

DIE FLEDERMAUS

By Karen and Tom Copple

The operetta "Die Fledermaus" was the last production at the University by John Zei, who has done much to promote opera in the area.

In the overture, the orchestra directed by Richard Grace was well-balanced and rich in sound.

If you had seen "Fledermaus" presented in the Viennese style, there was a definite shock upon the opening of the curtain. If not, the set was well-done and quite luxuriously furnished.

However, we have difficulty finding a reason for the large number of modern paintings up stage right. They presented too much of a distraction to the viewer.

Art conflict

In addition, there was a conflict of art on stage. Why with all that modern art would

there be a Greek statue by the door? The set itself had a problem in that there was only one exit to the outside. When Eisenstein exited for jail (actually the party) and Alfred came in to woo Rosalinds, the two gentlemen couldn't have helped seeing one another. It would have been more believable to have had Alfred duck down behind the picture window momentarily, or have Eisenstein exit from stage right, letting us imagine a more acceptable exit.

Excellent music

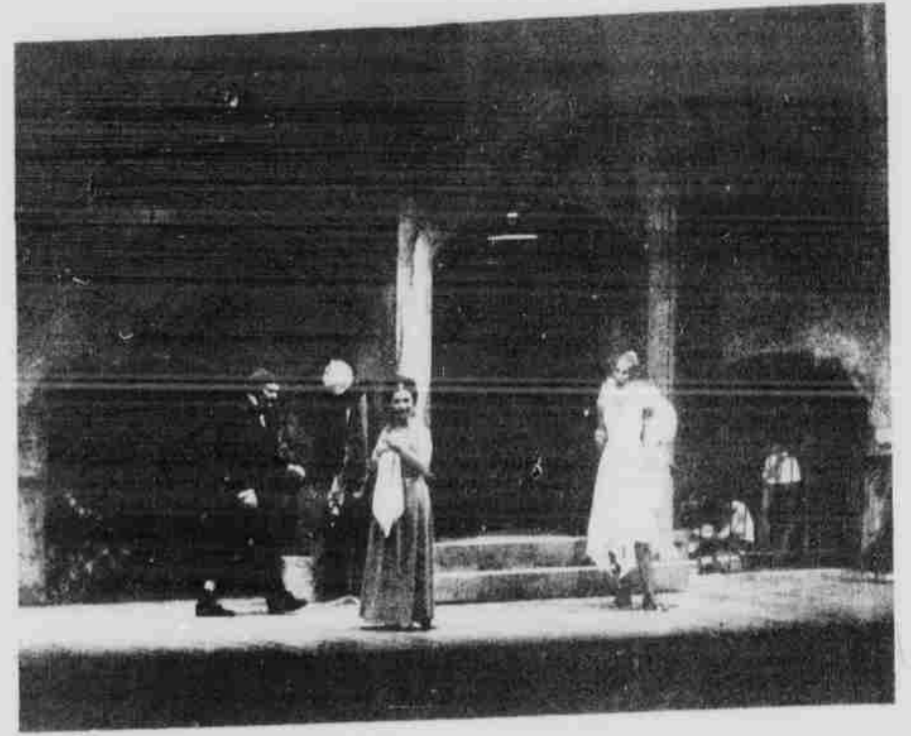
The music of the orchestra by itself was excellent. However, by mid Act I the age-old battle that exists between the singers and the orchestra had begun, and the orchestra was winning.

The set for Act II was striking and excellently lighted with the right touch of naughty red. However, there seemed to be a conflict of periods in the costumes. We had either fad 1973 or early 1920's, plus old Cossack, in addition to a doorman dressed in early eighteenth century.

The movement, in and out, of the large chorus was well done because it did not detract from the main characters. The vocal sound from the chorus was full and added to the musical enjoyment of the operetta. The entire act dragged because of a lack of diction, the pace of the dialogue, and the positions of the actors, many of whom had to cross the vast gulf of the stage before speaking.

Exhausted characters?

In Act II, the men still had control of their voices, but the singing in general had lost



something. First the characters might have been exhausted from trying to push their voices over the orchestra. Second, in the women's voices there seemed to be a lack of solid technique on the high notes, which caused them to be harsh and constricted. Sandra Utsumi had little difficulty with her aria. Jeanne Dietrich had some problem with tightness in her aria, but carried it off beautifully with enough sense not to have hung on to the final high note.

The dancers in Act II were good in what they presented. It seemed at that type of a party with all the promiscuous side lines, there could have been dancing with a little more flair.

