



Letters to Students



Lehmann stayed in touch with many of her students. She was an avid letter writer and also loved to type. She must have been a rapid typer for there are always many of her handwritten corrections. It all adds to her particularly personal letter. Many thanks to the students who've shared their "Lehmann Letters." Several other LL students have promised to send their "Lehmann Letters" when they find them. That will warrant a revised edition of this volume. There's a section listing LL's students at the end of this chapter.

The following two pages are transcriptions of the exchange of letters between Lotte Lehmann and her student Grace Bumbry.

Grace Bumbry to Lehmann, from Italy, no date.

I am a very ambitious person, but more than anything else, I want to bring the audience an EXPERIENCE; something to remove them from the doldrums of their everyday existence. My greatest satisfaction is in knowing that I will have succeeded in transporting the audience as well as satisfying myself....

You have been my greatest inspiration and without you I would not have become aware of Artistry, for I want to carry on the Lehmann tradition of "More than singing" since it is just that which makes the difference between a singer and an artist.

Lehmann to Bumbry, Dec. 28, 1965:

Dearest Grace— I was glad to hear from you at Christmas. Of course I know how hectic life is for you now, but nevertheless I miss the kind of communication which we had in earlier times. I am happy to know where my thoughts will meet you during all these months and I thank you for writing me the schedule.

I send the letter back. Dearest Grace, these kind of letters you will receive at the thousands—I don't mean letters which accuse all the critics as being idiots—no—letters from "fans" who may be lacking in all objectivity. First they have impressed me very much, later I threw them away as you will do without doubt... What you need is not a blind adoration—you need people who watch you and try to say what they think. I know that it is difficult to do that.—You are so overwhelmed by success—of course: justified success—that it sounds like a bad disharmony to you if one dares to criticize something you do. And yet: I love you too much and want you to have not only a brilliant but a very long career. And therefore I can only say: be careful, take your time, don't force your voice into a higher register than is good for you.

Your Carnegie Hall program was not a good one in my opinion. I remember that once you refused to sing the Wagner songs with Piano, informing me that they are written for orchestra accompaniment... And yet you put "Dick teure Halle" on a program in New York!!! I don't doubt that you can sing it—but the deep beauty of your voice (which Andreas once in Salzburg called: black velvet) that

beauty lies mostly in the middle and low register. Your voice is brilliant in the soprano register, but the 'thrilling tones lie deeper down.

I know you will be furious and I dare to endanger our friendship in telling you what I think...But I have to be honest with you.

If you would have asked me (which you of course don't) I would have said not to do this Carnegie Hall recital at all: your Metropolitan success was so fantastic that anything else had to be an anticlimax. At least what the critics concerns.

I don't know if it is your vocal teacher who favors the soprano roles. If so...then he does something which you will regret.

The mezzo soprano roles are so wonderful. You have no equal I believe, no real rival.

O please, Grace, stick to them! That is my fervent wish for the new year...

Grace Bumbry to Lehmann Feb. 5, 1972:

I am glad that you agree that I should take three months off for study and I believe that I have to do it all on my own since there are no voice teachers suitable. I took four lessons last year from Zinka Milanov and found that it really is impossible at this point to find a teacher whom you really can trust. In most cases they have forgotten how they sang when they were at their peak and expect you to employ all of their personal singing habits. It is a pity that ToKatyan died so early because he had the right approach to singing. I think that I can recapitulate some of the exercises that were given me by him for vocal placement and agility.



Miss Jeannine Altmeyer
 222 Madeline Drive
 La Habra, California 90631

LOTTE LEHMANN
 4565 VIA HUERTO
 HOPE RANCH PARK
 SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93105

April 21, 1970

Dearest Jeannine:

I received a reply from Dr. Werba; he expects you on May 29, at 2:30, and his address is

Hohenstaufengasse 4
 Vienna 1010
 Telephone 33-61-70

He cannot do it earlier, because he is on a concert tour. His Master class in Salzburg starts on July 13, till end of July. But then this master class continues in Gent (near Brussels, Belgium) and at the end of that class there will be a concert and a jury will decide who is the best singer who then will get a contract for the Flanders Festival for next year. I have written to Dr. Werba that you will study with him in Vienna and in Salzburg, and in case your funds would be sufficient, you would also go to Gent.

You must realize that Dr. Werba is the accompanist for all the great singers nowadays.

I had also a letter from Pension Schneider who will reserve your room without private bath from May 17th to July 1st. They wrote a very nice letter, saying that you could come to them with all your problems, and they would help you.

