#### CRITICA DE OPERA:

## "Madama Butterfly"

Es más bien difícil que una función de "Madama Butterfly" aburra. ralmente, se vibra hasta las lágrimas; en otras ocasiones el público puede indignarse. Pero en el estreno del cuarto titulo de la temporada del Municipal primó, por lo menos al término del prolongado primer acto, una sensación que bordeó peligrosamente el aburrimiento en esta obra tan convencional, pero re-presentativa del melodrama italico del período realista, con injertos de procedencia japonesa.

A menudo la mente -y el corazónde los espectadores se encontraron más bien vibrando con los magnificos decorados de Ming Cho Lee, tan finos, tan ilustrativos de lo que uno al menos su-pone debe ser el estilo adecuado. Hasta en los más mínimos detalles se preocupó el escenógrafo: el piso -que los asistentes a platea dificilmente pudieron apreciar-, los adornos, la combinación de colores. También contribuyeron a agradar visualmente los trajes de Nan Cibula, nada chillones, Asimismo, la excelente iluminación del chileno Bernardo Trumper, sugerente, bien graduada. El público pudo sentirse satisfecho, así, de un montaje escenico que quiso, y lo logró, ser auténtico: nada de tarjeta postal, un peligro que acecha a las re-

presentaciones de la obra pucciniana.
"Madama Butterfly" es una ópera de
contenido dramático y sentimental; además, si se dan las condiciones que se propuso el compositor, es convincente. Destacan una ancha y generosa melódica y una cuidada orquestación. El director Juan Pablo Izquierdo entregó una lectura correcta de la partitura, para la que la orquesta respondió sin fallas de bulto. Pero a nuestro juicio fue demasiado "intelectualizada": lo que faltó que el calor itálico. Sobre todo en el primer acto, la parte orquestal resultó plana, sin matices y, muy especialmente, sin magia, el elemento que puede hacer inolvidable la versión de la obra.

Más adecuado estuvo en los actos siguientes. No hay duda que al director chileno le acomodan más los pasajes sinfónicos, pero será cuestión de tiempo, dadas sus condiciones, el llegar a compenetrarse de una partitura tan característica de una etapa muy definida dentro de la lírica italiana.

Más que el elemento orquestal, lo que fundamentalmente sostiene a esta conmovedora historia es la protagonista. Cio-Cio-San es la razón de ser de la ópera, y cuando ella no está en escena aquella parece desmoronarse. Con razón Puccini amaba a la japonesita más que a todas sus demás heroinas, y comprendemos que las sopranos de todos los calibres se sientan irresistiblemente tentadas con este personaje de tan profunda humanidad. Es tan rico el rol protagónico, que puede ser válido tanto un enfoque "natural" como uno sofisticado (o la combinación de ambos). Pero no creemos que, a priori, el que la intérprete sea japonesa signifique una ventaja. Puede serlo desde el punto de vista teatral, dramático, escénico, pero más bien pensamos que es una desventaja mirado con criterio estrictamente muslcal y vocal. Ambientada en Japón "Madama Butterfly" no deja de ser una opera indisimulablemente italiana, con sus grandezas y defectos, pero inequivocadamente italiana.

Niwako Matsumoto hizo su debut dando una lección de "orientalismo" de buena ley. En escena fue fina, sensitiva: sus movimientos y actitudes (la preparación para el harakiri fue un ejemplo entre tantos) llegaron al público natural y fluidamente, sin la artificiosidad tan común en otras intérpretes. Pudo ser conmovedora, también, en frases como "forse potrei cader morta sull'attimo". Su drama asomó con fuerza interior, y la artista marcó, dentro de sus límites, la transición desde los "quindici netti, netti" hasta la abrumadora madurez con un enfoue refinado. En resumen, estuvo resuelta la parte "japonesa" de la historia. Sólo que —y nada menos— la voz no la acompañó (no sabemos si habrá influido alguna disposición). Pequeña en volumen, sin cuerpo en el centro y casi inaudible en las notas bajas, su rendimiento vocal descansó en el agudo, no siempre resuelto limpiamente. Y no sabemos si por problemas de emisión su italiano fue demasiado exótico y forzado.

