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MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

1975-76 Season

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Michigan Opera Theatre welcomes you to our fifth season of presenting opera in English at Music Hall Center. I look forward to sharing with you a season of standing ovations as we travel throughout the world — from America's Deep South, to the Left Bank of Paris, on to the Scottish Highlands, and finally to warm and sunny Seville — all on the wings of music and drama.

This year also will be highlighted by five beautiful young sopranos who, critics agree, have the potential to reach international stardom. Leona Mitchell and Irene Oliver will alternate in the role of Bess in *Porgy and Bess*; Marianna Christos is Mimi in *La Boheme*; Catherine Malfitano will sing Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*; and Ruth Welting is Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*.

Our outstate tour of communities from Livonia to Traverse City has established MOT as one of Michigan's major cultural resources. Thousands of our fellow citizens have had the opportunity to enjoy opera, as our traveling company has presented workshops, seminars, and productions in classrooms, gymnasiums, and theatres throughout the state. Plans are now underway to bring Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land* to more communities during March and April of 1976.

Looking ahead, MOT, in its first commissioned production, has engaged the renowned Thomas Pasatieri to compose an original opera for a Detroit world premiere. The most sought after opera composer in America, Mr. Pasatieri has written the widely acclaimed *Black Widow* for the Seattle Opera Company, *The Seagull* for the Houston Grand Opera and *The Trial of Mary Lincoln* for National Public Television. This premiere promises to be a landmark event in Detroit's cultural history, and will attract critics and opera lovers from throughout the nation.

All of these elements — our exciting and diverse season, our dynamic Opera in Residence Program, and the Pasatieri premiere — are giving MOT a national reputation as a company in the forefront of American operatic trends and ideas. For this I am grateful to a dedicated staff, a supportive board of directors and, above all, to the generosity and encouragement of our many contributors and patrons. To all of you a heartfelt thank you.



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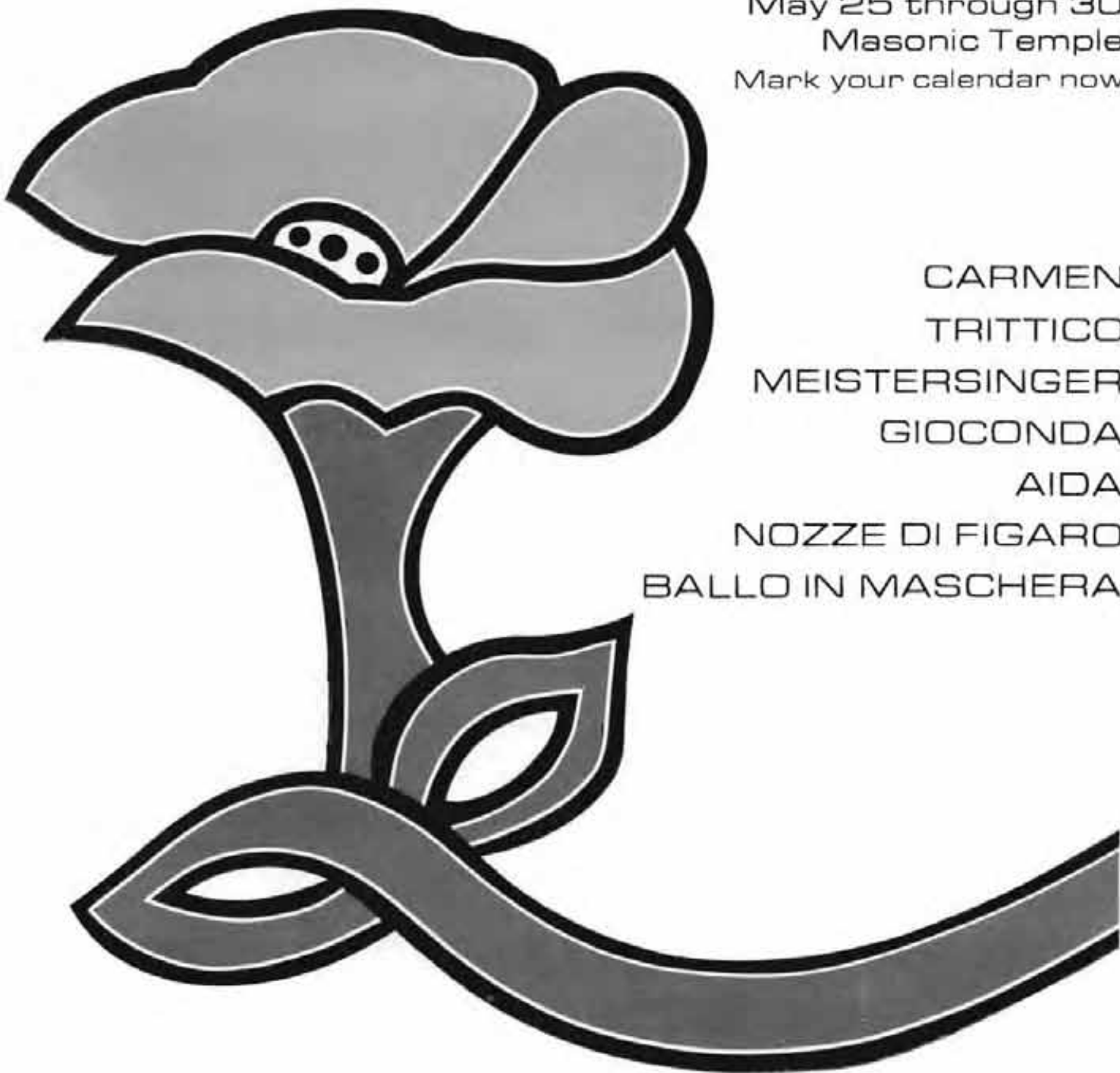
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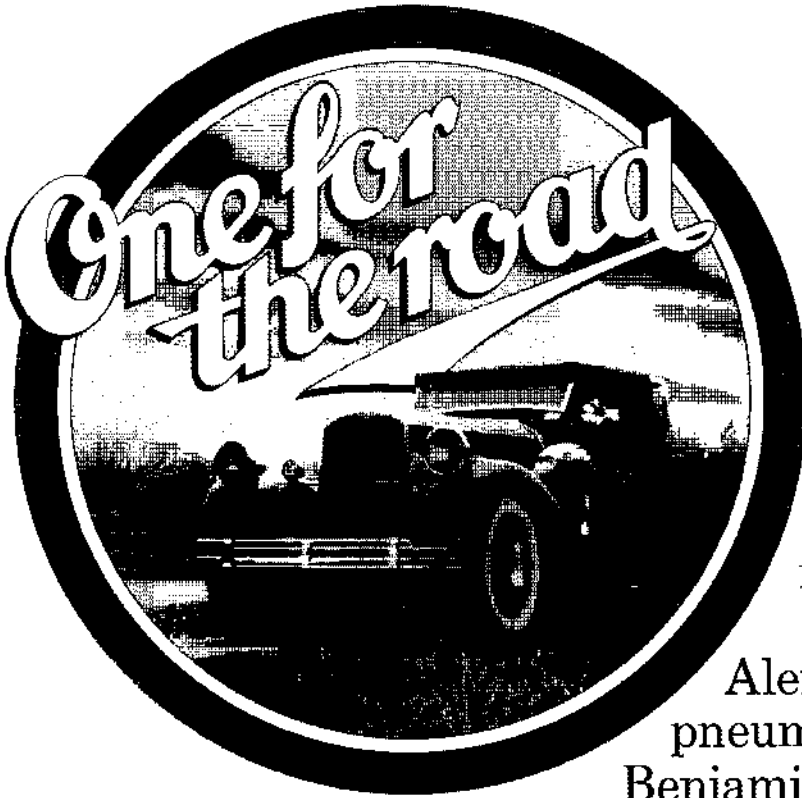
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Motor cars pioneered by Alexander Winton were riding on pneumatic tires pioneered by Benjamin Franklin Goodrich in 1896.

In the Twenties, Jordans, Overlands, Pierce-Arrows and Premiers were roaming the roads on tires made better because B.F. Goodrich had developed age resistors and adhesives that added miles to their life.

B.F. Goodrich developed synthetic rubbers and started making tires out of them just before WWII. And the first post war cars were rolling on the first tubeless tires introduced by BFG in 1947.

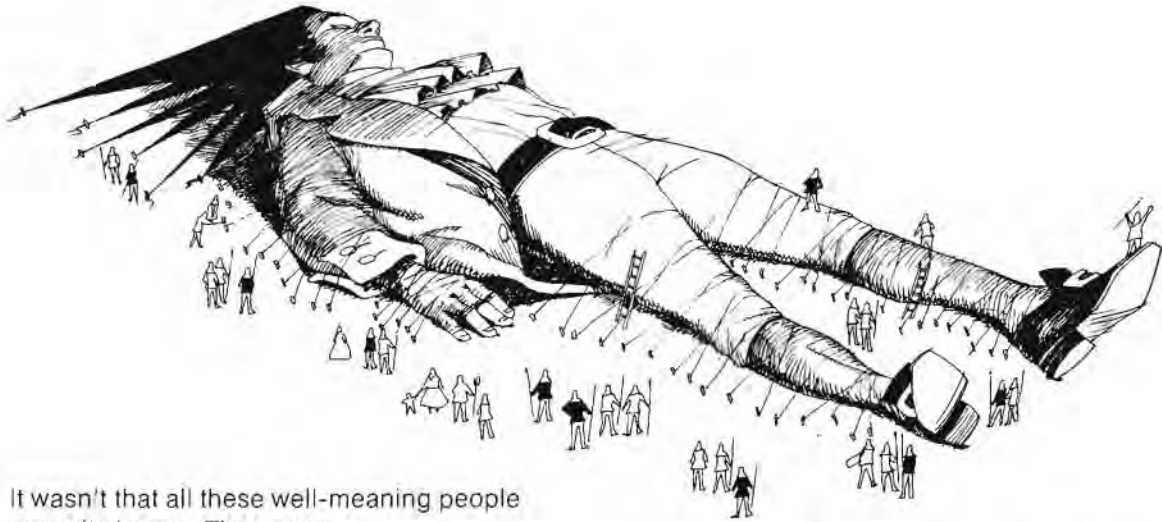
As the years sped by and cars became more sophisticated, Goodrich kept pace with a steady stream of tire firsts.

The first foldable tire. The first run-flat tire. And, in 1965, the first American radial; a tire that could run cooler, longer than any tire before it.

While motoring has changed drastically in the last eight decades, America's dependence on the automobile hasn't changed much at all.

And as for B.F. Goodrich innovations, well, as long as there are cars, there will always be another B.F. Goodrich innovation brewing—"one for the road".





It wasn't that all these well-meaning people weren't sincere. They were.

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Let's start by not being unduly influenced by every sensation-seeker who thinks all our problems can be solved overnight.

Let's start by agreeing that since the auto industry affects one out of every six working adults, additional hamstringing is not the answer.

And let's start now.