I also had a letter from Dr. Zachary who has changed his travel plans to expect you when you arrive in Vienna, and I am very relieved that you will have so much protection from all sides...

I have not heard when you will have your next lesson. Better call me on time, and get in touch with La Verne.

Much love

I received your letter from Dr. Werba; he expects you on May 29, at 2:30, and his address is

Hohenstaufengasse 4
Vienna 1010

Telephone 35-61-70

We cannot do it earlier, because he is a concertist. His master class in Vienna starts on July 1st and of July 1st. But then his master class continues in Gent (near Brussels, Belgium) and at the end of that class there will be a concert and a jury will decide who is the best singer who then will get a contract for the next year.

Airmail



Miss Jeannine Altmeyer

C/o Mr + Mrs. William Altmeyer
222 Madelena Drive
La Habra, CA 90631
~~Lyric Opera House~~
~~Chicago, Illinois~~

Please forward

November 29th 1971.

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93110

Jeannine's

Debut

Brings Praise

Jeannine Altmeyer, former student of Mme. Lotte Lehmann and of Martial Singher at the Music Academy of the West and now one of the newest members of the Metropolitan Opera company, enjoyed a success as Freia in Wagner's "Das Rheingold" recently in the Chicago Lyric Opera.

The Chicago Tribune critic wrote: "Jeannine Altmeyer, making her Lyric debut as Freia, is a pretty girl with a big open voice and a sense of phrasing which suggests more experience than she has had."

The Daily News reviewer said: "Jeannine Altmeyer, in a particularly taxing Lyric debut, was a beautiful Freia both vocally and visually."

The conductor of this performance, Dr. Leitner, director of the Zurich Opera which had wanted to engage Miss Altmeyer, telephoned Mme. Lehmann from Chicago to tell her of the successful debut and of how satisfied he is with the young singer's performance.

Dearest Jeannine -

here is the notice of your nice success which I asked Mr. Scofield to print at the Newpress. Hoping to hear from you soon I am with much love yours

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93110

*Postcard
Mitzgerland*



*Miss Jeannine Altmeyer
Opernhaus
Zürich*

VIA AIR MAIL
CORREO AEREO

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93110

PA

October 15, 1973

Dear Jeannine:

I am glad that at last I got a letter from you and I am looking forward very much to the promised reviews. Of course I do not take your promises very seriously- thinking of the pictures as Freia which I have not received yet...

I am happy that you feel all right in Zürich, and I shall write to Dr. Leitner thanking him for his interest in your artistic development.

What kind of role will you sing at the Salzburg Festival? And what are the roles promised to you in Zürich, besides Elisabeth?

I suppose you will come back to the United States in November, and I hope that I will see you so that you can tell me all you want to tell me...

Much love, and best wishes - Yours

L. Lehmann

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4565 VIA HUERTO
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BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93110



VIA AIR MAIL
CORREO AEREO

Miss Jeannine Altmeyer
Opernhaus Zurich
Zürich

November 4th 1973.

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93110

PAR 3¢
077617

Dear Jeannine - thank you for the reviews which gave me great joy. I hope you really will send some pictures, I love to see you at work. Yes, I wrote about Elisabeth. Laura Lee had the pages immediately cycled (I cannot spell that!) and I will send them to you separately. But it may be possible to give you my book "My Many Lives" because it is reprinted by Greenwood Press, but they do it only for Universities and Colleges. But I hope to get some books myself. —

Your success was quite wonderful,
they all see in you a great
promise. But please, dear
Jeanine, don't think now,
that you are a Star. You
have to sing quite a long
way till you will be one...
Didn't you sing the first Lady
in Gauberflute? Every call
is good for getting "at home"
in the stage.

You are now surrounded by
"music makers" - that is so
good for you. Please don't
lose this feeling, when

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93110

you come back to U. S. A.
Elisabeth is a marvellous role.
I hope you will come here
to study it with me. Not
with anybody else. Of course
Fritz Greig will be for the
music, he is perfect.
you have to fly very much
from one place (or country)
to an other. But that is
today's tragedy. (Desdemona
is also marvellous for you.)

I will not go to Europe at all.
My God, in February I shall
be 86 - it is time to stay
home... But if I go, then
I shall come ~~to~~ to Zurich for
you Elisabeth. It is a
very great ~~if~~...
Don't you think that I shall
Europe is good for you?
You could even cook there
and would save quite a
lot of money.

