

Grace Bumbry receives first Tibbett Award

Grace Bumbry has received the first annual Lawrence Tibbett Award presented by the AGMA Relief Fund. Named in honor of the founding President of AGMA, the Award has been established to recognize and celebrate the achievements and careers of those artists who have shared the fruits of their successes with their less fortunate colleagues.

The Trustees of the Relief Fund also have established a Grace Bumbry Scholarship to be awarded annually to a son or

daughter of an AGMA member who successfully competes in an audition for singers preparing for a career in the field of classical music. The Relief Fund is intending a similar award for dancers.

The Award was presented by AGMA President and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the AGMA Relief Fund, Nedda Casei, at a reception at the Cafe Des Artistes in New York on May 29. Miss Casei praised Miss Bumbry for her "graciousness and generosity" which has "inspired

the affection and respect of her fellow artists just as she has inspired audiences worldwide with the brilliance, dignity and beauty of her performances."

Following the AGMA event, Miss Bumbry left for France where she performed by invitation of French President Francois Mitterand at a concert honoring Nelson Mandela. She was awarded France's highest honor in the performing arts, the Officier des Arts et Lettres and also received a UNESCO Medal.

AGMA recovers \$200,000 for members in cancelled *Aida*

AGMA is distributing \$200,000 to nearly 130 choristers, dancers and principal performers signed to union contracts for the production of *Aida* which had been scheduled to perform at Giants Stadium in the New Jersey Meadowlands on June 1 and 2. The production was abruptly cancelled on May 27.

In addition, more than \$12,000 was collected for members hired in Canada (see letter, page 6).

Upon learning that one of the investors in the production was withdrawing its financial support, AGMA National Executive Secretary Bud Wolff made a demand on the \$200,000 Letter of Credit which had been posted to cover the salaries of the AGMA performers. "Our contracts are executed on the basis of 'pay or play,'" Wolff said, "with no cancellation clauses."

AGMA had begun discussions with promoters during the spring of 1989 when it was first announced that a Canadian company intended to produce *Aida* in Seattle. Subsequently, there was to be a tour including Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Boston. In April 1990, AGMA demanded a bond or Letter of Credit for the full amount of the payroll to cover AGMA members. After protracted discussions, the producer agreed and principal artists, as well as chorus and dancers, were signed to AGMA form contracts, and a Letter of Credit was posted.



AGMA President and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the AGMA Relief Fund Nedda Casei presents the first annual Lawrence Tibbett Award to Grace Bumbry.

The Importance of being AGMA

by **Sanford I. Wolff**
National Executive Secretary



The recent *Aida* debacle in New York and California (see separate story, page 1), resulted in a graphic example of what your union can do for you, will do for you and wants to do.

In a nutshell, when we learned of the scheduled performance of *Aida* and then had difficulty getting the production company to talk to us about a contract protect-

ing our people, we bearded the lion in its den by going to Montreal and insisting: "No AGMA contract, no performance."

We concluded an agreement which, most importantly, contained two provisions: (1) All singers and dancers were to be on AGMA contracts, and all principals already signed were to re-sign on AGMA contracts, and (2) the posting of security for the entire AGMA payroll, in the amount of \$200,000.

The rest is history: The performances

were cancelled; we drew on the Letter of Credit and all AGMA members were paid in full. Less dramatic instances of this nature occur almost weekly — the most recent being the settlement of a claim by General Counsel Mortimer Becker by payment of \$10,000 to a member.

At the last Board of Governors meeting, President Nedda Casei announced that she was preparing a list of members to invite to serve on the study committee called for by a resolution adopted first by the Southern California Executive Committee and thereafter by the Board of Governors, which stated in part: "... a majority of the committee members selected from areas outside New York, to conduct a thorough review of the structure and functioning of AGMA's organization, system of governance, and decision making process, and to develop and present recommendations to the National Board and to the general membership of AGMA to achieve the following goals:

"1. Greater internal democracy within AGMA."

"2. Increased communication with, and participation by, the membership throughout the country in the operation of their union."

"3. Greatly improved participation by the members of the National Board, especially those from outside New York City, in decision making at the national level of AGMA."

"4. Improvements in support for, training of, and networking among AGMA's local delegates and volunteer activists throughout the country."

