

# LL's Death, Books, Centennials, Ring

### DIE WIENER STAATSOPER

nimmt Abschied von ihrem Ehrenmitglied

### KAMMERSÄNGERIN LOTTE LEHMANN

am Freitag, dem 25. Februar 1977.

Die Trauerfeier beginnt um 13 Uhr im Foyer der Wiener Staatsoper.

Anschließend wird die Urne in einem Ehrengrab der Stadt Wien auf dem Wiener Zentralfriedhof, Eingang 2. Tor, beigesetzt.

Wien, im Februar 1977

THE VIENNA STATE OPERA takes leave from their honored member
Kammersängerin Lotte Lehmann on Friday, the 25th of February 1977. The funeral service begins
at 1:00pm in the foyer of the Vienna State Opera. Afterward the urn will be buried in an honor
grave of the City of Vienna at the Vienna Central Cemetery.

Some of the important material that Judy Sutcliffe sent, included the last letter that Lehmann wrote, the various newspaper articles on her death, and other memorabilia that seemed to fit as sections in this chapter. Following the opening on Death, the sections are: Books, Centennials, Ring.

Since this chapter deals with Lehmann's death, I believe it's only fair to include her birth certificate, which does verify her birth year as 1888, no matter the variety of years found in some sources.

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The New York Times' obituary for Lotte Lehmann on this and the following pages.

# Lotte Lehmann Dies at 88; Diva and Lieder Specialist

### By ALDEN WHITMAN

Lotte Lehmann, one of the most illustrious operatic sopranos and lieder singers of her day, died in her sleep yesterday at her home in Santa Barbara, Calif. She was 88 years old and had been in failing health for several months.

Mme. Lehmann (she was of an era when the great prima donnas were always addressed as Madame) performed in every major opera house in Europe and the United States and under every major conductor in her stage career, which extended from 1910 to 1945.

She was a lovely Eva in "Die Meistersinger," dramatic Sieglinde in "Die Walküre," a radiant Elsa of Brabant "Lohengrin," an awesome Elisabeth in "Tannhäuser" and a Elmatchless Marschallin in "Der Rosenkavalier," role she Imade synonymous with her name. Moreover, she was a diva in the regal manner.

In her lieder singing career, which continued until 1951, she excelled in songs by Schus bert, Schumann, Brahms, Wolf kland Strauss and never failed a to pack recital halls. Her ac--companists included such distinguished musicians as Bruno Walter and Paul Ulanowsky.

Although she had long been celebrated throughout Europe | Continued on Page D14, Col. 1



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Associated Press, 1968 Lotte Lehmann

and had made her American debut with the Chicago Civic Opera in 1930, Mme, Lehmann did not make her Metropolitan Opera bow until 1934, when she was almost 46 years old. She was acidulous in blaming the Metropolitan's management for the delay, accusing it of being "passive" and of "taking no interest in me."

Despite her successes in New York, and the raptures she excited among critics and operagoers, she said after she left the company that "I never really felt at home on this longed-

### Lotte Lehmann, Diva and Lieder Specialist, Dies at 88

Continued From Page Al, Col. 3

for stage." The Metropolitan, she insisted, "came as a sort of anticlimax."

In 1962 she returned to the Metropolitan to direct a pro-duction of "Der Rosenkavalier." Her relationship with the management on that occasion was serene.

In her opera prime Mme. Lehmann was statuesque and amply proportioned, with thick, short walnut hair, dark brown eyes and a plump and childlike face. She made an indelble impression as she moved about the stage, for she was an ac-tress of uncommon talent and communicativeness, as well as a singer of great enlotional range and limpidity.

### " Live What I Sing'

.I give myself to my part with all my soul," Mme. Leh-mann explained. "I cannot think of technical matters while I sing, because I live what I sing so completely that there is no room left for anything else."

She had a voice that for a Wagnerian soprano was not large in volume. Her pianissimo, however, was of exquisite quality and her fortissimo pierced the climaxes of the orchestra without difficulty. Her enunciation, even in mo-ments of tense dramatic activ-

braced her and exclaimed:

### Generous in Praise

Other singers were equally generous in their praise. Among with virtually all the great composers, Richard Strauss singers of her era, including preferred Mme. Lehmann above Ganna Walska, Maria Jeritza, all others as a soprano in his coperas. Conductors, even in-Ezio Pinza, Feodor Chaliapin, alluding the magnitude of the proposition of the conductors.

Although Mme. Lehmann sang Sophie and Octavian in "Der Rosenkavalier," a third soprano role, that of the Marschallin—a woman with much experience in affairs of love—was her most famous. Discussing it Harold C. Schonberg. ing it, Harold C. Schonberg, music critic of The Times, wrote:

"Talking about it, strong men snuffle and break into tears. They discuss her with the reverence of a legal mind talking about Justice Holmes, or a baseball connoisseur analyzing Schönberg recalled in a Times Hornsby's form at the plate, or article, on the singer's 75th.



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Lotte Lehmann helping restage "Der Rosenkavalier" at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1962. The singer at the left is Regine Crespin.

ity, was remarkably clear.

Her voice was esteemed by than formerly and was used her peers. Hearing her for the first time, Enrico Caruso em-Times's Noel Straus wrote, "her every phrase was so replete "Ah, brava, brava! Che bella with meaning and so deeply magnifica voce! Una voce Ita-communicative that never has her artistry in the role worked with greater conviction of im-pressiveness."

Mme. Lehmann cluding the mercurial Arturo Frieda Hempel, Richard Tauber Toscanini, admired her abilities. and Lawrence Tibbett.

### Intensity and Understanding

"Lehmann brought to the



Mme. Lehmann as The Marschallin in "Der Rosenkavalier," about 1934.

was in Hamburg in 1910, when she sang Freia in "Das Rheingold." It was at Hamburg that in she met Otto Klemperer, the conductor who encouraged her artistic development, and one of her early triumphs was as Elsa of Brabant in "Lohengrin," v with Klemperer conducting.

In 1914 she scored heavily in London as Sophie in "Der Rosenkavalier," with Sir Thomas Beecham in the pit. She was shortly engaged for the Vienna Court Opera. There she perfected her Wagnerian roles and met Giacomo Puccini and Strauss. She was the Young Composer in the Vienna pre-miere of Strauss's "Ariadne auf Naxos" and she sang Suor Angelica in Puccini's "Tritico" at its Vienna premiere.

### First in Strauss Role

Triumph followed triumph in the nineteen-twenties. She toured South America in 1922 and in the same year sang the Marschallin at Covent Garden, London. Three years later she was Christine in the Vienna premiere of Strauss's "Inter-Hornsby's form at the plate, or the old-timer who remembers Toscanini's Wagner at the Metropolitan Opera. In short, she was The One: unique, irreplaceable, the standard to which all must aspire."

Into artist and music, Mr. Schonberg recalled in a Times article on the singer's 75th birthday. "Lehmann's voice was a large one of rather dark coloration. She may not have been one of the great vocal by furnished. Her Park Avenue apartment in New York was burg Festival in "Der Rosen-

Schonberg continued, in explanation of her extraordinary rapport with audiences . . . . Lehmann in her concert and opera days had only to walk opera days had only to walk on stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing me. The stage to reduce the stage t

Vincent Sheean, the writer, who heard Mme. Lehmann many times, was haunted by

did."

Mme. Lehmann had an immense repertory, perhaps 100
Marschallin, who gives up her young lover in "Der Rosenhouses where she had to sing virtually everything. In addition to Wagner and Strauss, in all of whose major operas she appeared, her principal roles were Leonora in "Fidelio," Fforia Tosca in "Tosca," Donna Elvira - in "Don Giovanni,"

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Although Mme. Lehmann was wont to Jo64.

In 1926 the singer was marnied to Otto Krause, a former husband and to kiss the doll. She also said the beads of one of her rosaries.

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In 1926 the singer was marnied to Otto Krause, a former husband and to kiss the pictures of her mother, her father, her brother and her father, her brother and her father, her father, her brother and her father, her brother and her father, her father, her father, her brother and her father, her brother and her father, her father, her father, her father, her brother and her father, her father, her father, her father, her brother and her father, her f appeared, her principal roles were Leonora in "Fidelio," Floria Tosca in "Tosca," Donna Elvira - in "Don Giovanni," Tatjana in "Eugen Oaegin," Manon in "Manon Lescaut," Marguerite in "Faust" and Turandot."

Glowing Review

Her New York debut on Jan. 11, 1934, was made as Sieglinde in "Die Walküre," with Artur Bodansky conducting. Hubbard Hutchinson, covering the event for The Times, wrote:

Many in the throng wept. Later, backstage, she remarked:

"It is good that I do not wait for the people to say: My God, when will that Lotte Lehmann was born in "Die Walküre," with Artur Bodansky conducting. Hubbard Hutchinson, covering the event for The Times, wrote:

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"It is good that I do not wait to not with Lotte Lehmann was born in Unit Lotte Lehmann was born in Perleberg, Germany, on Feb. 27, 1888. Her singing lessons began when she was 12 years old, with Erna Tiedke in Beround With Erna Tiedke in Beround With Helene Jordan and Eva Reinhold.

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Wednesday in Paul Kimball Hospital. Lakewood. N. J. He

on stage to reduce the audience inhumanly perfect singing mator a melting blob.

"She was the most aristoman, with human limitations cratic of artists, and also the most intelligent. Whether or not casional lapses, as they would her interpretations were have cared with a lesser artist.

"In the chicago Civic Opera House, another large afterward she toured the counciline; that she, too was human limitations father, a third big leather folding blob.

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Fritz, and a fourth huge folder Austrian citizen.

Fritz, and a fourth huge folder as an American citizen. worked over, they always for at all times the flame of sounded spontaneous and in-Lehmann's inspiration burned stinctive."

### Farewell in Town Hall

### Souvenirs Always Along

All these photographs were in Santa Barbara, Calif. set up not only in Mme. Lehmann's home or hotel room but Farewell in Town Hall

It was at a lieder recital in Town Hall in 1951 that Mme. Lehmann announced her repressiveness of her voice," he wrote, "the beauty of her style in the theater, the general sense that her every performance was a work of art, lovingly elaborated in the secret places and brought forth with matchless authority before our eyes, made her a delight that never staled. "She was like that Chinese empress of ancient days who commanded the flowers to bloom—except for Lotte they did."

Farewell in Town Hall in 1951 that Mme. It was at a lieder recital in Town Hall in 1951 that Mme. It was at a lieder recital in Town Hall in 1951 that Mme. It was at a lieder recital in Town Hall in 1951 that Mme. It was at a lieder recital in Town Hall in 1951 that Mme. It was at a lieder recital in Town Hall in 1951 that Mme. Lehmann announced her repressiveness of her voice," he was a singer. Stepping totem poles, the root of a Christian totem poles, the root of a

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Audience 'a Melting Blob'

"She generated love." Mr. Schonberg continued, in explanation of her extraordinary rapport with audiences.

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"In a curious way, those moments were maids and a housekeeper, moments."

After her retirement from the Netropolitan she made her home

In California she became a 888

Vienna takes leave of LL: the internment of her ashes in the grave of honor. An error under the second photo: not Mariandl, but the Marschallin.

# Wien nimmt Abschied von Lotte Lehmann

Von Andrea Seebohm

Morgen, Freitag, wird Lotte Lehmann in einem Ehrengrab der Stadt Wien auf dem Zentralfriedhof begraben.

Es war ein lebenslanger Wunsch der im August verstorbenen großen Sängerin, in jener Stadt, in der sie die glücklichste Zeit verlebte, ihre letzte Ruhestatt zu finden.

Das erstemal war Lotte Lehmann – damals 26 Jahre alt – 1914 nach Wien gekommen. Ein "Gastspiel auf Engagement" als Evchen in Wagners "Meistersingern" unter der Leitung von Franz Schalk hatte sie in die Kaiserstadt gebracht. Publikum und Presse zeigten sich von der jungen Norddeutschen – sie stammte aus Perleberg in der Priegnitz – angetan. Die Hofopern-Direktion bot ihr einen Vertrag an.

Vertrag an.
Doch die Lehmann kehrte zunächst an ihr Hamburger Stammhaus zurück, an dem sie - mit einer Anfangsgage von 200 Mark - ihre ersten Bühnenschritte gewagt hatte: als zweiter Knabe in der "Zauberflöte", als Sängerknabe im "Tannhäuser", als Gerhilde in der "Walküre".

### Rührende Unbeholfenheit.

Nach ihrer ersten Freya im "Rheingold" (unter Arthur Ni-kisch) hatte ihr die Hamburger Presse "rührende Unbeholfenheit" attestiert. Doch schonfolgten größere, schwierigere Partien: die Gutrune, die Irene im "Rienzi", die Sophie im "Rosenkavalier", die Eurydike am selben Abend, als Caruso (mit Leoncavallos "Bajazzo") am Hamburger Stadttheater gastierte. "Que bella magnifica voce! Una voce italiana", schwärmte Una voce italiana", schwärmte der berühmte Tenor nach der /orstellung und schlug sie aleich als seine Micaela für Carmen" vor. Überglücklich sagte die Lehmann zu – doch die Intendanz untersagte ihr das Wagnis, das nur wenige Tage später stattfinden sollte: Sie hatte die Partie nicht studiert.

Otto Klemperer, gerade nach Hamburg gekommen, erarbeitete mit ihr in einer Woche die Elsa im "Lohengrin". Auch diese etzte "Prüfung" bestand sie, obwohl es bei den Proben etli-

beiden in London wieder zusammen. Es entspann sich folgender Dialog: "Was tun Sie hier, Frau Lehmann?" – "Ich halte Meisterkurse ab, sie sind sehr erfolgreich." – "So Ich hatte eigentlich gehofft, daß Sie – seit Sie zu singen aufgehört haben – alle jene Partien endlich Iernen würden, die Sie früher gesungen haben. Sie waren immer eine berühmte Schwimmerin!" – "Und Sie hatten immer eine böse Zunge. Lachen Sie nur, aber das Publikum liebt meine Kurse. Ich habe sogar wieder aber das Publikum liebt meine Kurse. Ich habe sogar wieder gesungen." – "Gesungen? Hahaha – was haben Sie denn gesungen?" – "Die "Fidelio'-Arie. Natürlich das meiste davon eine Oktave tiefer." – "Oh, eine Oktave tiefer? In E-Dur oder Es-Dur?" Eine Anspielung auf jene Zeit, da Toscanini in Salzburg der Lehmann zuliebe, die mit den hohen Tönen stets Schwierigkeiten hatte, die Arie um einen Halbton heruntertransponierte.

### Klemperers Zuneigung

Wer Klemperer gekannt hat, der weiß, daß solche Sticheleien lediglich aus großer Zuneigung und Liebe entsprangen. Die Lehmann hatte er so ins Herz geschlossen, daß er sogar seiner Tochter den Namen Lotte gab.

Doch zurück nach Wien. 1916 trat Lotte Lehmann endlich ihr Engagement an der Hofoper an.

Engagement an der Hofoper an, und zwar mit der Agathe im "Freischütz". Sie stieß zu jenem glanzvollen Ensemble, dem unter anderen Selma Kurz, Marie Gutheil-Schoder, Maria Jeritza, Leo Slezak, Alfred Piccaver und Richard Mayr angehörten. Sie brauchte einige Zeit, um sich mit ihrer deutschen Gründlich-keit und Ehrlichkeit, mit ihrer unverblümten Offenheit und zurechtzufinden.