Much love -

your Father-in-law,



Miss Jeannine Altmeyer
PO Box 387
Running Springs, Calif/

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93110

December 23, 1972

Dearest Jeannine:

I am very excited about the good news your mother gave to me. But- first of all: Have you contracts, and are you sure that the Metropolitan will release you? Your mother said that you have to be in Salzburg for two months. Will you get paid for these two months? I am very curious to hear all the news and hope that everything is as you imagine in your glowing imagination.

I am with warmest wishes for Christmas and the New Year, for you and your family,

yours

Lotte Lehmann
dzt:



DER KAISERHOF

KUR- UND PARKHOTEL

A-5640 BADGASTEIN
LAND SALZBURG - AUSTRIA

Miss
Jeannine ALTMAYER
Hotel "Opera"
CH-8008 Zürich
S c h w e i z

Badgastein, June 22nd, 1974
LL/Ro

Dearest Jeannine!

Schornstein has written to you as I know and I underline every word of his letter. Please understand right. I like your mother very much and I know she means it very well, but you can't always hang on the apron strings of the mother. You have to forget to ask: "I need Mom". You are old enough to stand on your own feet.

I quote here from a letter which I got from ^{Beau Glass} Beau: He writes, "Jeannine had a triumph as Elisabeth. ~~Angeline~~ and I thought her the best we have ever seen in this role (that includes Nelson, De Los Angeles and Rysonek). She was radiant and completely involved in her role! Very touching and convincing, all together ideal. You would have been proud. Once again you picked a winner. //

He talks also about your singing that was better ^{thn} as Eva. You have all the reason to be very happy.

I remain with much love

x Evangeline

Your

L. Lehmann

February 1st 64.

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

Dear Lois —
Thank you — the program
seems very interesting.
I don't know most of
the songs though!
Let me know the
critical results.

Much love —
as always — yours
Lp Lehmann.

These letters are written to Lois Townsend, later known as Lois Alba.

December 15th 1963.



CLIFT HOTEL
GEARY AT TAYLOR
SAN FRANCISCO

Dear Lois —
Thank you for your letter,
your kind sympathy
for my brother's death.
It came quickly and
without his knowing it,
but it was a great
shock.

I am happy about your
plans. May 1964
be a very marvellous

THE SANTA BARBARA BILTMORE
HOTEL AND SUITES
UNDER SAME OWNER-MANAGEMENT

year for you, bringing
success and securing
personal happiness.
Affectionately

Yours

Esther M. M.

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

France



PAR AVION VIA AIR MAIL CORREO AEREO

Mrs Lois Townsend
1 Rue de L'Alboni
Paris 16 France

December 28th 1960.

LOTTE LEHMANN
4565 VIA HUERTO
HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

Dearest Lois —

I am buried under an
avalanche of Christmas
cards... So forgive me
if it's only today:
happy New Year!

Much love —

Yours

Lotte Lehmann.

LOTTE LEHMANN
4868 VIA HUERTO, HOPE RANCH PARK
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

May 18, 1955

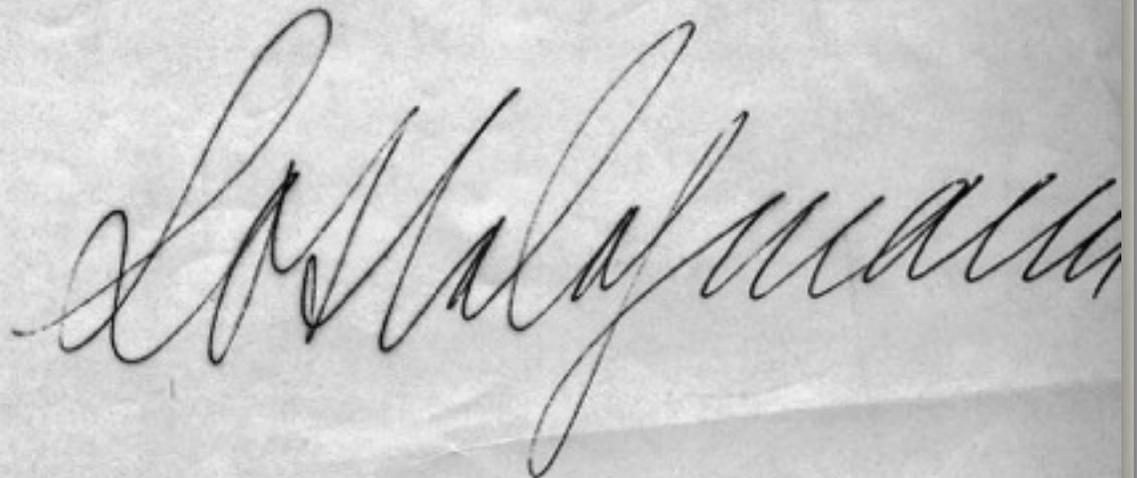
Dearest Brunetta,

I better send you also a recommendation in English. If you cannot use it on your trip, you may perhaps like to use it another time.

