discs of lieder. Her most recent releases include recordings of: American songs with André Previn at the piano; lieder by Robert and Clara Schumann with pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy; Mozart opera arias and duets with Bryn Terfel; Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* led by Seiji Ozawa; songs by Richard Strauss accompanied by Malcolm Martineau; and scenes from Strauss operas with Renée Fleming and Susan Graham, led by Christoph Eschenbach. Born in New Jersey, the soprano spent two years as a Music and German major at the University of New Hampshire before enrolling at the University of Salzburg to further her German studies. While there, she was accepted into the vocal program at the renowned Mozarteum and subsequently began her operatic career with Germany's Darmstadt City Opera.



ANNA NETREBKO recently opened the current season at Washington Opera, receiving overwhelming critical and public acclaim for her portrayal of Gilda in *Rigoletto*. Born in Krasnodar, the soprano received her training at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where she appeared as Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Violetta in *La Traviata*. After winning first prize in Moscow's 1993 National Glinka Competition, she was invited by Irina Arkhipova to take part in a concert at the Bolshoi Opera. Since making her 1994 Kirov Opera debut as Susanna, she has repeated this role on the Kirov tours to Finland, Germany and Israel, and was seen as the Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Riga Opera Theater. In 1995, Netrebko made her U.S. opera debut as Lyudmila in San Francisco Opera's premiere production of *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. In 1998, San Francisco Opera audiences saw the former Merola Opera Program participant appear as Susanna in *Figaro* and as Louisa in the Company premiere of *Betrothal in a Monastery*. She was also featured last year in a critically acclaimed performance as part of the Schwabacher Debut Recital series. Netrebko has been heard in concert the world over, and in concert performances of *Betrothal* and *La Traviata*

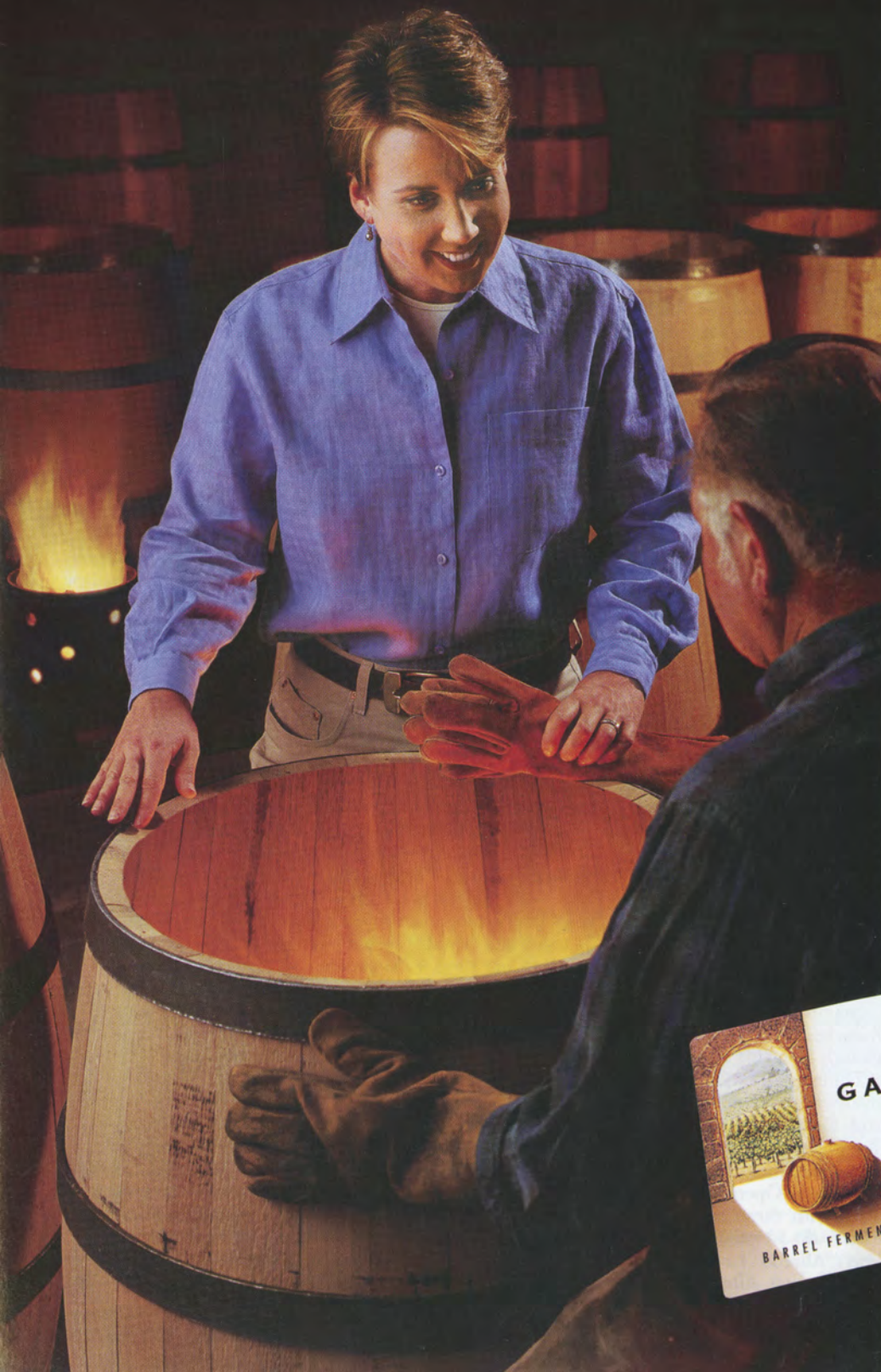
with the Kirov. Now a full-time member of the Kirov, her appearances with that company include *Ruslan and Betrothal* at New York's Metropolitan Opera; *Rigoletto* (role debut as Gilda) in St. Petersburg; *Carmen* (Micaëla) in Japan; *Boris Godunov* (Xenia) and *Parsifal* (Flower Maiden) both at Italy's Ravenna Festival and the Salzburg Festival; *The Love For Three Oranges* (Ninetta) and *Benvenuto Cellini* (Teresa) at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw; as well as *Boris* and *Betrothal* throughout France. In addition to *Rigoletto* for Washington Opera, the soprano's most recent engagements include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina) in Latvia, *La Sonnambula* (her first Amina) with the Kirov, as well as concerts with the S.F. Symphony and the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano. Her Kirov performances in *Ruslan and Lyudmila* and *Betrothal in a Monastery* are available on video and CD.



