

Music Creates Problems When Opera Is Produced

... 'La Boheme' Opens Saturday

When a director talks about technical problems in producing opera he is talking about more than just a cast of thousands, hundreds of props, or curtain cues.

He is concerned about the fusion of drama, music — choral and orchestral, art and ballet into a total aesthetic experience for the audience which creates a total picture of unity.

John Zei, is dramatic director of "La Boheme," now in its final week of rehearsal before opening Aug. 17. He has worked with his cast since the beginning of June for the upcoming production.

He said that the greatest difficulty in directing opera lies with the singer-actor himself:

"A singer, by his very nature, does not have the tradition of moving around when he sings. He must have a background of choral tradition so that he can respond to certain choral principles. But the problem created by opera is the addition of physical expression needed to give a portrayal."

Zei said that a singer-actor, then, must be taught how to move in a manner which will not danger his voice.

"And therein lies the main reason for the enormous amount of time needed to mount a show of this proportion," Zei said.

In effect, the singer then undergoes a complete reversal of polarity. He starts out by having the music demand certain things of him. In the end, the singer must make the audience feel that it is he who is commanding the music.

This process is lengthy, Zei explained:

In the first place, the singer is bound by the musical demands of the score from what the composer has written. The singer must abide by the rules of the composer, which include crescendos, metric times, and all of the innuendos that he has set down to make an idea complete. The singer learns these through the director's coaching.

After he learns his musical role he then goes into blocking sessions. The measurements of the actual stage are taped (in different colors for each act) on the floor of the rehearsal room, and the singer must learn where he should be at a prescribed time.

"This is done with the idea that the director has a certain



Mimi (Lorraine Gibb) and Rudolph (Raymond Miller) fall in love during this scene in "La Boheme."

picture in his mind," Zei said, "and he wants the singer to be there for that picture."

He emphasized that the singer-actor is allowed complete freedom in his interpretation of his role.

"No two people will do a role the same way because of this," Zei said. "Each will have a different feeling and sense of pace."

Often parts of an opera have to be reblocked. Certain parts must be lengthened. The tempo might have to be increased. Sets could be changed — all to make it right for a total effect.

Once the actual theatre is entered the singer is hampered with the addition of properties, costumes and lighting.

"But the singer-actor thinks of his voice first, so all of these additives are done bit-by-bit so that a complete performance is the result," he continued.

Zei said that the basic problem with music-drama, when compared to straight

musical idea because certain devices (arias, duets, choral numbers) are always used.

"La Boheme" will be performed in Howell Theater, on a comparatively small stage. Since most operas require a change of sets with each scene it has been the custom of the Music Department to stage operas in an impressionistic mode: most of the scenery establishes a where-they-are mood but much is left to the imagination of the audience.

Zei said that the greatest detail is spent on costuming which is costly. The romantic, exhuberant customs of the Bohemians depicted in Puccini's opera open the costume designer's choices of color and nonconformity, so the stage should be filled with dazzling images, he said.

The other element of opera — the orchestra — will be used by the NU production troupe. A twenty-piece group will accompany the production.

"The orchestra is an all-important element of opera," Zei said. "Without it, much of the impact would be missed."

Soon the Music Department will be able to use the new Kimball Recital Hall for operatic productions.

The building should be finished in time for a 1969 Summer Nebraska premier of "The Number of Fools," an opera composed by Robert Beadell of the NU Music Department, with libretto by Stanley Peters.

The new stage will be over twice the size of the one presently used, so Zei believes that future productions will utilize even more the impressionistic technique.

"The art form will be even more pure," he concluded. "The opera will unfold not as they see it on stage, but as they will want to see it in their minds."

EPILOGUE

This is the last issue of the 1968 SUMMER NEBRASKAN.

In our eight issues we have tried to offer each segment of the diverse University community something each week.

We hope that, at sometime, you have been pleased with something you have read in this paper these past weeks, remembering that the old adage applies to a campus newspaper too.