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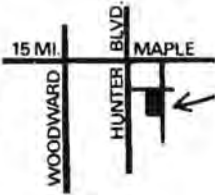


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October 3 through 11, 1975

PORGY AND BESS

A folk opera in two acts by
George Gershwin

Libretto
DuBose Heyward

Lyrics
DuBose Heyward and Ira Gershwin

After the Play *Porgy* by
DuBose and Dorothy Heyward

Entire production directed by
Ella Gerber

Music Director-Conductor-Chorus Master
Remi Ghilespi

Costumes By
Karen McKean, Opal Hairston & Bonnie Whalen

Sets By
Paul A. Norrenbrock

Time:
The mid 1920's

Place:
Charleston, South Carolina

CAST

(In order of appearance)

Sporting Life	Robert Monroe	Bess	Leona Mitchell (Oct. 3, 8*, 10, 11) Irene Oliver (Oct. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11*)
Lily	Gerri Adams	Ruby	Florence Pate Sampson
Annie	Synthia Maddox Reese	Ruby's husband	J. C. Blue
Clara	Bernadine L. Oakley	Policeman	Roman Terlecky
Lady with laundry bundle	Bertha Mae Adams	Burial Voices	Patricia J. Lewis, Douglas C. Rowland, Augustus Williamson, Faye Blakely Washington, Herbert L. Rawlings, Jr., Bill Broyles, Doris J. Berry, Sherman Patrick Garner, James E. Parks
Man and wife	George Franklin Williams, Dorothea A. Pullen	Detective	John O. Peters
Mingo	Dennis Rowland	Undertaker	Van Fore
Men in crap game	Chester Carter, Billy L. Mack, James E. Parks, James G. St. Clair	Frazier	C. Cass Hudson
Boy in crap game	Robert Brantley	Neighbor lady and her cronies	Doris J. Berry Edris L. Banks Penelope Jones
Fighting couple	Augustus Williamson, Amina Rahaman	Strawberry woman	Billie Joyce Bowden
Man on third floor	Ulysses L. Wolf	Crabman	Marvin-esrl
Serena	Earnestine F. Nimmons	Coroner	Fred J. Bush
Jake	Sherman Patrick Garner	Talkative couple	Carl M. Temple, Penelope Jones
Robbins	Ned Wright	Porgy's goat	Arrowhead
Maria	Marguerite Lenora Motley		
Jim	Leroy Winston		
Jim's wife	Anna C. Aycox		
Serena's children	LaMon Griffin, Tracy Monique Hines		
Skip, Maria's helper	Herbert L. Rawlings, Jr.		
Peter the Honeyman	Melvyn Hardiman		
Scipio	Johnny Johnson		
Porgy	Robert Mosley (Oct. 3, 5, 8*, 9, 11*) Benjamin Matthews (Oct. 4, 7, 8, 10, 11)		
Young man on breezeway	Robert E. Helms		
Crown	Leonard Parker		

*Matinee performance

Other residents of Catfish Row: Mattye Gaither Anderson, Veda M. Bryant, Perry L. Brown, Tilis Butler, Billie Carter, Christopher A. Hall, Abu Bakr Hamilton, Gracie Hanks, Alice Harris, Larry L. Johnson, Sandi Johnson, Lewis H. Martin, Gloria L. McKee, Art Robinson, Charletter Sanders, Myles G. Savage, Monique Shelton, James S. Simmons, Josephine M. Smith, Silas N. Waldon, Charmaine Bailey Whitehead, Carolyn Williams, Renee Williams, Myrna J. Wilson.

Other children of the community: Darah Arrington, Yvonne L. Butler, Jerrilyn Mack

Asst. Musical Coach — Asst. to the Director	Ned Wright
Rehearsal Accompanist — Asst. to the Conductor	Randolph Mauldin
Costume Crew	Beth Cordial Debra Scott, Mary Whalen
Prop Coordinators	Deborah Hazlett Beth Cordial, Roman Terleckyj, Karen DiChiera

ACT ONE

1. Catfish Row. A summer evening
2. Serena's Room. The following night.
3. Catfish Row. A month after
4. Kittawah Island, Evening of the same day.

ACT TWO

1. Catfish Row. Before dawn, a week later
2. Serena's Room, Dawn of the following day.
3. Catfish Row. The next night.
4. Catfish Row. The following morning.
5. Catfish Row. Five days later, afternoon.

Acknowledgements

Scenery constructed in Detroit with the assistance of the University of Detroit/Marygrove College Theatre.

The stage props used in this production were loaned by: Wayne State University Theatre Department; Jinny's Antiques, Rochester; Looking Back Antiques, Rochester; Mamie Riley's Antiques, Troy; Miss Rose's Nursery School; Mr. and Mrs. William Greenwalt; Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hanson; Mr. and Mrs. Robert VanderKloot.

Arrowhead, the goat, is courtesy of Mrs. Virginia Guzowski, of Lapeer, and is being housed at the Michigan Humane Society's Central Shelter. Arrowhead's handler is Mr. Cliff Sevier.

Sporting Life's suits are courtesy of Louis the Hatter Clothier, Detroit.

Special thanks to the Public Radio WDET-FM for sound assistance, and to Jesse Mann and Kathy Lyon for their assistance in the preparation of costumes.

Porgy and Bess is presented through special arrangement with Tams-Witmark Music Library, Inc., New York.

All casts subject to change without notice.

PORGY AND BESS

The Story

ACT I. A tranquil Saturday night in the lives of the hard-working residents of Catfish Row is interrupted by sudden violence, springing from a crap game squabble between the amiable Robbins and drunken Crown. Robbins is brutally killed within sight of his wife, Serena, and Crown escapes before the police arrive, leaving his woman Bess, behind. Porgy, a crippled beggar, sympathetically offers her refuge when the rest of the community refuses.

Robbins' funeral expenses are raised by the community during a wake. The proceedings are interrupted by the arrival of a detective who takes the aging Peter off to jail as a material witness to the killing, and by the undertaker who promises to give Robbins a decent burial.

A month later, Crown has still not returned for Bess, who is living happily with Porgy. Frazier, a mock-lawyer, takes advantage of Porgy, selling him a "divorce" which Porgy believes will legally free Bess from Crown. The community, including Bess (still considered an outsider unacceptable to the self-righteous ladies of Catfish Row), leaves for the annual church picnic on Kittawah Island.

Porgy is left behind, unable to make the trip, but happy for Bess and blissfully content with the security of their love.

The festivities of the picnic, led by the worldly Sporting Life, are ended by the sound of a horn from the boat that will take them all back to the mainland, but Crown suddenly appears and detains Bess. Her initial resistance to his advances is weakened by his sexual dominance, and he carries her off into the thicket, his hiding place.

ACT II: At dawn a week later, Jake and the fisherman depart for the blackfish banks, although his wife, Clara, fears bad weather. Bess is heard from within Porgy's room, deliriously moaning with a fever contracted on the island. Serena leads a prayer in Bess' behalf, more confident of her own spiritual powers than trusting in the treatment Bess would receive in the white man's hospital. After a buzzard (considered an evil omen) has been sighted and driven off, Bess' delirium ceases just as Serena predicted. Porgy reconfirms his love for her, although he is fully aware of her rendezvous with Crown, and he promises to protect her from him when Crown comes for her. Suddenly, the hurricane bell is rung, a storm warning that causes the residents to take shelter

They huddle in Serena's room during the storm. Crown bursts in, intending to take Bess with him, but is interrupted by the sighting of Jake's boat, upside-down in the river. Clara runs out into the storm to find him, and Crown follows, being the only able-bodied man brave enough to rescue her. He promises once again to return for Bess.

The following night, a spiritual is sung in behalf of Clara, Jake, and Crown, all presumed lost in the storm. Crown unexpectedly returns, intent on stealing Bess and killing Porgy, but Porgy surprises him with a knife, and succeeds in killing him.

A detective and coroner arrive the next day to investigate Crown's death. Porgy is taken off to jail to identify the body, superstitiously fearful of the thought of looking on the face of the man he killed, Sporting Life convinces Bess that Porgy will be convicted and subsequently jailed for a long time, and succeeds in luring her away from Catfish Row. They leave together, seeking a new, extravagant, amoral life in New York.

Porgy returns from jail a week later, only to discover that Bess has left him. Heartbroken, yet firmly resolved, he leaves on his goat cart, intending to travel alone, all the way to New York, to find her.

The History

The history of *Porgy and Bess* began in 1925 with a best-selling novel called *Porgy*, written by DuBose Heyward. The Catfish Row of Heyward's story had a real-life counterpart: Cabbage Row, a neighborhood of dilapidated buildings and a run down mansion surrounding a courtyard. Heyward modeled his *Porgy* on an actual Charleston character, a local beggar named Goat Sammy, who made his way about the community in a little box on wheels drawn by a goat. What emerged from Heyward's transformation of Goat Sammy was the successful novel, followed two years later by the triumphant Broadway play, also called *Porgy*, which ran for 367 performances.

George Gershwin read Heyward's novel a year after it was published and was profoundly affected by it. Here was a warm yet powerful basic human story told with feeling and compassion by someone obviously familiar with the locale and the people he described. He immediately wrote to Heyward and proposed a collaboration on a musical version of the tale. Heyward was most interested and responded affirmatively. What resulted was eight years of negotiating and correspondence before Gershwin was able to interrupt his busy schedule and devote himself to creating the music. During this period Heyward reached

an agreement with Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II, who had aligned themselves with Al Jolson to set *Porgy* to music. The parties were unable to consummate the arrangement and the deal fell through.

Gershwin and Heyward were an unlikely alliance. Gershwin was the bumptious, quick-moving, quick-talking New Yorker of new immigrant background; Heyward was a Southern aristocrat of plantation-owner stock who could trace his lineage to Thomas Heyward, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Yet, together they achieved a consistency of style that defies discernment of where the New Yorker begins and the Southerner leaves off. Much of this artistic partnership is attributable to Ira Gershwin, George's brother, who served as a creative middleman, offering refinements and original ideas in text, music, and lyrics.

Gershwin actually composed *Porgy and Bess* during a four-month hiatus at Folly Beach, a small island ten miles from Charleston. His residents of Catfish Row are based on the Gullahs who inhabited adjacent St. James Island. Physically and emotionally removed from the mainstream of American life, they had retained more of their African heritage in their customs and language than any black group in America.

Ironically, *Porgy and Bess* was not an immediate success. It opened in New York in 1935 to mixed reviews and was a box-office flop, quietly closing after only 124 performances. Gershwin was never to see another production of his creation after the original closed.

A streamlined, faster-moving version of *Porgy and Bess* was revived on Broadway in 1942 and was a smash success, both critically and financially. The rest is history, *Porgy and Bess* has become a worldwide favorite, playing to millions. Ironically, Gershwin did not live to witness any of this belated success. He died in 1937 at the age of 38 of a brain tumor.

The longest-lasting, most widely seen production of *Porgy and Bess* opened in Dallas in 1952. After setting a box-office record, it moved on to triumphs in Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Washington. By the time it reached Washington, it had created such a tremendous impact that it was sent to Europe under the sponsorship of the State Department. Opening in Vienna in September 1952, it began an internationally triumphal tour that continued for six years.

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CURTAIN CALL



ELLA GERBER, known the world over for her association with *Porgy and Bess*, is the director of MOT's production of the classic folk opera. Miss Gerber's extensive travels with the production have taken her throughout the world, including Israel, Portugal, New Zealand, and Australia. In all, she has directed 20 different productions of *Porgy*, including the New York City Center Opera Production. *Porgy and Bess* is but a single facet of Miss Gerber's directorial dossier, which embraces three decades of work on Broadway, off-Broadway, in musical-theatre theatres, in summer stock and internationally in South Africa, Japan, Korea, Italy, and England.



REMI GHILESPI, musical director, conductor, and chorus master for *Porgy and Bess*, has been Musical Director at Casa Manana Musicals of Fort Worth, Texas, since 1959. He also has been Assistant to the Conductor and Chorus Master of the Fort Worth Civic Opera for the past five years. Mr. Ghilespi has composed two full-length musicals, a children's comedy version of *Hansel and Gretel* and a drama, *Francis*, based on the life of St. Francis of Assisi.



BENJAMIN MATTHEWS, who alternates in the role of Porgy in *Porgy and Bess*, has appeared in recital, oratorio, and

operatic performances in Germany, Holland, and throughout the United States. He sang the role of Campere in the Metropolitan Opera's revival of the *Four Saints* and has sung with the Philadelphia Grand Opera, the Milwaukee Florentine Opera, Opera South, and the St. Paul Opera Association.



LEONA MITCHELL, who alternates in the role of Bess in *Porgy and Bess*, is only 24 but already has appeared with the San Francisco Opera, the London Symphony, the Washington Opera Society, the Houston Grand Opera, and the Cleveland Orchestra. Miss Mitchell, who has been selected to sing Bess in the first full-length recording of *Porgy and Bess*, enjoyed her most recent success in this part at the Los Angeles Music Center. Following her Detroit engagement she will debut with the Strasbourg (France) Opera and the Geneva (Switzerland) Opera. Her American schedule includes appearances with orchestras and opera companies and numerous solo recitals around the country. Next December, Miss Mitchell will make her Metropolitan Opera debut, singing Micaela in *Carmen*.