The members invited are: Geraldine Barretto, New England Board Delegate; Boston Lyric; Charles Fidler, San Francisco Board; Katherine Bjornson, Los Angeles Board; Burman Timberlake, Los Angeles Board; Pam Emanuel, Pittsburgh Executive Committee; Sean Kelly, Houston Ballet Delegate; Tami Aleson, Cincinnati Ballet Delegate; Arnold Voketaitis, Chicago Board; Lori Rosecrans, New York Board; Dominic Cossa, New York Board; Robert Manno, Met Chorus Committee Chairman.

A procedure for the study and review

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Members of Board of Governors are elected

A total of 1,689 ballots were received in the recent election: 1,639 were valid and 50 were declared invalid for having arrived too late, because the members were in arrears in dues or other reasons. All active members in good standing as of February 1, 1990 were eligible to vote. A report follows. Names of elected candidates appear in large type and new members are indicated by a * next to their names.

NEW YORK AREA

Solo Singers — 7 Vacancies

DOMINIC COSSA	538
ELINOR ROSS	533
DIANE KESLING	499
SANDRA DARLING	460
EDMOND KARLSRUD	422
* MARGARET GOODMAN	422
WILL ROY	403
Joseph Sopher	325
Paula Stark	312
Write-ins	7

Stage Directors/Stage Managers — 1 Vacancy

PAMELA McCRAE	532
Write-ins	18

Choristers — 11 Vacancies

MARILYN ARMSTRONG	514
SUZANNE DER DERIAN	509
MADELEINE MINES	509
HARRIET GREENE	504
MARILYN PELLETIER	495
KENNETH BONJUKIAN	489
HARRIS DAVIS	488
NANCY KENDALL	486
TOM TOMASOVIC	479
* KENN DOVEL	470
* SALVATORE RANDAZZO	435
Bernard Fischer	417
Write-ins	10

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA

Solo Singers — 2 Vacancies

BEVERLY ROBINSON	134
JOHN LOMBARDI	111
Lillias Gilbert	93
Write-ins	1

Choristers — 2 Vacancies

BURMAN TIMBERLAKE	116
* JONATHAN CURTSINGER	78
Andrew Black	71
Jeff Shipman	52

Michael Mout	50
Write-ins	1

Dancers — 1 Vacancy

LOLA MONTES	170
Write-ins	1

CHICAGO AREA

Solo Singers — 1 Vacancy

* SUSAN HOFFLANDER	151
Mark Nienow	75
Write-ins	4

Stage Directors/Stage Managers — 1 Vacancy

* BLYTHE DE BLASIS	201
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Choristers — 10 Vacancies

* WILLIAM DIANA	182
SCOTT HOLMES	171
CAROLYN BERGHOFF	165
BETTE McGEE	159
DENNIS MARSHALL	158
* DEBORAH FAIR	147
LORENE RICHARDSON	147
CATHY WEINGART-RYAN	146
ROBERT PRINDLE	145
MARTHA EDWARDS	144
Bryan Miller	140
Joseph Poprawski	135
Richard Livingston	134
Thomas Sillitti	129
Write-ins	4

SAN FRANCISCO AREA

Solo Singers — 2 Vacancies

JOHN MacALLISTER	113
* RUTH ANN SWENSON	111
Write-ins	4

Choristers — 2 Vacancies

* FREDRICK MATTHEWS	113
* DALLAS LANE	108
Write-ins	4

Dancers — 2 Vacancies

KATHRYN ROSZAK	116
* JO ELLEN ARNTZ	106
Write-ins	2

NEW ORLEANS AREA

Solo Singers — 1 Vacancy

MARY BERTUCCI	28
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Choristers — 1 Vacancy

SALLY FISCHER	27
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PHILADELPHIA AREA

Solo Singers — 1 Vacancy

KENNETH GARNER	52
Charles Wurster, Jr.	19

Choristers — 3 Vacancies

ELIZABETH WALKER	51
* JAN TAYLOR	41
* ROBERT PERRY	34
Patricia Kampmeier	30
Roger Crouthamel	27
Walter Granger	23