Soprano **CAROL VANESS** enjoys a career that encompasses regular appearances at the world's major opera houses and concert halls, an impressive catalogue of recordings, and frequent television broadcasts in Europe and North America. The American artist, a first-place winner in the 1976 Merola Opera Grand Finals and a former Affiliate Artist with the Company, appeared as Vitellia in Mozart's *Titus* (*La Clemenza di Tito*) and Cleopatra in *Julius Caesar* for Spring Opera Theater. Since her 1977 debut season with San Francisco Opera, she has been applauded on the stage of the War Memorial as Mimi in the English-language performances of *La Bohème*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Blanche in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, Mathilde in *Guillaume Tell*, Elisabetta in *Don Carlo*, Elena in *I Vespri Siciliani*, and in the title roles of *Anna Bolena*, *Tosca* and *Norma*. Also a leading artist at the Metropolitan Opera (where she appeared during their 1998–99 season as Tosca and as Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*), she has performed at the Glyndebourne, Edinburgh and Salzburg Festivals, Milan's La Scala, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Bavarian State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Vienna State Opera, Bastille Opera in Paris, Royal Opera at Covent Garden, and with the companies of Los Angeles, Seattle, Rome, Toronto, Madrid, Barcelona, Cologne and Houston, among others. In demand as a concert soloist, she has sung with the major orchestras of the world and is a veteran of numerous television appearances. Her distinguished discography includes *Tosca* led by Riccardo Muti, two recordings of *Don Giovanni* (as Donna Anna under Bernard Haitink and as Donna Elvira under Muti), *Iphigénie en Tauride* from La Scala, *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* (the Countess) conducted by Charles Mackerras, *Idomeneo* led by James Levine, an album of "Diva Scenes," two solo recordings of Mozart and Verdi arias, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, an album of Haydn masses, and the Verdi Requiem.

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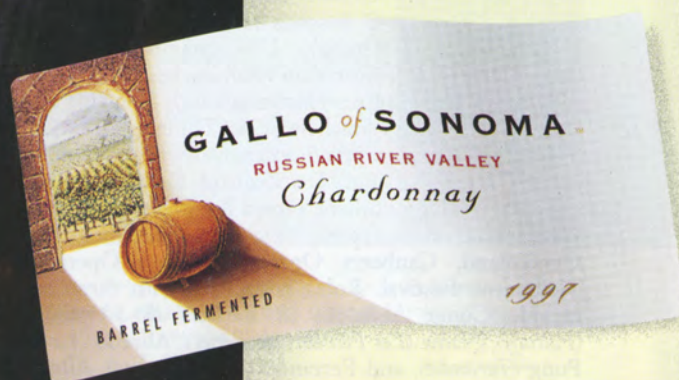
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A native of Bulgaria, **VESSELINA KASAROVA** was originally trained as a concert pianist and became a singer when, while studying at the Music Academy in Sofia, she began to perform mezzo-soprano roles at the State Opera of Sofia. After winning an important German vocal competition in 1989, she was engaged by the Zurich Opera where she sang for two seasons. International appearances, most

often in the operas of Mozart and Rossini, soon followed — at the Salzburg Festival, Vienna State Opera, and at the houses of Geneva, Florence, Barcelona, Berlin, Amsterdam, Munich and London (Covent Garden). Highlights of her operatic career have included *Don Giovanni* (Zerlina) and *La Clemenza di Tito* (Annio) at Salzburg; *Anna Bolena* (Giovanna) at Munich's Bavarian State Opera; *Idomeneo* (Idamante) in Florence and for her 1997 U.S. debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago; *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* (Romeo) at the Paris Opera/Bastille; *Werther* (Charlotte) and *La Pêricole* (title role) in Zurich; *La Cenerentola* (Angelina) in Pesaro; as well as *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina) at the Vienna State Opera and Metropolitan Opera. Among her most recent performances are *Barbiere* and *Così fan tutte* (Dorabella) in Zurich, *Alcina* (title part) in Barcelona, *Clemenza di Tito* in Munich, *La Damnation de Faust* (Marguerite) in Salzburg, and *I Capuleti* with the Opera Orchestra of New York. Future engagements include *La Clemenza di Tito* at Covent Garden, *L'Italiana in Algeri* in Paris, *Anna Bolena* in Zurich, *Idomeneo* and *Così* at the Salzburg Festival, in addition to *Der Rosenkavalier* (her first Octavian) at the Met. Also praised worldwide in concert and recital, the mezzo's discography includes complete operas (among them *Werther*, *Tancredi*, *I Capuleti*), as well as several recordings of arias, songs and operatic duets.



Tenor **GÖSTA WINBERGH** received his musical training at the Opera Conservatory in his native Stockholm. After his 1973 debut as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* in Göteborg, he became a member of the Royal Opera Stockholm where his roles included Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and Rodolfo. Since 1981, he has been a regular

guest at the Zurich Opera, singing many of the major Mozart roles, particularly in productions staged by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle and conducted by Nikolaus Harnoncourt. Winbergh is now considered one of the leading tenors of the day and has been a frequent performer at the major houses and festivals of the world. He has appeared at San Francisco Opera (1974 U.S. debut as Don Ottavio, a reprise of the role in 1981, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* in 1983, Erik in *Der Fliegende Holländer* in 1997), the Metropolitan Opera (1983 debut as Ottavio), Milan's La Scala, the houses of Munich, Berlin, Amsterdam, Vienna, Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Chicago and Houston, as well as at the Salzburg, Aix-en-Provence, Glyndebourne, Munich and Tanglewood Festivals. In recent seasons he has been appearing with great success in heavier tenor roles: the title parts of *Lobengrin* (Berlin, Paris, Ravenna) and *Parsifal* (Zurich, Berlin, Stockholm); Walther in *Die Meistersinger* (Berlin, Vienna, Chicago, Covent Garden); Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Zurich); Florestan in *Fidelio* (Nice, Zurich, Vienna); and, most recently, a highly praised Tristan in *Tristan und Isolde* (Zurich). In the future, the tenor will sing the roles of Siegmund/*Die Walküre*, Siegfried/*Siegfried* and Tristan for the Vienna State Opera, Zurich Opera and the Royal Opera in Stockholm. An artist with numerous recordings to his credit, Winbergh is also a highly regarded concert soloist and recitalist.