(Continued Next Page)

CURTAIN CALL



ROBERT MONROE, who sings *Sporting Life*, grew up in Washington, D.C., where he was discovered by his high school music teacher, songstress Roberta Flack. His musical talent earned him scholarships to Howard University and to George Washington University. Mr. Monroe made his debut in the role of *Sporting Life* in 1974 with the Los Angeles Light Opera Company. This role has subsequently taken him to productions in Atlanta, Lisbon, Portugal, and Madrid, Spain. He also has appeared in an all-black cast version of *The Music Man* in Washington.



ROBERT MOSLEY, who alternates in the role of Porgy, has appeared with many opera companies throughout the country, in addition to a widely acclaimed New York Town Hall debut. He has sung with the New York City Opera, the Boston Opera Co., and the San Francisco Opera, in such roles as Porgy, Valentin, Rigoletto and Trinity Moses. More recently, he starred in his first Wagnerian role, *Flying Dutchman* with the Opera South, where he also created the part of Leonce in William Grant Still's *Bayou Legend*. In recital, Mr. Mosley has toured from Iceland to South America and throughout the U.S.A. He has also appeared with various symphony orchestras, notably the New York Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony, Leopold Stokowski's American Symphony and the Philadelphia Symphony. Last season he was introduced to Detroit audiences by the Detroit Symphony. For the coming season, Mr. Mosley will appear in the part of Amonasro in *Aida* with the Seattle Opera in Denver and in Seattle.



EARNESTINE NIMMONS, who sings *Serena*, is a Detroit native who teaches elementary school and holds a masters degree from Wayne State University. Miss Nimmons is no stranger to Detroit music lovers. She sang for four years with *Overture to Opera*, MOT's predecessor company, and the Detroit Chamber Opera Theatre. She also has sung with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the National Association of Negro Musicians, the Flint Symphony Orchestra, and has performed recitals over WTVS-TV Channel 56, and at the Detroit Institute of Arts and Marygrove College.



IRENE OLIVER, who alternates in the role of Bess in *Porgy and Bess*, began her operatic career in Italy as a Fulbright student and has since established herself as a leading soprano in Europe. Miss Oliver has sung lead roles in Milan, Florence, Parma, Rome, Berlin and other cities. In 1971, she toured Russia in concert to critical acclaim, and has appeared extensively in concert, on radio and television throughout Europe. Her European experience includes more than 150 performances in the role of Bess. Miss Oliver made her triumphal American debut in 1973 with the Dallas Civic Opera. She continues in repertoire at the Royal Opera House, Copenhagen.



LEONARD PARKER, who sings the role of the villain Crown, is a veteran actor and singer whose long list of credits includes Broadway and off-Broadway productions, Hollywood films, television dramas, and summer stock. Since 1958, he has appeared as Crown in nine different productions of *Porgy and Bess* throughout the world. Mr. Parker's background includes: Broadway, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *The Physicists*; off-Broadway, *Dark of the Moon* and *Black Girl*; films, *The Hustler* and *Nothing But a Man*; television, *The Defenders* and *As the World Turns*; and summer stock, *Cry the Beloved Country* and *Carmen Jones*. Mr. Parker is currently the Director of Arts and Culture of the Haryou-Act Community Corporation of Central Harlem.

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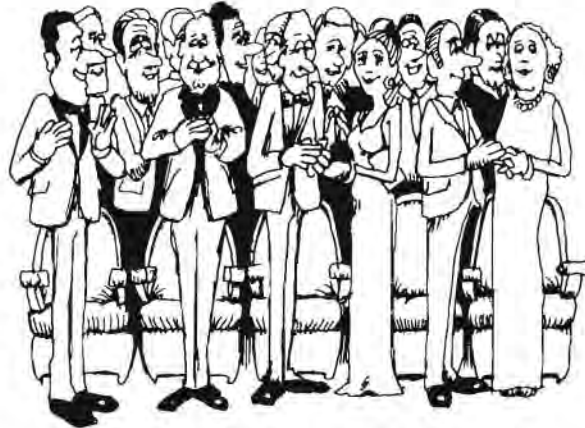
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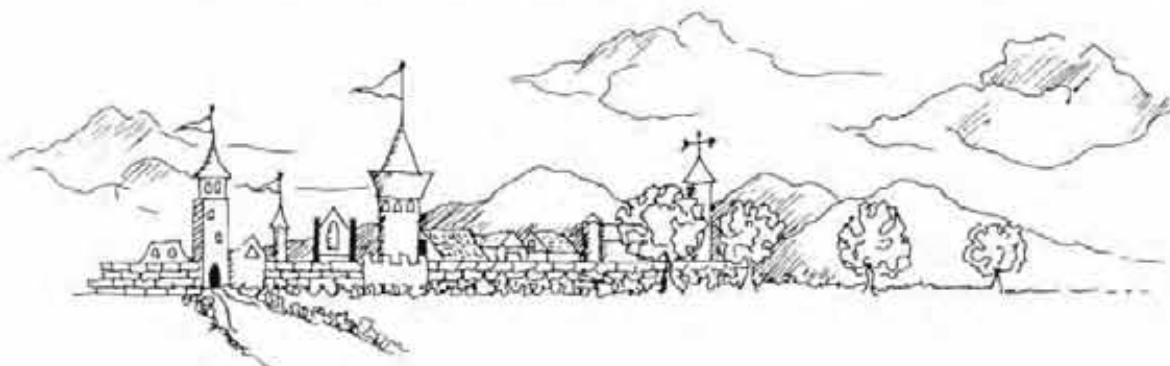
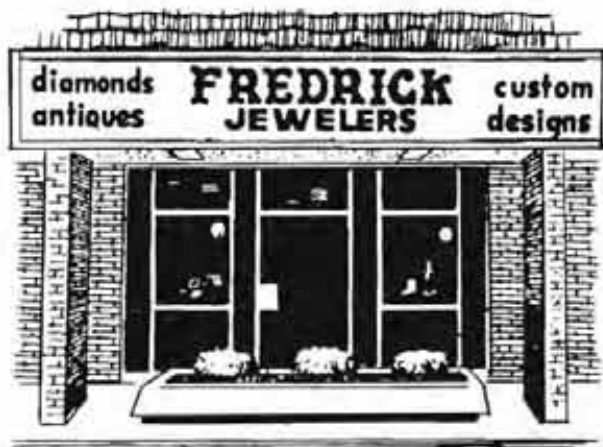
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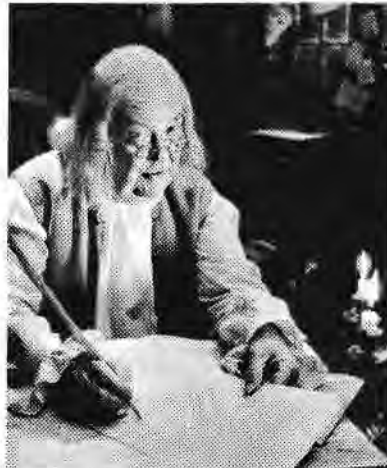
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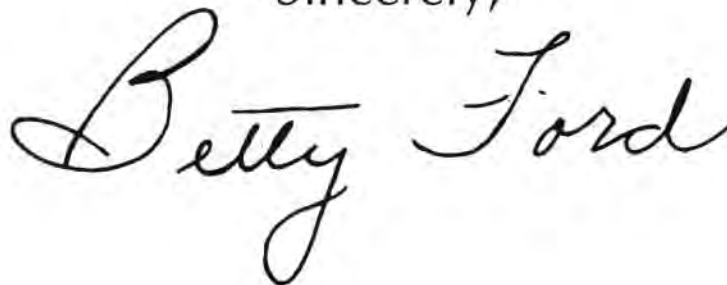
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1975-76 Season

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Michigan Opera Theatre welcomes you to our fifth season of presenting opera in English at Music Hall Center. I look forward to sharing with you a season of standing ovations as we travel throughout the world — from America's Deep South, to the Left Bank of Paris, on to the Scottish Highlands, and finally to warm and sunny Seville — all on the wings of music and drama.

This year also will be highlighted by five beautiful young sopranos who, critics agree, have the potential to reach international stardom. Leona Mitchell and Irene Oliver will alternate in the role of Bess in *Porgy and Bess*; Marianna Christos is Mimi in *La Boheme*; Catherine Malfitano will sing Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*; and Ruth Welting is Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*.

Our outstate tour of communities from Livonia to Traverse City has established MOT as one of Michigan's major cultural resources. Thousands of our fellow citizens have had the opportunity to enjoy opera, as our traveling company has presented workshops, seminars, and productions in classrooms, gymnasiums, and theatres throughout the state. Plans are now underway to bring Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land* to more communities during March and April of 1976.

Looking ahead, MOT, in its first commissioned production, has engaged the renowned Thomas Pasatieri to compose an original opera for a Detroit world premiere. The most sought after opera composer in America, Mr. Pasatieri has written the widely acclaimed *Black Widow* for the Seattle Opera Company, *The Seagull* for the Houston Grand Opera and *The Trial of Mary Lincoln* for National Public Television. This premiere promises to be a landmark event in Detroit's cultural history, and will attract critics and opera lovers from throughout the nation.

All of these elements — our exciting and diverse season, our dynamic Opera in Residence Program, and the Pasatieri premiere — are giving MOT a national reputation as a company in the forefront of American operatic trends and ideas. For this I am grateful to a dedicated staff, a supportive board of directors and, above all, to the generosity and encouragement of our many contributors and patrons. To all of you who have made Michigan Opera Theatre



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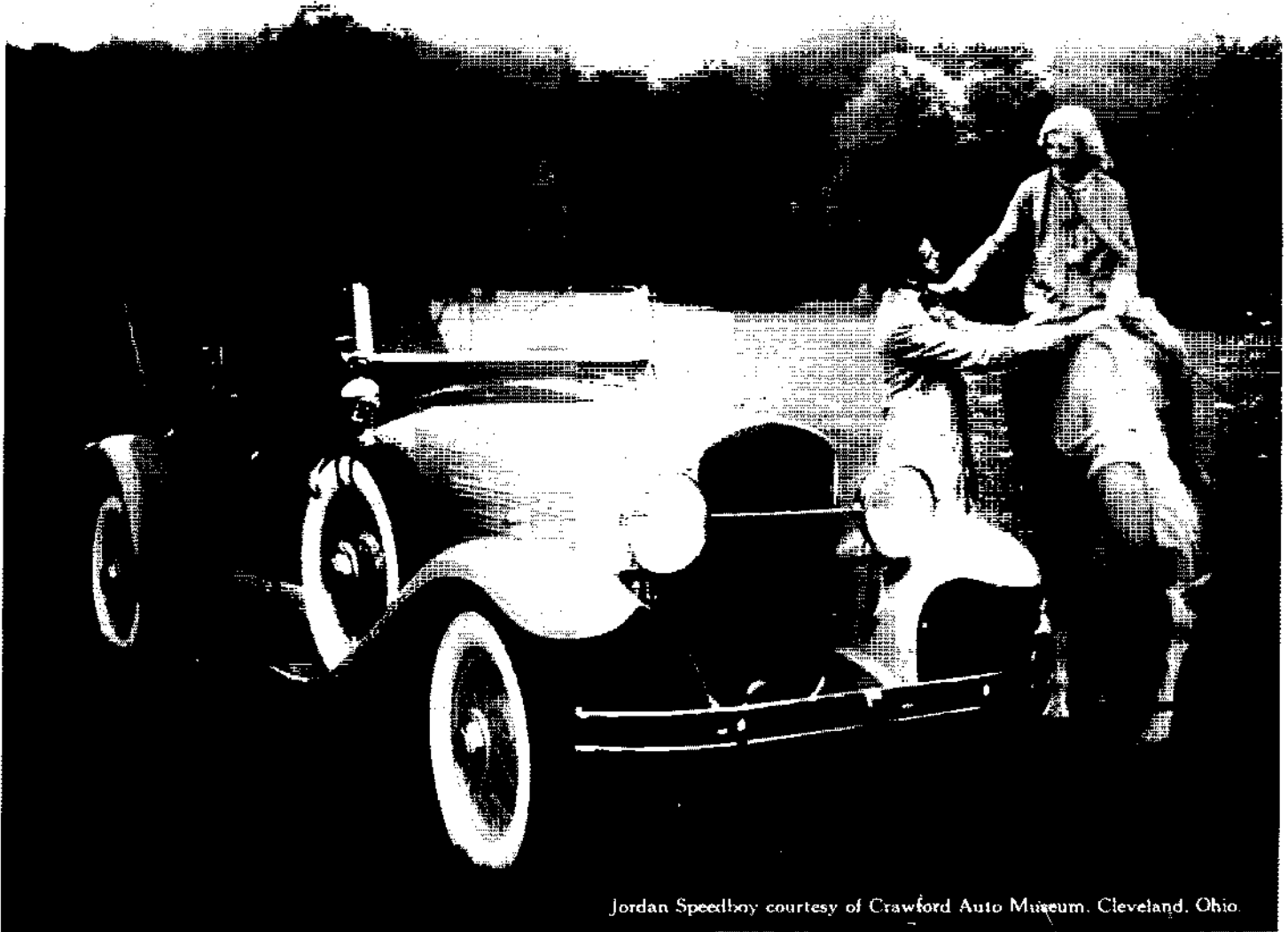