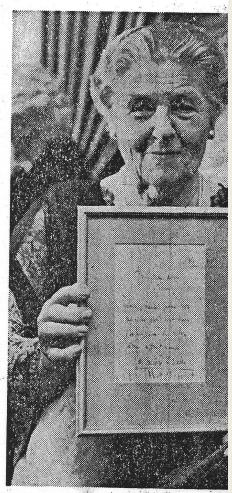
Vor allem die Tatsache, daß die Jeritza zahllose Partien ihres die Jeritza zahllose Partien ihres eigenen Repertoires sang (Elsa, Elisabeth, Sieglinde, Tosca, Oktavian), machte ihr das Leben nicht leichter. Aber spätestens mit der Wiener Uraufführung der "Ariadne", bei der sie auf ausdrücklichen Wunsch vor Richard Strauss den Komponisten chard Strauss den Komponisten Durchbruch. "Seit gestern abend, 8.30 Uhr, weiß ganz Wien, wer Lotte Lehmann ist", schrieb eine führende Wiener Tageszeitung.

Nach dem Zusammenbruch der Monarchie war sie es auch, die als erste den erneuerten Titel einer österreichischen Kammersängerin erhielt.

### Ahnung ihrer Persönlichkeit

Sie war die erste Färberin in der "Frau ohne Schatten", die erste Wiener Schwester Angelica (Puccini), die erste Christine im "Intermezzo" (in Dresden). Wer nachprüfen will, wie sie Oper, wie sie Lieder gesungen hat, der bekommt durch ihre Platten eine Ahnung von ihrer Persönlichkeit. Zu haben sind derzeit in Wien Schumanns "Frauenliebe und -leben" (am Klavier: Bruno Walter) sowie sechs Arienplatten und der legendäre "Walküren"-Ausschnitt unter Bruno Walter. Ihre Marschallin, längst Operngeschichte gewor-Sie war die erste Färberin in längst Operngeschichte geworden, hüten jene Glücklichen, die den 1933 entstandenen Querschnitt besitzen, als Kostbarkeit. schnitt besitzen, als Kostbarkeit.
Das "Ja, ja" dieser Aufnahme ist
weltberühmt geworden: Elisabeth Schumann hat den resignierten Seufzer nachträglich
à la Lehmann in das Mikrophon gehaucht, weil die Marschallin selbst bereits abgereist

war...
"Meine große Schwäche war
der Mangel an perfekter Technik", hat die Lehmann einmal
behauptet. Aber bis zuletzt
wußte sie, daß sie anderes,
Wichtigeres, Unwiederbringliches zu bieten hatte, nämlich
Wärme, Menschlichkeit, Wahrheit im Gesang. London, Paris,
New York – die Welt lag ihr zu
Füßen. Glücklich war sie, die
1938 aus Abscheu vor der neuen
Macht nach Amerika emigrierte. Macht nach Amerika emigrierte nach eigenen Aussagen vor allem in Wien. Hierher, an die Seite ihrer Eltern, die ebenfalls auf dem Zentralfriedhof begra-ben sind, führte sie nun auch ihre allerletzte Reise.

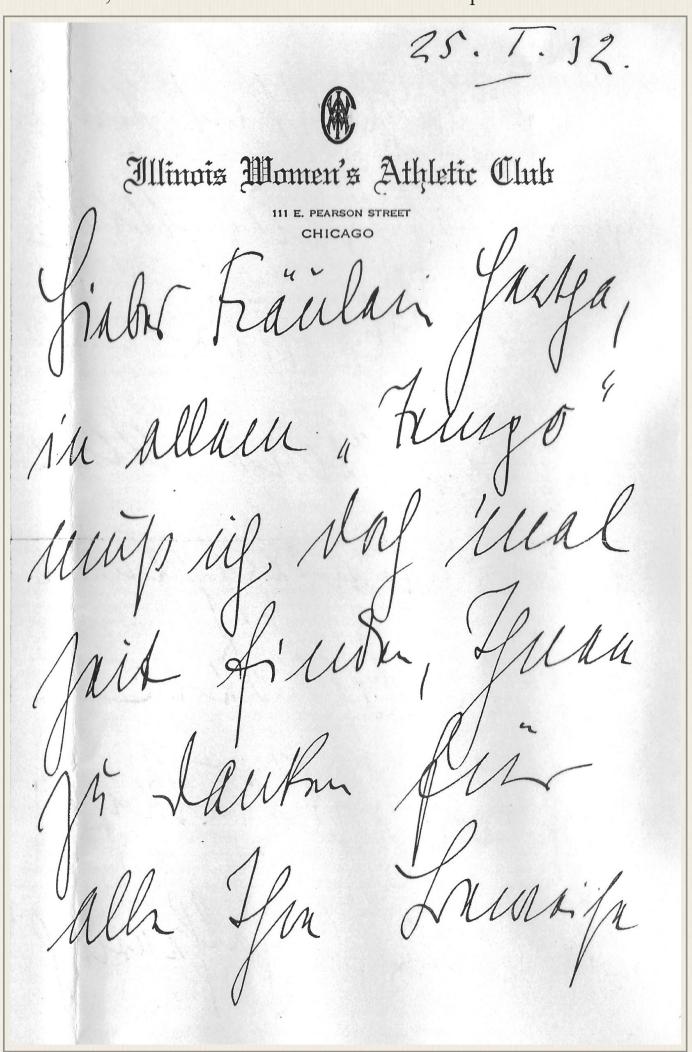


Bei Ehrung in Wien: Lotte Lehmann mit Ma



Mariandi im "Rosenkavalier": Die Lehmann mit

One of the first letters Lehmann wrote to a fan who was to become one of her best friends, Hertha Schuch. Following this letter, you'll find the last letter Lehmann wrote, was also to Hertha. Both a transcription and translation follow.



De Aufaigliffeit mus Jah. J Miller Milly m untuffer Millen A Smithu, Alau In Mis! Jafhablis

Jufu (In Muly Millief Min alle Gefalg nuhlmillif du Mita ama finter,

Most of Lehmann's ancient Sütterlin handwriting was deciphered by Ulrich Peter.

Liebes Fräulein Hertha,

25. I. 32

in allem "Tempo" muß ich doch 'mal Zeit finden, Ihnen zu danken für all Ihre Beweise der Anhänglichkeit und Liebe. Ich freue mich so sehr darüber \_ wie sehr lernt man es, zu unterscheiden zwischen all' den Briefen, glauben sie mir! Hoffentlich besuchen Sie mich in Wien \_ es gehört wirklich kein "Mut" dazu!!

Ich freue mich trotz aller Erfolge hier unbeschreiblich auf mein armes, liebes, so ganz unvergleichbares Wien \_ und denke zwischen den Wolkenkratzern an Wald und Berge.

Herzlich grüßt Sie Ihre Lotte Lehmann

Dear Fraulein Hertha,

25 January 1932

in all the "speed" I must find time to thank you for all your evidence of attachment and love. I'm so happy about it \_ how much one learns to distinguish between all the letters, believe me! Hopefully you will visit me in Vienna \_ it really doesn't take any "courage" [to do that]!

Despite all the successes here, I am indescribably looking forward to my poor, dear, so completely incomparable Vienna \_ and between the skyscrapers [here in Chicago] am thinking of the forest and mountains. [of Vienna]

Warm regards to you Your Lotte Lehmann Ton select use of the content of the

. ties remedugust 17,1976

Du kannst mir einen sehr grossen Gefallen tun: Bitte geh zur Crditanstalt-Stefansplatz wo Du ja auch Dein Konto hast und frage was los ist. Sie haben mir am 5. Juli versprochen meinem Ersuchen gemaess alles Geld was ich dort habe, per Scheck an mich zu schicken. Es sollten in Schilling 5,000 dort behalten, was ich spaeter zu 10.000 abaenderte. Ich habe keinerlei Aufklaerung um die ich bat, bekommen, und keinen Scheck. Die Pension fuer August kam an, aber keine Abrechnung wie ich sie gewoehnlich bekomme. Ich kann mir nicht vorstellen was da los ist. Ich bin Dir sehr dankbar, wenn Du Dibh der Sache annimmst.

Hoffentlich geniesst Du den Besuch Deiner Schwester.

Und hoffentlich fuehlst Du Dich all right,

Ich selbst habe eine boese Zeit und hoffe, dass
es mir bald wieder besser geht.

Herzlich gruesst Dich Deine deil en el

Du kennet mir einen sehr grossen Jefallen Attelen zu Trijtanstalt-Stefansplats

is auch DelA Monto best uni frage was

DER LETZTE BRIEF!

Bericht:

Sofort bei Erhalt dieses Briefes war ich bei der C.A. und mußte dort erfahren: Frau Lehmann sei gestorben und das Konto ist bereits gesperrt!

In the final letter Lehmann was to write, she asks her long time friend Hertha to check on a financial matter at the Vienna bank that handles her pension from the Vienna Opera. On the second page Lehmann writes that she's going through a bad time and hopes that she'll soon be better. She died eight days later.

Below, Hertha writes that by the time she received the letter the account was closed because of Lehmann's death.



Lehmann's best friend in Vienna, Hertha Schuch. Above at Lehmann's 1937 departure from Vienna and below, at her gravesite. Elizabeth Hvolbøll (who'd studied briefly with Lehmann) and her son Eric are also there.



"God's most beautiful creation," Toscanini's words about Lehmann, the headline of the Stuttgarter Zeitung announcing her death. LL's last student sang at Bayreuth.

Stuttg. Ztg. 28.8.76

Shertgarter Zeitung

bttes schönste Erfindung

Zum Tode der Sängerin Lotte Lehmann / + 2 %

Sie haben a von ihr, die am Donnerstag im Alter vo 8 Jahren in Santa Barbara Californien destorben ist, geschwärmt. Bruno Walte der sie nicht nur als Dirigent, sondern auch bei Liederabenden am Klavier begleitet hat: "In Lotte Lehmanns Marschallin begegnete ich jenem seltenen Phänomen der Identität vom Künstler mit der dichterischen Gestalt, durch das ein vergängliches theatralisches Erlebnis zum dauernden Eindruck wird. Arturo Toscanini, der sie die "schönste Erfindung des lieben Gottes" nannte und sagte: "Wenn die Lehmann einen Schmiß macht, ist sie mir noch immer lieber als die anderen, wenn sie ganz genau singen." Richard Strauss, für den sie drei seiner Uraufführungen gesungen hat, den Komponisten in der "Ariadne auf Naxos", später 1919 in Wien die Kaiserin der "Frau ohne Schatten" und schließlich 1925 in Dresden die Christine, das Konterfei von Frau Pauline Strauss, im "Intermezzo".

Ihr Rollenrepertoire war breit, umfaßte lyrische ebenso wie dramatische Partien. Puccini — dessen erste deutsche Turandot sie gesungen hat - Massenet und die Frauenpartien in den beiden großen Opern Korngolds liebte sie ebenso wie Beethovens Leonore, mit der sie in Salzburg der frühen dreißiger Jahre Triumphe feierte. Wer sie selbst nicht mehr gehört hat, kann sich von der Wirkung ihrer Persönlichkeit auf der Bühne wohl nur schwerlich ein Bild machen. Die Plattah, die man sich zu Hause auflegen kann, können zwar vom Schmelz ihrer Stimme, von den Wand-lungsmöglichkeiten ihres eher dunklen Soprans einen Eindruck geben, doch die Größe dieser Sängerin lag, wie alle versi-chern, die sie noch auf der Bühne gesehen

haben, in der Verschmelzung von gesanglichem und darstellerischem Ausdruck.

Lotte Lehmann, aus dem Märkischen stammend, begann ihre Sängerkarriere 1910 am damaligen Hamburger Stadttheater unter dem jungen Dirigenten Otto Klemperer. Im Kriegsjahr 1914 wechselte sie an die Wiener Hofoper, deren Ensamble sie bis zur Okkupation Österreichs durch die Nationalsozialisten angehörte. Hermann Göring wollte sie, wie man sagt, zu einer deutschen "Primadonna assoluta" machen, wenn sie nur noch in Deutschland singe, was die international längst berühmte Sängerin ablehnte. Daraufhin erhielt sie 1934 ein Auftrittsverbot im Reich. Durch zahlreiche Gastspiele an der Met in New York und in anderen amerikanischen Städten hatte Lotte Lehmann ihre zweite, ihre amerikanische Karriere gut vorbereitet, die ihr selbst für die dortigen Verhältnisse ganz ungewöhnliche Erfolge eintrug. 1951 hat sie sich von Podium und Bühne

Der Titel eines der von ihr im Alter erfaßten Bücher heißt "My many Lives" und er trifft genau die ständigen Aktivitäten dieser Frau. Nachdem sie die Bühne verlassen hatte, zog sie sie sich nicht in den Ruhestand zurück, sondern begann eine neue wieder von Erfolgen getragene Karriere als Gesangslehrerin in Santa Barbara in Kalifornien. Ihre Schule wurde zur Talentschmiede für viele bekanntgewordene amerikanische und europäische Sänger. Bis ins höchste Alter hat sie unterrichtet. Noch in diesem Sommer geschah es, daß eine junge, in Bayreuth debutierende Sängerin in ihrem Lebenslauf vermelden konnte, sie komme aus der Gesangsklasse

von Lotte Lehmann.

FAZ 28.9.76

Frank/serfe Blejen sins Zerfans

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung's notice of LL's passing. Her painting and writing are listed, and Grace Bumbry is mentioned as one of her students.

# Lotte Lehmann 4.8. gestorben

Zum Tod der großen Opernsängerin

Geläufige Gurgeln, um mit Mozart zu sprechen, gibt und gab es viele - Sängerinnen aber, die nicht nur eine schöne Stimme haben, sondern auch ein außergewöhnliches Maß an musikalischer Intelligenz, an persönlicher "Ausstrahlung", die umfassend musikalisch und im weiteren Sinne künstlerisch begabt sind, können an den Fingern einer Hand abgezählt werden. Lotte Lehmann, 1888 in Perleberg bei Berlin geboren, hatte in Berlin studiert und machte rasch Karriere: 1910 wurde sie nach Hamburg verpflichtet, sang sich dort quer durchs Repertoire jugendlichdramatischer Partien (Elsa in "Lohengrin", Margarete in "Faust", Agathe im "Freischütz", Eva in den "Meistersingern") und wurde schon als 26jährige an die Wiener Hofoper geholt, wo sie als "Komponist" in der Wiener Fassung der "Ariadne" (1916) Richard Strauss so begeisterte, daß er sie für Partien in "Die Frau ohne Schatten" (Färberin), "Intermezzo" und "Arabella" engagierte. 1924 sang sie erstmals die Marschallin im "Rosenkavalier" (Covent Garden London), die zu ihren glanzvollsten Rollen gehörte.

Die Ablehnung eines Angebots Görings, nur noch in Deutschland aufzutreten, trug ihr 1933 ein Auftrittsverbot ein. Sie sang bis zum Anschluß Österreichs noch an der Wiener Staatsoper, emigrierte dann in die Vereinigten Staaten; wo sie als Strauss- und Wagner-Sängerin Furore machte. 1946 verabschiedete sich Lotte Lehmann mit einem letzten Auftritt an der Metropolitan Opera von der Bühne, 1951 gab die als Liedsängerin nicht minder Geschätzte ihren letzten Konzertabend.

Die großen Dirigenten, unter deren Leitung sie sang, wie Schalk, Bruno Walter und Toscanini, waren von ihrer Stimme und Musikalität hingerissen — das, was davon erlernbar ist, gab sie als Gesangspädagogin in Santa Barbara (Kalifornien) weiter. Unter anderen zählte Grace Bumbry zu ihren Schülerinnen

Nachdem sie sich von Opernbühne und Konzertpodium zurückgezogen hatte, widmete sie sich neben ihrer Unterrichtsarbeit der Malerei und der Keramik, setzte ihre schriftstellerische Tätigkeit fort (bereits 1923 waren von ihr "Verse in Prosa" erschienen, später folgten mehrere autobiographische Werke), versuchte sich — allerdings erfolglos — an der "Met" als Regisseurin und war selbstkritisch genug, den Versuch nicht zu wiederholen.