We wish to thank all of the columnists, the reviewers, the artists, the photographers, and all those who did help us this summer. We thank our advertisers who kept us in the black. And we thank you for reading our campus weekly.

Larry Eckholt, Editor
Meg Brown, Business Manager

NEED EXTRA COPIES OF YOUR Thesis or Term Paper??

Join the parade of students who are having their extra copies reproduced professionally at BOOMER'S.

Finest copy machine equipment available. Prompt service—while you wait!

15c for first copy, 10c for each additional copy.



BOOMER'S PRINTING COMPANY
1212 O Street 477-1251

Experienced Typist

desires home typing. Fast, accurate, electric typewriter. 434-4166



The Ohio Express and the People

Wednesday, Aug. 21st
Pershing Auditorium
8:00 p.m.

\$1.00 a ticket at the following stores

- Danielson Floral, Gold & Co., Ben Simons, & Paine, Cliff's Smoke Shop, Nebr. Book
- Hovland-Swanson, King's Food Host, Worth Store, J. C. Penney Co., Sartor Hamann,
- Mart, Kresge's, Lawlor's, Magee's, Miller Sears Roebuck, Wells & Frost.

or \$2.00 at Pershing Box Office.

Call to the New Party

By Phillip H. Scribner
Chairman, Formation of The New Party

In the desperate days of last fall there was born a new political movement which could breathe a new vitality into the democratic processes of the country and change the direction of national policy. But now that movement stands at the crossroads. We can sit back and watch its repudiation by the party professionals at the national conventions. Or we can act to preserve and continue it in the only way possible now — by forming a new political party.

To find the origins of this political movement, we must look back to last fall. We had seen a summer of racial riots in 1967 — the worst riots of this century. There were some who hoped that this nation could be led to solve the problems which lay behind the violent outbursts. But their disappointment was predictable; their President named a day of prayer and appointed a commission.

Last fall we faced a long and pointless war. It was hard to imagine a more foolish and inhuman policy. And again there were those who hoped that our leaders could extricate us from that needless bloodshed and set us on a new path in our dealings with foreign countries around the world. But once more their disillusionment was to be expected; their President continued to escalate our commitment to the war and refused to make the concessions necessary to negotiate a settlement.

There were other festering sores in our social structure which had become obvious to most people, but last fall these two overwhelming issues, the war and the domestic crisis, took precedence. And clearly they were related to one another, for the Administration's priorities for national action demanded that we kill Vietnamese rather than save Americans.

Movement of Change

That desperate fall a political movement was begun to change the direction of American history. Recognizing that stopping the war was necessarily the first step, a group of Nebraskans joined a national movement to dump Johnson and repudiate his war policies. When McCarthy agreed to be a candidate in December, it quickly became a campaign to defeat the Administration in the primaries. These moves were made against the advice of all the professional politicians. Who does not remember their pessimistic cries: "It is no use; it cannot be done," and "You cannot deny an incumbent President renomination in his own party"? But those concerned Americans who began the movement had more faith in the democratic process than in the schoolbook regularities of hack politicians.

In turning to the democratic process, marshalling votes, arguing, getting people interested and involved, other desperate alternatives were rejected. There were, after all, many who were talking about revolution, burning cities down, blowing up induction centers, and the like. There were others who talked of leaving the country or sitting back and waiting for the worst. But the fact remained that 1968 was an election year, and there was a chance — just a chance — that they could influence the decisions about national policy made through those elections. And thus was born the new political movement: grassroots in its support, tied to issues rather than power, and unequivocally committed to democratic procedures.