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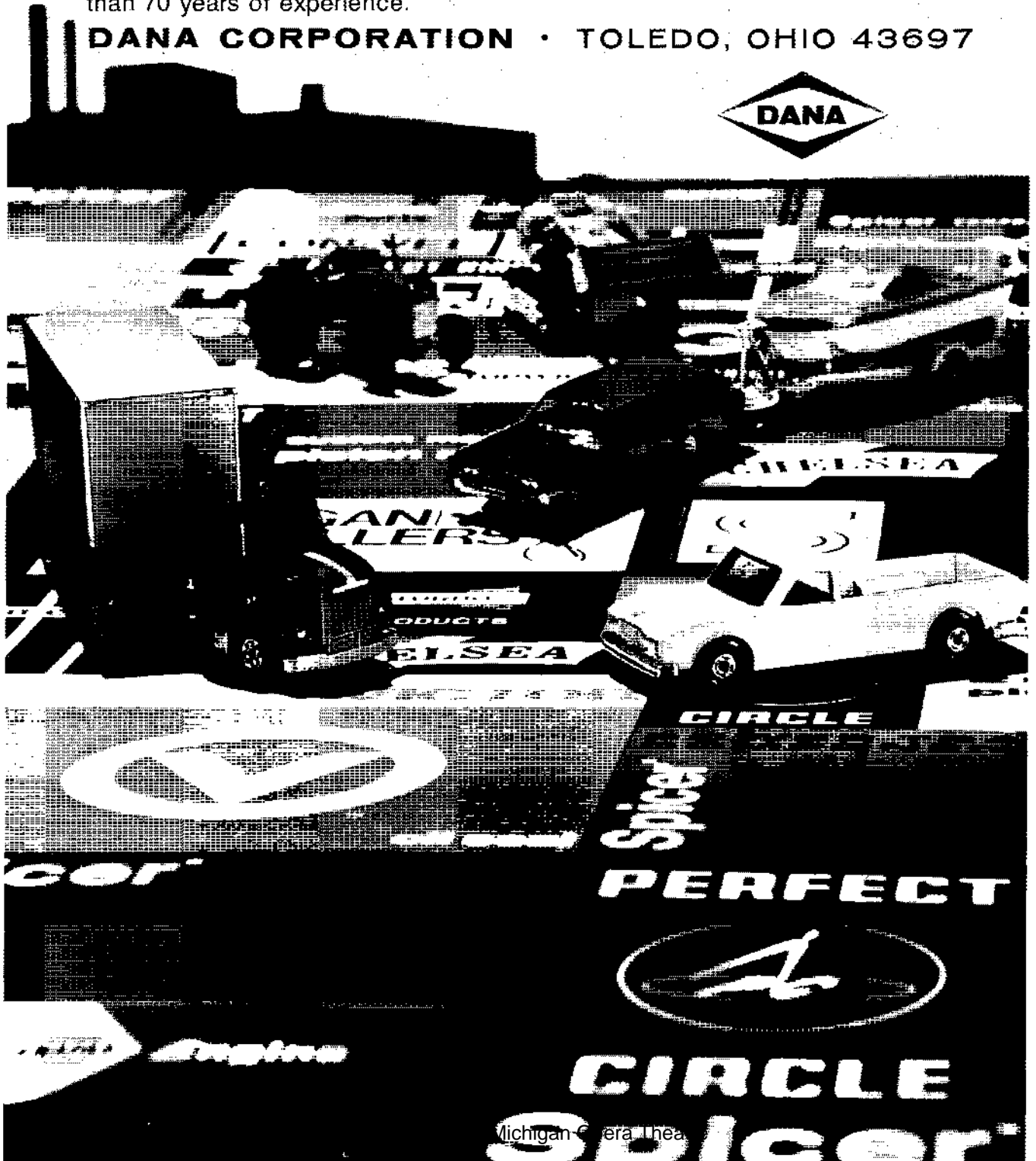
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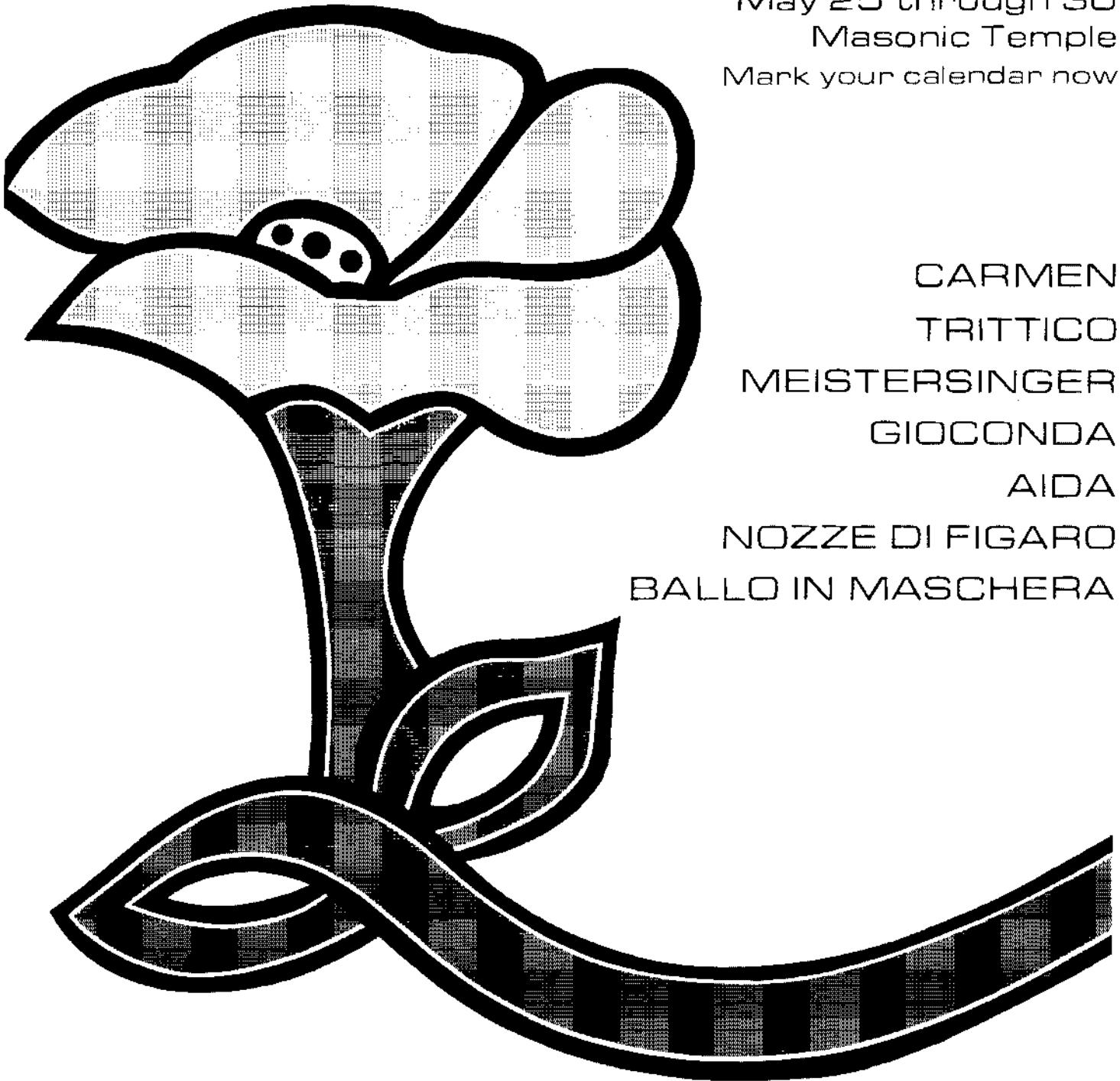
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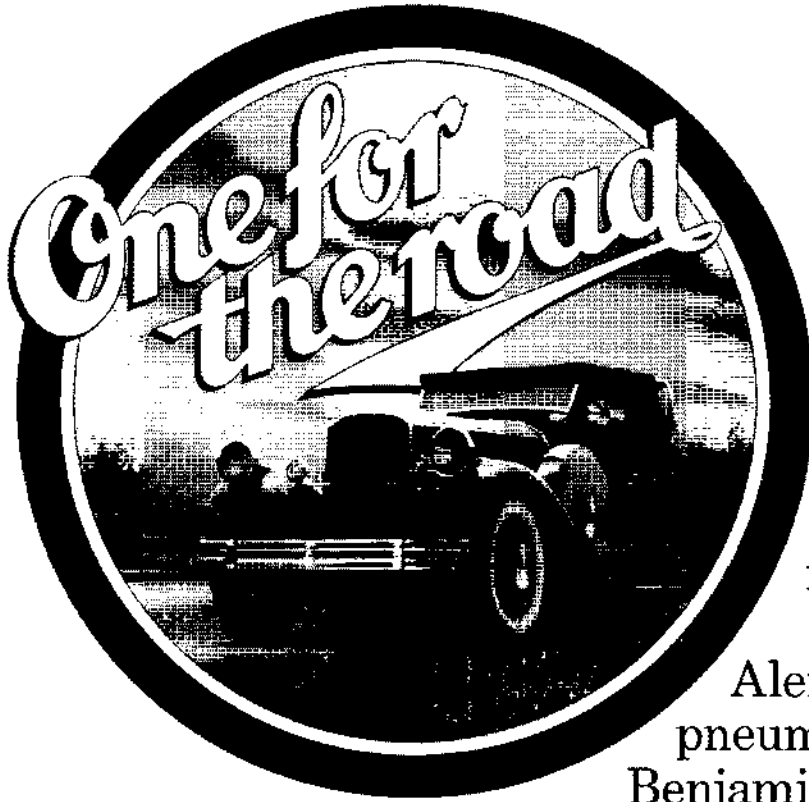
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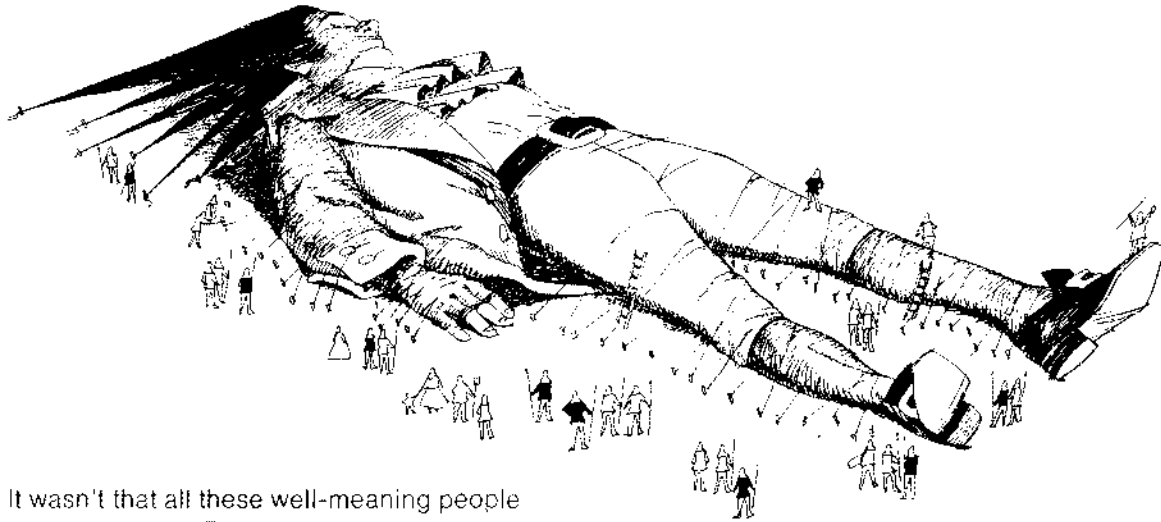
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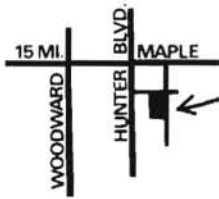
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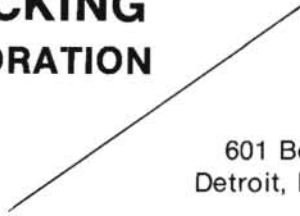
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LA BOHÈME