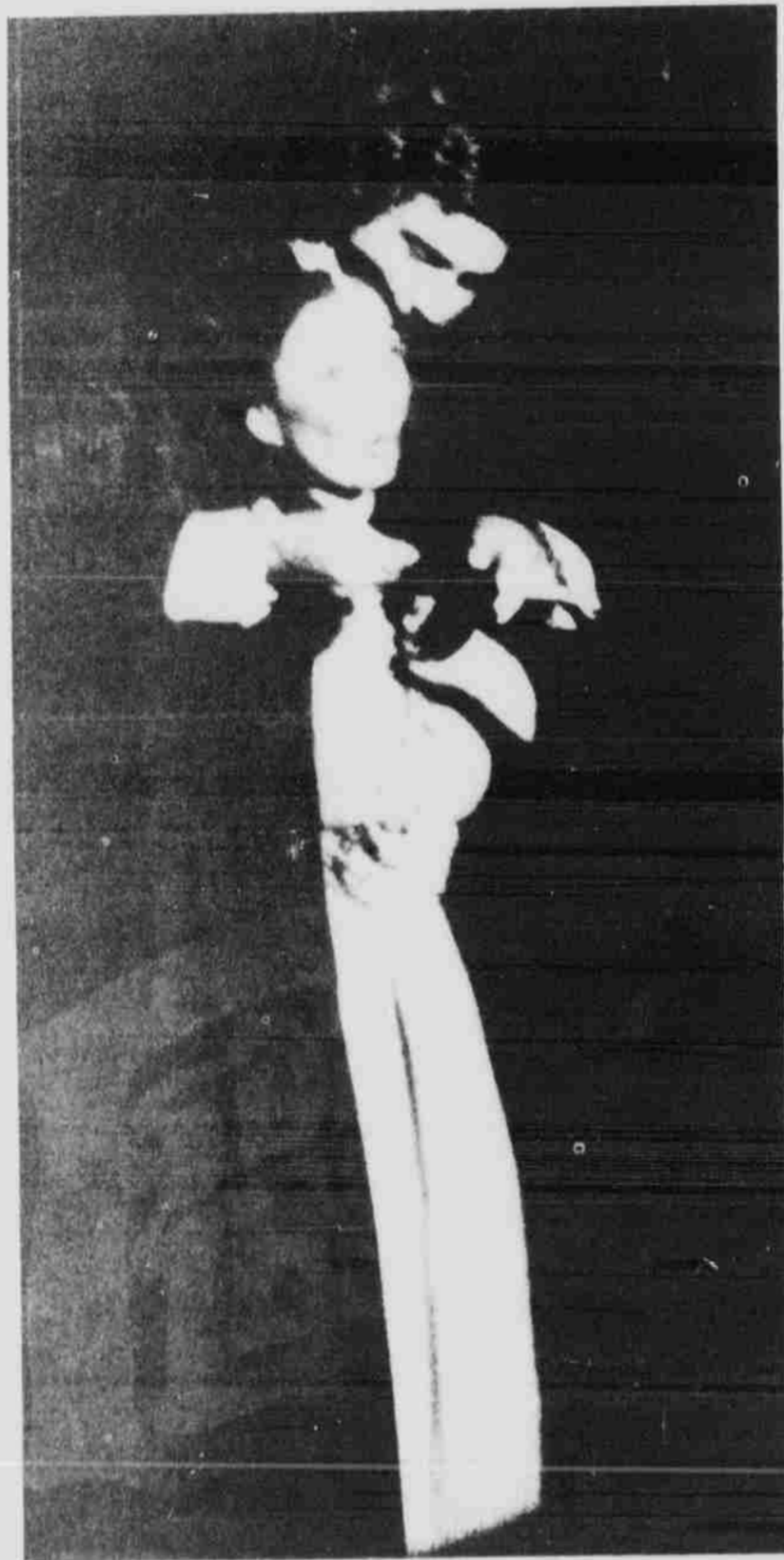
Everything lost

Everything we started with in Act I seemed to be totally lost by Act III, with two exceptions. The warden's entrance was funny. Kent Hall does a fine characterization. But Jill Eiche with her cat-calls helped to carry the act through some shaky moments. She possesses a brilliant sense of dramatic humor. With the play updated, the old style jail in Act III didn't quite fit. But then there didn't seem to be any motivation for the fire either.

In summary, many things in the operetta didn't mesh together. The actors had the right emotions, facial reactions

and gestures, but they all seemed to be independent of each other. The vocal production of the men was very secure throughout the operetta. The voices of John Brandstetter, Rick Brandt and Kent Hall were resonant and full sounding throughout the entire show. As a rule we found the minor roles to be very strong and secure.

"Die Fledermaus" was a very ambitious undertaking for a summer production. However, there was a thread of inconsistency in the fitting together of the show, and when we compare it to other productions we find it lacking the polish of past endeavors.



NEBRASKA REPERTORY
THEATRE ★ 73

472-2073 ★ 12th & R

8:00 P.M.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Aug. 5 BUTLER	Aug. 6	Aug. 7 SHREW	Aug. 8 COMPANY	Aug. 9 SHREW	Aug. 10 COMPANY	Aug. 11 BUTLER
Aug. 12 SHREW	Aug. 13	Aug. 14 COMPANY	Aug. 15 SHREW	Aug. 16 COMPANY	Aug. 17 BUTLER	Aug. 18 SHREW
Aug. 19 COMPANY	Aug. 20	Aug. 21 SHREW	Aug. 22 BUTLER	Aug. 23 SHREW	Aug. 24 COMPANY	Aug. 25 COMPANY
Aug. 26 SHREW	Aug. 27	Aug. 28 BUTLER	Aug. 29 SHREW	Aug. 30 BUTLER	Aug. 31 SHREW	Sept. 1 SHREW