Second year Adler Fellow **NORMAN SHANKLE** made his San Francisco Opera debut during the 1998 *Femmes Fatales* Festival as Valletto in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, subsequently performing here last season in *Tristan und Isolde*, *Don Carlo* and *Betrothal in a Monastery*. The tenor was first prize winner of the prestigious 1998 MacAllister Awards and is the recipient of a 1999 Richard Tucker Career Grant. Shankle's

credits with the S.F. Opera Center include participation in two Merola Opera Programs (1996, '97); Showcase presentations of *Iphigénie en Tauride* (Pylade, 1998) and *Così fan tutte* (Ferrando, 1999); a Schwabacher Debut Recital; as well as two national tours with Western Opera Theater. Elsewhere, he has performed with the Washington Opera (*Luisa Miller*), Washington Concert Opera (*Roméo et Juliette*), Paul Hill Chorale (*Messiah*), S.F. Choral Society (Britten's *War Requiem*), Washington Oratorio Society, Choral Arts Society of Washington and New Century Chamber Orchestra, among others. A native of Winchester, Virginia, Shankle received his undergraduate degree in voice from Shenandoah University.



TODD GEER, a 1999–2000 Adler Fellow, participated in the 1998 Western Opera Theater national tour of *La Traviata*, in which he sang the role of Alfredo. Prior to that he appeared as Don José in the 1997 WOT tour of *Carmen*. After his professional opera debut with Syracuse Opera as Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore* and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, the tenor was named a resident artist with Tri-Cities (Binghamton,

N.Y.) Opera where he appeared as Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* and in the title role of *Faust*. Additional credits include Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Pollione in *Norma* and the title role of *Albert Herring*. In concert, the young artist has been heard in *Carmine Burana*, *Messiah*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* and Bruckner's *Te Deum*. Among his most recent engagements are a debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in *Salome*, his European debut in Paris and Geneva as Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, and the Opera Center's Showcase production of *Così fan tutte* in which he sang the role of Ferrando. Geer holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and Binghamton University and is a former voice instructor at Cornell University.



1999–2000 Adler Fellow **JOHN AMES** was a participant in the 1998 Merola Opera Program, in which he sang the role of Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*. While studying music at the University of Nevada, the Reno native began his appreciation of opera when his university chorus joined the Nevada Opera's choristers for a production of Verdi's *Otello*. A recipient of the Anna Ross Foundation Scholarship for Apprentice Artists, the bass studied voice while performing nearly a dozen roles at Nevada Opera including Colline (*La Bohème*), the Speaker (*The Magic Flute*) and the Old Hebrew (*Samson et Dalila*). A winner of the Elsie Sweeney Scholarship, he studied with Giorgio Tozzi at Indiana University where his credits included Sparafucile in *Rigoletto* and the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*. After leaving I.U., Ames made debuts with Indianapolis Opera and Kentucky Opera, toured with the Nevada Opera Studio as Sulpice in *The Daughter of the Regiment*, and

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participated in the Nevada Opera Young Artist Program. In concert he has performed Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and *Requiem* with the Reno Philharmonic. The young artist most recently sang Don Alfonso in the Opera Center's Showcase presentation of *Così fan tutte*, the Duke in *Roméo et Juliette* with Kentucky Opera, as well as Tom in *Un Ballo in Maschera* and Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* at Nevada Opera.



Music Director of San Francisco Opera since 1992, **DONALD RUNNICLES** is 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 Tippet's *King Priam* with the S.F. Opera Center; and the 1996 West Coast premiere of Wallace and Korie's *Harvey Milk*. The maestro most recently led three highly praised cycles of the Company's *Ring* Festival this summer. 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 *Ring* excerpts with the Dresden Staatskapelle and a disk of German Romantic opera arias with tenor Ben Heppner. Elsewhere, he has conducted opera productions at the Bayreuth Festival, Salzburg Festival, New York's Metropolitan Opera, Milan's La Scala, Bastille Opera, Berlin Opera, Vienna State Opera, Cologne 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. He also 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.



Internationally celebrated director **JOHN COPLEY** made his Company debut in 1982 with Handel's *Julius Caesar* and the following year staged the U.S. premiere of Tippet's *The Midsummer Marriage*. Subsequent SFO assignments have been *Don Giovanni*, Handel's *Orlando*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Traviata*, *Idomeneo*, *Suor Angelica*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Il Trovatore*, *Anna Bolena*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Peter Grimes* and *Manon*. In addition, he directed the young artists of the Merola Opera Program in productions of *Die Fledermaus* (1993), *Don Giovanni* (1994) and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1996). Copley began his career as stage manager for musicals in London's West End before becoming assistant and then principal resident director of the Royal Opera at Covent Garden. His work has been acclaimed at the major opera houses and festivals in Europe, and he has also directed over 30 productions at Opera Australia. In North America, his credits include stagings for the Metropolitan

Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dallas Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Washington Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera, San Diego Opera, Canadian Opera Company and the New York City Opera. His most recent work has been seen at the New York Met (*Giulio Cesare*) and City Opera (*Ariodante*), Opera Australia (*Macbeth*, *Tosca*), as well as in Dallas (*Ariodante*), Chicago (*La Gioconda*), London's Royal Opera (*Semele*, *Bohème*), and Santa Fe (*Madama Butterfly*, *Semele*).



JOHN CONKLIN created the original designs for the four operas of Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung* which were recently presented as part of the Company's *Ring* Festival. 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 *Orpheus and Eurydice* 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.



One of the world's leading operatic and theatrical costume designers, **MICHAEL STENNETT**'s work was first seen by San Francisco Opera audiences in the 1982 staging of Handel's *Julius Caesar*, and in 1985 he scored a triumph in another Handel opera here, *Orlando*. He also designed the costumes for the Company's 1984 staging of *Anna Bolena* (reprised in 1995), *Eugene Onegin* (1986), the new production of *Idomeneo* (1989), as well as for *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1992). Since his first production in 1968, *Anne of Green Gables* in London's West End, the English designer has worked for various leading opera, ballet and theatrical companies. In addition to numerous costume credits for Opera Australia, his designs have been seen in productions at the Metropolitan Opera, London's Covent Garden, English National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Welsh National Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Los Angeles Opera, among others. Among his costuming credits last season were *Così fan tutte* for Palm Beach Opera, *Falstaff* in Los Angeles, and *Idomeneo* in Chicago. In recent years, Stennett has been concentrating on his painting career. He had a very successful 1998 exhibition in Aldeburgh followed by an acclaimed showing earlier this year in London. His portrait of Dame Joan Sutherland (for whom he created numerous stage costumes) is in the Royal Collection at England's Windsor Castle.