An opera in four acts by

Giacomo Puccini

(1858-1924)

Libretto
**Giuseppe Giacosa and
Luigi Illica**

Based on episodes from
Henri Murger's
Scènes de la Vie de Bohème

English Adaptation
**Richard Pearlman and
Francis Rizzo**

First performance in Turin. February 1, 1896

CAST

Marcello, a painter	Allan Glassman
Rodolfo, a poet	Jerold Norman
Colline, a philosopher	Saverio Barbieri
Schaunard, a musician	Robert K. Gray
Benoit, the landlord	William Morris
Mimi, a seamstress	Marianna Christos
Parpignol, a toy vendor	Gene A. Wabeke
Musetta, a coquette	Sheri Greenawald
Alcindoro, her elderly admirer	Roman Terleckyj

Paris during the reign of Louis-Phillipe

ACT I. A garret
ACT II. The Café Momus, the Latin Quarter
Intermission
ACT III. A tollgate at the edge of Paris
Intermission
ACT IV. A garret

Conductor	Joseph Carmen De Rugeriis
Stage Director	Francis Rizzo
Set Designer	John Wright Stevens
Costume Designer	Suzanne Mess
Lighting Designer/ Technical Director	C. Alan Cordial
Chorus Master	Dr. Raynold Alvin
Vocal Coach/Accompanist	Stephen Lord
Production Coordinator	Yael Gani
Stage Manager	Valerie A. Bernackj
Assistant to the General Director	Roman Terleckyj
Assistant to Mr. Rizzo	Neil Steinberg

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Michigan Opera Theatre gratefully acknowledges the support of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, the Michigan Council for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Background

"It is pretty music, sweetly melodious. Nevertheless, we cannot believe that there is permanent success for an opera constructed as this one is." Thus spoke the venerable *New York Times*, following the Metropolitan Opera premiere of Puccini's fourth opera, *La Bohème*, in December, 1900. The public disagreed, however, as it had four years earlier in Turin, when Arturo Toscanini conducted the first performance of what was to become one of the most popular operas in the world.

Giacomo Puccini was thirty-five when he began composing music to a text prepared for him by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica, based on Henri Murger's *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*. He had experienced moderate success with his first opera, *Le Villi*. This was followed by *Edgar*, which was a fiasco, and then *Manon Lescaut*. But *Scènes* afforded him

material to which he could react personally, emotionally, and passionately, recalling as it did his own struggling student days in Milan.

So strong was his reaction that he worked three years, relentlessly demanding revisions from his, at times, exasperated librettists. (These same librettists were later to furnish Puccini with texts for *Tosca* and *Madame Butterfly* — a most successful collaboration!)

Puccini's publisher, Giulio Ricordi, was also closely involved in the creation of the work. He acted as arbitrator for the many disputes which arose between Puccini and his librettists, and even added suggestions of his own. And it was to Ricordi that Puccini entrusted the task of casting the opera for its premiere performance. According to a famous Puccini biographer, George R. Marek, "The cast

sired) was not one of stars, not one of 'virtuosos of the throat', but a group of singing actors, (for *La Bohème* was to be a music drama in which youth was to have its sway."

The premiere performance of *La Bohème* was held February 1, 1896, at the Teatro Reggio in Turin. The rest is history. Just as Puccini himself fell in love with Mimi, so did the world. And not only Mimi, but all the Bohemians, and most especially Puccini's glorious music, sensuously warm, meltingly radiant and lushly romantic.

La Bohème is the fourth Puccini work to be presented by Michigan Opera Theatre (the others were *La Rondine*, *Tosca*, and *Madame Butterfly*), and we are proud to present this work in the spirit of its first performance, with a cast of "singing actors . . . and youth will have its sway".

LA BOHEME

The Story

ACT I. In their bleak and cheerless Latin Quarter garret, Marcello, a painter, and Rodolfo, a poet try to keep warm as they do their work. Their spirits are high but their funds are low. They are soon joined by companions Colline, a philosopher, and Schounard, a musician, who bring food, fuel and wine.

A knock on the door announces the arrival of Benoit, the landlord. He demands rent, but the four mischievously refer to his romantic escapades. When he confesses, they throw him out in mock indignation.

Since it is Christmas Eve, they decide to go to the Café Momus. Rodolfo decides to remain behind for a short time to finish some work.

There is a knock on the door, and Mimi enters. Her candle has blown out, and Rodolfo, seeing how pale she is, (and how lovely), invites her in. He relights her candle and as she is about to leave, both candles are blown out, and she drops her key. The two search for the key and their hands touch in the darkness. At this touch, Rodolfo begins his famous aria in which he tells Mimi of himself and his dreams.

She answers with her equally famous aria, describing her lonely life embroidering flowers. The act closes with a rapturous duet in which each declares his love for the other.

ACT II. The crowds have gathered at the Café Momus for the Christmas Eve celebration. Mimi and Rodolfo enter, and he buys

her a new bonnet. Mimi is then introduced to Colline, Schounard and Marcello by Rodolfo who also proclaims that she is his Muse, the inspiration for his poetry.

As the friends order dinner, the toy vendor Parpignol enters, flanked by excited children. The next one to enter is Musetta, Marcello's former sweetheart, with her elderly friend Alcindoro, who take a table next to Marcello and friends. In the midst of this Musetta sings her famous waltz, to further taunt Marcello and remind him of how lovely she is.

Suddenly, Musetta screams that her shoe is pinching her foot, and she sends Alcindoro off to buy another pair. The minute he leaves, she is in Marcello's arms, and all join in a musical climax which is interrupted by the arrival of the patrol. The crowd hails the soldiers and everyone follows the formation, leaving Alcindoro to pick up the check.

ACT III. At one of the gates of Paris, on a cold, wintry dawn, a guard admits some street-sweepers and farm women with their produce. Late merry makers can be heard in a nearby tavern. Mimi enters, coughing and shivering, looking for Marcello who is staying at the tavern with Musetta.

When Marcello appears, Mimi implores him to help her. She tells Marcello that she and Rodolfo must part. They quarrel constantly over Rodolfo's jealousy. Rodolfo enters and Mimi hides before he appears to talk to Marcello. At first Rodolfo insists that Mimi is nothing more than a flirt, but on further questioning, he breaks down and confesses to Marcello that he loves her deeply

but her health is quickly deteriorating, made worse by the poverty in which they are living. Mimi overhears Rodolfo and rushes to him.

Laughter from Musetta prompts Marcello to reenter the tavern. Mimi and Rodolfo, left alone, sadly bid each other farewell. Marcello and Musetta reappear, once again furious and quarreling with each other. The act ends with a quartet in which Marcello and Musetta continue their quarrel, as Rodolfo and Mimi tenderly decide to remain together until spring.

ACT IV. Marcello and Rodolfo are in the garret, once again trying to work, but both are distracted by thoughts of Musetta and Mimi. Schounard and Colline enter with "yesterdays dinner", bread and a fish. The four try to make light of the dismal situation with a mock duel and a dance. Their gaiety is interrupted by Musetta who appears and says that Mimi is with her and is very ill.

Mimi enters. She happily but weakly greets her old friends and murmurs that her hands are so very cold. Marcello and Musetta leave to get a muff for Mimi and, hopefully, some medicine. Colline bids farewell to his beloved overcoat and leaves to pawn it.

Left alone, Rodolfo and Mimi sing of their former happiness and great love. The others return and give the muff to Mimi. Warm and happy, she falls asleep. As Musetta prays for Mimi's recovery, Schounard realizes that Mimi is dead. Rodolfo turns and faces the others whose looks betray the truth. In despair, he falls on the lifeless body of Mimi.

CURTAIN CALL



SAVERIO BARBIERI, who sings the role of Colline, was born in New York, grew up in Florida, and attended the University of Miami. His first professional work was with the Saint Louis Municipal Opera, and he has since sung with Teatro de Bellas Artes in the Dominican Republic, the Saint Paul Opera Association, the Duluth Symphony Orchestra, the Hawaii Opera Theatre, the Metropolitan Opera Studio, the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the New Jersey Symphony, and the Opera Orchestra of New York. In 1974, Mr. Barbieri appeared with the New York City Opera (*Carmen* and *Rigoletto*), and made his Michigan Opera Theatre debut in the role of Pimen in last season's production of *Boris Godunov*.



MARIANNA CHRISTOS, who sings the role of Mimi, is a 1975 Metropolitan Opera Auditions winner who lives in New York. She attended Duquesne University in Pittsburgh where she received a Masters degree in Music. Her roles include Donna Elvira with the New York Lyric Opera, Silvia with the Bel Canto Opera, Nella with the Fort Worth Opera, and Lady Billows with the Carnegie-Mellon Opera Theater. Two summers with the Santa Fe Opera included the roles of the Princess and the Bat (*L'Enfant Et Les Sortilèges*), and Bellezza and Ora II (*L'Egisto*). Just last month, Miss Christos made her New York City Opera debut as Liu in *Turandot*.



JOSEPH CARMEN DE RUGERIIS, conductor of *La Boheme*, has worked extensively in Italy, the Philippines and the United States, as a conductor, stage director, drama director, and instructor of music, English, and aesthetics. He has served as assistant to such operatic luminaries as Thomas Schippers, Christopher Keene and Franco Zeffirelli. For two years Mr. De Rugeriis was personal assistant to composer Gian Carlo Menotti. The operas he has conducted include *The Most Important Man*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, (Menotti), and most recently *Don Pasquale* (Donizetti) in Palermo. Mr. De Rugeriis has staged scenes from *Faust*, *Madame Butterfly*, and *Rigoletto*.

CURTAIN CALL *continued*

ALLAN GLASSMAN, who sings the role of the painter Marcello, is only 22 years old and has already performed Silvio in *Pagliacci*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Germont in *La Traviata* and Figaro in *The Barber of Seville*. He was born in New York and studied at the Juilliard School of Music and Hartt College of Music. In the summer of 1974, Mr. Glassman was a member of the Wolf Trap Company in Vienna, Virginia, and this past spring he sang Figaro with Michigan Opera Theatre's Opera in Residence program in eight Michigan cities.