También hubo algunos rasgos exóticos en la dirección escénica de Sarah Ventura, que tuvo sus méritos. La autora de la "régie" pareció compadecerse excesivamente con el niño y lo despachó al jardin antes de tiempo. Por otra parte, los continuos revoloteos de Kate Pinkerton atentaron contra el interés dramatico del tercer acto, pues la mujer americana de Pinkerton no es el centro de la escena. Pero creemos que la directora escénica argentina es una profesional interesante que, con algunas soluciones discutibles, sabe su oficio,

El tenor Umberto Grilli estuvo correcto y musical desde el punto de vista vocal, aunque poco convincente en su ingrato personaje, en el que no demuestra creer demasiado. Muy sólida se mostró Aida Reyes en un rol que ya domina, sin fallas vocales. Nino Falzetti, como Goro, suplió lo que, por su veterania, ha perdido en voz, con su admirable oficio y su envidiable dominio escénico; es un lujo para roles de composición. Al barítono Bryan Schexnayder, prácticamente no se le oyó por estar indispuesto. Del resto de los participantes, nuevamente sobresalió Jorge Escobar, como Yamadori, El coro, regular esta vez.

Victor M. Muñoz Risopatron

### "Noche de Celebra la Patrias con

Es inevitable que si Raffaella Carrà està entre los invitados de un programa, se convierta en la gran atracci-Para verla asistieron los invisibles

# Acerca de Juan Pablo Izquierdo

Próximamente, el director de Orquesta Juan Pablo Izquierdo vuelve a Euro pa, donde lo esperan importantes compromisos, entre ellos el Festival de la Sociedad Internacional de Música Contemporánea, que se desarrollará en Bruselas. Ya es de dominio público que Izquierdo ha sido nombrado titular de nuestra Filarmónica Municipal, de modo que en el futuro compartirá su tiempo entre Santiago y otras grandes plazas artisticas. Junto con desearle éxito en sus próximas actuaciones queremos dar cuenta de varios triunfos recientes del maestro nacional en el extranjero,

Su labor en la "Elegía para jóvenes amantes", de Hans Werner Henze, con el conjunto de ópera de la Universidad de Indiana (USA), mereció el siguiente comentario crítico del Chicago Tribune: "La preesntación fue conducida por Juan Pablo Izquierdo, un director joven que constituye, sin duda, un hallazgo. Bajo su dirección, tanto la orquesta como los

cantantes pasaron por una de las obras mas complicadas del repertorio sin dificultad alguna. Fue una demostración impresionante de musicalidad y oficio".

El International Music Guide (Londres 1981), llama a Izquierdo "una autoridad en el repertorio moderno". Sobre su trabajo frente a la Orquesta de Camara de Israel, L. Petecki acota en Hatsofer: "Durante esta audición, que abarcaba obras de Barroco, Post-Romanticismo y siglo XX, Izquierdo nos pareció un músico profundo, un director sobresaliente v por deroso. Hav gran exactitud en su dirección. En el transcurso del concierto pudimos sentir cómo se generaban compresión y afecto entre él y los instrumentistas. Por supuesto, dicho acoplamiento de técnica brillante y contacto personal produjo una ejecución extraordinariamente bella e inolvidable". Respecto de la suite "La historia del soldado", de Stravinski, dice: "La entrega fue intensa y encantadora, sensitiva y livia-

na, con tempo controlado y de un nivel musical elevadísimo",

Aviva Shelah escribe en Hamishmar: "Nunca hemos oido tocar la Orquesta de Cámara con semejante refinamiento y flexibilidad". La reseña de Olia Silverman, del diario Maariv, destaca "el experto profesionalismo de Izquierdo", "su Interpretación y entendimiento, hondamente emocionales". Concluye: "Nuestro sincero agradecimiento a Izquierdo, tanto por su programación como por el excelente resultado de esta velada".

Federico Helnlein

HOBBY gardeners who grew up in this country or have lived here a good number of years will not be surprised when mild, relatively warm winter days give way to rain, cold winds and night temperatures close to zero and lower in hilly places. I remember very cold late winters with snow in Jerusalem in late February. Whatever the coming month holds in store, it should not be forgotten that February is one of the most important months for gardeners in Israel.

It's the season of tree planting, the time to set out fruit and ornamental trees, and the month of Tu Bishvat, the New Year of the Trees. On this arbour day, tens of thousands of schoolchildren plant and celebrate.