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Chorus director and conductor at the San Francisco Opera since 1987, **IAN ROBERTSON** made his Company conducting debut with the 1988 production of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and has since led performances of *Falstaff*, *Lohengrin*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Don Carlo*, *Turandot*, *Il Trovatore* and *La Bohème*. In addition to his highly praised work with the Opera Chorus, he has led the Opera Orchestra and Chorus in

many concerts. Additional assignments include the Opera Center's productions of *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, *Così fan tutte*, *La Périochole* and *The Elixir of Love*, as well as the Merola Opera Program's Grand Finale Concerts. He has also led *Don Giovanni* for Sarasota Opera; *The Magic Flute* and *Rigoletto* for Edmonton Opera; in addition to numerous operas at Philadelphia's Curtis Opera Theatre where he will conduct *A Midsummer Night's Dream* next season. Before joining the Company, Robertson was head of music and chorus director of Scottish Opera, where he led *The Barber of Seville*, *The Secret of Susanna*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *Rigoletto*, *The Magic Flute* and *Die Meistersinger*, among others. A native of Scotland, the maestro trained as a concert pianist and accompanist at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, subsequently graduating with honors from the University of Glasgow. His recital career led to appearances at the Edinburgh International Festival and the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room in London. He has recorded recitals for the BBC and appeared as pianist with the New Music Group of Scotland. He was appointed artistic director of the San Francisco Boys Chorus in 1996.



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 our 1999 Ring 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*, in addition to the *Femmes Fatales* Festival's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and *Carmen*. 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* (nominated for an Emmy Award), *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, Dallas Opera, Washington Opera (*Dangerous Liaisons*), New York City Opera (*Emmeline*, also televised on PBS), New York's Mary Anthony Dance Theatre and Ballet Arizona. Lighting system consulting projects include San Francisco's renovated War Memorial Opera House and Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

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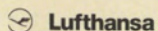
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Idomeneo

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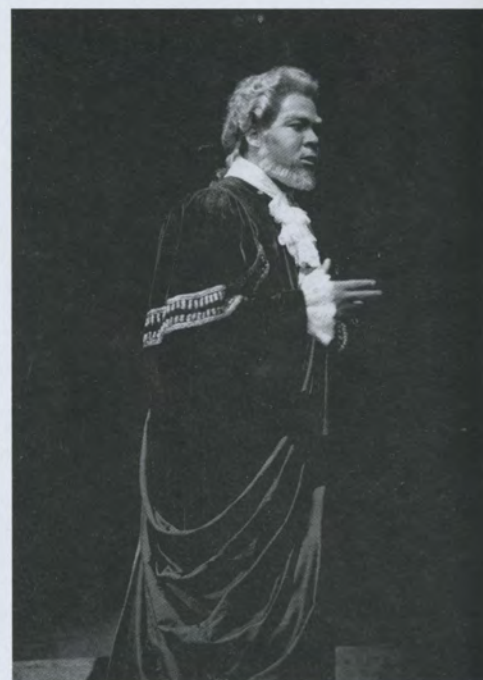


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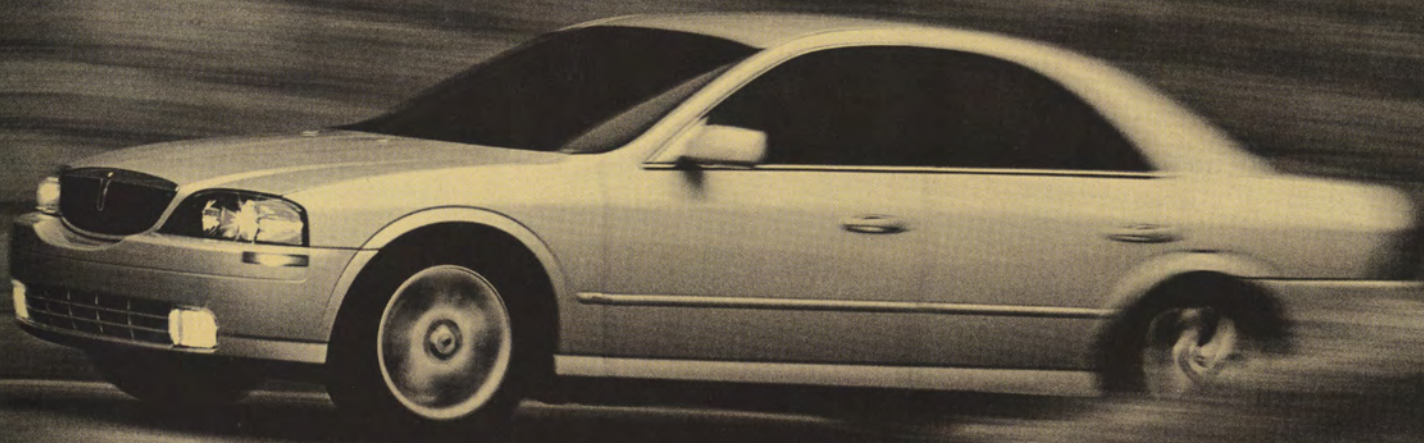
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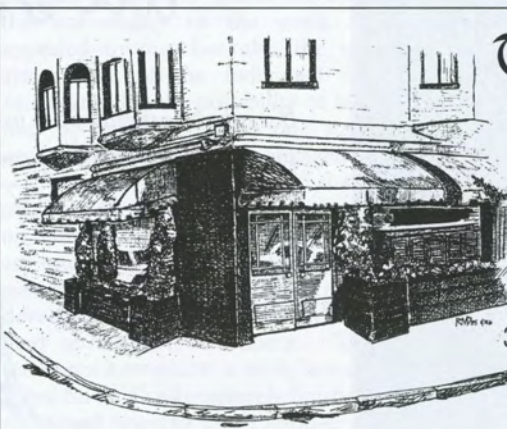
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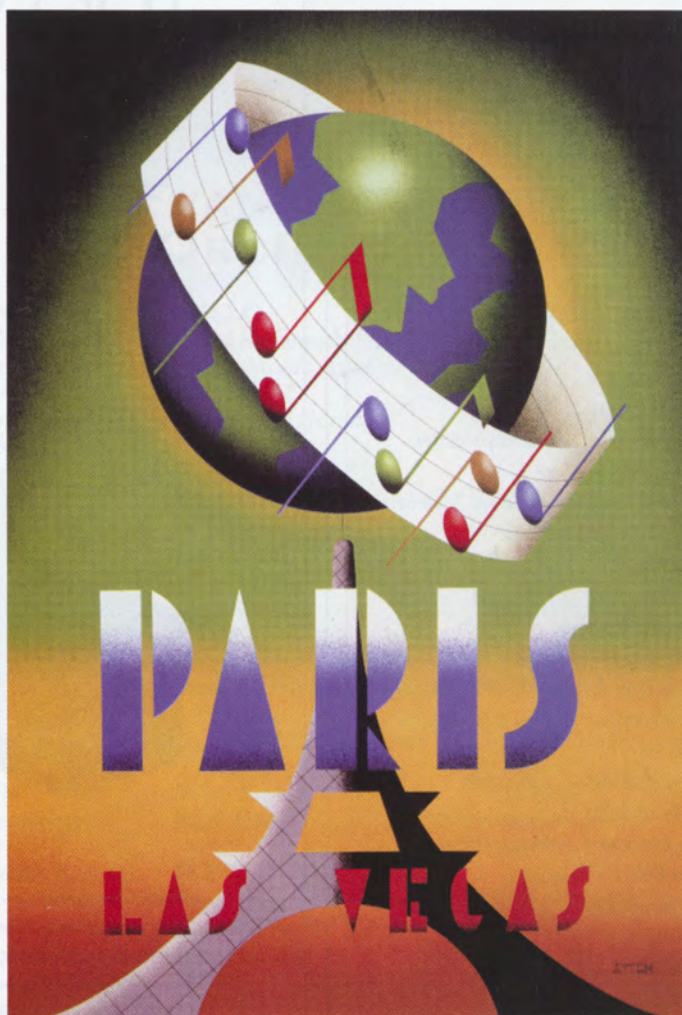
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SAN FRANCISCO OPERA ORCHESTRA