ROBERT K. GRAY, who sings the role of the musician Schumann, won the Metropolitan Opera Auditions in San Diego and placed in the Western Regional Finals in Los Angeles. He then went to the Juilliard School of Music and studied with Giorgio Tozzi. Mr. Gray has sung with the San Diego Symphony, Aspen Festival, Central City Opera, and the New York Philharmonic. Last season Mr. Gray made his MOT debut as Baron Douphol in *La Traviata*.



SHERI GREENAWALD, who sings the role of Musetta, was a 1968 winner in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions. She has performed with the Hunter College Opera Theatre, the Brooklyn College Opera Theatre, Temple Music Festival, and the Manhattan Theater Club. Recently, she sang Despina (*Così fan Tutte*), Miss Jessel (*Turn of the Screw*), and Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*) for Texas Opera Theatre, and Rosina (*Barber of Seville*) for the Omaha Opera Company. Immediately following her MOT debut, Miss Greenawald will debut with the Houston Grand Opera in *Bilby's Doll*, and *Don Giovanni* (Zerlina).

WILLIAM MORRIS, who sings the character role Benoit, has been studying voice for five years. He first performed for Michigan Opera Theatre in the 1973 production of *Rigoletto*, singing the role of Borsa. In 1974, Mr. Morris sang Missail in *Boris Godunov*, and has been a member of the Michigan Opera Theatre chorus since 1973, performing in most MOT productions.



JEROLD NORMAN, who sings the role of Rodolfo, holds degrees from Oklahoma University and Indiana University. While at Indiana, Mr. Norman was acclaimed for his performances in the School of Music productions of *Carmen*, *Jenufa*, *Arabella*, and *Tales of Hoffman*. This past season he has sung Alfred (*The Merry Widow*), Alfredo (*La Traviata*), Faust (*Mephistopheles*), Rodolfo (*La Bohème*), Pinkerton (*Madame Butterfly*), Don José (*Carmen*), Erik (*The Flying Dutchman*), and Narraboth (*Salome*), these last two roles with Cincinnati Opera and Canadian Opera, respectively. Immediately following his MOT debut, Mr. Norman will perform Don José with the Columbus Symphony, and next spring he will do his first Des Grieux (*Manon*) for the Charlotte Opera.



FRANCIS RIZZO, stage director for *La Bohème*, returns to Michigan Opera Theatre after his highly successful *Boris* of last season. Mr. Rizzo has been personal assistant to Gian Carlo Menotti, noted composer and stage director, and in 1967 was appointed director of the American Sector of the Spoleto (Italy) Festival of Two Worlds. Currently, he is Artistic Administrator of the Wolf Trap Foundation in Vienna, Virginia. Mr. Rizzo has directed productions for Santa Fe Opera, New York City Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Baltimore Opera, and in Europe for Teatro Verdi in Trieste, and the Opera House in Marseilles. He also is a frequent contributor to Opera News.



ROMAN TERLECKYJ, who sings the role of Alcindoro, made his MOT debut in 1971 (*The Perfect Fool*), and has since performed in *Beauty and the Beast*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Tosca*, *Rigoletto*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Merry Widow*, and both MOT Opera in Residence programs. He is currently personal assistant to Dr. DiChiera, and has also worked as prop and costume designer, chorus manager, and assistant to MOT stage directors. This past summer Mr. Terleckyj was assistant stage manager for the Santa Fe Opera.



GENE A. WABEKE, who sings the role of the toy vendor, Parpignol, has appeared extensively in the Detroit area and Michigan as a soloist with various groups, including the Cranbrook Festival, Dearborn Choral Arts Society and the Opera Association of Western Michigan. Mr. Wabeke first performed with MOT under its predecessor Overture to Opera (*La Rondine*, 1971). His other MOT credits include *Beauty and the Beast*, *Rigoletto*, *Madame Butterfly*, *The Merry Widow*, *Boris Godunov* and *Die Fledermaus*.

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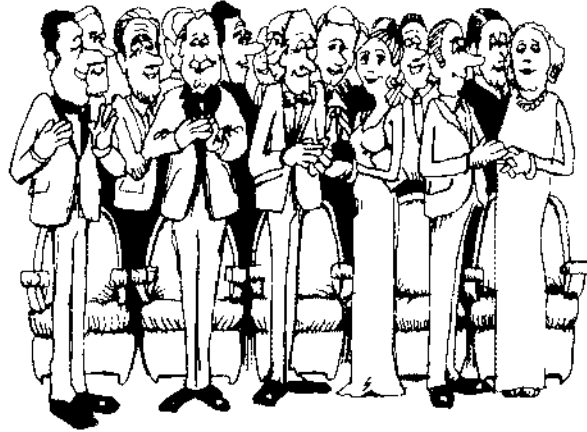
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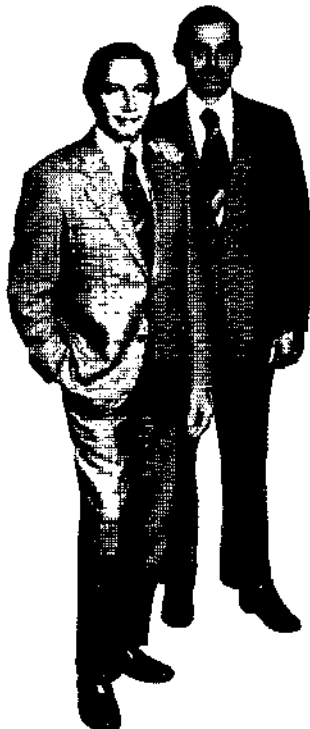


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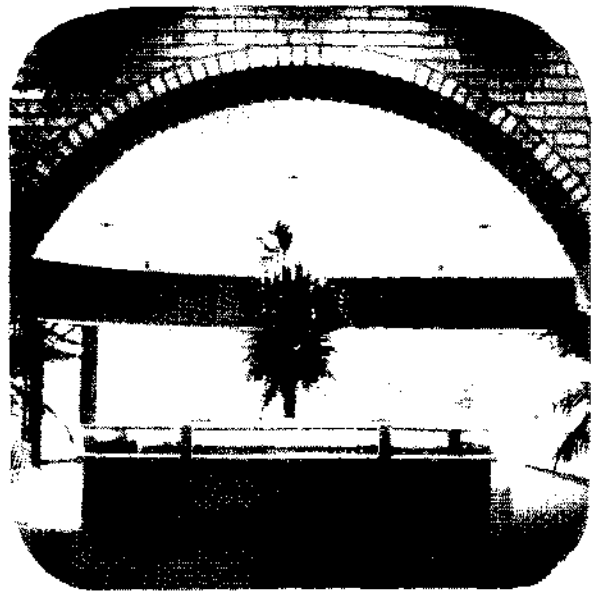
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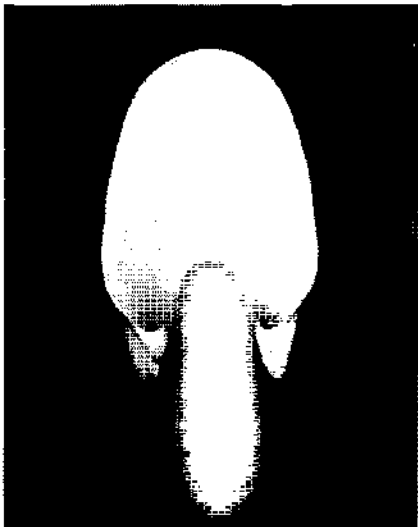
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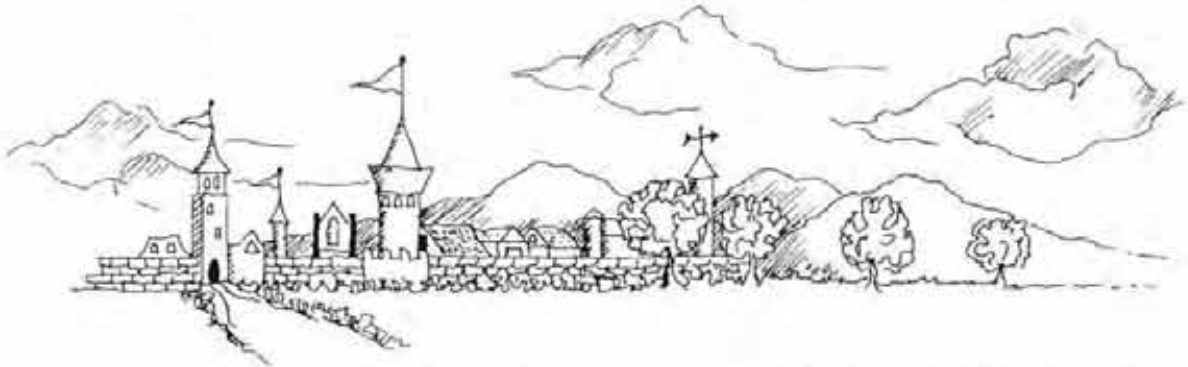
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**MICHIGAN
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THEATRE**

1975-76



LUCIA
DI LAMMERMOOR

JANUARY 16, 18, 21, 23, 24

**This production made possible in part by a generous grant from
THE MOBIL FOUNDATION**

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LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR

An opera in three acts by

Gaetano Donizetti

(1797-1848)

Libretto
Salvatore Cammarano

Translation by
Anne Grossman
Additional Materials by
Christopher and David Alden

Based on Sir Walter Scott's
novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*

First performance in Naples, September 26, 1835

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Normanno, Aide to Enrico Ashton	Alan Glassman
Lord Enrico Ashton	Robert Termine
Raimondo, Chaplain of Ashton Clan	Joseph McKee
Lucia, Enrico's Sister	Catherine Malfitano
Alisa, her Nurse	Eleanor Felver
Edgardo, Master of Ravenswood	Neil Shicoff
Lord Arturo Bucklaw	James Hopkins

Seventeenth century Scotland

ACT I	Scene 1 Outside Ravenswood Castle
	Scene 2 Ravenswood Graveyard
	Intermission
ACT II	Scene 1 Ravenswood Castle Chapel
	Scene 2 Great Hall of the Castle
	Intermission
ACT III	Scene 1 Abandoned Wolf's Crag Tower
	Scene 2 Great Hall
	Scene 3 Ravenswood Graveyard

Conductor	Andrew Meltzer
Stage Director	David Alden
Set Designer	Paul Steinberg
Costume Designer	Suzanne Mess
Lighting Designer/Technical Director	Donald Martin
Vocal Coach/Accompanist	Stephen Lord
Production Coordinator	Yael Gani
Stage Manager	Valerie A. Bernacki
Apprentice to the Stage Manager	David A. Pretzlaff
Apprentice to Technical Director	John M. Theuerkauf
Rehearsal Accompanist	Grace Walters
Supernumeraries	David Wassenaar

Costumes from Malabar, Ltd. Toronto

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Michigan Opera Theatre gratefully acknowledges the support of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, the Michigan Council for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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The Background

Gaetano Donizetti was born six years after the death of Mozart, and died three years before the premiere of *Rigoletto*. During the 51 years of his life (1797-1848) he wrote 75 works for the lyric stage, and was part of the triumvirate, the others being Rossini and Bellini, the works of which are considered the high point of Italian bel canto opera.

Donizetti's education prepared him well for his life's work. He studied music (voice, piano, organ, flute, and double bass), history, mythology, Latin, and rhetoric, all the while exhibiting an uncommon ability to compose "like lightning". It was this ability which assured him a comfortable living in an age when people went to the theater to see the latest opera as we, today, go to the theater for the latest play or musical comedy.

The immense and immediate popularity which Donizetti enjoyed is documented by the composer himself, writing to his publisher, Ricordi, following the opening of his 35th and most famous opera: "*Lucia di Lammermoor* has gone on stage and kindly permit me to shame myself and tell you the truth. It has pleased, and pleased very much"

The success of *Lucia di Lammermoor* is

The Story

by David Alden

In a feud between the Scottish families of Ashton and Ravenswood, Enrico Ashton has won the upper hand, and established his family in the Ravenswood castle, leaving Edgardo Ravenswood a bitter outcast. The political winds of Scotland are shifting, and Enrico fears disfavor with the new monarch; unless he can marry his sister Lucia to Lord Arturo Bucklaw, head of a powerful clan, his power may crumble.