I think it is a wonderful idea that you go to Germany, and I hope it will be the beginning of the career for which your beautiful voice and your talent certainly has destined you. You have only one very severe handicap! You are too shy. Dear Brunetta, you have to overcome this. To become a real artist and make a career, one has to have more than the God-given voice and the talent. One has to have the personality. You have this personality when you sing and act, but in the moment when you are Brunetta, it is lost. I don't want to depress you with this statement. On the contrary, I want to help you, and I trust that you know how well I mean it. If you keep in mind that from the beginning you enter a room full of people who know who you are and expect to meet an accomplished artist, you play a role. Forget that you are Brunetta Mazzolini... You are the singer, and you have to act as a singer. You cannot hide in a corner as if you would like to disappear. On the contrary, try to be arrogant. It may sound to you strange that I say this, because I hate arrogance, but I know that you are so far from any possibility of being arrogant that, if you may think you are, you may just do the right thing... Unfortunately the world judges very often superficialities. I personally like your shyness. I think it is very sweet, but it is not sweet for a singer who wants to make her way. Think all this over, dear Brunetta, and try to do what I tell you to do.

My love and my warmest wishes go with you.

Always yours,

A large, elegant handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Lotte Lehmann". The signature is written in dark ink on the aged, slightly wrinkled paper of the letter.

This is student Brunetta Mazzolini (Graham).

A List of Lehmann's Students



Grace Bumbry, Lehmann, Chieko Sakata, Douglas Miller, Luba Tcheresky, and Leslie Guinn in Lehmann's Metropolitan Opera box, 26 March 1958.

Listed here are Lotte Lehmann's students. We apologize to any students we may have missed. What an impressive array of performers! Some rose to prominence, but all to some degree went on to enrich the world of vocal music.

Lois Alba
Talaine Alexander
Josephine Allen
Judith Allen
Jeannine Altmeyer
Lucine Amara
Karan Armstrong
Tami Asakura
June Ava
John Baird
Janet Baker
Rose Bampton
Noelle Barker
Helen Barlow (Harrison)
Sara Baum
Shirley Bay
Kathryn Blum Barone
Irving Beckman(n)
Judith Beckman(n)
Peter Bedford
Patricia Beems
Christie Benson
Theresia Bester
Jane Birkhead
Barbara Blanchard
Anne Bollinger
Helen Bolton
Anne Brown
Grace Bumbry
Christabel Burton (Bielenberg)
Ariel Bybee
Larry Case
Olga Chronis
Lincoln Clark
Patricia Clark
Enid Clement
Janice Cloud
Elaine Cochran
William Cochran

Jean Cook
Ronald Combs
Coleman Cooper
Dr. Sister Marietta Coyle
Robin Craver
Elizabeth Crook
Grace de la Cruz
Sharon Currier
Ellen Dales
Gretchen d'Armand
Dolores Davis
Martha Martin Deatherage
Archie Drake
Ruth Drucker
Barbara Dunbar
Helen-Kay Eberley
Eleanor Edwards
Kenneth Edison
Cecilie Elsworth
Margaret Ennis
Elizabeth Erro (Hvølboll)
Magda Ertl
Joseph S. Eubanks
Jean Evans
Theresa Fagnan
Earl Fisher
Ruth Gaines (Gates?)
Oma Galloway
Edna Garabedian
Don Garrard
Eric Garrett
Elsa Gaze
Ava Gerset
Janice Gibson
Charles Glass
Victor Godfrey
Elvira Gonnella
Olen R. Gowens
Donald Gray