continued from page 18

Donald Runnicles observed that "Making music is orchestrating your personality. It's an expression coming from the deepest part of your soul. And that *has* to be affected by your state of mind."

How does a professional musician transcend that effect? "It's like being a professional in any job," says Pirquet. "You try to stay appropriate at work. And it's not the same for us as being Renée Fleming or someone. We're not so exposed as individuals."

"Sometimes, in fact, it actually helps to have a connection to something personal — even to troubles — there's something to tap into. I remember this past summer (during the *Ring*), seeing two of our section's players crying during the farewell between Brünnhilde and Wotan. Both of them were connecting to some personal loss, and I think it translated into the music."

For Wilson, it is a different process. "There's this baseball movie out now where the pitcher is on the mound and the crowd is screaming and pressing down and you can see the whole stadium, and then the pitcher says to himself, 'Mechanism on,'" says Wilson. "Then the crowd din goes down and everything around him blurs, and all he sees is the catcher's mitt."

"That's what happens for me. Mechanism on. Maybe it goes with the instrument. There is a conditioned response to perform. It took me quite a while to trust that, to trust that my subconscious brain will carry me — as long as I've done the preparation, of course. I don't shoot for perfection any more, I shoot for excellence. That goal makes it all much more interesting and probably makes for better music in the long run."

In his 19 years with the Opera Orchestra, Olivier has learned intimately about tapping into deep emotion and turning it into sound. When he found out during an intermission of *The Rake's Progress* that his long-ill father had died, he opened himself wide to his bassoon.

"Music is an amazing thing," he says. "I speak better with my instrument than my voice. I mean *much* better. When things like that happen, it can just pour out of you. That night, I sat there thinking, 'This is where my dad wanted me to be,' and that just poured out of my instrument."

On the other end of the spectrum,

Olivier says he has also learned the art of "leaving a lot *in* the Opera House when a performance is over."

"We might finish this great performance with Pavarotti or this incredible *Aida*, and I'm going crazy and I'm in this other world, and then I call my wife and she says, 'How'd it go?' and I say, 'Fine,' and she says, 'Great. Could you pick up some Pampers on the way home?' You have to live like you have another life," he says.

Yet, even a Pamper picker-upper can't completely forget being part of a transcendental performance, an opera in which all the intricate and obvious moving parts synchronize and — thanks to the maestro — operate as one. We already know what happens when a conductor stands in the way of such potential transcendence. What is it like when he or she has the right stuff?

"I have this note over a mirror in my locker that says, 'Play your butt off and get into the zone,'" says Olivier. "I'm going to try to do that every night I go out there, even if the conductor is a lunatic. But when you've got someone who's really going to take it to the top, it's just great. It becomes an addiction. You want the hairs to stand up on the back of your neck like that every time."

Says Wilson: "When it happens, it is because there is a unified concept, and that concept comes from the maestro. Somehow, within his framework, he allows the individual voices to make their contribution. You get the sense that he is working *with* us, allowing each of us to put our best foot forward. What he wants makes sense to you. It's difficult to find the right words, but, there are some people, when they move the stick, it just commands, it's just so clear."

For Pirquet, it is often a question of extra-sensory communication. "Some conductors really talk a lot and explain a lot. The really great ones communicate it with their hands," she says. "It's like dancing with someone who's really fluid and connected to the music. It's so much easier."

Can a conductor have an ego the size of the Pacific and a haughty demeanor to match, yet still make an orchestra want to play for him or her?

"Yes," says Pirquet. "If the music is in the forefront and they're really serving the music, not the music serving them, you want to play for them. After all, isn't that why we're all there? To serve the music?" □



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IDOMENEO: A SPECIAL MASTERPIECE

continued from page 12

the singers and the instrumentalists, whom he liked and admired; and from his reluctance to struggle on in what he considered a musically provincial town, an unsatisfactory post in the Archbishop's service, and, we can surely add, the shadow of a very demanding father.

Sent forth to win fame and honor, he had achieved neither in large measure. He had, at the age of twenty-one, been away from his father for the first time in his life. He had assisted at his mother's deathbed, far from home. He had fallen in love and been rejected. We might say that he had grown up. The ways of genius are strange. Psycho-biography is often suspect, and psycho-criticism even more so. (Do we know why Verdi was drawn again and again to dramas about father-daughter relationships, or Wagner to brother-sister ones?) But composers do choose their own librettos — or, as Verdi once put it, librettos seem to choose them and to insist on being set. (When composers choose badly, the music usually shows it.) They also shape their chosen material; Mozart did much to shape that of *Idomeneo*. It would be near-perverse not to discern Mozart's response to a drama in which a father resolves to sacrifice his son, and the son is prepared to sacrifice himself for his father, but which ends with the father's resignation of all authority to that son — with, moreover, his chosen bride beside him. That happy ending was Mozart's own contribution to his source material. In the "old libretto" from which *Idomeneo* was fashioned, Idamante was slain.