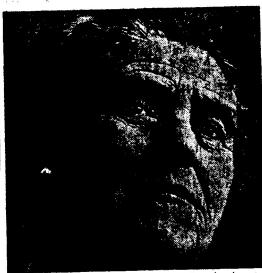
Zahl und Art der Auszeichnungen, die sie erhielt, bleiben üblicherweise gehobenen Diplomatenkarrieren vorbehalten: Ehrenlegion und Palmenorden, Bundesverdienstkreuz und fünf Doktorenhüte ehrenhalber, um nur einiges davon zu erwähnen.

Nach langer Krankheit starb die Künstlerin, 88 Jahre alt, in ihrem Haus in Santa Barbara — ihre Stimme ist nicht erloschen. Auch künftige Generationen werden sie von den vielen Schallplatten, auf denen sie verewigt ist, kennenlernen. Zur Tode Lotte Lehmanns

Die Nathicht vom Tode Lotte Lehmanns weckt nurch den Opern- und Konzertfreunden der älteren Generation persönlichen Widerhall. Als legendäre Künstleretscheinung war sie in den europäischen und amerikanischen Musikzentren bis zu ihrem Tode hochverehrt. Sie starb — wie gestern kurz gemeldet — in Santa Barbara an der kalifornischen Küste, wo sie seit 1939 ein Haus mit Blick auf das Meer besaß. Nach dem Kriege erhielt sie die amerikanische Staatsbürgerschaft und ging damit Europa endgültig verloren.

Ihr Lebensweg aber begann in Deutschland. 1888 wurde sie im märkischen Perleberg geboren; an der Berliner Musikhochschule ausgebildet, debütierte sie bereits 23jährig an der 'Hamburger Oper als Elsa in Wagners "Lohengrin". 1915 wurde sie nach Wien verpflichtet, wo sie bei der Uraufführung von "Ariadne auf Naxos" auf Wunsch von Richard Strauss die Rolle des Komponisten übernahm. Später gehörte die Titefrolle dieser Oper zu ihren größten Erfolgen. 24 Jahre war sie die gefeierte Primadonna der Wiener Staatsoper. Bei den späteren Strauss-Premieren war sie stets beteiligt, so in "Die Frau ohne Schatten", "Arabella" und in "Intermezzo" an der Dresdener Staatsoper. Als Marschallin im "Rosenkaväller" war sie an allen großen Häusern berühmt.

Damals hörte man sie in Wagner- und Strauss-Rollen auch in Berlin am Königlichen Opernhaus Unter den Linden. Vielleicht erinnern sich noch ältere Musikfreunde an ein Konzert in der alten Philharmonie, bei dem sie den damals noch nicht 20jährigen Chronisten mit Liedern von Strauss in eine Art Rauschzustand versetzte. Lotte Lehmann war eben nicht ällein eine mit üppigen Stimmmitteln begabte Sängerin. Sie ließ sich niemals zur Übernahme hochdramatischer Wag-



LOTTE LEHMANN

nerpartien verführen, sondern gewann ihre Hörer eher durch die glühende Intensität ihres Vortrags. Zehn Jahre lang, von 1927 bis 1937, war sie Star der Salzburger Festspiele. Auf Gastspielreisen kam sie schon 1922 nach den USA. 1930 triumphierte sie an der Chikagoer Oper als Sieglinde, 1934 an der New Yorker Metropolitan, Opera.

Daß wir sie endgültig an Amerika verloren, geht auf das Konto des nationalsozialistischen Regimes. Ein Versuch Görings, Lotte Lehmann als Primadonna an die Preußische Staatsoper zu verpflichten, scheiterte an der Klausel, daß sie nur innerhalb der Grenzen Großdeutschlands singen dürfe. Es hieß damals, die Sängerin habe einen Vertrag gefor-

Berlin's *Tagesspiegel's* notice of LL's death includes mention of her participation in the Salzburg Festivals from 1927–1937. But there's an error: she didn't sing in the USA in 1922, that was actually in South America. Also, she left Austria before the annexation. It is, however true that Eisenhower praised her.

Daß wir sie endgültig an Amerika verloren, geht auf das Konto des nationalsozialistischen Regimes. Ein Versuch Görings, Lotte Lehmann als Primadonna an die Preußische Staatsoper zu verpflichten, scheiterte an der Klausel, daß sie nur innerhalb der Grenzen Großdeutschlands singen dürfe. Es hieß damals, die Sängerin habe einen Vertrag gefordert, der auch nach dem etwaigen Zusammenbruch des Dritten Reiches Gültigkeit behalten solle. Nach dem "Anschluß" Osterreichs ging sie auf Rat Bruno Walters, den sie als ihren größten Lehrer bezeichnet hat, endgültig nach Amerika. 1946 trat sie zum letzten Male in der Met auf, ihr letzter Liederabend fand 1951 ebenfalls in New York statt.

In ihren letzten Lebensjahrzehnten versammelte sie noch einen Kreis ausgewählter Schüler um sich, unter denen Grace Bumbry Bedeutende Erfolge hatte. Für ihren weltweiten Ruhm zeugten zahlreiche Ehrungen. Sie war Ehrenmitglied der Wiener Oper, sie trug den Ehrenring der Wiener Philharmoniker, die Große Silbermedaille Salzburgs, das Offizierskreuz der Französischen Ehrenlegion und wurde mit vier Ehrendoktoraten ausgezeichnet. Sie widmete sich bis zuletzt ihren Liebhabereien: Malerei, Keramik, Schriftstellerei. Die Amerikanerin deutscher Herkunft, die Eisenhower das "singende Weltwunder" genannt hatte, feierte ihren 80. Geburtstag mit einem spektakulären Galadiner, bei dem ihr 200 Prominente aus Kunst, Gesellschaft und Politik huldigten. Dann wurde es stiller um sie.

TANK IN THE

The Hamburger Abendblatt's headline uses the words of Thomas Mann as he described Lehmann "Dear Lady Sunshine." The operas of Richard Strauss written with her voice in mind are listed. Her novel is misnamed, but otherwise the information is correct.



Hbg. Abendbl. 27.8.76

# Lotte Lehmann – "die liebe Frau Sonne"

### In Amerika gestorben/Weltkarriere begann in Hamburg

weltberühmte Sopranistin Lotte Lehmann ist am Donnerstag in Santa Barbara (Kalifornien) gestorben. Sie war 88 Jahre alt. Toscanini sprach einst von ihr als der schönsten Erfindung des lieben nini sprach Gottes". Präsident Eisenhower nannte sie "Amerikas singendes Weltwunder". In Salzburg wurde eine Straße nach ihr benannt. Lotte Lehmann erhielt zahlreiche Orden und fünf Ehrendoktorhüte. Als und Wagner-Sängerin feierte sie ihre größten Triumphe,

feierte sie ihre größten Triumphe,

Lotte Lehmann stammte aus Perleberg in der Mark Brandenburg und studierte an der Berliner Musikhochschule, Ihr erstes Engagement hatte sie von 1910 bis 1914 an der Hamburger Oper. Ihr Freund und Kollege aus jener Zeit, Paul Schwarz, erinnert sich tiefbewegt: "In Leo Blechs Oper "Versiegelt" machten wir 1912 unsere erste Bekanntschaft. Seitdem waren wir unzertrennlich. Lotte Lehmann hat mit kleinsten Partien begonnen und lange mit der Elsa im "Lohengrin" und der Elisabeth im "Tannhäuser" kokettiert — und ist dann die Beste in diesen Rollen geworden! Sie hat sich während und nach ihrer Opernkarriere auch in aller Welt für das deutsche Lied eingesetzt. Sie bezauberte vor

allem durch den innigen, stißen Klang ihrer Stimme und ihre über-aus deutliche Aussprache, selbst bei den höchsten Tönen. Wenn sie das Meistersinger-Quintett begann, Selig wie die Sonne'— das war zu schön!"

"Liebe Frau Sonne" nannte sie denn auch Thomas Mann, und Ri-chard Strauss schwärmte: "Ja, die Lotte ist eine Einmaligkeit!" Er muß-te es wissen, denn Lotte Lehmann sang noch zu seinen Lebzeiten in den



Liebe zu Hamburg: Die hochbetagte Lotte Lehmann kam 1967 zu Besuch

Strauss-Opern "Ariadne", "Die Frau ohne Schatten", "Intermezzo" und "Arabella", und im "Rosenkavalier" verkörperte sie nacheinander die Sophie, den Octavian und die Marschallin.

Als Hitler 1933 in Deutschland an die Macht kam, wollte Göring sie zur deutschen "Primadonna assoluta" machen, doch Lotte Lehmann lehnte ab und ging nach Österreich und schließlich in die USA. Von 1934 bis 1946 begeisterte sie das Publikum an der New Yorker "Met". Dans zog sie sich von der Opernbühne zurück. 1951 gab sie in New York ihren letzten Liederabend.

Aber sie setzte sich noch nicht zur Ruhe. Sie unterrichtete viel (ihre bekannteste Schülerin ist Grace Bumbry). Sie führte 1962 Regie in einer "Rosenkavalier"-Inszenierung der "Met". Sie widmete sich ihren Liebhabereien, der Malerei und Keramik, und sie setzte die schon früher begonnene Reihe ihrer Buchveröffentlichungen fort. Den "Versen in Prosa" (1923) und der Novelle "Ewige Flucht" (1937) folgten u. a. die Schrift "Mehr als Singen" und autobiographische Texte. 1967 besuchte Lotte Lehmann noch einmal Hamburg zum 80. Geburtstag von Paul Schwarz, Mit ihm traf sie sich noch bis 1974 regelmäßig in Badgastein.

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Sidden Gile

Süddeutsche Zeitung's headline is "A serious Primadonna," which they also write is incorrect because of her lack of ego or vanity. The notice calls her Marschallin the century's best.

# Eine ernste Primadonna

Zum Tod von Lotte Lehmann

Sie eine Primadonna zu nennen, heißt schon, ihr Unrecht tun. Lotte Lehmann, die jetzt 88jährig le Santa Barbara in Kalifornien gestorben st, hate nichts von der egozentrischen Eitelkeit

ge cierten Starnnen. Sie war eine ernste Gestalterin und muß - Richard Strauss wie Bruno Walter, das Salzburger wie das New Yorker Publikum haben es bestätigt - die Rosenkavalier-Marschallin des Jahrhunderts gewesen sein. Platten verraten noch, wie sie in dieser Partie jede Nuance mit Herz und Noblesse gestaltet



hat. Streng war ihr Anspruch nicht nur gegen sich, sondern auch gegen andere: Nach ihr gab es eine einzige Sängerin, die sie als Marschallin gelten ließ — die Schwarzkopf.

Lotte Lehmann stammte aus der Mark Brandenburg und kam 1914 an die Wiener Oper. Sie war die klassische Fidelio-Leonore, die erste deutsche Turandot, vor allem auch eine romantische Liedersängerin hohen Ranges; Bruno Walter, den sie ihren "größten Lehrer" nannte, hat sie dabei oft begleitet. In Deutschland ist sie nach 1933 nicht mehr aufgetreten, aus Protest; aber in Amerika hat sie noch bis 1951 gesungen.

Wer eine Vorstellung von Lotte Lehmanns Kunst gewinnen will, der höre sich den ersten Walküren-Akt unter Bruno Walter an — eine ihrer schönsten Platten, die noch ahnen läßt, wie einst Toscanini sich zu jenem viel zitierten Superlativ hinreißen ließ: Lotte Lehmann sei "des lieben Gottes schönste Erfindung". Go

An announcement of Lehmann's death from Austria's *Kurier*, calls her a legend. Her attributes included ensemble singing, singing actress, recitalist. Considering her excellent recordings, they write: "A legend has passed. But she is however not yet dead."

# Lotte Lehmann ist in Kalifornien gestorben

# Sie war die 4. Marschallin 28.8 dreier Dezennien

Eine Legende ist gestorben: Lotte Lehmann, 88, ist Donnerstag nach längerer Krankheit in ihrem Haus in Santa Barbara (Kalifornien) verschieden.

Die Lehmann – das war nicht Irgendeine große Sängerin. Das war ein Synonym für Ensemblekunst, Singschauspiel, Vortragskultur, vor allem aber auch für eine Opernpartie, die man mit Ihr identifiziert hat: die Marschallin im "Rosenkavaller".

Dabel hat die aus Perleberg (Brandenburg) gebürtige Sopranistin bald nach Ihrem Hamburger Debüt im Jahre 1910 in Richard Strauss' neuer Oper zuerst die Sophie gesungen, und dann, bei ihrem ersten Wiener Auftreten 1916, den Oktavian, ehe sie zur Marschallin dreier Dezennlen wurde. Mit dieser Rolle verabschiedete sie sich auch 1945 an der Metropolitan Opera von der Bühne.

Die Lehmann, die 1934 nach den USA gekommen war und während der Nazizeit nicht mehr nach Deutschland und Österreich zurückkehrte, hat Strauss und Puccini, Mozart und Wagner gesungen – ein umfangreiches Rollenfach, das auch viele jener Novitäten enthielt, die in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren als modern galten, aber nicht überlebten.

Schallplattenaufnahmen haben die Wärme des Timbres, die Ausdruckskraft der Stimme, die Noblesse des Vortrags bewahrt. Man hört daher auch heute noch, was unsere Eltern behaupteten: Lotte Lehmann muß eine bedeutende Gestalterin gewesen sein. Auch von Liedern, die sie noch bis 1951 gesungen hat.

Eine Legende ist gestorben. Aber sie ist deshalb noch nicht tot. K. L.



In Santa Barbara gestorben: Lotte Lehmann, 88 Jahre

## n Tode Lotte Lehmanns

DW. Santa Barbara

Lotte Lehmann, Opernsängerin amerikanischer Staatsbürgerschaft und deutscher Abstammung, ist mit 88 Jahren im kalifornischen Santa Barbari gestorben. Als Elsa in Wagners "Lohengrin" errang sie vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg erste Erfolge und eroberte nach dem Krieg die europäischen Bühnen mit ihren Darbietungen in unter anderem "Der Rosenkavalier" und "Die Meistersinger".

Lotte Lehmann wurde am 27. Februar 1888 in Perleberg in Brandenburg geboren. Nach ihrem ersten Engagement in Hamburg verpflichtete man sie 1916 an die Wiener Staatsoper, der sie bis 1939 angehörte. In der



Lotte Lehmann FOTO: UPI

Wiener Uraufführung der "Ariadne" von Richard Strauss begeisterte sie den Komponisten so sehr, daß er selbst mit ihr eine Rolle für die Premiere seiner "Frau im Schatten" einstudierte.

1930 gab die Sängerin als Sieglinde in der "Walküre" ihr amerikanisches Debüt in Chicago. Nach der Machtergreifung Hitlers lehnte sie Görings Angebot ab, deutsche "Primadonna assoluta" zu werden, und ging 1934 nach Österreich, das sie nach dem Anschluß 1938 verließ.

Sie emigrierte in die USA, wo sie vor allem als Wagner- und Strauss-Sängerin Ruhm erlangte. 1946 trat sie zum letzten Mal in der "Met" auf und widmete sich nach ihrem letzten Konzert 1951 ihren Liebhabereien wie der Malerei und der Schriftstellerei. An der Musikakademie von Santa Barbara bildete sie einige auserwählte Schüler aus, darunter Grace Bumbry. Zu Lotte Lehmanns Auszeichnungen gehören die große Silbermedaille von Salzburg und das Offizierskreuz der Französischen Ehrenlegion.

This notice includes mention of the fact that Strauss helped LL study his role for her as the Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. It is implied that she only began singing in Vienna after the Göring encounter and that she left Austria after the annexation.

## Books

This section represents two of the many books about Lotte Lehmann. The first book that I mention, *Mehr als eine Sängerin* (More than a Singer), is a compilation of photos of and letters to and about Lehmann, assembled and "written" by Berndt Wessling. Lehmann herself supplied much of the material used in the book. It is only available in German and has never won much praise. It tends to show only the favorable words about Lehmann.

