

# *Audio Encyclopedia*

To many opera lovers, the United States is represented by The Metropolitan Opera in New York. The greatness of that house is unquestioned and its performances have been known for more than sixty-five years through its remarkable broadcast history. But another great house and company have consolidated in this century in San Francisco. With roots as deep and as respected as those in New York, this West Coast company formed in 1923 and moved to its home in the War Memorial Opera House in 1932. The driving force behind this consolidation of San Francisco's commitment to opera - dating back to the mid-19th century - was Gaetano Merola. Until his death in 1953, Merola was variously conductor, manager and fund-raiser; but above all, he was the force which assembled a great institution in what appeared at first to be a remote and provincial location. The company has gone on to international success, of which we have an example from their visit to Los Angeles on this disc. Similarly, the Opera House has hosted great performances by visiting companies and great artists; two such concerts are included to suggest the quality of those activities.

In 1953, Kurt Herbert Adler began his thirty-year reign as General Director; many feel that he is responsible for the greatness of the company. The number of American debuts made under Adler is staggering. Considering only sopranos, we must include Tebaldi, Nilsson, Rysanek, Borkh, Schwarzkopf, Jurinac, and both Leontyne and Margaret Price. The glory years of the 1970's through 1983, when Sutherland, Sills, Nilsson, Pavarotti, Domingo, Caballe, Vickers, Thomas and Price appeared regularly provided a new Golden Age in San Francisco. Broadcasts preserve much of this historic era at the Opera. Our survey concentrates on the exciting growth period just preceding, when innovations in repertoire, casting, conductors, and stage direction prepared us for the glories to come.

## **San Francisco Opera**

**A celebration of the city,  
the company and the  
War Memorial Opera House  
during the regime of  
Kurt Herbert Adler**

Britten	PETER GRIMES	9-11-1973
Donizetti	L'ELISIR D'AMORE	10-10-1975
Donizetti	LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR	17-11-1972
Massenet	WERTHER	7-11-1975
Ponchielli	LA GIOCONDA	19-9-1967
Poulenc	DIALOGUES DES CARMELITES	10-1982
Puccini	LA BOHEME	12-10-1969
Puccini	TURANDOT	30-11-1968
Rossini	LA CENERENTOLA	16-11-1969
Strauss	ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	26-9-1969
Strauss	ELEKTRA	30-9-1966
Strauss	SALOME	30-10-1970
Verdi	AÏDA	30-9-1960, 26-11-1969
Verdi	FALSTAFF	7-10-1970
Verdi	LA FORZA DEL DESTINO	7-11-1969
Wagner	GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG	17-10-1969
Wagner	SIEGFRIED	2-10-1970
Wagner	TRISTAN UND ISOLDE	6-11-1970
Wagner	DIE WALKÜRE (in LA)	29-3-1969

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