February is the month to set out seed potatoes in all parts of the country and to prepare tomato, pepper and lettuce seedlings. The planting of certain corms and tubers - dahlias, gladioli, canna lilies, agapanthi tritomas - begins now. This month you will probably begin to get up earlier in order to pay a visit to your garden before breakfast. Most of your leisure time will be devoted to renewed gardening efforts after enforced inactivity.

SPRING fever has a way of unleashing ambitions in everyone, and new gardeners are especially susceptible. They tend to let their aspirations get the better of their common sense. A visit to a seed shop can prove too enticing so that the novice gardener gives in to the wish of trying one seed packet of each of the flowers, herbs and vegetables so temptingly displayed in charming little packets with lovely, coloured pictures.

It doesn't seem unrealistic when standing in front of a well-done seed display to think such thoughts as, "Maybe okra will taste good, if I grow it myself." And someone with a grand gardening scheme would require certain essential equipment, and little effort is involved in shifting one's attention from seed variaties to brochures on rotary tillers. How pleasing to contemplate a vision of oneself sunbathing on a vast expanse of green lawn accented by handsome beds of colourful

Hold it! Many a potential green thumb in February turns into a disillusioned experimenter in May, whose dream garden has disappeared under the weeds.

Think small in a big way, and you will avoid having your gardening efforts become a burden on your time or on your cheque-book. Start out the first year with a small, easily manageable plot of land, prepared and maintained by a few basic handtools. Develop a limited garden plan including half a dozen or so vegetables that your family really loves and a few of your favourite flowers. This will keep your initial

ISRAEL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, Juan Pablo Izquierdo, conducting; with Emanuel Gruber, cello (Tel Aviv Museum, January 20). Mozart: Symphony No.30 in D Major ("Prague"), K.504; Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No.1, Op.9; Ligeti: Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra (1966); Weil: from "Kleine Dreigroschenmysik."

OUTSTANDING in its choice of programme and its execution, this concert offered three 20th century works and this was an unusual event. Conductor Izquierdo undoubtedly took a risk, but to judge by the audience's enthusiastic response, it paid off extremely well:

Opening with Mozart, Izquierdo immediately created confidence and established authority. Though his movements are restrained, the orchestra responded eagerly, giving him what he asked for. The "Prague" symphony is one of Mozart's greatest, heralding not only his last three, but also Beethoven. Here was profound depth of expression.

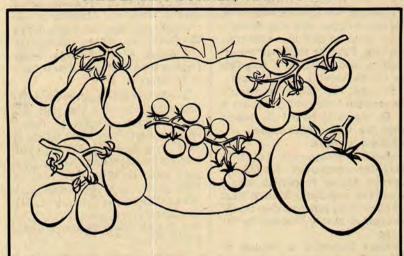
Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony was played with such intensity and surrender that it was impossible to ignore or withstand the composer's sweeping emotionalism.

I was fascinated by this remarkable, almost disturbing performance. The music bore the unmistakable marks of a turbulent

Schoenberg overwhelms with the

# Green-thumb mania

GARDENER'S CORNER/Walter Frankl



The small-fruited tomatoes resemble such other familiar fruits as the pear, plum, currant, cherry and peach.

best implements for turning over

packed clay or rocky soil. Strong

tines can handle the rocks, tree

roots, stones and other unwanted

material in the soil. The tines will

slip into such ground with light pres-

sure from your foot, but a spade

You will also find this tool prac-

tical for cultivation. And when you

want to move a plant, a fork will

cause less damage to roots than a

spade, which is more likely to cut

them. In Jerusalem, municipal gar-

deners can now be seen just about

everywhere along boulevards and in

public gardens, digging around tens

of thousands of polyanthan roses

If the fork seems too heavy for

you, the old-fashioned hoe may do

the job. It can help you to turn the

earth and to break clods apart.

Later it can be put to good service

in building trenches around trees

and rose bushes. Buy one with a

pointed, almost heart-shaped blade.

The point can be used to make little

furrows along a path marked by

string for seeds. A useful additional

tool is the so-called two-teeth

cultivator with a small hoeing edge

on one side, about half the width of

the hoe, and a set of two or three

The long handle of this tool will

prove beneficial in pulling out

weeds around flowers or vegetables

and to open the soil for aeration

without your developing back pains.

handle is necessary for levelling

ground, removing bigger stones in

the soil and other obstacles. Buy

one with 10 or 12 teeth. A trowel

A steel rake with a long wooden

teeth on the flip-side.

with garden-forks.

investment to a minimum and bring you a maximum of joy and satisfac-

Tools-Before you buy any new tools, have a look around. Maybe some old rusty ones, the inheritance of an earlier enthusiast, are lying in a corner of the garden, partly covered by fallen leaves and pine needles. Wherever things get stored or put aside to be fixed some day is a good place to look. Carefully cleaned and sharpened, and perhaps equipped with a new handle, old tools will do the job and be much cheaper than new ones.