The second book is the "authorized" biography of Lehmann written by Beaumont Glass while actually living in her home Orplid, in Santa Barbara. He had access to her letters and other documents because her companion, Frances Holden, was an active participant. You'll find photos of them together in the back yard of Orplid. I wrote the discography for the book.

There was some controversy when a competing "centennial" Lehmann book was written by Alan Jefferson, who felt that he was prevented from access to information that was important for his work. This matter is addressed in a letter from Frances.

Other Lehmann biographies and works can be found in the Bibliography chapter.

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

21. Maerz 1968

Malafullelle

Lieber Herr Wessling:

Ich danke Ihnen herzlich fuer das ausgezeichnete Buch ueber Leopold Ludwig, und natuerlich auch fuer die Artikel mit denen Sie so schmeichelhaft meinen Geburtstag feierten.

Ich bin oft gefragt worden warum ich meine Memoiren nicht beende. Um aber so ehrlich zu sein wie ich es wuensche zu sein , muesste ich vieles dagen was weder gut fuer mich noch fuer andere waere,

Mit vielen herzlichen Gruessen bin ich

Ihre

In this letter LL rejects the idea of her cooperating with the problematic singer/writer Berndt Wessling in providing material for the end of her career that occurred after her memoir *On Wings of Song* aka *Midway in My Song*. He ended up writing a kind of tribute/biography called *Mehr als eine Sängerin*, that didn't really provide the material the she feared would be "bad for her as well as for others" and so was just a bland puff piece with letters from famous colleagues saying nice things.

## "Keine zweite Lehmann"

EIN BESUCH IN WIEN UND EIN NEUES BUCH

Von Franz Endler

"So setzte ich mich vors Schreibzeug. Kaum hatte ich den ersten Schluck feierlich geschlürft, so polterte Engel ins Zimmer, placierte sich neben mich und machte sich daran, ein Fußbad im Waschbecken zu nehmen. Ich teilte den kostbaren Wein mit ihm und in verhaltenem Grimm und mit komischer Eile. Dann ging ich allein in einen Liederabend der Lotte Lehmann aus Hamburg." gleich man in Santa Barbara einen Konzertsaal nach mir benannt hat und ich jeden Tag, wenn ich die Zeitung aufschlage, nachsehm kann, was man im Lotte-Lehmann-Auditorium spielt." Frau Lehmann ist wirklich nicht größenwahnsinnig, eher nett und angenehm und sehr schlagfertig.

Die Lektüre von Joachim Ringelnatzens "Als Mariner im Krieg" hat also doch einen aktuellen Bezug. Lotte Lehmann aus Hamburg, die für ihn einen Liederabend gab, ist vor wenigen Tagen zur 100-Jahr-Feier der Oper am Ring in Wien gewesen, ist gerade jetzt auf Kur in Badgastein und wird sich während der Salzburger Festspiele bei einer Präsentation des Buches "Lotte Lehmann... mehr als eine Sängerin" wieder der Öffentlichkeit stellen. Den Ringelnatz hat sie nie gelesen.

Wohl aber das eben erwähnte neue Buch von Berndt W. Wesling (Residenz-Verlag), ein Denkmal der Liebe und der aufopfernden Arbeit, wenn diese Charakterisierung gestattet ist. "Ich finde das Buch außerordentlich schön und bewundere den Residenz-Verlag, der sich so viel Arbeit gemacht

saal nach mir benannt hat und ich jeden Tag, wenn ich die Zeitung aufschlage, nachsehen kann, was man im Lotte-Lehmann-Auditorium spielt." Frau Lehmann ist wirklich nicht größenwahnsinnig, eher nett und angenehm und sehr schlagfertig.

Eine Verehrerin bringt Rosen und die Lehmann ist interessiert, warum man denn in Wien nun auch Hosen trägt als Frau. "Bei mir daheim ist es heiß, da verstehe ich das. Aber in Wien? Liebt man den Unterschied der Geschlechter nicht mehr?" Und in die Jubiläumsausstellung der Staatsoper, der sie ein Bild per Luftfracht — selbstbezahlt — gesandt hat, wird sie nicht gehen, weil dies doch zu anstrengend wäre. "Ist die Jeritza schon da?" Die Jeritza ist noch nicht da, und Kammersängerin Lotte Lehmann macht sich

ein Bild per Luftfracht — selbstbezahlt — gesandt hat, wird sie nicht gehen, weil dies doch zu anstrengend wäre. "Ist die Jeritza schon da?" Die Jeritza ist noch nicht da, und Kammersängerin Lotte Lehmann macht sich nicht allzuviel draus. "Wir haben in New York ein Fernsehen miteinander gehabt, da hat sie gebeten, man möchte doch die Jahreszahlen weglassen. Aber ich habe sie daran erinnert, daß wir keine Teenager mehr sind und daß jeder weiß, daß wir 1916 schon ganz

wacker gesungen haben."

In Wien wird die Lehmann so bald keinen Gesangskurs geben. Als sie das einmal tat, hatte sie erschreckend "schlechtes Material", und wenn sie es jetzt noch tut, dann nur daheim oder mit bereits voll ausgebildeten Künstlerinnen, denen sie noch aus ihrer Erfahrung mitteilt. "Aber die sollen keine zweite Lehmann werden, eine war durchaus genug."

In Santa Barbara freilich werden auch nichtprofessionelle Sänger manchmal mit der Lehmann arbeiten. Ein Kurs an der Universität heißt "A Genius at Work" und ist Dichtern und Komponisten und eben auch Lotte Lehmann gewidmet, der man beim Unterricht zuhören darf. "Ich erkläre da vor allem Lieder, mühe mich, den Inhalt allen Anwesenden nahezubringen und hoffe, daß dann jeder Sänger seinen eigenen Weg zu einer richtigen Interpretation findet." Und beim Gespräch über diese Lehrtätigkeit wird die Lehmann plötzlich ruhig und kontemplativ. "Eigentlich ist diese Arbeit für mich sehr interessant. Ich lerne dabei, warum ich früher einmal ein Lied so oder so gesungen habe — jetzt kann ich es erklären und anderen Künstlern weitergeben, damals habe ich es intuitiv richtig gemacht. Aber das ist wohl auch kein Ausnahmefall, man weiß ja immer erst dann, wenn man die Stimme verliert, wie man eigentlich hätte singen sollen."

Bei all diesen freundlichen Worten klingt keine Wehmut mit und selbstverständlich auch keine falsche Koketterie, die Lehmann weiß, daß sie ein Star war und ein Star geblieben ist, sie weiß, daß man sie heute noch immer verehrt, und sie ist gewiß, daß das auch immer so bleiben wird. Sind die Schallplatten, die sie gesungen hat, dafür verantwortlich. "Ich finde einige sehr gut. Sesbstverständlich bin ich kritischer als jeder andere Zuhörer, wenn ich die Platten jetzt



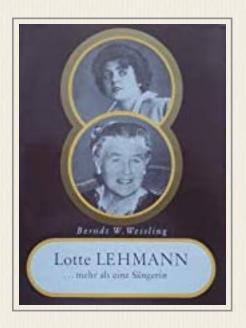
Photo: "Die Presse"/Blaha "MAN KANN RUHIG SAGEN: 81" Schlagfertig und liebenswürdig zeigte sich

announcement of the book on Lehmann by
Berndt Wessling
called *Mehr als eine*Sängerin.

A visit to Vienna to

celebrate the Opera's

centennial and the



"No second Lehmann" A visit in Vienna and a new book.

"Nothing invented" is the headline for this excerpt from the Berndt Wessling book *Lotte Lehmann, mehr als eine Sängerin* that includes such interviews as the one found here by her early singer/colleague, Paul Schwarz.

### LOTTE LEHMANN

### Nichts erfunden

Zu dem, woran man sein ganzes Leben lang denken wird, kam ich in Hamburg und Badgastein, wohin es Frau Lotte auf ihren Kreuzfahrten über den gesamten Globus gelegentlich trieb (sei es, um alte Freunde wiederzusehen oder sich über die gefräßigen Gasteiner Eichhörnchen zu ärgern).

Zuerst hatte ich die schöne Aufgabe, sie in einen vollbesetzten Festsaal der Hansestadt zu geleiten, wo sie vor einer überdimensionalen Schokoladentorte saß, die unter der Hitze der Schein-

Gekürzter Auszug aus dem Buch "Lotte Lehmann, mehr als eine Sängerin" von Berndt W. Wessling, das — gerade rechtzeitig zu Beginn der Salzburger Festspiele — im Salzburger Residenzverlag erschienen ist. Residenz-Verleger Wolfgang Schaffler gab vergangene Woche einen Empfang für die 82jährige Künstlerin.

werfer genauso dahinschmolz wie die Gäste unter den lieblichen Blicken der vierfachen Frau Doktor Lehmann.

Sie verbreitete, ohne viel zu sagen, so viel Glanz und gute Laune, daß verdiente Kammersängerinnen, die zu ihrer Begrüßung gekommen waren, ihrer Euphorie in schrillen Trillern und Verzückungslauten Ausdruck gaben und ein hoher Senatsbeamter ständig vor sich herplapperte: "Ich werd" verrückt! Ich werd verrückt!" Das klingt beinahe unwahr; aber es ist kein Gramm an der Sache gelogen.

Und dann durfte ich am nächsten Tag zu ihr ins Hotel kommen, wo wir ein Fernsehinterview machten, an dem auch ihr früherer Kollege Kammersänger Paul Schwarz teilnahm.

Das ging so vor sich: Madame empfing in purpurnem Sammetmantelkleid, das oben von einer goldenen Agraffe geschlossen wurde. Sie nickte uns huldvollst zu und feuerte sogleich das Team an: "Nun macht aber schnell zu, denn Ausdauer habe ich nicht!"

Sie saß neben ihrem "Genossen" Paul Schwarz, hatte einen hübschen japanischen Fächer in der Hand, den sie im Schoß hin und her drehte, und sagte ihm ins Gesicht: "Du bist auch nicht jünger geworden!"

Schwarz: "Aber du...!"

Madame Lehmann: "Ich kann
mir das auch leisten."

Paul Schwarz: "Du siehst tatsächlich immer noch so aus wie 1910, als du nach Hamburg kamst."

Madame: "Danke. Aber wie weißt du, was 1910 mein Gesicht war, da du doch erst 1912 nach Hamburg gekommen bist?"

Schwarz: "Ich hatte dich vorausgeahnt."

Madame: "Um Ausreden warst du noch nie verlegen."

Schwarz: "Und dann hast du gleich den Pagen im "Lohengrin" gesungen..."

Madame Lehmann: "Um diese kleine miese Rolle habe ich sogar Tränen vergossen. Ich hatte nicht aufgepaßt. Und so wollte sie mir der Dirigent Gustav Brecher wieder wegnehmen. Da bin ich hin zu ihm und habe ihn angebettelt: "Können Sie mir nicht die Rolle wiedergeben?" Und da hat der Brecher gesagt: "Sie kriegen sie wieder; aber aufpassen, sonst ist es endgültig vorbei mit dem Pagen!" Stell" dir das vor: wegen so einer miesen Rolle habe ich mich fast umgebracht!"

Schwarz: "Aber dann merkte man bald, was in dir steckte, und ich habe dir als Junker Spärlich, der dann bald zum Fenton avancierte, "o süße Anna!" ins Ohr geflüstert." (Er singt eine Melodie). Madame Lehmann: "Mensch, di kannst ja immer noch singen. Ich kann das gar nicht mehr. Abe tröste dich: es klingt wie ein alte Blechtopf...!"

Schwarz: "Dafür hast du, mei Kind, ja auch in deinem Leber genug gesungen."

Madame: "Gott sei Dank nich alles mit dir Das hätte ich ja ga nicht ausgehalten!"

Schwarz: "Übrigens: wenn d mich noch öfter unterbrichs dann werden die Zuschauer die ser Sendung ganz schön prote stieren. Du bringst mich total au dem Konzept, weiß du das?"

Madame: "Wie interessant, da ich noch einen Mann aus der Konzept bringen kann!"

Schwarz: "Und wenn du hundert Jahre alt bist, kannst du da noch, weil du einen unbesieg baren Charme hast!"

Madame Lehmann: "Du trägs ganz schön auf, mein Lieber. Un wenn ich hundert Jahre alt bin dann bist du hundertundeins. Wi tröstlich, daß ich so viel jünge bin als du."

Schwarz: "Ja, man kann wirk lich sagen, daß du kaum älter ge worden bist."

Madame (mit blitzende Augen): "Du könntest fast mei Vater sein!"

Schwarz: "Dein Sohn, meir Teure, nichts als dein Sohn!"

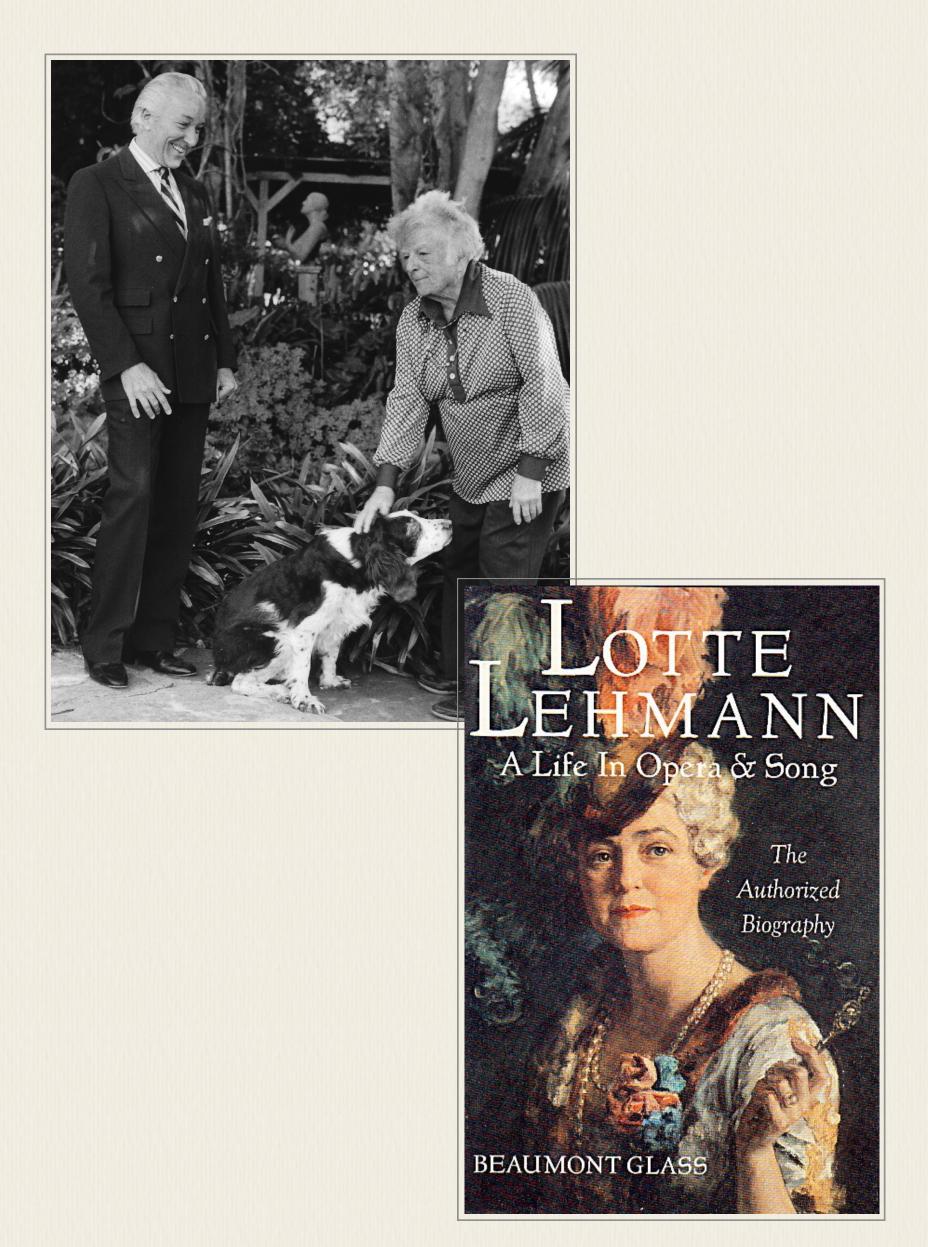
Madame Lehmann: "Und einen wie dich hat der Jell durchgehen lassen!"