The most dramatic and outstanding fact about the new political movement was that it was almost completely successful. In the New Hampshire primary, the unknown candidate of the movement, Eugene McCarthy, took 42 per cent of the vote away from LBJ. Kennedy joined the attempt to change the Administration's policies in the only way he thought possible — by changing the personnel, Johnson

decided to drop out, and nearly 80 per cent of all the Democrats who were given the opportunity to choose in the primaries voted for candidates who fundamentally opposed the policies of the Johnson-Humphrey administration. Those who began the drive found more support for their cause than anyone could have predicted in the fall. By the California primary one could finally believe in victory at the convention and in November; one could believe that LBJ would be replaced by someone who was sincerely committed to stopping the war and dealing with our domestic ills. Their faith in the good judgment of the American voter was vindicated.

Tragedy's Aftermath

But then Kennedy was assassinated. The people involved in the campaigns were broken and tired, unable to find direction.

And while they floundered, looking for direction, Hubert Humphrey was flying delegates to the Capitol for the Washington treatment.

In these few weeks before the Democratic convention, we face, not the fruits of victory at the polls, but the prospect of being denied all that we have fought for this long year. The representative of the very Administration which was rejected so decisively at the polls, the advocate of precisely those policies we challenged in the primaries, Hubert H. Humphrey, has wrapped up the Democratic Convention for his own nomination. He has done this, not by campaigning in the primaries, not because he won the support of the people, but because he is the choice of LBJ to continue his policies and the recipient of all the delegate votes Johnson controls through patronage, party professionals and power in the party. Those delegates number about 500 of the approximately 2300 delegates at the convention. If Humphrey were denied those 500 votes, McCarthy would be leading in the unofficial delegate counts. If Humphrey were denied the additional hundreds of votes he controls from state conventions governed by the unit rule, the voters could be heard at the convention.

What is disgusting about this outcome is not so much that the Democratic party is undemocratic. The party professionals who run it have rarely been interested in listening to what the Democrats across the country want, and there is nothing new about that. What really is disgusting is that because the Democratic party is undemocratic, none of the three candidates who appear on the ballot in the fall will represent the position of the vast number of insistent voters which put McCarthy and Kennedy in the running and which gave Rockefeller hope.

At the Crossroads

The movement which supported the candidacies of Kennedy, McCarthy and Rockefeller stands, therefore, at a crossroads. In the next week we will help decide where it goes. On the one hand we can quietly accept the rejection of our candidates and position by the party professionals and rally half-heartedly behind Humphrey out of fear of Nixon and Wallace. That is, we can abandon all that the movement fought for and solemnly prepare for four more years of the same. On the other hand we can act. We can continue the movement begun last fall. We can take the only effective means open to us to insure that we have a candidate in the fall elections who represents us.

The Democrats will choose their candidate on the 28th of August. At this time, it appears the choice will be made in total disregard of the Democrats who supported Kennedy and McCarthy in the primary elections. The political professionals feel safe in doing this for they believe that, although they shove Humphrey down the throats of the Democratic voters, by the time the fall elections roll around the dissident Democrats will have rallied behind

Continued on Page 3

On the Inside

Was it (a) An Act of God, (b) a touch of irony, or (c) a show of power which caused the electricity failure on Aug. 7 over most of Eastern Nebraska, moments after Richard M. Nixon was nominated for the Republican presidential candidacy?

Miss Nebraska has been chosen. So has Miss Universe and Miss Pork Queen. It seems that Madison Avenue has overlooked a large segment of the Miss Title contest. Try to picture the following queens: Miss Carriage. Miss Cegeneration. Miss Demeanor. Miss Ft. Miss Hap. Miss Begotten. And, of course, there is Miss Nomer.

Rumors have it that there is a "Draft Hersey for Veep" movement within the American-Independent party.

SUMMER NEBRASKAN

Editor Larry Eckholt
Business Manager Meg Brown

Information for publication may be brought to 219 Nebraska Hall or called in to 472-3290. The SUMMER NEBRASKAN is published eight times during the summer seasons: five in the first, and three in the second.

Looking for something smooth, mild, satisfying?

Try one of our special tobacco blends.

Cliff's Smoke Shop
1204 O St.