Dancers — 1 Vacancy

* ROY KAISER	66
Write-ins	1

WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA

Solo Singers — 1 Vacancy

* YVETTE LEWIS	116
Write-ins	3

Choristers — 3 Vacancies

ELENI KALLAS	120
* JAMES HAMPTON	110
CLIFF THOMSON	105
Write-ins	2

PITTSBURGH AREA

Choristers — 1 Vacancy

* CAROL KISSEL	35
Erma Thurston	20

Dancers — 1 Vacancy

* RAYMOND RICKETTS	11
(Elected by write-in vote)	
Write-ins	6

NEW ENGLAND AREA

Choristers — 1 Vacancy

GERALDINE BARRETTO	46
Write-ins	6

TEXAS AREA

Dancers — 2 Vacancies

* SEAN KELLY	35
* MARK ARVIN	28
Write-ins	2

NORTHWEST AREA

Solo Singers — 1 Vacancy

SHIRLEY HARNED	58
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Choristers — 2 Vacancies

MONTE JACOBSON	56
PATRICIA BERG	54
Write-ins	2

BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED



Cossa



Ross



Kesling



Darling



Karlsrud



Goodman



Roy



McCrae



Armstrong



Der Derian



Mines



Greene



Pelletier



Bonjukian



Davis



Kendall



Tomasovic



Dovel



Randazzo



Robinson



Lombardi



Timberlake



Montes



Hofflander



Diana



Holmes



Berghoff



McGee



Marshall



Fair



Richardson



Weingart-Ryan



Prindle



Edwards



MacAllister



Lane



Roszak



Bertucci



Fischer



Garner



Walker



Taylor

BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED



Lewis



Kallas



Hampton



Thomson



Kissel



Barretto



Kelly



Harned



Jacobson

Not shown:

Curtsinger
De Blasis
Swenson
Matthews
Arntz

Perry
Kaiser
Ricketts
Arvin
Berg

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING AGMA *(continued from page 2)*

warded for the suggestion and approval of the committee members.

Speaking of Committees, the New York Subcommittee of the Merger Discussion Committee was scheduled at press time to hold a meeting with its Actors' Equity counterparts on June 27. It is proposed that subsequent to that meeting AGMA and AEA members of the committee from throughout the country will be invited to a meeting of the full committees in New York City or Chicago for the purpose of ascertaining the pros and cons of a merger of the two unions.

The Board of Governors directed the staff to initiate a full study of the ill effects of stage smoke and fog, a subject that we have involved ourselves in for a long time, but it is apparent that we have a lot to learn about the effects on singers and dancers, specifically, about the effects of the chemical substances used.

The true international flavor of our members' careers was pointed up by two events in the past month. First, we received an invitation to join the International Secretariat for the Arts, Mass Media and Entertainment Trade Unions, which is based in Geneva, Switzerland and numbers among its members unions from all over the world as well as the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), American Federation of Musicians and the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET) from the United States.

Shortly thereafter we had a most interesting visit from old friend Peter Plouviez

and his assistant Peter Finch who are the chief executives of British Actors' Equity. Inasmuch as that union represents dancers and singers, we have for a long time made frequent use of their office as a branch office of AGMA and they have always been most cooperative.

I am not going to repeat all that I wrote in the last issue of AGMAZine, but I want to remind you that the success of the upcoming dues referendum is vital to our being able to do all the things we're doing, and all the things we should and want to do.

The study committee referred to earlier will certainly consider and recommend widening the scope of our work and activities throughout the nation, and to include in our endeavor the service to members on tour.

It is important, however, to repeat part of what I wrote in the last issue:

"The cost of living has increased by approximately 40% in the 1980s. Just since 1984, the year of our last dues increase, the Cost of Living index (inflation) in New York and other U.S. urban areas has been 27%. The result: Our basic annual dues of \$52.00 has eroded by \$14.04, resulting in purchasing power of only \$37.96 in 1990. Ironically, now is the time when we need to do *more*, not less.

"That is why we urge you to vote 'YES' when the dues referendum arrives in your mailbox this fall.

"Read the Dues Referendum and accompanying materials when you get them, then if you agree that more must be done for AGMA members nationwide — and worldwide when necessary — vote 'Yes' to approve and return the ballot as directed."

Union and management working together

Pennsylvania Ballet involves dancers in decision-making

The Pennsylvania Ballet is trying something new as it reorganizes and looks toward the future.

Dancers have been added to a Board committee aimed at strengthening internal communications and also are serving with Trustees and outside ballet experts in the selection of a new Artistic Director. "The quality of the final choice will owe much to the ideas and hard work of our artists," said Board president Patrick Veitch.