WOCHENPRESSE-Photo: Barbara Pflo Lotte Lehmann, Christa Ludwig: Mehr als eine Sängerin



Frances Holden and
Beaumont Glass with the
terra cotta bust of
Lehmann at Orplid.
These photos were taken
while Glass was living at
Orplid writing his book
Lotte Lehmann: A Life in
Opera & Song.



A second centennial biography of Lehmann was written by Alan Jefferson. There was some controversy as to access to material allowed or denied. Frances Holden's letter to one of the reviewers sheds some light on the matter.

### Frances Holden 4565 Via Huerto Santa Barbara, California 93110

November 19, 1988

Desmond Shawe-Taylor 15 Furlong Road London N 78LS, England

Dear Mr. Shawe-Taylor,

Your review of the Lotte Lehmann biographies has moved me to write you as you were responsible for Mr. Jefferson's contact with me.

As you seem in doubt about my part in the choice of biographers, I would like you to know what really happened.

When I first heard from Mr. Jefferson, I immediately read his books. The Beecham biography I felt was very inadequate and completely lacked any clue to Sir Thomas' personality. As I am not a musician I consulted some of the Music Dept. of UCSB and was told that they did not think favorably of his other books.

I wrote Mr. Jefferson that I would want a sampling of what he would write about Lotte. His reply indicated a fair appraisal of her as an artist but a completely wrong interpretation of her personality. He even went so far as to state that <u>all</u> her women colleagues hated her! With two exceptions Lotte's colleagues were her friends, Elisabeth Schumann especially, but also Tilly Zweig, Bella Paalen, Risë Stevens, Rose Bampton, etc. We saw much of Elisabeth Rethberg when living in Riverdale.

I wrote him then that I thought his source of information was rather prejudiced and I needed to see more of his book.

Then Julia McCrea telephoned me several times from New York and got me almost to the point of agreeing to accept Mr. Jefferson. At that point, what Mr. Jefferson called an introductory chapter arrived. In that he tells about all that Lotte's "daughter" had suffered getting her "mother" out of Vienna, and how she was still suffering for what she had done for her "mother."

As Lotte was in New York at the time of the Anschluss and did not return to Vienna until 1955 and had never had a daughter, that seemed too much. He obviously didn't research his "facts."

Ms. McCrea told the UCSB Librarian when they met later in Chicago that they had papers proving that this woman was Lotte's daughter. When

Dr. Boissé asked to see the papers she said she could not reveal them. That was the end of Mr. Jefferson for us.

At just that time I had a Christmas card from Beau Glass saying that he had so many notes written when he was Lotte's assistant at the Music Academy of the West that he would like to publish them. I showed this note to the steering committee of the Centennial and they asked that Beau come to Santa Barbara to meet with them. He did and they agreed to his writing the biography.

No one else would have devoted himself to the research and writing as Beau did. I learned much about Lotte's European career and Lotte herself that even I had not realized in spite of knowing her first as artist and then as a friend for 44 years. I had nothing to do with writing the book other than providing material. Everything he wrote was his choice, which I often questioned to no avail. The only thing I insisted on was that there be no misrepresentations. There was only one instance of that where he wrote what he wanted to believe but which was not true (a matter of religion).

Did his book convey the real Lotte? NO!

But who could? I have been several times asked to write her biography but have had to refuse as I felt there was nothing I could say of her personally that was 100% true.

Who could convey her radiance, her need to be creative, her wisdom, her love of beauty in all its forms, her superb sense of humor, and at the same time her earthiness and impulsiveness, which often led her to do things which she regretted sometimes deeply.

She was a combination of opposites. One of the delights of living with her was that it was a constant challenge and gave me the feeling expressed in "Cäcilie- "Wenn du es wüsstest, was leben heisst, umhaucht von der Gottheit Weltschaffendem Atem, Zu schweben empor, lichtgetragen, Zu seligen Höhn, Wenn du es wüsstest, Du lebtest mit mir!"

Please excuse the inadequacy of this letter. It is just a small attempt at the impossible but I did want you to know the truth about the biographies as I know how much Lotte liked and respected you.

Very sincerely yours,

### Books

Lotte Lehmann-A Life in Opera and Song by Beaumont Glass Capra Press 1988. 330 pp. \$18.95.

Beaumont Glass was a studio accompanist and general assistant for Lotte Lehmann during her teaching years in California, and his engaging, fun-to-read book does nothing to shake the expectations engendered by the subtitle The Authorized Biography. "Authorized" in this case means presumably that Lehmann's longtime companion and heir, Frances Holden, cooperated and made source materials available. In most cases, it means more generally that no critical evaluation of the subject will be undertaken, and that any failings will be treated in a sympathetic, not to say defensive, light.

So there is no real attempt to place Lehmann's art in a musical or historical context, and while there are references to the great singer's ability to be "difficult," occasionally "unreasonable," and hard to



get close to, there is practically nothing among the plentiful anecdotes to suggest just what the manifestation of those tendencies might have been like. All of the familiar stories from her early years-disaster at the Gerster singing school, promises made and unkept by opera managers-are recounted without any noticeable attempt to find out anything about them beyond what Lehmann recalled.

But it was in Lehmann's nature to inspire just such essentially uncritical warmth in nearly everyone who knew her, and in nearly everyone who hears her still on records. It is hard to carp at the tone of a biography that only reflects what one instinctively feels oneself. If Glass has done little in the way of independent research on the events of the singer's life, he has brought to print a fascinating wealth of private letters and other material from Miss Holden's library and the Lotte Lehmann Archives at Santa Barbara.

These have all the vital glow and the candor that the recordings lead us to expect. The picture of Lehmann's apprentice days, as it emerges in letters to her brother, a patroness and others (I especially like the one in which she is a little confused about all those Valkyries and says she is about to sing "Gerlinde"), is fascinating. Lehmann was not a fast, bright, obviously promising young talent. Throughout her career she had a weak sense of rhythm, and at the beginning her difficulty in learning roles, her habit of beating time with her hands and feet during performances and her frequent musical mistakes caused the authorities in Hamburg to doubt she had much of a future.

It was her sincerity and above all "the sensuous sound of her voice" that got her through. She was clearly an individual. She later recalled an early desire to do "with complete independence... what my feeling drove me to do...without wanting to copy-perhaps without being able to copy; for imitation is a talent in itself-a dangerous talent which I fear [in students] almost more than a lack of talent."

Glass' gloss on that passage brings Lehmann into the sphere of the more conventionally admirable young singer, with "the good sense to study the work of all the other great artists of her time, to draw the best of each into her inner self, and then to go her own way." But this misses the point. and the point holds a lesson. Nothing in the accounts of the time suggests that Lehmann had any knack for drawing on the best work, or any work, of other singers. Indeed, she struggled with what many of them found easy, and what she drew on was in herself.

In this she was tolerated because some perceptive people around her sensed a voice and an inner gift of importance. Would such gifts be perceived, such tolerance extended today? Standards of musicianship, which Lehmann never quite met, are considerably more stringent now. On the other hand, standards of vocal quality, which she met gloriously, are much relaxed and almost irrelevant in some circles today.

Lehmann's later career and life are detailed, with excerpts from reviews, letters and her published writings. The documentation of these is generally adequate though sometimes a little hard to use. Most valuable for many readers will be the comprehensive discography, listing 553 items (including live performances, interviews and master classes), with a separate index and a concordance of LP reissues. A more interpretive kind of Lehmann biography would be good to have, but this one is well WILL CRUTCHFIELD worth enjoying.

Combines devotion, factuality . . . and insight in the right proportion.

-GEORGE JELLINEK

WQXR RADIO

Lotte Lehmann A Life in Opera & Song BY BEAUMONT GLASS

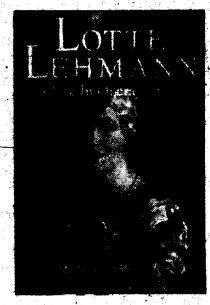
The authorized biography of the legendary international star contains rare photographs and full discography. \$18.95/cloth.

Order from Capra Press, P.O. Box 2068, Santa Barbara, CA 93120. (Add \$1.50 P&H; in CA add 6%.) Charge on MC or VISA. 805/966-4590.

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OPERA NEWS

NOVEMBER 1988



Lotte Lehmann: A Life in Opera and Song by Beaumont Glass (Capra Press, 1988)

The biography of one of the 20th century's greatest prima donnas; she lived in Santa Barbara for quite some time.

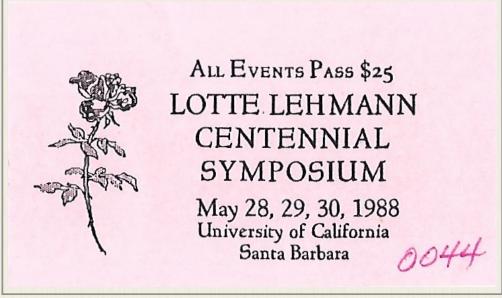
otte Lehmann met Otto Krause, her handsome future husband, in a most unusual way: she was his birthday present. A present from his wealthy wife, who wanted something very special for that special occasion. He was a great opera-lover and his favorite singer was Lotte Lehmann. His wife, for whom money was no object, gave a splendid party and engaged Fraulein Lehmann to sing. For Lotte, it was love at first sight. She had never experienced that feeling so overwhelmingly before. Every note she sang became a billet doux. The recipient was just as smitten as the gift. He left his wife and-temporarily—his four children. The first Mrs. Krause deeply regretted her generous, extravagant impulse, which had turned out to be much more expensive than she had ever dreamed. One can understand her bitterness; but she rather overdid her fury as the woman scorned. She adamantly refused to give Otto a divorce and began to make Lotte's life as as miserable as possible. Since she was very rich and influential, she could afford to make Lotte very miserable indeed. All Vienna was titillated at the scandal.

## Centennials

There are two Lotte Lehmann Centennials covered in this section. One was held at the Vienna Opera and the other in the Lotte Lehmann Hall as well as other buildings of the campus of the University of California Santa Barbara.



Here are two tickets to the Lehmann Centennial celebration held by the Vienna Opera. Her student, Grace Bumbry, sang and Marcel Prawy narrated. Lehmann's voice was heard on recordings.



Here is the pass offered to those wishing to attend all the events held at UCSB in honor of Lehmann's Centennial.



Judy Sutcliffe's introductory brochure for the Lehmann Centennial that took place at the University of California Santa Barbara. The date on the cover page marks the 100 years, but implies that Lehmann lived that long. She died in 1976.

# LOTTE LEHMANN 1888-1988

An Introduction

Seltsam beglückend ist's, zu denken Daß es durch Wunderkraft gelingt, Millionen singend mich zu schenken, Zu denen meine Stimme dringt.

Dem Vogel gleich, auf schnellen Schwingen Entschwebe ich der engen Welt— Und weit von hier lauscht meinem Singen Ein jeder, dem es wohl gefällt.

Es weitet sich der Saal, in dem ich stehe, Zu grenzenlosem Himmelsraum— Und jede Ferne wird zur Nähe— Und Wirklichkeit ein alter Traum.

- Lotte Lehmann

It makes me strangely happy to think That a miraculous power Sends me singing to the millions, Giving me to those my voice has reached.

Birdlike, on swiftest wings I sweep out over the narrow world And far from here someone Who may love my singing listens.

The hall in which I stand widens Into boundless heavenly space— Every distant place draws near— And real is an ancient dream.

-Translation, Judy Sutcliffe

Geronima Press 2216 Cliff Drive • Santa Barbara, CA 93109 TE MOVED ON to the next tapes, and there were six of them, I believe, all transferred from National Educational TV films of Lotte's master classes in opera and lieder filmed in late July of 1961, when Lotte was seventy-three.

She was beautiful. This is the closest I will ever be to seeing the real artist or woman, and it didn't take enormous imagination to see what a wonder was there and what a marvel had been. I had been so taken with the master class that Gary Hickling put on audio tape for Marcel Prawy's Vienna lecture. In it Lotte sang the entire Marschallin's monologue from Rosenkavalier. Lo and behold, that was what was on this videotape. And there she was, holding the mirror, her eyes flashing in moments and shadowing in others as the emotions cascaded across voice, face and form.

The wonderful thing to me is that she envelopes every mental idea with complete expression of soul and body. Intelligent understanding floats in the voice, soaring outward in the accentuation of meaning of each phrase. A supreme intelligence is there in the life and light of her eyes and in the expression of eyebrows, in the tilt of head and turn of mouth. The thoughts she expresses do not stop there but move onward in concert with the body; her strong shoulders, arms and torso lift and turn, embodying the nuances of the voice. This is the way a dancer's body should be, radiating music with every slightest tightening and turning of the tiniest muscle. But it is much more than that. The unity of mind and body that was evident in Lotte is of a very high spiritual

level. It bespeaks a vast and vibrant intelligence that is far beyond the commonplace, but it is also an intelligence that was not intellectual or rational but intuitive and emotional. It came from her heart and from her rich experience of life and loves, not from schools or books. It was a gift of interpretation with which she physically and psychically embodied the spiritual and emotional ideas that rested in the intentions of poets and composers. She brought them forth into reality for shimmering moments made real for her listeners. She was able to open spiritual doors or channels through herself and to transmute with exceptional purity the best and highest musical thoughts. Because she was such a clear and exquisite transmitter, many common mortals were able to hear and to perceive the original beauty intended by the poet and composer. Because they could hear and see radiant love so clearly, they were often moved to ecstacy or tears, an emotional reaction which was also a spiritual reaction in the very highest religious sense. No wonder that Frances gave most of her life to the furtherance of this remarkable being. No wonder that people-speaking of myself, at least-still veil with tears when hearing her voice. She raised up everyone around her, her fellow singing actors on the stage and her listeners, raised them to a higher spiritual level for at least the moments of the musics' passage. I don't think very many singers reach that spiritual level of activity, because very few human beings do.

> Judy Sutcliffe, Santa Barbara From a letter, January 17, 1988



### Schedule Set For Lehmann Centennial Symposium-UC Santa Barbara, May 28-30 1988

### Afternoon Session

2 PM Opening Remarks by Dr. Barbara Uehling (Chancellor, UC Santa Barbara), Dr.

Vernon Cheadle (Chancellor at UC Santa Barbara when Lehmann Archives were established) and Dr. Donald Davidson (University Librarian at UC Santa Barbara

when the Lehmann Archives were established)

2:30 PM Maurice Abravenel: His Recollections of Lotte Lehmann

3:15 PM Beaumont Glass: "Lehmann's Biography in Words, Pictures and Music"

5 PM Opening of Lehmann Art Exhibit, College of Creative Studies Gallery, UC Santa

Barbara (Wine and Cheese Reception)

**Evening Event** 

8 PM Concert featuring Carol Neblett, soprano; Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall, UC Santa

Barbara

Sunday, May 29, 1988:

Morning Session

10 AM Dr. Richard Exner and Dr. Dolores Hsu: "Lehmann and Richard Strauss"

11 AM Dr. Edward Downes: "Lehmann's Opera Career"

-- Lunch Break 12:30-2 PM --

Afternoon Session

2 PM Beaumont Glass: "Lehmann's Concert Career"

3:30 PM Alan Rich: "Lehmann as an Interpreter"

**Evening Event** 

8 PM Multi-Media Presentation/ Lotte Lehmann Hall, UC Santa Barbara: "Lehmann's

Sung and Painted Interpretations of Schubert's Die Winterreise"

Monday, May 30, 1988

Morning Session

10 AM Gary Hickling: "Lehmann's Recordings and Discography"

11 AM "Lehmann as a teacher": Panel Discussion with former students, highlighted by

video and audio tapes of Master Classes with Lotte Lehmann

12:30 PM Closing Remarks

### Lotte Lehmann as a Celebrity

Lotte Lehmann is certainly remembered by many as one of the great singing actresses of the twentieth century. Others may remember her as a writer, painter and teacher. However, it is perhaps less well known that through her artistry, humanity and generosity Mme. Lehmann became one of the best-loved celebrities of her time.