If you have no choice but to buy new ones, take care this first season not to buy more than you really need. If you live in or near Tel Aviv, or at any place near the Mediterranean coast, where the soil is predominantly a light, sandy one, your best tool for turning the ground is a spade. Look for one proportioned to you, one that will work with you. Pick it up, feel its heft, put it through some imaginary motions, or, better yet, take it out behind the store for a real test if they'll let you. It should not be too heavy. You don't always need the most expensive one, but you should have one that will get work done without frustration. A long handle minimizes the amount of bending and will save you from back trou-

For those who live in Jerusalem or another hilly region with heavy, red or clay soil, the spade isn't the best tool for virgin ground. The right one is a garden-fork. It has strong flat tines and is one of the and a dibble for general use in transplanting seedlings are additional small tools the amateur gardener usually finds useful. The few tools mentioned here will enable you to prepare and care for a small garden.

As for watering a small garden, the first season will require nothing more than a watering can and a rubber or plastic hose. When the day comes that you are caring for an expanded space with more trees, shrubs and perhaps even a lawn, your watering facilities will presumably need to be augmented by sprinklers or a drip irrigation

Tomatoes for every garden Everyone can grow vegetables, no matter where they live. A good beginning is the tomato, the king of

Nothing else will reward you so generously in a small space. A carefully tended plant can yield up to 10 kilos of fruit in one season. I grow my tomatoes in medium-sized tins, for lack of garden space. The tins stand between the flower beds and on my balcony. Tomatoes can be grown on a patio, a roof or even a window sill.

Growing your own vegetables can be a fascinating adventure for you and your family. Since tomatoes take a long time from seed to harvest, it would be wise to start seedlings indoors in early February and transplant them into the open when they are 6-8 weeks old.

Raising seedlings. Small boxes, made from dried foam (kalkar in Hebrew) can be used, or wooden trays, tins, balcony cases or ordinary flower pots made of clay or plastic. Just make sure that your containers have drainage holes.

Fill containers with a mixture of peat, compost and sand (or vermiculite). The compost mixture should be slightly compressed with the finger tips of each hand. Take special care with the corners and sides of the containers. Then the soil surface should be levelled off and pressed flat with a firming board or your flat hands.

Before sowing seed, water the boxes thoroughly, so that the soil is evenly moist right through, but not sodden. Now make holes, using a stick or a pencil, which should be about 11/2 cm. deep and 3-4 cm.

Insert two seeds into every hole. After germination, in two — three weeks, thin out one, leaving the stronger for further growth. Place the container in the warmest spot in your room on a sunny window sill and keep it covered with a sheet of glass or plastic at night and whenever you open the window for ventilation. Keep the surface moist by hand-spraying.

This is enough for today. Later instalments of this column will provide you with further advice for your tomato adventure.

Schubert. Plavin's conception was now orchestral-symphonic. The two main elements of the music, the demonic and the lyrical-meditative, were combined into a drama of Faustian dimensions.

He started with a murderous tempo, but soon slowed down. revealing all necessary details, both musical and technical. When Plavin. reached the huge climax, after which Liszt inserts, abruptly, a moment of complete silence, I found myself holding my breath.

Plavin surprised with his maturity, his grand design, his breadth of conception. His future development should be followed with great interest.

# Worthwhile risk

MUSIC/Benjamin Bar-Am

deprives us of sound. Silences. whispers, hints of sound, mysterious noises, mutes slowly evolve into pitches. Ligeti's sound, the antithesis of Schoenberg's sound, is freed of emotional connotations. But Izquierdo again proved the man to present the soundscapes. Within the severe limits of the lowest level of sound, he created a wealth of contrast and sonoral development. Gruber handled the strange, antisolistic solo with complete understanding, never trying to overstep the composer's intentions.

Weil's Kleine Dreigroschenmusik evoked the spirit of pre-Nazi Germany of the early Thirties with all its terrible connotations. This was an amusing and yet foreboding finale to a highly dramatic evening.