Before embarking on *Idomeneo*, Mozart had returned to nearly two years of what he must have regarded as servitude in Salzburg. Soon after its performance, he left his Salzburg employment, engaged himself to and then married Aloisia Weber's sister Constanze, and set up in Vienna as an independent, freelance composer, performer, and teacher. When he and his wife returned to Salzburg to pay their respects to father Leopold, there was a family performance of the quartet from *Idomeneo*, which begins with the son's "Andrò, ramingo e solo" ("Alone I'll go to wander"). Leopold sang the father, Idomeneo; Mozart sang the son, Idamante; his bride Constanze sang Ilia, Idamante's beloved; and Mozart's sister, Nannerl, was the Elettra. Nannerl tells us that Mozart "was so overcome that he burst into tears and

quitted the chamber, and it was some time before I could console him." Father-son bonds are not easily broken. Perhaps we should not make too much of this. Yet the changes that were made to the source plot do seem significant.

The source was Antoine Danchet's *Idoménée*, a *tragédie lyrique* set by André Campra in 1712. But in Campra's opera *Idoménée* — in a fit of madness, it is true, brought on by the gods at Electre's request — does kill his son. No Oracle intervenes to save the youth. Ilione (Ilia) does not offer herself as an alternative victim (although she does so later, when *Idoménée* is preparing to kill himself). Mozart's librettist, the Abbé Gianbattista Varesco, a chaplain of Salzburg Cathedral, followed Danchet's action for two acts and then provided the new ending. That he worked to Mozart's prescription, under the young composer's orders, seems clear enough from the tone of the correspondence that passed between Munich and Salzburg as the opera assumed its final shape. But not only the ending was altered. Generalized Metastasian moralizing was scrapped in favor of personal, passionate statement.

That *Idomeneo* correspondence, three months of ample and lively exchange of letters between Munich and Salzburg, between Mozart and father Leopold, provides our fullest account of a Mozart opera in the process of composition. As a verbal key to the workings of a composer's mind it is something to set beside the Verdi-Somma, the Verdi-Boito, and the Strauss-Hofmannsthal exchanges. Mozart's letters, wonderfully vivid, deal with large matters of construction and small matters of diction (along with such practical cares as sending a pair of socks and getting a suit turned). Trumpet and horn mutes, rather surprisingly unavailable in Munich, are ordered from "provincial" Salzburg. On November 23rd, while Mozart is in mid-letter, Domenico de Panzacchi, the Arbace, knocks on the door and enters with the suggestion, made "very meekly," that the words "Se cola" might sing better as "Se la sa" — and his suggestion gets into the score. Anton Raaff, the Idomeneo, is worried by the large number of *is* Varesco has used in his final aria, "Torna la pace": "rinvigorir" and "viemmi a ringiovinir." "Signor Raaff is far too pernickety" was Leopold's reply, but in the revised text of the aria the string of *is*

gets written out; "viemmi a ringiovinir" becomes "nuovo vigor gli da," and Raaff is able to color the phrase with different vowels. But before the first night the whole aria was cut!

So was much else: notably large sections of recitative in the Idomeneo-Idamante first meeting (because, Mozart said, Raaff was a stick and Vincenzo del Prato, the young Idamante, was hopeless onstage); Idomeneo-Arbace recitative at the start of the second act; and in the third act, besides "Torna la pace," Idamante's aria "No, la morte," some powerful accompanied recitative for Ilia as she presents herself as an alternative victim, and — one of Mozart's cuts that has seldom been observed — Elettra's great, show-stopping aria "D'Oreste, d'AJace." (Mozart thought it dramatically absurd that everyone else should just stand about while Elettra sang the show-stopper.) In addition, the two choral prayers of the third act — magnificent pieces — were reduced each to its opening strophe. The Oracle's utterance was reduced from 70 to 44, to 31, and eventually to just nine measures. "If the speech of the Ghost in *Hamlet* were not so long it would be more effective," Mozart wrote to his father.

The Abbé Varesco's libretto was printed in full, without Mozart's cuts, and when Mozart's *Idomeneo* was published it included the great music that he had composed but then jettisoned while he brought the opera to performance. Only in 1967 did Daniel Hertz draw attention to another, different Munich libretto, cut down to correspond with what was actually performed at the premiere. As the editor of *Idomeneo* for the New Mozart Edition, Hertz banished the passages that Mozart cut to an appendix. But not quite all of them: in his main text he left the choral prayers (which Mozart had cut) in full, opining that their abridgement was due to "the special circumstances of the Munich premiere."

He made a personal judgment. Like many great operas, *Idomeneo* does not have a fixed, definitive text. (For the Vienna performance, Mozart adjusted Idamante's castrato role for a tenor, and wrote a new aria for Idamante and a new Ilia-Idamante duet.) Others have not unreasonably concluded that "the special circumstances of the Munich premiere" prompted cuts that might not have been made had the stage-stodgy

Raaff as Idomeneo ("like a statue," Mozart said) and the inadequate castrato Del Prato, the Idamante, been stronger performers. Most modern performances of *Idomeneo* include some of the great music that Mozart, reaching a peak in his powers, composed but then omitted in the "special circumstances" of particular performance.

Reactions to opera are personal. Let me be personal for a moment. As a schoolboy, the first three operas I heard were *Idomeneo*, *The Magic Flute*, and Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris* — sung to me in English, directly stirring. They showed what opera could be. Then, as an undergraduate, I was rehearsal accompanist for the Oxford University Opera Club's production of *Idomeneo*. Jack Westrup, who as an undergraduate had in 1925 founded the OUOC with the first staging since 1607 of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, returned in 1947 as Oxford's Heather Professor and conducted an OUOC *Idomeneo*. Anthony Besch was the director; Denis Stevens the concert-master. The opera caused as much stir as Monteverdi's *Orfeo* had done. British critics hailed a masterpiece newly revealed. *Idomeneo* reappeared soon at Glyndebourne — Birgit Nilsson the Elettra, Sena Jurinac the Ilia, later young Luciano Pavarotti the Idamante of a 1964 revival. And from Glyndebourne *Idomeneo* swiftly made its way through the world's theaters.