Of course, Mme. Lehmann was greatly admired and acknowledged in the world of art She received many awards for her musical genius, with the following representing only the most prominent ones:

- Given title of "Kammersingerin" by Vienna State Opera (1926)
  "Honorary Lifetime Member" of Vienna State Opera (1928)
  The "Golden Palm" Medal from France (1928)
  Swedish Medal of Letters and Arts (1929)

- First Austrian woman singer to possess the decoration of French Legion of Honor; "chevalier" (1931) and, later, "officier" (c1950)
- First Woman to receive the ring of honor from the Vienna Philharmonic (1933)
- Gold Medal of Honor, First Class, from the Republic of Austria (1934)
- First woman singer to be on the cover of *Time* magazine (18 February 1935)
- Cover of Musical Courier (9 March 1935)
- Cover of *Opera News* (26 December 1938)
- Given a testimonial plaque in 1942 on the 10th anniversary of her Town Hall Recitals
- Certificate of Appreciation from General Omar Bradley for outstanding service to U.S. War Veterans (1945)
- Invited to Vienna as special guest of President Theodor Koerner when Vienna State Opera reopened (November 1955)
- Cover of Music and Musicians (September 1957)
- Woman of the Year, City of Santa Barbara (1958)
- Testimonial from the Music Academy of the West (1958)
- Honor Cross of Art & Science from the 2nd Austrian Republic (1961) - Ring of Honor, from the Soloists of the Vienna State Opera (1962)
- Great Service Cross of the German Republic (1963) Hero's Ring from the City of Vienna (20 June 1964)
- Woman of the Year, Los Angeles Times (1965)
- Lotte Lehmann Day, proclaimed by City of Santa Barbara (27 February 1965)
- Woman of the Year, City of Santa Barbara, 1965
- Honored guest at the occasion of the closing of the "old" Metropolitan Opera facility (1966)
- Lotte Lehmann Archives and Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall, dedicated at the University of California at Santa Barbara (1969)
- The "Lotte Lehmann Promenade" dedicated in Salzburg (July 1970)
- Honorary Doctorates from University of Portland, Mills College, Northwestern University, and University of California at Santa Barbara

Los Angeles Herald Examiner Friday, May 27, 1988 11

#### Music

Opera legend Lotte Lehmann will be remembered at UC Santa Barbara this weekend with performances, seminars and lectures.

# **Treasured** memories of one of opera's greats

By Alan Rich Herald Examiner music critic

f you're lucky enough to be as old as I. Lotte Lehmann must surely figure in your personal memories. If not ... well, there are the records, and the reminiscences of us cackling oldsters.

cackling oldsters.

Lehmann was born 100 years ago this year; the anniversary came in February, but the major local celebration takes place this weekend at UC Santa Barbara. There, in a series of talks, seminars and concerts, we'll pool our recollections.

Mine include one short stage performance, in 1946, as Sieglinde to Lauritz Melchior's Siegmund in an evening of Wagnerian scenes to honor Melchior's 20th anniversary at the Met. Lehmann had retired from opera the year before, but she came back this once, and I remember most of all her clutching, frantic, desper-

back this once, and I remember most of all her clutching, frantic, desperate gestures as she virtually clawed a declaration of love out of that great motionless hulk of a tenor.

I don't have as clear an aural image of that night, but then again there is the Lehmann-Melchior performance of that music, Act 1 of "Die Walkuere," with Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic, recorded 10 years earlier. That performance (still available on Angel's cheapo Seraphim label and bound to be reissued on CD one of these days) ranks as one of the greatest recorded performances of anything.

performances of anything. Santa Barbara had been Leh-mann's American home since 1934; she died there in 1976, active to the end in passing on her own particular spark. She helped found that excel-lent summer program, the Music Academy of the West, one of the best American training programs for

Academy of the west, one of the Sak American training programs for singers.

The list of singers who worked with her in Santa Barbara is impres-sive indeed; Grace Bumbry, Marilyn Horne, Carol Neblett (who will give a concert tomorrow night as part of the Lehmann celebration), Jeannine Altmeyer — these are but a few of the distinguished names.

Some may be surprised to learn that Lehmann was born in Prussia; everything about her musical per-sona seems to come from the other end of the Germanic world, from Vienna most of all. So much for stereotypes: that melting lift you hear on her old recording of bits from "Die Fledermaus," the warmth and wit of her Marschallin in EMI's cut-down "Der Rosenkavalier"

these made up the new accent she acquired when she moved southward

acquired when she moved southward early in her career.

Currently, there aren't many Lehmann recordings in the catalog: the Wagner, a Viennese collection on CBS-Odyssey, another Odyssey disc enshrining the Schumann "Frauenliebe und Leben" and "Dichterliebe" cycles, with Bruno Walter's marvelous collaboration at the piano, which she recorded too late in life. Surely there must be plans afoot to restore

she recorded too late in life. Surely there must be plans afoot to restore the earlier treasures: the Strauss, the operatic collections, the songs she recorded for EMI at the height of her expressive mastery.

There was an earnestness, a pleading in her singing that might be considered old-fashioned by singers today. Certainly she could ham up a choice item, even in a setting as modest as a Lieder recital. But the overacting, she made you believe, grew out of her own passionate clinging to that particular song; it was never the kind of contrived veneer that later singers — Elisabeth Schwarzkopf most of all — felt they needed to put over a song they didn't really believe in.

Lehmann's singing gave off, more

didn't really believe in.

Lehmann's singing gave off, more than anything, the sense of complete belief in what she was doing. She was the most literate of singers, which is what enabled her to master the Marschallin's words and music, that most subtle musico-dramatic romp on the part of both Strauss and his librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal. She sang the role when she was far older than the character the authors had conceived. But if you can get hold of the off-the-air recording from January 1939, distributed by the Metropolitan Opera Guild to substantial donors, you'll hear the wisdom in that performance that has made every Marschallin since Lehmann's time sound shallow.

There are some singers around

There are some singers around There are some singers around who have some, at least, of what Lehmann accomplished in her singing: the ability to create a whole world, a little larger than life but beautifully proportioned, out of something as modest as a Schubert song. Barbara Hendricks is one, and her Schubert Lieder collection on EMI, issued about a year ago, has in it some of Lehmann's visionary manner. manner

Basically, however, Lehmann's kind of intense involvement with whatever she sang has been replaced in public taste by a cooler, less committed kind of singing — some of it, to be sure, very beautiful. The



archetype, I suppose, is the singing of Lehmann's contemporary Elisa-beth Schumann (the Sophie on her EMI "Rosenkavalier" abridgement).

Believe me, I adore Schumann's work, too, and hold her two-LP Schubert album (on EMI) in my inner circle of treasures. Her descendants are Elly Ameling and the upcoming Dawn Upshaw.

But in her own realm of expressiveness, Lehmann ruled unchallenged. There is no mistaking her voice, even at the end of her career: that slight breathiness, that sly humor that always seemed poised on the brink of exquisite melancholy—all that, and that passion that burned the listener with its intensity without ever breaking out of the framework of musical artifice. There will never be another Lehmann.

THERE WILL, HOWEVER, be another "Ring," and another. Even in these days of famine among proper Wagnerian singers, one reads of at least two complete recording projects underway to add to the half-dozen "Rings" currently available.

Yet, the latest entry is in a class by itself. London's "Ring" weighs in at 15 CDs; RCA's runs to 18; Karajan's on Deutsche Grammophon is 19. Are you ready, then, for a complete "Ring" on seven (seven!) compact discs, and a strong, goodsounding performance at that?

The recording, on the Rodolphe label distributed here by Harmonia

Mundi, is the complete broadcast of the 1953 production at Bayreuth, with the noble Clemens Krauss as conductor, and the cast including such luminous names as Hans Hotter (Wotan), Regina Resnik (Sieglinde), Astrid Varnay (Brunnhilde), and Ramon Vinay (Siegmund), all at the gleaming height of their singing

Why only seven discs? The gimmick here is that the recording is monaural, so that each disc can hold twice as much information as on a stereo recording. The set comes packaged with an adaptor that takes about half a minute to attach to your CD player. You play Side One once, and the adaptor feeds the mono signal to both sides of your amplifer. Then you flick the switch and play Then you flick the switch and play that side again, and you get the second half. The complete "Das Rheingold" fits onto one disc. running two hours 28 minutes; the other wersions require three. There's a middle position on the switch, which allows the CD player to function as a normal stereo playback.

It works; there's no bleed-through from one channel to the next, and the sound is brilliant and throughly convincing. Will all future mono reissues be made this way, using only half the normal space? Will future CD players come with that simple mono-stereo switch built in?

Don't count on it. Dominated as these days are by the masters of media hype, those suggestions are much too sensible.



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Daniel C. Jacobson, Editor

No. 8

June, 1988

#### Hundreds Come to UC Santa Barbara to Celebrate the Lehmann Centennial

During Memorial Day weekend 1988, Mme. Lotte Lehmann was honored and remembered in the concert hall that bears her name at the University of California at Santa Barbara. This three-day centennial symposium, sponsored by the Library and Lehmann Archives at UCSB, featured presentations by several noted scholars in areas relating to the life and career of Lotte Lehmann.

The symposium began in the early afternoon on Saturday, May 28. Dr. Joseph Boissé, University Librarian at UC Santa Barbara, provided introductory comments as Master of Ceremonies. Then Dr. Barbara S. Uehling, UCSB Chancellor, opened the festivities by officially welcoming the audience and participants on behalf of the campus. The next two speakers, UCSB Chancellor Emeritus Dr. Vernon I. Cheadle and University Librarian Emeritus Dr. Donald Davidson, offered their personal reflections on Mme. Lehmann and described how the Lehmann Archives came to UCSB. Maestro Maurice Abravanel gave a touching and informative account of his close association with Lehmann, sharing his knowledge of her as a person and as an artist. Next, the recollections of two of Mme. Lehmann's dearest friends, Dr. Frances Holden and Gwendolyn Koldofsky, were shown through a videotaped interview, moderated by Dr. Dolores M. Hsu, Chair of the UCSB Department of Music. The Saturday afternoon session ended with Beaumont Glass' authoritative paper on the life of Mme. Lehmann, highlighted with music and projections of rare photographs.

At 5 PM on Saturday, a wine-and-cheese reception marked the official opening of the Lehmann Centennial Art Exhibit at the Gallery of the UCSB College of Creative Studies. Over sixty of Lehmann's artworks were displayed, including tapestries, painted representations of song-cycles, portraits, porcelain plaques, and glass mosaics. The exhibit was designed by Tim Schiffer, the Gallery Director. Other exhibits of Lehmann's paintings and memorabilia were on display in the UC Santa Barbara Library and in Cheadle Hall, the administration building at UCSB.

On Saturday evening at 8PM soprano Carol Neblett, a former student of Mme. Lehmann, presented a concert in her teacher's honor. Her accompanist was Levering Rothfuss, who studied with Gwendolyn Koldofsky at the University of Southern California. The three hundred people who attended the concert at Lehmann Hall were treated to a rich assortment of songs by Schubert, Brahms, Debussy and Strauss. The highlight of the evening was Ms. Neblett's encore rendition of Schubert's *An die Musik*.

On Sunday, May 29, Mme. Lehmann's musical accomplishments were discussed by five leading experts in the fields of music and literature. In the first session Dr. Dolores M. Hsu of the UCSB Department of Music and Dr. Richard Exner of the UCSB Department of

Germanic Studies lectured on the collaboration of Lehmann with Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Dr. Exner's paper, entitled "Some Thoughts on the Magic of Courage and Metamorphosis," was so well-received that it elicited dozens of requests for transcript copies, which are now available through the UC Santa Barbara Library.

The Sunday morning session ended with a fascinating lecture by the esteemed opera authority, Dr. Edward Downes. He had been scheduled to speak on Mme. Lehmann's opera career, but this aspect had been covered so well in Beaumont Glass' biographical lecture on Lehmann that Dr. Downes decided to avoid duplication by delivering a delightful extemporaneous talk about his own recollections of Lotte Lehmann. The Sunday afternoon session featured two lectures: the first, another outstanding audio/visual lecture by Beaumont Glass--this one on Lehmann's career as a concert recitalist; and the second, a comprehensive discussion of Lehmann's interpretative gifts by the eminent music critic, Alan Rich.

Sunday evening marked the unveiling of a special multi-media presentation of Mme. Lehmann's sung, spoken, painted and written interpretations of Franz Schubert's *Die Winterreise*. The visual presentation was designed by Dr. Richard Oglesby and Willis Flachsenhar of the Instructional Development Division at UC Santa Barbara and Dr. Daniel Jacobson, Planning Coordinator of the Lehmann Centennial. The production required over 400 slides based on two different sets of twenty-four paintings completed by Lehmann in the 1940s. The soundtrack was a compilation of Lehmann's RCA and Columbia recordings, transferred for this project by William Moran, Honorary Curator of the Stanford University Archive of Recorded Sound.

The final day of the Centennial Symposium began with Gary Hickling's detailed survey of Lehmann's recordings. Mr. Hickling spent several years compiling, cross-checking and updating his recently-completed Lehmann discography, which is included in Beaumont Glass' new biography on Lotte Lehmann: "Lotte Lehmann--A Life in Opera and Song." Next, two videotaped excerpts from Lehmann's 1961 masterclasses at the Music Academy of the West were shown. The first excerpt was a scene from Beethoven's *Fidelio*, and the second excerpt was an segment from Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* during which Mme. Lehmann demonstrates her rendition of the Marschallin's monologue. The final segment of the symposium was an animated panel discussion about "Lehmann as a teacher," featuring seven of Mme. Lehmann's former students: Patricia Jennings Armstrong, Kay Duke Ingalls, Evangeline Noël Glass, Martha Longmire, Kay Griffel Sellheim, Joy Kim Slote, and Luba Tcheresky. The panel was moderated by Carl Zytowski of the UCSB Department of Music, who was an assistant to Mme. Lehmann at the Music Academy of the West and who is a leading authority on opera and song.

After a brief commentary by Dr. Jacobson, the three-day tribute to Lotte Lehmann was concluded. The symposium achieved its goals, for those who attended and participated in it left with a greater appreciation for Lehmann's artistry and a deeper understanding of her as a person. Through such knowledge Mme. Lehmann's legacy will continue to thrive for generations to come.

#### **Announcements**

- This is the last issue of the *Lotte Lehmann Centennial Newsletter*. Those of you who wish to be informed of matters relating to Mme. Lehmann should write to:

Lotte Lehmann League c/o Gary Hickling 161 B. Kalaheo Avenue Kailua, HI 96734 - After July 1, 1988 all correspondence relating to the Lotte Lehmann Centennial or the Lehmann Archives should be sent to:

Dr. Joseph Boissé Lotte Lehmann Archives University Library University of California Santa Barbara, CA 93106 (805) 961-3256

- In October or November 1988, RCA plans to release a new Lotte Lehmann compact disc in honor of her centennial. The CD will be approximately 70 minutes in length, and it will include some recordings that have never been released, and other recordings that never appeared in LP format.

#### Lehmann Centennial Items Available for Purchase

The Lehmann Centennial has been commemorated by several special items:

Lotte Lehmann Centennial Record Set: A boxed, 3-record set of newly-discovered recordings from a rare set of radio broadcast discs made for Columbia Records in 1941. This set features 44 songs by Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, R.Strauss, Wagner, Wolf, as well as several Christmas favorites. Each song is introduced by Mme. Lehmann's own spoken commentary. A 27-page book with program notes, texts and translations is included.

