

In Honor of Lotte Lehmann



Sunday, July 13, 1986
Music Academy of the West



This photo appeared in the News-Press on July 6, 1947 with the following caption: "Mme. Lotte Lehmann and Gwendolyn Williams at work in preparation of the song recital, a benefit for the Music Academy of the West, to be presented in the Lobero Theater Tuesday evening. They are shown here rehearsing in the famous singer's Hope Ranch home."

In Honor of Lotte Lehmann

Judith Beckmann, soprano
Gwendolyn Koldofsky } piano
Lawrence Leighton Smith }

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Abravanel Hall
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I

An die Musik (<i>Schober</i>)	Franz Schubert
Ganymed (<i>Goethe</i>)	(1797-1828)
Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt (<i>Goethe</i>)	
Geheimes (<i>Goethe</i>)	
Die Forelle (<i>Schubart</i>)	
Gwendolyn Koldofsky, piano	

II

Botschaft (<i>Daumer</i>)	Johannes Brahms
Ständchen (<i>Kugler</i>)	(1833-1897)
Komm bald! (<i>Groth</i>)	
Die Mainacht (<i>Hölty</i>)	
Von ewiger Liebe (<i>Wenzig</i>)	
Lawrence Leighton Smith, piano	

Intermission

III

Ariettes oubliées: (<i>Verlaine</i>)	Claude Debussy
C'est l'extase	(1862-1918)
Il pleure dans mon coeur	
L'Ombre des arbres	
Green	
Gwendolyn Koldofsky, piano	

IV

Auf einer Wanderung (<i>Mörike</i>)	Hugo Wolf
Das verlassene Mägdlein (<i>Mörike</i>)	(1860-1903)
Mignon (<i>Goethe</i>)	

V

Du meines Herzens Krönelein (<i>Dahn</i>)	Richard Strauss
Morgen (<i>MacKay</i>)	(1864-1949)
Zueignung (<i>von Gilm</i>)	
Lawrence Leighton Smith, piano	



The Lehmann Legacy

Lotte Lehmann: Born February 27, 1888, Died August 26, 1976

Only your song is an absolute gift.
—from *The Composer* by W.H. Auden

It might be said that Lotte Lehmann was the happiest of mortals. Her long life proved to be that “absolute gift” of bringing music to others, of lighting the dark places of the soul and making a troubled world more calm, tolerable, and—when she sang—certainly, more beautiful.

Fortunately, Mme. Lehmann did not have to choose, as W.B. Yeats put it, “Between perfection of the life or of the work.” She poured her personal and professional life into the vessel of song. Her active singing career spanned close to 50 years as one of the premiere lyric-dramatic sopranos of the 20th century. A consummate recital performer and leading interpreter of Lieder, Mme. Lehmann passed on her knowledge to succeeding generations by teaching at major universities in the United States, Europe, and at the Music Academy of the West.

For tonight’s memorial concert, a re-creation of the first benefit concert for the Music Academy in 1947, a former pupil of Mme. Lehmann, Judith Beckmann—currently on the Academy’s staff and a principal with the Hamburg State Opera—has chosen songs that Mme. Lehmann sang. Gwendolyn Williams Koldofsky, who accompanied Mme. Lehmann at that concert, and was associated with her for many years, will accompany Mme. Beckmann, as will music director Lawrence Leighton Smith.

Born in Perleberg, Germany, on February 27, 1888, Lotte Lehmann knew quite early that she was blessed with a special gift. In her autobiography, *Midway Through My Song*, she describes her girlhood ambition for a musical career, although her father, a minor official, thought the stage unsuitable. Her mother, however, encouraged her obvious talents by paying for music lessons from precious household money.

The earliest episode of her career began on a sour note when she was dismissed from a local singing school and told she was “totally and hopelessly lacking in talent.” Undaunted, she moved to Berlin, where she studied with Mathilde Mallinger, a favorite of Richard Wagner, and her formal career began soon after in 1910 with the Hamburg Opera.



Lotte Lehmann in one of her greatest roles, as the Marschallin in Act I of Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Within four years, Mme. Lehmann was engaged in England for the role of Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* for the 1914 Drury Lane season directed by Thomas Beecham. In 1916, she moved to Vienna, where she mastered a wide repertory that included not only German opera, but also Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, Massenet's *Manon* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, roles she sang throughout the world. In 1938, her disgust with the rise of Hitler brought her to New York, and she settled in Santa Barbara in 1940.

Considered a great favorite of Richard Strauss, Lotte Lehmann sang in many of the composer's operas: *Der Rosenkavalier* (Sophie, Octavian and the Marschallin), *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Arabella*, while Strauss chose her for the Dyer's Wife in the first production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

It was at Covent Garden in 1924 that she first sang the Marschallin under Bruno Walter. It was there, during the 1940s, that Gwendolyn Koldofsky recalls first hearing Mme. Lehmann as the soprano's re-



In the early 1950's, Mme. Lehmann joined the Music Academy faculty as a teacher of opera and Lieder. Here, she demonstrates an aspect of vocal technique to student Brunetta Mazzalini. The accompanist is Gwendolyn Koldofsky. (1952)

nowned Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. Later, Mme. Koldofsky was selected by Mme. Lehmann to become her accompanist for both her concerts and her master classes on the West Coast.