An Advisory Committee, elected by all

the dancers, meets with Veitch in order to survey a wide range of management issues. This forum also lets the artists contribute to thinking on key issues.

Mr. Veitch says he comes away from meetings "filled with pride in the performance of our dancers . . . They set a new and positive tone for management-artist relations that continues to serve us. Our success in involving dancers in management in a meaningful way is an ongoing priority," Veitch adds.

Entr'acte

A Review of current events

The Spring edition of the Opera Quarterly contains an article written by Nedda Casei celebrating the final performance of Madame Zinka Milanov, after 30 years at the Met, in a production which included Ms. Casei as Bersi, companion to Mme. Milanov as Maddalena in *Andrea Chenier*. This was one of the last nights at the "Old Met" at 39th Street and Broadway in New York.

Former Dallas Ballet dancers Shari Garber and David Curwen welcomed a 9 lb. 9 oz. girl, Shelby Jayne, on May 14. Congratulations!

Promotions in the Boston Ballet: Jennifer Gelfand and Daniel Meja promoted to Principals and Kyra Strasberg to Soloist.

Joffrey Ballet's Roger Plaut and Mane Rebello were married on July 7 in Bethesda, Maryland. Congratulations!

Pennsylvania Ballet mounted John Cranko's contemporary classical masterpiece, *Romeo and Juliet*, to close their 1989/90 season at the Academy of Music. Chris D'Amboise is the newly appointed Artistic Director of the Pennsylvania Ballet.

Wedding bells for San Francisco Ballet's Cynthia Drayer and Andre Reyes, married on May 19. Congratulations!

Dance Theatre of Harlem has received not one — but two — \$1 million grants: one from American Express Travel and another from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

Arts Endowment under attack; support is urgently needed

For 25 years, the National Endowment for the Arts has supported the cultural life of America: theatre, dance, music and art. Congress will soon be considering whether that support should continue and, if so, to what degree and in what form.

It is urgent that all AGMA members act now and communicate with appropriate legislators letting them know of the need to **reauthorize the National Endowment for the Arts without content or grant review restrictions.**

AGMA members can help in this manner:

1. **Write a letter** to members of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee or the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities in care of the United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

2. **Send a telegram.** Call the "Save the Arts" Western Union hotline number now to send pre-written telegrams to let your legislators know where you stand on funding for the arts. Call: 1-800-257-4900, Hotline Number 9681. The operators will be able to direct your telegrams to the appropriate parties.

3. **Make a phone call.** Call Save the Arts: 1-900-226-ARTS or the American Council on the Arts Hotline, 1-800-321-4510 for information.

AGMA members have been responding to the urgent call to save the National Endowment. Seattle Opera wins the prize for most letters written to date. They had a one-half hour "write-in" before their rehearsals. Bravi Tutti, and a special thank you to Monte.

LETTERS

Dear AGMA

Thank you for the settlement check for the Meadowlands Aida.

I have to admit that in the past I have been somewhat critical of AGMA, thinking that it couldn't do anything for me. Well, I have to say I was wrong in that attitude. You came through for me in a very difficult time and I want to thank you for your time and effort.

Thanks again for your help.

John D. Darrenkamp

Dear AGMA:

Just a short note, at long last, to say thank you from my heart for whatever good words you put in with the Relief Fund which marvelously speeded up the process and saved me from being put on the street.

I've since then secured a decent job and life seems to have returned to normal (whatever that is). But I know it wouldn't have [been] quite so timely without your help, so thanks again and again.

Whenever you need something I can do for you here, just ask.

Name withheld

Dear Mr. Wolff:

Thank you very much for forwarding the cheque for \$12,425.85 USD.

May I extend our sincere thanks for your efforts on behalf of our members and our congratulations on bringing a difficult situation to such a successful conclusion.

Jim Biros

Business Representative

Canadian Actor's Equity Association

Deceased

Irene Antal-Hanly

Stephen Berman

Kurt Bohme

Wilbur Broms

John Dexter

Robert Dodd

Jamison Gill

Joseph A. Gimma*

Florence Guarino*

Nanette Guilford

Ben Holt

Ashley Lawrence*

George P. Leighton

Bernard Lias

Glade Peterson

Gianni Poggi

Flora Rafanelli

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Felix Salmaggi*

Iris Silvers

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*Distinguished individual in related profession.