Act I Scene 1

Outside the castle, Normanno and members of the Ashton clan search for a mysterious trespasser. Enrico is angry at Lucia's refusal to agree to a political marriage, but the chaplain, Raimondo, pleads in her favor. Normanno tells Enrico that Lucia is in love with a stranger whom he suspects is Edgardo. When the searchers return and confirm Normanno's suspicions, Enrico swears vengeance on his sister and her lover.

Scene 2

Anticipating a tryst with Edgardo, Lucia has come to the cemetery where her mother is buried near an ancient fountain. She tells her nurse Alisa of the fountain's ghost — a terrible omen, according to Alisa, and of her love for Edgardo, who soon arrives. He must leave immediately for France, but first he wants to end the feud of the families, and marry Lucia. Knowing her brother's hatred, Lucia begs Edgardo to keep their love a secret. Before parting, the lovers exchange tokens and swear eternal vows.

Act II Scene 1

In the chapel, Enrico plots to force

Lucia in part to the novel on which it is based. Sir Walter Scott's tale, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, had many elements which make it a great story: an exotic setting; a gloomy castle in 17th century Scotland; an ill fated love between two innocents of warring families; the madness of the heroine; her brother's scheming intrigue; and murder.

But it is Donizetti's use of these elements, setting them to music which is at once laden with glorious melody and at the same time characteristic of the individuals and dramatic situations which he portrays, which has secured for this work its prominent place in the history and standard repertoire of opera.

Writing of the famous mad scene, Herbert Weinstock, biographer of Donizetti and opera historian, said, "It is only when the soprano's voice, under perfect control, has been made the vehicle for a display of . . . virtuoso characterization as well (as vocal pyrotechnics), tearing at the listener with understanding of a human mind going in and out of eclipse, that Donizetti's artistic wisdom has been justified."

To justify Donizetti's artistic wisdom . . . this is the aim of Michigan Opera Theatre's production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Lucia to marry Arturo by showing her a forged letter proving Edgardo unfaithful. Raimondo advises Lucia to do as her brother asks. Crushed and confused, she consents.

Scene 2

In the great hall, the Ashton clan greets the Bucklows. Enrico warns Arturo that if Lucia appears melancholy, it is because she mourns her mother. Lucia enters, and is forced to sign the marriage contract. At that moment, Edgardo enters claiming Lucia as his bride. Seeing her signature on the contract, he curses her, and storms out.

Act III Scene 1

Edgardo, hiding in the Wolf's Crag tower, is approached by Enrico who explains that he couldn't enjoy the wedding knowing that his enemy is alive. The two decide to meet the next morning for a duel.

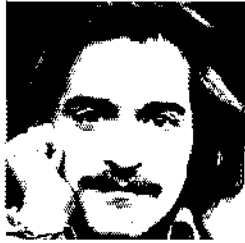
Scene 2

The wedding festivities are interrupted by Raimondo who tells the horrified guests that Lucia has lost her mind and stabbed Arturo to death in their wedding chamber. Lucia enters and relives her anguish and ecstasy to the dismay of all, and to the remorse of her brother.

Scene 3

Edgardo, awaiting his enemy for the duel, is overcome with grief at Lucia's supposed betrayal and desires only death. Wedding guests enter and tell Edgardo that Lucia is dying and calling for him. He is about to rush to her side when Raimondo arrives with the news that she is dead. Edgardo stabs himself, and dies with his beloved's name on his lips.

CURTAIN CALL



DAVID ALDEN makes his MOT debut as stage director for *Lucia* in a production which he successfully premiered this past Fall in Augusta, Georgia. Actor, director, and translator, he apprenticed at the Lake George and Santa Fe Operas, and directed his first opera, *The Barber of Seville*, in Florida in 1972. He spent the past three years as resident stage director of Houston Opera's Texas Opera Theater. Future assignments include the world premiere of Carlisle Floyd's *Bilby's Doll* and a new *Don Giovanni* for Houston, a repeat of *Bilby* in Omaha, and debuts with the Cincinnati Opera and the Wolf Trap Festival.



ELEANOR FELVER, who sings the role of Alisa, was born and educated in Scotland. The contralto came to Canada in 1965, after establishing herself as a recitalist in Britain. The recipient of a Canada Council grant, Miss Felver made her Canadian operatic debut in 1971 at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. Her Michigan Opera Theatre debut was as the innkeeper in last season's production of *Boris Godunov*, and she has sung extensively in oratorio, and as soloist with the orchestras of Buffalo, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Windsor.



ALLAN GLASSMAN, who sings the role of Normanno, most recently was heard as Marcello in MOT's production of *La Bohème*. The 23 year old baritone from New York studied at Juilliard and the Hart College of Music. Mr. Glassman spent the last two summers as a member of the Wolf Trap Company, and in the Spring of 1975 he sang the role of Figaro in MOT's Opera in Residence (*The Barber of Seville*). Upcoming in March and April, Mr. Glassman will sing Enrico in the Opera in Residence production of *Lucia*.



JAMES HOPKINS, who sings the role of Arturo, most recently performed Rodolfo in the University of Michigan production of *La Bohème*, and in April will sing Don Jose in their *Carmen*. A native New Yorker, the tenor has appeared as guest soloist at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and with the university orchestras of Michigan, Oakland, and Florida State. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in voice at the University of Michigan, and is also Assistant to the Dean of the Music School.



CATHERINE MALFITANO, who sings the title role of Lucia, is currently on the roster of New York City Opera. The 27 year old soprano made her professional debut in 1972, and since then has sung with the companies of Santa Fe, Lake George, Wolf Trap, Portland, Washington D.C., Houston, Chicago, and Minneapolis. Her European engagements include the Holland Festival and an upcoming Covent Garden debut. She has appeared at Carnegie Hall in recital, and has recorded for Musical Heritage Society. In October, Miss Malfitano returns to MOT for the season opening world premiere.



JOSEPH MCKEE sings the role of the sympathetic Raimondo. Presently a member of the American Opera Center at Juilliard, the bass-baritone from Pennsylvania is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory, and has performed with the opera companies of Tucson, Omaha, and Augusta. Future engagements include Kansas City Lyric Theater and Kentucky Opera. In February, Mr. McKee will sing the role of Bartolo in Michigan Opera Theatre's production of *The Barber of Seville*.



ANDREW MELTZER, music director and conductor of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, received his training at the Oberlin Conservatory. His professional engagements have included work with Santa Fe Opera, the Geneva Opera Centre Lyrique International, and the Minnesota Opera Company. In 1974 Mr. Meltzer made his debut with the San Francisco Opera, and he subsequently was music director of Western Opera Theater for the season 1974-75, and music director of the San Francisco Opera Merola Program. In the spring of 1975, he debuted with the Vancouver Opera Association.



NEIL SHICOFF sings the role of Lucia's lover, Edgardo. The tenor from New York is a recipient of National Opera Institute grants, and the first Jennie Tourel Memorial scholarship. Mr. Shicoff attended the Juilliard School, and has performed with the American Opera Center, the Santa Fe Opera, and the Opera Society of Washington. His Cincinnati debut was the title role in the 1975 May Festival production of *Ernani*. Other upcoming engagements include Cavaradossi in the Miami Opera's *Tosca*, and the title role in Houston Grand Opera's *Faust*.



ROBERT TERMINE, who sings the pivotal role of Lucia's brother Enrico, attended Hunter College and the Manhattan School of Music. The New York City Opera baritone appeared with the Lake George Opera Festival for six consecutive seasons, performing 18 major and minor roles. The recipient of a Corbett Foundation grant for study in Europe, Mr. Termine has performed with the Stadttheater Klagenfurt in Austria, and the theater in Regensburg, as well as the American Opera Center at Juilliard.

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

GENERAL DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the third production of our fifth season at Detroit's Music Hall Center. We look back with pride on the first two productions of the season, *Porgy and Bess*, Gershwin's American classic, which drew unanimous critical and popular acclaim, and *La Bohème*, Puccini's tender love story, at the end of which there "wasn't a dry eye in the house". And now *Lucia*, the most famous of the bel canto operas, with Malfitano, whose name is destined for the bright lights of super stardom. Yet to come, in February, Rossini's delightful *Barber of Seville* will end our season on a joyous note.

But even as we present *Barber* in Detroit, rehearsals will be well under way for Opera in Residence III, the third year of our innovative and well received program of taking opera throughout the state. From as far west as Kalamazoo to Cheboygan in the north, MOT travels for six weeks to Michigan communities, lecturing, teaching, and entertaining the residents of our state. For this and for the general excellence of our program we've earned the designation as one of Michigan's six major cultural institutions.

As a fitting salute to the American Bicentennial, Michigan Opera Theatre will present the world premiere of an American opera to open our 1976-77 season. This event not only will pay tribute to our country's birth, but will also place our company in the forefront of the major opera companies in America. I cordially invite you to join us for what promises to be a "giant step forward" for Michigan Opera Theatre and our city and state.

For all that we are, a major cultural resource serving the people of Detroit and Michigan, a professional opera company which showcases the masterpieces of the past as well as being a forum for the creativity of the 20th century — all with the emphasis on opera as vital musical theatre, for this I thank a dedicated staff, a supportive board of directors, our generous contributors, and you, without whom we would cease to be.



DR. DAVID DICHERA

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Dr. David DiChiera
Artistic Director

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Coming next . . .

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Rossini's gay, witty, ever-fresh classic comedy will end our season with a laugh. Starring New York City Opera baritone Charles Roe (MOT's Eisenstein, Danilo, Guglielmo), and directed by world famous basso Italo Tajo, THE BARBER, in English, will be proof that opera can be great, hilarious fun.

February 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 1976

WORLD PREMIERE

“Washington Square” to open MOT's 1976-77 season

A first for Detroit, a first for Michigan, an event of national and international significance in the arts, MOT has commissioned the renowned Thomas Pasatieri to compose an opera — MOT's salute to the Bicentennial — to open our 1976-77 season in October. *Washington Square*, Henry James' psychologically penetrating novel which became a successful stage play and an award winning movie (The Heiress), is transformed into an opera, the ultimate artistic experience. Tickets are now available on season subscription only.

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NEWSWEEK

the Barber of Seville



february

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Michigan Opera Theatre

1975-76

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

A comic opera in three acts by

Gioacchino Rossini

(1792-1868)

Libretto:
Cesare Sterbini

After the play of
Beaumarchais

English Translation:
Ruth and Thomas Martin

First performance in Rome, February 20, 1816

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Fiorello	Robert K. Gray	Ambrogio	Robert Taynton
Count Almaviva	John Walker	Basilio	John Cheek
Figaro	Charles Roe	Berta	Karen Ruczynski
Bartolo	Joseph McKee	The Sergeant	Bryan McNeil
Rosina	Brenda Boozer (Feb. 6,11,13)	The Notary	James L. Tuman
	Kathleen Battle (Feb. 8,14)		Robert Lowe

Seventeenth century Seville

ACT I A street of Seville, by Dr. Bartolo's house.
Intermission

ACT II The courtyard in Dr. Bartolo's house.
Intermission

ACT III The music room in Dr. Bartolo's house.

Conductor	Richard Kapp	Stage Manager	Valerie A. Bernacki
Stage Director	Italo Tajo	Wardrobe Mistress	Bonnie Whalen
Set Designer	Paul R. Shortt	Make up and Wigs	Marta Guran
Costume Designer	Suzanne Mess	Apprentice to the	
Lighting Designer	Donald Martin	Technical Director	John M. Theuerkauf
Chorus Master	Dr. Raynold Allvin	Apprentice to the	
Vocal Coach/Accompanist	Stephen Lord	Stage Manager	David A. Pretzlaff
Production Coordinator	Yael Gani		

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Scenery in cooperation with the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music
Michigan Chamber Orchestra, Virginia Catanese, General Manager

Michigan Opera Theatre Chorus, Roman Terleckyj, Manager: Larry Belaire, Scott McCue, Bryan McNeil,
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*Michigan Opera Theatre gratefully acknowledges the support of the Legislature of the
State of Michigan, the Michigan Council for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.*

All casts subject to change without notice.