Ordering information:
Send a check or money order for \$23.95 (includes shipping and handling)

Payable to: **Lotte Lehmann Centennial Album** c/o Dr. Joseph Boissé
Library, University of California
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

The New Lotte Lehmann Biography:

Lotte Lehmann--A Life in Opera and Song by Beaumont Glass.

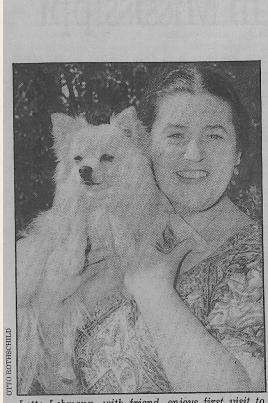
A new, comprehensive, and authorized biography of Mme. Lehmann. Includes many rare photographs, a complete discography, and translations of many personal letters.

Ordering information:

Write or call the publisher, or contact your local bookseller.

Publisher:
Capra Press
629 State Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 966-4590

### Martin Bernheimer reviews the UCSB Lehmann Centennial for the Los Angeles *Times* on this and the following three pages.



Lotte Lehmann, with friend, enjoys first visit to Santa Barbara during tour in February, 1938.



Lehmann in her signature role, the wise and charming Marschallin of Richard Strauss' "Rosenkavalier," ca. 1935.



Lehmann confers with erstwhile student, Marilyn Horne, at Times Woman of the Year reception, 1964.

## Centennial Celebration for a Singing Actress

By MARTIN BERNHEIMER

ANTA BARBARA—Contrary to popular myth, she wasn't the only great Germanic soprano of her time.

The stately Kirsten Flagstad had a much

bigger voice and a better technique. Frida Leider commanded the heroic challenges and Brunnhilde-that eluded her. Maria Jeritza was more glamorous, more temperamental. Elisabeth Rethberg mastered the lofty Verdi heroines that she

Still, Lotte Lehmann was unique. Tenors loved her. "Che bella magnifica voce!" exclaimed Enrico Caruso, who wanted to sing Don José to her Micaela. Leo Slezak said "she possessed our secret weapon—the only one we have: heart." Lauritz Melchior simply called her "My Sieglinde."

Conductors loved her. Otto Klemperer, Franz Schalk, Bruno Walter, Richard Strauss and Hans Knappertsbusch sang her praises lustily, and they represented just a small part of a large chorus. Arturo Toscanini found her so appealing, off stage as well as on, that he permitted her the indulgence of a downward transposition in Fidelio's "Abscheulicher.

Composers loved her. Citing her "rare fusion of a soulful voice with excellent articulation of the text with genial force of expression and a lovely stage appearance, Richard Strauss insisted that she sing the premieres of his revised "Ariadne auf Nax-os," his "Frau ohne Schatten" and "Intermezzo." He was willing, moreover, to temporarily sanction any liberties she would take with the vocal line

LOS ANGELES TIMES/CALENDAR

Puccini felt that she was the first soprano who really could validate his "Suor Angelica." That she did so in the wrong language was irrelevant.

Audiences adored her, from her debut as a bit player in Hamburg in 1910 to her years as a reigning diva in Vienna to her career as a song specialist throughout America to her extended farewells in Southern California.

A final performance of her signature role, the Marschallin in "Der Rosenkavalier," took place with the San Francisco Opera in Los Angeles on Nov. 1, 1946. (The Times review, dated Nov. 2, doesn't even mention the milestone.) Her valedictory recital followed five years later in Pasadena. The masses continued to adore her in old age as she performed-the verb is emphatically accurate—in public master classes.

Even critics adored her, most of the time. A Beckmesser or two may have lamented her tendency to approximate pitches or distort rhythms as she sacrificed precision to passion. Others worried about her top tones in later years, or her eagerness to usurp lieder that tradition had assigned exclusively to male voices. A few iconoclasts groused that she conveyed housewifely decency even when she wanted to be very complex and very grand.

But no one doubted her profound poetic instincts or took her interpretive rapture for granted. No one questioned the radiance of her tone or the generosity of her spirit.

Lehmann was capable of disarmingly

candid self-appraisal. Possibly protesting too much, she liked to admit that her technique was somewhat erratic, especially in matters of breath control. Although she enjoyed a splendid success at the Vienna premiere of Puccini's "Turandot" in 1926, she said she took greater pleasure in the performance of Maria Nemeth, her alternate in the strenuous

Still, she knew her strengths. "I am a person," she declared, "who cannot do anything without being totally, compulsively devoted to the effort.'

The effort eventually embraced lecturing, writing, painting and stage directing as well as singing. After Lehmann died at her beloved home in Santa Barbara on Aug. 26, 1976, aficionados everywhere continued to worship her. Fanatics with long and/or rose-colored memories dismissed such soprano whippersnappers as Reining, Bampton, Varnay, Schwarzkopf, Della Casa, Grümmer, Steber, Crespin, Söderström, Rysanek, Jurinac and Altmeyer. "Very nice," they invariably clucked, "but you didn't see

The world at large, however, proved somewhat fickle. Much of the huge but in many ways frustrating Lehmann discogralapsed into library limbo. A new, more inhibited generation of performers and audiences tended to find her art oddly effusive and dangerously old-fashioned. The ranks of the devout began to thin.

Lehmann would have been 100 on Feb. 27, 1988. It was, clearly, time for revival and reappraisal. It was time for a centennial

celebration. UC Santa Barbara, which houses the exhaustive Lehmann archives, provided just that last weekend.

For three busy, potentially hypnotic days, the cold little concert hall-it happens to be called Lotte Lehmann Hall-in this mirage of a campus by the sea was warmed with lectures, concerts, multimedia presentations, panel discussions, fanciful séances and fancy tributés. An "official" biography was introduced. Paintings were exhibited. Rare re-cordings were played. Hyperbole flowed in sincere abundance

Lehmann's erstwhile students came to the shrine. Her friends, colleagues and associates came. Her disciples came. Who says nostalgia isn't what it used to be?

Ironically, the people who didn't come turned out to be the ones who could have benefited most from the illustrious examples and poignant testimonials. The crowds, though vastly enthusiastic, were disappointingly small and distinctly mature. Despite the scholarly ambiance, one saw few young

After the inaugural ceremonies on Friday. Maurice Abravanel took the podium. Now 85 he offered vivid recollections of his collaborations with Lehmann, as conductor and administrator at the Music Academy of the West. He spoke with extraordinary warmth of her impetuosity and her flexibility. He invoked the poetic excitement of her creations and confirmed the prosaic insignificance of her miscalculations

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# Lehmann ottora

Continued from 5th Page

He was the first of many speakers to stress the singer's concern for the word and its telling inflection. "With Lehmann," he said, "expression was everything."

Variations on this reverential theme were immediately provided, via videotape, by Dolores M. Hsu, UCSB music department chairman; Gwendolyn Koldofsky, Lehmann's longtime accompanist, and Frances Holden, Lehmann's muse, companion, rock of Gibraltar and personal Brangane.

Beaumont Glass, erstwhile assistant to Lehmann at the Academy and now head of the opera department at the University of Iowa, offered a thoughtful preview of his new biography of the soprano (Capra Press, Santa Barbara: \$18.95).

Paradox clouded the picture that night when Carol Neblett, who for a short time had coached repertory with Lehmann, offered a recital in her mentor's honor. Contrary to the exalted Lehmann tradition, Neblett sang over-familiar music of Schubert, Brahms, Debussy and Strauss with much luminous tone and little interpretive insight. The words counted for little, and the subtleties behind the words counted for less.

Ironically, Neblett's duochromatic delivery and chronically glamorous image suggested nothing so much as a latter-day incarnation of Lehmann's arch-rival, Maria Jeritza.

The symposium reached its high point Sunday morning with a brilliant paper presented by Richard Exner of the Santa Barbara faculty. This imposing literary authority chose a subject—the strange but mutually enriching relationship between Richard Strauss and his librettist Hugo von Hofmanns-thal—that bore only a tangential relationship to Lehmann. However, Exner explored that subject, and its capricious arguments regarding

the relative impact of word and music, with probing wit and contextual wisdom.

Edward Downes completed this most stimulating session with personal recollections of the prima donna in Europe. He mentioned that Lehmann claimed to admire Flagstad's singing but found her Scandinavian colleague cold. He also mentioned, conversely, that the essentially prim and placid Flagstad admired Lehmann's singing but found that she enacted Sieglinde "as if doing a striptease."

To belie the notion that Lehmann always had difficulties with her top voice, the visiting musicologist played an early recording of Butterfly's entrance aria. Lehmann rode the crest of the climax to an effortless, gleaming high D-flat. It elicited a collective gasp.

Betraying his own special fondness for Lehmann, Downes admitted that the heart-bedecked tie around his neck had been an impulsive mid-interview gift from the prima donna some 50 years ago. It elicited wild applause.

The afternoon session found Beaumont Glass returning to recount Lehmann's concert career. At the end, he played the famous recording of "An die Musik" as sung by the soprano at her final New York recital. Choked with emotion, she was unable to utter the last grateful apostrophe to her art: "Ich danke dir." Even now, 37 years after the event, this remains a wrenching document of renunciation.

Redundancy began to set in as



Lehmann celebrates her 80th birthday in 1968 with heldentenor Lauritz Melchior, left, and conductor Maurice Abravanel.



Beaumont Glass, left, meets Maurice Abravanel at opening of exhibition of Lehmann's paintings in Santa Barbara, May 1988.

exhibition of Lenmann's paintings in Santa Barbara, May 1988.

Redundancy began to set in as Alan Rich, music critic of the Herald Examiner, traced the evolution of Lehmann's art through successive recordings of the same material. One had to admire his sentimental enthusiasm even if one could disagree with his premise—"She became a more conscious singer with age."

The concert Sunday night, interesting if not entirely successful, was a ghostly experiment devoted to the monumental "Winterreise." Some 400 slides allowed us to examine Lehmann's pretty, naive illustrations-in toto and in nervously changing detail—on a big screen. Meanwhile, Lehmann's isolated recordings of the songs that comprise Schubert's tragic cycle were pieced together for a less than cumulative sound track. Under these contrived circumstances, the comic-bookish, essentially amateurish paintings somehow managed to overwhelm the pathos of the music and obscure the ardent professionalism of the singing.

On Monday, Gary Hickling, a

bassist of the Honolulu Symphony, offered an illuminating, obsessive glimpse into the Lehmann discography. Then the houselights went down and a shadowy, elderly Lehmann appeared in film clips from her famous master classes. She impersonated a melodramatic Ortrud for an innocent student mezzo. With minimal prodding, she enacted the Marschallin's entire monologue while croaking the vocal line an octave or two below the normal terrain.

She exuded eloquence and savoir-faire. Music and the theater obviously were in her blood. The sound of applause, she often admitted, was irresistible to her. The documents are important.

Still, one must question their educational value. Lehmann reportedly exhorted her students not to copy her. In her classes, however, she seemed to prefer demonstrating to teaching.

Here, she would say, you smile. Here, you take three steps, raise an arm and look upward. . . .

It looked terrific when she did it. It looked silly when those nice, ultra-American kids imitated her.

The symposium closed with seven of Lehmann's erstwhile students joining in an awe-inspired if not awe-inspiring panel discussion. Significantly, only one of the participants, the soprano Kay Griffel, had gone on from the Lehmann classroom to a reasonably substantial career.

Actually, many singers attended Lehmann's classes. But none emerged as an artist who could even approach Lehmann's stature. If Lehmann knew her own secrets, she did not know how to pass them on.

The evidence suggests that she was not a great teacher. Nor, for that matter, does she seem to have been a great writer or a great painter. It doesn't matter.

She was a great singing actress. That is enough.

We can see it clearly now. □

Onera News 3/12/88

### THE LEHMARN MYSTIQUE

### Recalling an unforgettable soprano on the centenary of her birth: a previously unpublished tribute

by John Coveney

ometimes I fancy myself belonging to an exclusive New York club, The 3,500 Plus. It is one that cannot admit additional members, because "3,500" refers to those who

had seats for Lotte Lehmann's debut at the old Metropolitan Opera House on January 11, 1934, and "Plus" refers to those of us in standing room. I had just turned eighteen, and the event remains as vivid now as it was then, not because I have a good memory but because I can never forget it.

That night I realized opera could be a stunning experience, that singing could rank with the noblest of human achievements. The magnificent violence of the Walküre prelude had spent itself, and the storm-driven Siegmund (Lauritz Melchior) staggered into Hunding's hut, uttered his cry of exhaustion and collapsed. In the flickering firelight a graceful figure emerged from the shadows. Tentativeness, curiosity and apprehension were in her movements even before she sang Sieglinde's questioning first lines. Then for the first time I heard the perfect enunciation charged with quiet emotion, the

concern with text and meaning, that were hallmarks of a Lehmann performance, approached by a few and exceeded by none. "Ein fremder Mann? Ihn muss ich fragen. Wer kam in's Haus und liegt dort am Herd?" Gentle phrases, sung at pp but so arresting that my attention was instantly riveted. As Richard Capell was later to write in *Grove's Dictionary*, "Along with her rich vocal gift went a rare theatric power of establishing herself from the first phrase of a part as ardently engaged and quiveringly sentient."

Long before the first act was over, as she conversed with the stranger in her household in tones of fear, growing awareness and eventual ecstasy, I experienced a joy that I relive each time I remember that night. Every nuance of Sieglinde's character was implicit in her beautiful voice,

and explicit in her appearance and action. Her musical and dramatic instincts were unerring.

We were treated to two more Lehmann roles that season, Elisabeth and Eva, and



the following year she added Elsa, Tosca and the Marschallin to her Met repertory. Der Rosenkavalier had been absent for some years. Thanks to Lehmann's fame abroad as the Marschallin, plus interest created by her Vienna recording of extensive scenes, which had reached America just a year before, it was decided to revive the work at a Milk Fund benefit matinee on Friday, January 4, 1935. By that time I had determined to hear every Lehmann performance possible, and this was the one that earned her the cover of Time magazine, the second musician to be so honored. It was also the one of which Vincent Sheean would later write that it was "spun from within like the spider's web, and the beholder had nothing left to do but to marvel and to weep." He ranked Lehmann's Marschallin with Chaliapin's Boris and Mary Garden's Mélisande.

Our sadness following her official Met farewell on February 23, 1945, was mitigated by her continuing career as the pre-

eminent recitalist of her day. She had sung in New York two years prior to her Met debut, at Town Hall in 1932, where she was surprised and delighted to see Geraldine Farrar in the audience. About American audiences she wrote in her autobiography, "I vow obstinately to myself that I will conquer them. that I will entrap them in a net of lieder I will cast over them.' She thought nothing of performing Winterreise, Die Schöne Müllerin and other cycles usually associated with male singers, and three all-Hugo Wolf recitals on successive Sundays were a matter of course for her.

She would never leave us altogether; indeed we were inclined to think of her as immortal. Joseph Wechsberg would paraphrase our feelings when he wrote, "She started in Hamburg and ended on Olympus." But the time inexorably did come, on Friday evening, February 16, 1951. It was the last of her fifty-five recitals in

New York alone over nineteen years, though it was not advertised as such. She had just finished the first half and was acknowledging the applause from a full house. Unexpectedly she made a gesture for silence and to everyone's consternation announced it was her farewell. Some of us murmured, "No! No!," some shouted "Never!" and some wept. Smiling, she said she had hoped we would protest but her decision was irrevocable. She spoke of her joys and agonies during forty-one years of public performing, thanked specific friends and colleagues and then bid good-bye in a remarkable valedictory that concluded:

You have always given me more than I gave you. I explain what I mean. When I came home after a recital, I had always continued on page 46

Lehmann, continued from page 14

the feeling of deep dissatisfaction. I know so much better what perfection means, perfection which always was a goal for me and never attained. There are so many limitations, vocal limitations, limitations in my technique, in my expressive power. So, I have sometimes failed you. But you as a public have been perfect. You were kind and understanding. You gave me enthusiasm, you gave me everything, and you gave me your heart. So when I say good-bye to you I say good-bye not to a public but I say good-bye as though to a very beloved person, and I will cherish the memory as long as I live. You have given me much inspiration, you were the wings on which I soared, and if sometimes it was possible for me to take you with me on my flight into beauty and into a better world, then perhaps I have achieved a fraction of what I wanted to give you.