Lotte Lehmann made her debut in America as Sieglinde: first in 1930 in Chicago and, in 1934, at the Metropolitan Opera. It was a part she had so perfected that one critic remarked: "No one in her time sang Sieglinde more beautifully."

Retiring formally from the Met in 1946, in addition to a farewell concert in 1951 at New York's Town Hall, Mme. Lehmann continued to teach at the Academy from 1951 to 1969. Among Lotte Lehmann's highly-acclaimed students are Marilyn Horne, Grace Bumbry, Jeannine Altmeyer, Benita Valente, and, of course, the Music Academy's own Judith Beckmann.

In a sense, there was no retirement for the singer, who returned to Vienna in 1955 to dedicate the reopening of the Vienna State Opera. Winning numerous honors and awards—ranging from Santa Bar-



An opera master class at the Music Academy in 1952, Mme. Lehmann is pictured with students Joy Kim (holding duster), Martha Holmes and Sally Murphy as they rehearse a scene from *Così fan tutte*.



A Music Academy celebration sometime in the late 1950's.

bara's Woman of the Year to the Vienna State Opera's prestigious "Ring of Honor"—Mme. Lehmann was the complete artist. She wrote five books (one was a novel), painted and left a personal legacy to the Academy in her tapestry, depicting a scene from *Die Walküre* that hangs in the faculty dining room.

What was Lotte Lehmann's secret? Principally, of course, her legendary voice. One critic described it as "lovely and generous," accompanied "with a rare theatrical power of establishing herself from the first phrase." Further, her emotional range was described as "quivering-ly sentient." Others have described her voice as sometimes less than perfect, but, still, a "heavenly voice with a unique quality."

Much of Lotte Lehmann's success can be attributed to her penetrating interpretive skills. In her book *My Many Lives*, she describes the inner depths of the women she portrayed. She chose, for example, to play Eva in *Die Meistersinger* as "willful and tempestuous," against the grain of the usual rather bland interpretation. She assumed Leonore's mantle of courage in *Fidelio*, which she sang for the Beethoven centenary in 1927.

As for the Marschallin, a role that she made her own, her ability to express the tender sorrow of an aging, sophisticated woman relinquishing a young lover as she says farewell to youth, became legendary. "On the concert stage," Lotte Lehmann said, "your art must



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Gwendolyn Koldofsky, piano

Lawrence Leighton Smith, piano

Liederbuch / Song Book

Sunday, July 13, 1986

Abravanel Hall

Music Academy of the West



Music Academy of the West

*Even though
we have received
your reservation, we
thought you would
like to see the finished
product.
July Smith*

June 1, 1986

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On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Music Academy of the West, we invite you to join us on Sunday, July 13, 1986 for a very special concert, "In Honor of Lotte Lehmann".

During her life, Mme. Lehmann's legendary voice inspired us all with its radiance and beauty. As a teacher, she was known for her interpretative skill and humanist values -- traditions that to this day remain part of the Music Academy's training program.

In our tribute, Judith Beckmann, an internationally acclaimed soprano and student of Mme. Lehmann, will sing a program which will draw upon songs that Mme. Lehmann sang in her concert held on July 8, 1947, honoring the opening of the Music Academy.

Mme. Beckmann will be accompanied by Maestro Lawrence Leighton Smith and faculty artist Gwendolyn Koldofsky, who as Gwendolyn Williams, played for Mme. Lehmann at her 1947 concert.

We hope that you will join us for this fitting tribute to one of the greatest artists of our age. Your participation will replenish the Lotte Lehmann Scholarship Fund which has supported many fine vocal students over the years.

Details regarding the concert and champagne supper are on the enclosed reply card. We look forward to seeing you on July 13.

Sincerely,

William J. Bailey
William J. Bailey
President

Frances Holden
Frances Holden
Honorary Chairman

Janet M. Hellmann
Mrs. Richard H. Hellmann
Honorary Director

PERFORMING ARTISTS COMP LIST - INCLUDES DINNER

LEHMANN CONCERT - OVERVIEW

	NUMBER	INC. DINNER	NO DINNER
PAID ATTENDANCE (approx.)	237	237	
ARTISTS COMP	14	14	
VOCAL STU. & ACCOMP.	24		NO
STAFF COMP	9		NO
FACULTY	19		NO
TOTAL	303	251	

Should open up 10 extra seats to instrumentalists - first come basis.

SPECIAL NOTE:

BECKMANN/KOLDOFSKY WOULD LIKE 2 TABLES OF 7 ADJACENT TO EACH OTHER FOR THEM AND THEIR GUESTS.

PERFORMING ARTISTS COMP LIST - INCLUDES DINNER

BECKMANN (6) Beckmann and 5 family members
KOLDOSKY (4) Koldofsky and 3 family members
SMITH (2) Mr. and Mrs. *Lang*
LEWIS (2) Madeline and mother, Roselle