Cameras and recording equipment not permitted in theatre

The Background

The chapter on Rossini in Brockway and Weinstock's book, *THE WORLD OF OPERA*, is entitled "The Divine Opera Grinder". An output of thirty-eight operas in nineteen years qualifies Rossini as an opera grinder. Works that sparkle with musical humor, gaiety, effervescence, infectious rhythm, and which are loved by millions, qualify Rossini as divine. Richard Wagner is supposed to have said, "Oh Rossini! Rossini! How I love him!"

Chronologically, Rossini is the first of the "big three" of Italian bel canto opera composers (the others are Donizetti and Bellini). Their works dominated the lyric stage during the first half of the nineteenth century, and showcased singers possessed of the bel canto style: beautiful tone and dazzling technique.

The first of Rossini's thirty-eight works premiered in 1810 when he was eighteen years old; and his final opera was written in 1829 when the composer was thirty-seven. Though he lived nearly forty years longer, he never wrote another opera, but instead retired to become an international wit and famed host of Paris. At the time, he was very famous, very popular, and very rich.

Although Rossini wrote serious works as well as comic ones, it is with the latter that he enjoyed his greatest successes. One of his biographers, Francis Toye, has said that Rossini's outstanding contribution to music was gaiety, that his comic operas worked because they reflected the personality of the composer. Rossini himself said, "Give me a laundry list and I will set it to music"; and on another occasion, following the composition of a religious work, he wrote, "Dear God: Well this poor little Mass is completed. Have I for once written real Sacred Music or just damned bad music? I was born for opera buffa, as Thou knowest."

Bel canto was his style, comic opera was his art, the *The Barber of Seville* was his masterpiece. Based on the first play of a Beaumarchais trilogy, *The Barber* premiered to the hoots and catcalls of Paisiello fans (Paisiello had a popular work of the same name on the board at the same time). The premiere was also plagued with poor singing, a singer who tripped and had to sing with a bloody nose, and a cat who wandered in and upstaged everyone.

But Rossini had the last laugh; *The Barber* has fulfilled the prophecy of Beethoven who said, "It will be played as long as Italian opera exists". One hundred and sixty years after its premiere the work remains not only in the standard repertoire of most opera companies and houses throughout the world, it ranks with *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Rosenkavalier*, and *Falstaff* as the very best of comic opera.

The Story

by Italo Tajo

ACT I

Count Almaviva, a Spanish nobleman pretending to be Lindoro, a poor student, comes to serenade Rosina, a ward of Dr. Bartolo, who wants to marry her himself. He meets Figaro, barber and general factotum in Bartolo's household, and the two plot to gain entrance for Almaviva into Bartolo's house. Figaro suggests that Almaviva present himself as a "drunken soldier", a smoke screen for his amorous intentions.

ACT II

Rosina, alone, muses on Almaviva's serenade, which has touched her heart. She writes him a note which she plans to send via Figaro. Bartolo enters with the music master, Basilio. Bartolo tells of his plan to marry Rosina, and hears from Basilio that Almaviva, of whom Bartolo is suspicious, is in town. Basilio suggests "a little slander" against the Count. Figaro, having overheard Basilio and Bartolo, tells Rosina about the Dr.'s desire for her hand, and then promises to deliver Rosina's note to Lindoro. Rosina is sharply questioned by her jealous and suspicious guardian. Soon Almaviva appears, disguised as a drunken soldier. A long argument ensues, during which Almaviva slips a love note to Rosina. When Bartolo demands to see it, she quickly substitutes a laundry list. The noise attracts the attention of soldiers, and when the sergeant is about to arrest Almaviva, he reveals his true identity. Bartolo is stupefied. To cover his mistake the sergeant arrests Ambrogio, a servant. Bartolo faints and the lovers embrace.

ACT III

Almaviva now returns disguised as the music teacher Don Alonso, "pupil of Don Basilio", who, according to Alonso, is sick. Rosina recognizes her Lindoro, and begins her music lesson. Figaro arrives to shave Bartolo, and Basilio comes in looking the picture of health. The others bribe him to leave. Figaro shaves Bartolo while Rosina and Almaviva plan to elope. Berta complains that she is going mad. Bartolo tells Rosina that Lindoro is not true to her, and is planning to hand her over to his master Almaviva. Rosina believes Bartolo and unhappily consents to marry him. Bartolo sends for a notary. Almaviva and Figaro arrive with a ladder to get Rosina, but she accuses Lindoro of treachery. He reveals his true identity and she is joyous. When Basilio enters with a notary to marry Rosina and Bartolo, a gold ring from Almaviva convinces Basilio to witness the marriage of Rosina and the Count. Rushing in too late, Bartolo finds his ward already married, and admits he was a fool. "All's well that ends well."

CURTAIN CALL



KATHLEEN BATTLE, soprano, alternates in the role of Rosina. A graduate of the College Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Miss Battle is the recipient of Corbett and Ford Foundation scholarships, and was the national winner in the Federation of Music Clubs' 1975 "Young Artist Auditions". As soloist she has appeared with maestri James Levine,

Thomas Schippers, Robert Shaw, and Lukas Foss, and her opera roles in Cincinnati include Rosina, Susanna, and Emily (*Help, Help, The Globolinks*). Most recently, Miss Battle performed Treemonisha on Broadway.



ROBERT K. GRAY, baritone, who sings the role of Fiorello, studied with Giorgio Tozzi as a scholarship recipient at Juilliard where he received his B.M. and M.M. degrees. He was an Eastern Regional finalist in the San Francisco Opera and Metropolitan Opera auditions. Mr. Gray made his MOT debut in 1974 as Baron Douphol in *La Traviata*, and this

season performed Schaunard in MOT's *La Bohème*. Currently, Mr. Gray is the Chairman of the Voice Department at Oakland University.



BRENDA BOOZER, mezzo-soprano, who alternates in the role of Rosina, is a Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions winner. Her operatic experience includes performances with the opera companies of Central City, Santa Fe, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and the Goldovsky Opera Theatre. Miss Boozer is also a dancer, currently studying with Martha Graham,

and she has made guest appearances on the Mike Douglas and Merv Griffin shows. She recently made her New York debut at Avery Fisher Hall as soloist with the New York Choral Society.



RICHARD KAPP, conductor for *The Barber*, is well known as a conductor through his regular appearances on the European continent and in North America. An accomplished pianist and composer, Mr. Kapp is the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship. He was National Music Director of Young Audiences, Inc., and Musical Director of the Opera Theatre of

the Manhattan School of Music. He is presently conductor of the Philharmonia Virtuosi of New York (a chamber orchestra consisting of leading members of the New York Philharmonic). He has more than twenty-five recordings to his credit, reflecting his immense operatic and orchestral repertoire. Mr. Kapp is also a graduate of New York University Law School, and a program officer for the Ford Foundation.



JOHN CHEEK, bass-baritone, who sings the role of Basilio, is a native of North Carolina, and a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts. He also attended the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Italy, and the Manhattan School of Music in New York. He has appeared with the symphonies of North Carolina and Baltimore, and with the National Gallery

Orchestra, the Washington Cathedral Choral Society, and the Opera Society of Washington. For the past four years, Mr. Cheek has been a member and featured soloist with the United States Army Chorus.



JOSEPH MCKEE sings the role of Dr. Bartolo. Presently a member of the American Opera Center at Juilliard, the bass-baritone from Pennsylvania is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory, and has performed with the opera companies of Tucson, Omaha, and Augusta. Future engagements include Kansas City Lyric Theatre and Kentucky Opera. Last month

Mr. McKee won considerable critical acclaim for his moving portrayal of Raimondo in Michigan Opera Theatre's production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*.



CHARLES ROE, baritone, who sings the role of Figaro, is currently on the roster of the New York City Opera. He made his MOT debut in 1971 as Rambaldo in *La Rondine*, and has performed in each succeeding season for a total of nine roles with the company. A native of Cleveland, Mr. Roe was Assistant Professor of Music at Eastern Michigan University for six

years. He has performed with the orchestras of Cleveland, Toledo, and Detroit, and with the Opera Association of Western Michigan, and Music Theater of Wichita, and the Oberlin Music Theater.



JOHN WALKER, tenor, sings the role of Almaviva. A native of Illinois, he attended Denver and Indiana Universities and the Aspen School of Music, and then went to Europe where he performed in Stuttgart, Brussels, Frankfurt, and Zurich. Mr. Walker's Canadian debut was in 1970 with the Canadian Opera Company (the title role in Gounod's *Faust*), and he

sang Prunier in the CBC television production of *La Rondine*. He has performed with the companies of San Francisco, Dallas, Chicago, Seattle, Portland, San Diego, and Santa Fe.



KAREN RUCZYNSKI, who sings the role of Berta, is a graduate of Western Michigan University and the University of Michigan with a Master's degree in Voice Performance. The soprano from Grand Rapids made her professional debut with the Western Michigan Opera Association as Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*, a role she also performed with the Ann Arbor Comic

Opera Guild. Miss Ruczynski appeared as soloist with the Flint Symphony, and sang Rosina and Berta in the MOT Opera in Residence production of *The Barber of Seville* last spring.



ITALO TAJO, is stage director for *The Barber*. His singing career includes 160 basso roles in every major opera house in the world. Currently Professor of Voice and Opera at the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, Mr. Tajo has pursued an equally successful career as stage director in the last ten years. Next season Mr. Tajo returns to the

Metropolitan Opera for 23 performances in *La Bohème* and *Gianni Schicchi*. He also will perform the Sacristan next season for the Chicago Lyric Opera.

MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

Welcome to the fourth and final production of our fifth season at Music Hall Center. We hope you have enjoyed *Porgy and Bess*, *La Bohème*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor*; and we hope too, that *The Barber of Seville*, Rossini's comic masterpiece, will be as memorable for you as it has been for us to present it.

Curtain going down at Music Hall means curtain going up for Opera in Residence, our six week touring, educational program which takes opera throughout our entire state.

I invite you to renew your season tickets now for next season which will open with a world premiere, a "giant step forward" for Michigan Opera Theatre, our city, and our state.

My sincere thanks to the entire company, the board of directors, and to you, for enabling us to wear proudly our designation as a major cultural institution.



Dr. David DiChiera
General Director

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WORLD PREMIERE

to open MOT's 1976-77 season
"Washington Square"



CATHERINE MALFITANO



GIORGIO TOZZI

Composer: Thomas Pasatieri Librettist: Kenward Elmslie

A first for Detroit, a first for Michigan, an event of national and international significance in the arts, MOT as commissioned the renowned Thomas Pasatieri to compose an opera — MOT's salute to the Bicentennial — to open our 1976-77 season in October. *Washington Square*, Henry James' psychologically penetrating novel which became a successful stage play and an award winning movie (*The Heiress*), is transformed into an opera, the ultimate artistic experience. Tickets are now available on season subscription only.

— Starring —

Metropolitan Opera Bass-Baritone
GIORGIO TOZZI

New York City Opera Soprano
(MOT's Lucia)
CATHERINE MALFITANO



Six communities in Michigan will each enjoy a full week of our touring company, as we present lectures, assembly programs, concerts, and a complete performance of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Funded in part by a grant from the Michigan Council for the Arts, the following communities will host Opera in Residence:

Alpena February 23-27
Birmingham March 1-6
Saginaw March 8-14

Traverse City March 22-27
Olivet March 29-April 2
Cheboygan April 5-9

The role of COUNT ALMAVIVA will be sung by GRAYSON HIRST, a Julliard graduate who has appeared in a wide repertoire of operas and has been soloist with the New York Philharmonic under the direction of both Leonard Bernstein and Thomas Schippers. He was recently acclaimed for his Carnegie Hall debut in which he sang the leading male role opposite Beverly Sills in a revival of Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment*. In the fall of 1970, nationwide television audiences will have the opportunity to view him in the role of Belmonte in NET Opera's production of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*.

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