PIANO RECITAL by Zecharia Plavin (Tel Aviv Museum, January 19). Schubert: Sonata in A Minor, Op.143; Rachmaninov: Variations on a Theme by Corelli:; Liszt: Sonata in B Minor.

FROM THE first note of the Schubert sonata, Plavin had the audience in his grip. He has made magnificent strides forward and developed a very strong personality, capable of penetrating far beyond lushness of his sound; Ligeti the printed notes. His Schubert was

powerful, replete with exciting contrasts, demonic and beautifully lyrical beauty (in the second movement). His immersion in the music is so intense that its spiritual content is exposed and turned convincingly into sonorific substance.

It was no coincidence, one feels, that for the second part of the concert, Plavin chose the monumental Liszt sonata, clearly indicating the connection between Liszt and

# Shameful truth

LISTENING IN.../Ze'ev Schul

THE 40TH anniversary of the infamous Wannsee Conference came and went, and most of the radio audience were left believing that the Endloesung, the passing of the death sentence on the Jewish People by the Third Reich, occurred only then, in January 1941. Someone who believes that may also find it possible to accept the widespread fallacy that the German people - and I am speaking of adults only - were by and large ignorant of the beastly enforcement of the Wannsee resolutions and the genocide they perpetrated.

Yet the thumbscrews were put on almost a decade earlier. The new faith declared by Julius Streicher and Alfred Rosenberg was widely accepted. If there were any protests during those first six prewar years of the Thousand Year Empire, only a few people ever heard of them. One must still wonder how German citizens were able to walk past the "new benches" and the brownshirted guards posted in front of Jewish shops and accept the economic and social boycott that began before Hitler came to power early in 1933. Where was the scream of protest? Today people voice their opposition to nuclear reactors, NATO, the Russians, you name it.

Without German acceptance of that six-year "running in" period, and world-wide passivity about what was going on inside that country, Wannsee and its final solution would never have happened.

My symbol of the Jewish martyrdom of that period is Eva Kesten. She died three years before Wannsee - gunned down by a stormmaculately clean street in a city that was particularly proud of the Baroque facades on its main street and its early Gothic cathedral. The fine sons it had raised included physicist Otto von Guericke and composer Georg Phillip Telemann.

Eva Kesten was a chubby, goodlooking mother of two, the wife of a clothing wholesaler who had done fairly well for himself until the boycott ruined his business.

As Eva lay in the street, German citizens walked over to the other side of the road. Her cousin didn't wait for the Nazis to come up and get him. He jumped from a thirdstorey window. Or maybe he was pushed. There were different

I cannot understand how Holocaust experts like Professors Shlomo Aharonson and Yehuda Bauer, not to mention Eliahu Ben-Elissar (TV panel discussion earlier in the week) could ignore this period. It almost seemed that the victims of 1933 to 1939 did not count. The Jewish emigrees of 1933 who fled to Paris because they mis-



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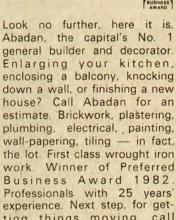
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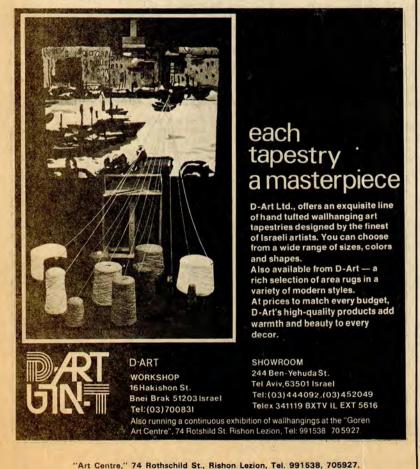


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IS NO ACCIDENT. takenly thought it was a liberal haven already knew of the infamous concentration camps at Oranienburg and Dachau. The first "institute" bestowed by DRIVE 17043 the Nazis on Austria after the Where were they then? Anschluss was Mauthausen. If they knew of these camps in Paris, they must surely have known of them in Berlin and Cologne, in Hannover and especially in Dachau, which is a suburb of Munich and a well-known one at that. The camp lies cheek by jowl with a residential quarter, and the good burghers of that place must have known what was happening next door. How about setting the record straight? Wannsee was trooper. She bled to death on an imno beginning.