Lily Gribbin
Kay Griffel (Sellheim)
Hilde Guden
Leslie Guinn
Jane Guthrie
Marilyn Hall
Glenice Halliday
Betty Hanson
Helen Barlow Harrison
David Hartley
Kathryn Harvey
Elizabeth Hawes
Marvin Hayes
Joan Heels
Elisabeth (Betty) Hellowell
Raimund Herincx
Nancy Hanners
Ronald Holgate
Martha Holmes
Marilyn Horne
Judith Huston
Julie Idoine
Kay D. Ingalls
Georgina Iva
Evelyn Gale Jacobs
Enid Jacobson
Rhianon James
Gloria Jennings
Patricia Jennings (Armstrong)
Emma Jost
Ava June
Beverly Ka'ana
Antoinette (Toni) Keet
Celina Kellogg
Iris Kells
Stephen Kemalyan
Julia Kemp (Rothfuss)
Joy Kim (Slote)
Maria Lagios

Ruth Landis
Georgia Laster
William Latimer
Alice Lee
Soo Bee Lee
Martha Leiter
Margaret Lensky
Ray Leonard
Diane Leoncavallo
Arnold Lewerence
John Limpus
Martha Holmes Longmire
William Longmire
Paul Loomis
Susan Nalbach Lutz
Jeanette MacDonald
Rev. Patrick Maloney
Lotfi Mansouri
Dorothy Maynor
Leila McCormack
Kay McCracken (Duke) (Ingalls)
Adair McGowan
Jane McGowan
Margery McKay
Lotfi Mansouri
Raymond Manton
Glenda Maurice.
Brunetta Mazzolini (Graham)
Nan Merriman
Edith Meyers
Joseph K. Meyers
Douglas Miller
Niven Miller
Mildred Miller
Richard Milius
Kenneth Mills
Ronald Mitchell
Norman Mittelmann
Allan Monk

Carol Monson
Thomas Moser
Carol Ann Müller
Ron Murdock
Sally Murphy
Eleanor Murtaugh
Bonney Murray
Timothy Mussard
Rosalind Nadell
Roy Neal
Carol Neblett
Nitza Niemann
Alice Marie Nelson
Maralin Niska
Katsuumi Niwa
Evangeline Noël (Glass)
Gloria Nygaard
William Olvis
Rose Palmal-Tenser
Sue Patchell
Ian Paterson
Johanna Peters
Maria Petrova-Elson
John Pflieger
Linda Phillips
MaryBeth Piel
Guy Pierce
Judith Pierce
Naka Pillman
Beata Popper
Harve(y) Presnell
Hermann Prey,
Marcella Reale
Alberto Remedios
Brenda Roberts
Sheila Rosenthal
Elise Ross
Mona Ross
Guy Rothfuss
Shirley Rothfuss
Martile Rowland
Sylvia Rowlands
Elizabeth Rust
Chieko Sakata
Roy Samuelsen
Dorothy Sandlin
Laura Sarti
Emerentia Scheepers
Honor Sheppard
Hazel Schmid
Conrad Schultz
Vernon Sell
Kenneth Shelton
Jeannette Sinclair
Myron Slater
Gretchen Smith
Gérard Souzay
Shirley Sproule
James Standard
Eleanor Steber
Rita Streich,
Richard Stromberg
Loris Sutton
William Swan
Page Swift
Daniel Taft
Luba Tcheresky
Dermot Troy
Riki Turofsky
Delcina Stevenson
Mary Lou Sullivan-Delcroix
Benita Valente
Henrietta Valor
Marc Vanderwerf
Kristi Vensand
Eric Vietheer
Maureen Walton
Joan Watson

Alan Wagner
Jeannine Wagner
Joan Watson
Maurice Wear
Lenno Wells
Shirley Westwood
Elizabeth Wheatley
Elizabeth Winkie
Linda Williams (Eddy)
Seoung Lee Wilson
Joan Winden
Kenneth Wohn
Rae Woodland
Elizabeth Wrigley
Carol Wright
Roland Wyatt
Shige Yano-Matsuura
Maria Zahlten-Hall

The following student names have been taken from the master class recordings, so the spelling is only approximate.

Ronald Anderson	Maria Legis
Noël Barka	John McCCasey
-----Beckey	Kevin Mills
Maria Bense	Carol Ann Muller
Ruth Case	Judith Otin
----- Chun	Beverly Pierce
Suena Donau	Natalie Pierce
Eleanor Edwards	Karen Robey
Rosalind Enns	Georgia Roster (Raster)
Carolyn Forbay	Marvin Sperry
Elizabeth Hall	Suzanne Stregel
Geraldine Hall	Thomas Waterman
Wesley Hanson (Hampson?)	Eileen Weldon
Joanne Haimee	
Harold Hicks	