Mozart chose to set a version of a basic tragic subject: Agamemnon and Iphigenia (Algarotti's "ideal matter" for serious opera), Jephtha and his daughter, Abraham and Isaac — and Idomeneo and Idamante, protagonists torn between sworn obligation and paternal love. Mozart set the drama with passionate directness, intent upon his own vision of what an *opera seria* could and should be. Gluck-inspired, and fired too by the prowess of the Mannheim singers and the woodwind soloists, he composed a "continuous" drama, again and again subverting any applause-catching closes.

Opera at its highest is a compound of, among much else, vocal gesture that touches the heart and eloquent instrumental lines and timbres. One cannot listen unmoved to the plights of gentle Ilia, woodwind-uttered while she sings, or to those of the fierce, stricken Elettra, or to Idomeneo's anguish, or to the powerful ensemble scenes. *Idomeneo* is opera at its highest. □

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PRE-PERFORMANCE LECTURES

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

Un Ballo in Maschera — Sept 14, 19, 23, 25, 28; Oct. 6
Louise — Sept. 16, 18, 22, 26, 29; Oct. 2
La Favorite — Oct. 5, 10, 13, 16
Lucia di Lammermoor — Oct. 15, 17, 21, 23, 29; Nov. 3
Wozzeck — Nov. 5, 7, 9, 13, 17
Idomeneo — Nov. 16, 19, 23; Dec. 1, 5
Nabucco — Nov. 27, 30; Dec. 3, 6, 10, 12
La Bohème — Dec. 7, 9; Jan. 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Don Giovanni — June 11, 17, 22, 28; July 1
The Rake's Progress — June 16, 20, 23, 25, 29
Parsifal — June 21, 24, 27, 30; July 2

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD — INSIGHTS

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

September 1	<i>Louise</i>
September 16	<i>La Favorite</i>
November 9	<i>Idomeneo</i>
June 13	<i>Parsifal</i>

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA GUILD — PREVIEWS

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

East Bay Chapter — San Francisco Opera Guild

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

Sept. 9	<i>Louise</i>
Sept. 22	<i>La Favorite</i>
Oct. 6	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>
Oct. 27	<i>Wozzeck</i>
Nov. 10	<i>Idomeneo</i>
Nov. 17	<i>Nabucco</i>

Marin Chapter —

San Francisco Opera Guild

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

Sept. 8 *Louise*
Sept. 20 *La Favorite*
Oct. 4 *Lucia di Lammermoor*
Oct. 25 *Wozzeck*
Nov. 8 *Idomeneo*
Nov. 15 *Nabucco*

San Francisco Chapter —

San Francisco Opera Guild

Lectures held at 12:00 noon, Koret Auditorium, Lower Level, New Main Library, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco. Admission: Free. For information call Esther Jennings, (415) 751-7732.

Sept. 8 *Louise*
Sept. 22 *La Favorite*
Oct. 6 *Lucia di Lammermoor*
Oct. 27 *Wozzeck*
Nov. 10 *Idomeneo*
Nov. 17 *Nabucco*

San Jose Opera Guild

Lectures held at 10:00 a.m., followed by no-host luncheons on 9/9 and 11/18 (\$7.00). Los Gatos History Club, 123 Los Gatos Blvd., Los Gatos. Admission: \$8.00 (free to San Jose Opera Guild members). For information call Joy Hulme (408) 741-1331 or Margaret Boddy (408) 354-7525.

Sept. 9 *Louise*
Sept. 23 *La Favorite*
Oct. 7 *Lucia di Lammermoor*
Oct. 28 *Wozzeck*
Nov. 11 *Idomeneo*
Nov. 18 *Nabucco*

Sonoma Chapter —

San Francisco Opera Guild

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

Sept. 10 *Louise*
Sept. 20 *La Favorite*
Oct. 7 *Lucia di Lammermoor*
Oct. 28 *Wozzeck*
Nov. 8 *Idomeneo*
Nov. 15 *Nabucco*

South Peninsula Chapter —

San Francisco Opera Guild

Lectures held at 8:00 p.m. at the Palo Alto Senior Center, 450 Bryant Street, Palo Alto. Admission \$7.00. For information call Ramona Rockway (650) 941-3890.

Sept. 7 *Louise*
Sept. 21 *La Favorite*
Oct. 5 *Lucia di Lammermoor*
Oct. 26 *Wozzeck*
Nov. 9 *Idomeneo*
Nov. 16 *Nabucco*

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

MERRITT COLLEGE OPERA LECTURE SERIES

Held on Tuesday evenings in Room A-117, 7 to 10 p.m., *Introduction to Opera* (Music 13A) is based on the operas of the 1999-2000 season. The College is at 12500 Campus Drive (off Redwood Road in the Oakland hills). Information: (510) 436-2430.

OPERA EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW SERIES

Given by Michael Barclay, director of OEL. Lectures are held from 7:30 to 10 p.m. at 400 Yale Ave. (at Vassar) in the Kensington section of the Berkeley hills. Series began on September 7; lectures are \$15 at the door. Information: (510) 526-5244.

Sept. 21 *La Favorite*
Oct. 11 *Lucia di Lammermoor*
Oct. 25 *Wozzeck*
Nov. 8 *Idomeneo*
Nov. 15 *Nabucco*
May 15 *La Bobème*
May 22 *Don Giovanni*
June 5 *The Rake's Progress*
June 12 *Parsifal*

FRIENDS OF THE KENSINGTON LIBRARY

A free lecture on Mozart's *Idomeneo* will be given by Michael Barclay on November 10 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kensington Library, 61 Arlington Avenue, Kensington. Information: (510) 524-3043.

SAN FRANCISCO CITY COLLEGE PREVIEW

A music course will deal with all operas of the 1999-2000 season. Taught by Marvin Tartak on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., it takes place at the College's Castro/Valencia campus, 450 Church St., in San Francisco. Classes began August 26th and continue for 15 weeks. Information: (415) 239-3641.

ROBERT GOODHUE'S OPERA PREVIEW

Held at Crowne Plaza Hotel, 480 Sutter St. (corner of Powell), San Francisco, mostly Monday evenings at 6 p.m. (5/30 at 5:45 p.m.) Series began August 30. Lectures are \$15 per session or \$50 for any five previews. Information: (415) 956-1271.

Oct. 4 *Lucia di Lammermoor*
Oct. 25 *Wozzeck*
Nov. 8 *Idomeneo*
Nov. 22 *Nabucco*
Nov. 29 *La Bobème*
May 30 *Don Giovanni*
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For more information, contact our Corporate Council Hotline at (415) 565-3264.

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

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

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

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

MAKE A VALUED CONTRIBUTION TO SAN FRANCISCO OPERA. You can make an important contribution to San Francisco Opera by returning any tickets you cannot use to the Box Office for resale. These ticket returns are of great value to S.F. Opera and to other patrons who may be unable to obtain tickets to sold-out performances. If you are unable to use your tickets or exchange them for another performance of the same opera, you may make a full-value, tax-deductible contribution of your tickets to the Box Office or call (415) 864-3330, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Unfortunately, we are unable to apply the donations towards membership benefits.

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

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

ACCESS FOR DISABLED PATRONS Wheelchair seating positions are located in the orchestra, mezzanine and dress circle levels. Aisle seats with swing-up armrests are located in the orchestra, dress circle, balcony circle and balcony levels. Contact the S.F. Opera Box Office—(415) 864-3330—for more information.

On permanent display in the Opera House lower bar:

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Stage photography by Robert Cahen

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

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

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

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

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER TOURS

Tours of the San Francisco Performing Arts Center include the War Memorial Opera House, Davies Symphony Hall and Herbst Theatre and take place as follows: Mondays, on the hour between 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Special group tours of Davies Hall only may be scheduled on Wednesdays and Saturdays by request two weeks in advance. All tours leave

from the Grove Street entrance of Davies Symphony Hall. There are no tours on holidays. General \$5; seniors/students \$3. Information: (415) 552-8338.

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).

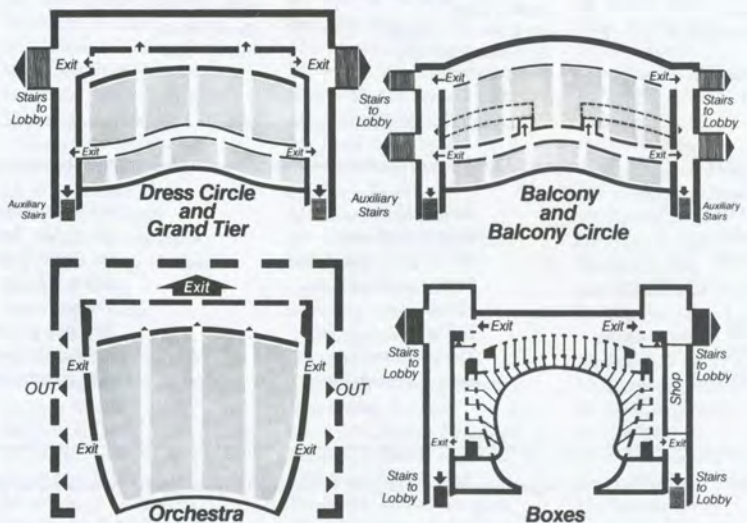
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Sponsored by the San Francisco Opera Guild, house and backstage tours of the War Memorial Opera House will be conducted every half hour from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on weekdays and Saturdays; and every half hour from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Sundays.

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Saturday, October 2
Sunday, October 10
Tuesday, October 19
Thursday, October 28
Tuesday, November 2
Sunday, November 7
Saturday, November 20
Friday, November 26
Saturday, December 4
Wednesday, December 8
Sunday, January 9
Wednesday, January 12
Saturday, January 15
Saturday, June 3
Wednesday, June 7
Saturday, June 24

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

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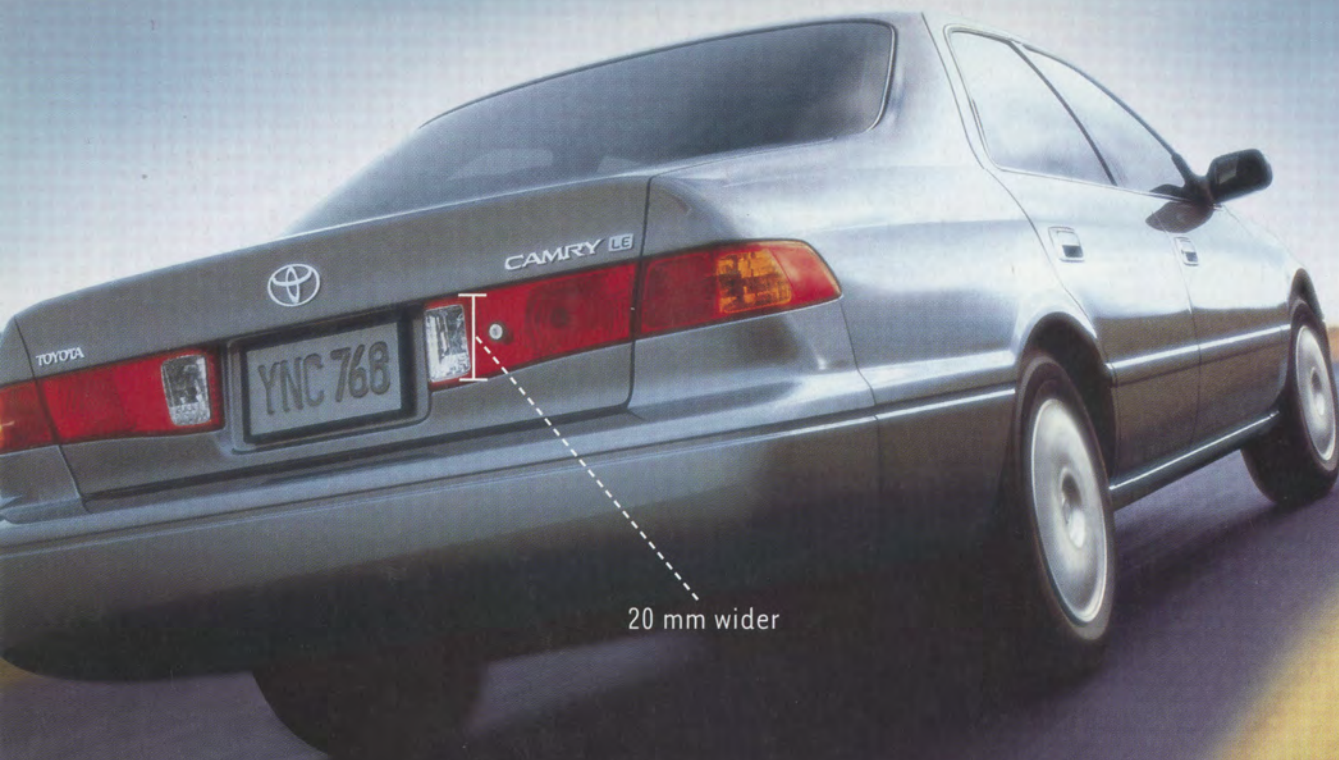
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