Afterward in a crowded greenroom Lehmann told fans and friends she had decided to retire while people might still say "Why do you retire?" instead of "Why don't you retire?"

uch are the sometimes pleasant turns of fate that almost a decade later I found myself professionally involved with Lotte Lehmann. She was living in Santa Barbara, and I was working in Los Angeles for Angel Records. It was November 1959, and the San Francisco Opera was bringing Die Frau ohne Schatten to Los Angeles, just forty years after the world premiere in Vienna. Lehmann had been invited as guest of honor. During the intermission I finally stood in the presence of the person who had meant so much to me for twenty-five years. After the introductions I stammered, "Mme. Lehmann, I hope you'll be pleased to know we will reissue your Rosenkavalier in February.'

I hoped there wouldn't be a furtive tear of gratitude, an emotional embarrassment to everyone. Indeed there was not. Instead she smiled and said, "That's very nice, but couldn't you get it on the market before Christmas?" I was delighted. Here was a person—as I was to learn, an intensely human one, warm, loving, witty and at times

acerbic. During the cautious professional exchange of letters that ensued over the final details of the reissue, an incipient friendship developed, and soon the eighty miles between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara shrank until they seemed like adjacent cities.

Her warmth and good humor were matched by inexhaustible energy. During her performing career, beginning as early as 1942, she had at all times at least one pupil or protégé. Professional singers sought her guidance, Eleanor Steber and Jeanette-MacDonald being among the very first. The former prepared Frauenliebe und Leben with her help, and the latter was coached for her Canadian appearances as Marguerite and Juliette. After 1951, with more time at her disposal, these pursuits increased. The best-known of her later protégés was Grace Bumbry.

Master classes followed in America, Austria and England, along with three books (in addition to five published during her performing career), two TV series here and in England, several one-woman shows of her paintings, tapestry exhibitions, a worldwide correspondence and annual junkets to Europe, always including her beloved Vienna. Beyond all this stands probably her proudest achievement, the role she played in building the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. She had spent Christmas in that city with her husband during her first American tour and in 1940, two years after his death, returned to make it her home for the last thirty-six years of her life.

Leo Slezak said of her, "She had the secret, the only secret we have—heart. The sound that comes from the heart goes straight to the listener's heart. Perhaps he does not even know what it is that warms the cockles of his heart, what gives him so much satisfaction, what makes him so happy." That possibly comes closest to defining the Lehmann mystique, and it is another way of saying she engendered a love that took a powerful hold on her audience.

MR. COVENEY was a frequent panelist on Texaco's Opera Quiz and director of artist relations for Angel–EMI Records until his death in 1979.

some human problem, and one has to get to the bottom of that first. That's how one learns to know oneself better, to inquire

Meier, continued from page 28

learns to know oneself better, to inquire about things. Then one can live these things out somewhere. Naturally, each role shows only parts of a given human problem, but thank goodness, they are always different parts. That makes it so alive."

Predictably, Meier finds the most satisfaction in rich characters, such as Kundry. "You will never find out her true being. You can see Kundry in 100 guises, and that won't be enough. I have no favorite role, but I adore Santuzza, Eboli, the Walküre Fricka, all full of temperament and many colors. That's the primary thing-that a character have different human sides and somewhere an insoluble problem." How do these characters and their problems come to life? "I have a picture of the character, but not in concrete terms. You don't need great 'Herz-Schmerz' gestures. That's absolutely laughable. When you know what you're singing, it already shows in your face. Your posture, your whole body tension carries to the audience, whether it's five meters or twenty or thirty.

Meier's own acting has evolved under the tutelage of well-known directors, without formal instruction. "You can teach acting only to a certain extent. If 'expression' is buried in the body somewhere, hidden by shyness, then a good director can pull it out. But it must be there, plus something we call 'talent.'"

Despite her own store of talent and her ongoing success, Meier insists upon humility before the art itself. "To exploit the privilege of being a singer to promote oneself, I find that horrible. To serve the music with all the means one has, that is truly fun. As long as one tries to trace the truth that lies in the music-how far one succeeds is another question—and keeps the eyes open, then one doesn't become blinded by a certain degree of success. It's exciting for me to sing in big houses, but that's not a goal. My goal is to work at the highest level, with a super orchestra, marvelous colleagues, a wonderful conductor. And that could be in the provinces." Like everything else, it is all a question of quality.

#### Ein Abend für Lotte Lehmann

anläßlich der 100. Wiederkehr des Geburtstages der Künstlerin am 27. Februar 1988

Zusammenstellung und verbindende Worte: Gerhard Hnatek

Johann Sebastian Bach: Bist du bei mir

Lotte Lehmann war mit ihrer künstlerischen Ausdruckskraft und der Einzigartigkeit ihrer Stimme eine der bedeutendsten Sängerinnen in unserem Jahrhundert. Ein Kritiker schrieb einmal über sie: Thre Stimme jauchzte lerchenhaft auf, um nachtigallensüß zu verschweben. Sie besaß die so seltene Begabung, dem Wort denselben Stellenwert zu verleihen wie der Musik. Wenn sie vom Frühling sang, dann glaubte man ihr förmlich den frischen Hauch des Frühlings, wenn sie die Rose besang, den Duft der Rose zu spüren. Darüber aber stand der Glanz ihrer einzigartigen Persönlichkeit, der in seiner Unnachahmlichkeit fast jeden berührte, der diese außergewöhnliche Künstlerin noch persönlich erleben durfte.

Eugen d' Albert: Zur Drossel sprach der Fink op. 9/4

Lotte Lehmann wurde am 27. Februar 1888 in Perleberg, einer Kleinstadt in der Mark Brandenburg in einer sangesfreudigen Beamtenfamilie geboren. Im Jahre 1902 zogen die Lehmanns nach Berlin,
in der Absicht, es sich zu verbessern. Dort besuchte Lotte eine
Höhere Mädchenschule, denn auf Wunsch des Vaters sollte sie Lehrerin werden. Da Lotte aber immer schon gern sang, wurde man auf
ihre auffallend schöne Stimme aufmerksam und ihre erste Gesangspädagogin war Fräulein Helene Jordan an der königlichen Hochschule für Musik. Doch bis zum Ende ihres Studiums mußte die angehende Sängerin noch so manche Hürde überwinden. Durch eine Erkrankung ihrer Lehrerin wandte sie sich hilfesuchend an die damals sehr berühmte Stimmpädagogin Etelka Gerstner. Die nahm Lotte
sogleich als Schülerin ihrer Privatschule auf und übergab ihre
weitere Ausbildung an Fräulein Eva Reinhold.

Doch die angehende Sängerin fühlte sich durch die Lehrmethoden ihrer neuen Lehrerin eingeengt und unverstanden. Nach einigen Monaten kam es zum verzweifelten Bruch zwischen ihr und Fräulein Reinhold, die meinte, Lotte Lehmann hätte weder Talent noch

Stimme. Verzweiflung - Anklagen - Selbstbeschuldigungen - Zusammenbruch. Doch ihr Entschluß, doch noch eine anerkannte Künstlerin zu werden, war nun schon zu tief in ihrem Herzen verankert gewesen.

W. A. Mozart: Arie der Gräfin aus "Die Hochzeit des Figaro"

So schrieb sie an Mathilde Mallinger, die das Evchen in der Meistersinger-Uraufführung gesungen hatte, und durfte ihr alsbald vorsingen. Frau Mallinger verstand es, auf Lotte in der rechten Art und Weise einzugehen. Erst sie erschloß ihre Stimme. Dort studierte die junge Sängerin etwa ein volles Jahr, und ihre Lehrerin sah, daß sie schon so gute Fortschritte machte, um ins Engagement zu gehen.

Nach etlichen Probesingen bei verschiedenen Agenturen, wobei sich Lotte überdies noch sehr schüchtern und ungeschickt benahm, gelang ihr dann doch der Sprung auf die Bretter, die die Welt bedeuten. Ihr erstes Engagement erhielt die blutjunge Anfängerin im Jahre 1910 an das Hamburger Stadttheater, wo sie es anfangs nicht gerade leicht hatte.

Nach vielen kleinen Nebenrollen gelang ihr dann 1914 der Durchbruch, und zwar im jugendlich-dramatischen Fach als Elsa in Wagners Lohengrin. Diese Rolle begründete den anhaltenden Erfolg und stetigen Aufstieg Lotte Lehmanns. (Sie hören nun die allererste Aufnahme Lotte Lehmanns aus dem Jahre 1914.)

Richard Wagner: Erzählung der Elsa aus "Lohengrin"

Weitere Erfolge blieben nicht aus, und mit der Zeit stärkte sich auch ihr Selbstvertrauen. Das aber ganz besonders, als sie bei einem Gastspiel Enrico Carusos am selben Abend als Euridike in Glucks Orpheus und Euridike auf der Bühne stand und danach die anerkennenden Worte des großen Sängers empfing.

Als sie der Direktor der Wiener Hofoper, Hans Gregor in einer Carmenvorstellung als Michaela hörte, erhielt sie sofort einen Vertrag nach Wien, wo sie von 1916 bis 1937 engagiert war und auch ihren Wohnsitz hatte. Wien und die Hofoper - Das war für die junge Sängerin der Traum aller Träume. Doch es war Krieg, und sie kam in eine schwere Zeit hinein.

Hermann Leopoldi: Wien, sterbende Märchenstadt

Anfangs kam sie natürlich als Brandenburgerin bei ihren neuen Kol-

legen nicht sonderlich an, doch sie lernte rasch. Mit der Zeit wurde sie zum Ingegriff der wienerischsten Sängerin und sie erhielt vom Wiener Publikum das höchste Adelsprädikat, das man in Wien erreichen kann: Sie wurde "Die Lehmann".

Im Jahre 1916 also begann ihre über 20 Jahre andauernde Mitgliedschaft zum Ensemble der Wiener Staatsoper. Hier erhielt sie auch sogleich die Aufgabe zugeteilt, den Komponisten in der Uraufführung der Zweitfassung von "Ariadne auf Naxos" zu singen. Übrigens verkörperte sie in dieser Oper später auch die Titelrolle. Es folgten weitere Strauss-Partien, wie die Färberin in der "Frau ohne Schatten" sowie die Christine in "Intermezzo" und die Arabella in gleichnamiger Oper. Doch eine Partie Richard Straussschen Schaffens wird für immer mit dem Namen Lotte Lehmanns verbunden bleiben: Die der Feldmarschallin, Fürstin Werdenberg im Rosenkavallier. Sie spielte nicht, sie war die Marschallin.

Richard Strauss: Monolog der Marschallin aus "Der Rosenkavallier"

In ihrem autobiographischen Buch "Anfang und Aufstieg" schrieb sie: "Der beste Lehrmeister ist das Leben. Seine Höhen und Tiefen muß man durchlebt haben, um ein großer Künstler zu werden, ein Darsteller von Fleisch und Blut. Die Routine, die von Laien oft überschätzt wird, ist ja nur das äußere Kleid. Aber den Herzschlag einer Partie kann nur der fühlen, dessen Herz selbst schneller geschlagen hat in Schmerz und Freude, in Sünde und Sühne. Nur aus Lebendigem wird Lebendes geboren."

Das war auch bei den großen Frauengestalten Puccinis der Fall, die sie fast alle verkörperte und der alternde Maestro war voll des Lobes bezüglich Lotte Lehmanns Gestaltungskraft.

Giacomo Puccini: Arie der Mimi aus "La Boheme"

Am 27.März 1927, anläßlich der Beethoven-Zentenarseier sang diese überragende Künstlerin unter der Leitung Franz Schalks erstmals die Leonore in Fidelio. Tieser, ergreisender, herzlicher, inniger und mitreißender ist diese Figur wahrscheinlich nicht wieder dargestellt worden.

Ludwig van Beethoven: Arie der Leonore aus "Fidelio"

Thre hauptsächlichsten Partner an der Wiener Oper waren Alfred
Piccaver, Leo Slezak und später auch der junge Jan Kiepura.

- 4 -

Piccaver schrieb einmal in einem Brief:

zierlichen Blümchen Rührmichnichtan, die überstolzen Palmwedlerinnen, auch hochdramatische Absolutistinnen genannt, die rampenlichtsüchtigen Sopran-Tigerinnen, die mit echtem Schmuck an Händen und Füßen klingeln und ihre Zungen herausstrecken, als wollten sie das Publikum beschlecken; aber es gibt nur eine Sängerin, die gerader heraus ist als gerad, die nicht um Glanz und Glorie buhlt und nach einem schlohweißen Lipizzaner verlangt, um in einer Puccini-Oper zu reiten... diese Ausnahme, wie ich sagen möchte, ist Lotte. Ihr Familienname spielt in Wien keine Rolle, obwohl man ihn weiß. Aber: wer Lotte sagt, der sagt alles... und das braucht nicht erst verdolmetscht zu werden."

Diese Wahrhaftigkeit Lotte Lehmanns erhielt durch ihre Gestaltung von Wagner-Partien unerreichbare Glanzpunkte. Elsa in Lohengrin, Elisabeth in Tannhäuser, Eva in den Meistersingern und vor allem ihre Sieglinde in der Walküre. Mit dieser Rolle gab sie auch am 11. Jänner 1934 ihr Debüt an der Metropolitain Opera, New York. Ihre Partner waren dabei unter anderem Lauritz Melchior als Siegmund und Emanuel List als Hunding. Im Juni 1935 wurde in Wien unter der Leitung Bruno Walters der 1. Akt Walküre mit der gleichen Sängerbesetzung für die Schallplatte produziert.

Richard Wagner: Erzählung der Sieglinde aus dem 1. Akt "Die Walküre" In den dreißiger Jahren nahmen die Gastspielreisen Lotte Lehmanns immer mehr zu und mit der Zeit verlagerte sie ihr künstlerisches Wirken auf den Liedgesang.

Robert Schumann: Die Lotosblume op. 25/7

Pause

- 5 -

Richard Strauss: Ständchen op. 17/2

Nun kam das Jahr 1938 - Lotte Lehmann sollte nach Berlin engagiert werden. Bei der Vertragsbesprechung kam es zwischen ihr und Hermann Göring zu einem gewaltigen Krach und Lotte Lehmann kehrte Wien und Deutschland den Rücken. Darüber schrieb sie später:

Lotte Lehmann: "Ich war ja schon viele Jahre in Amerika gewesen, hatte Land und Leute einigermaßen kennengelernt, als ich beschloß, ganz in den Staaten zu bleiben. Das war 1938, als Adolf Hitler in Osterreich einmarschierte. Ich bin ja sozusagen arisch (dieses herrliche Wort!) und hätte aus diesem Grunde nichts zu befürchten gehabt. Aber da war der Krach mit Göring gewesen, dem das Verbot folgte, daß ich in Deutschland nicht mehr singen durfte. So glaubte ich, daß man mich einsperren oder mit mir sonst etwas machen würde, wenn diese Bande Wien eingenommen hätte. Aber selbst wenn ich das nicht befürchtet hätte: ich bin ein sehr freiheitsliebender Mensch, und ich hätte auf alle Fälle Wien verlassen, denn in Unfreiheit und unter Zwang leben, das Grauen vor Augen . . . Nein! Alle Welt wußte, daß ich gegen das Regime war. So bin ich weggegangen und habe mich ganz in Amerika niedergelassen."

Sie wohnte vorerst in der Nähe von New York, wo ihr geliebter Gatte Otto Krause am 11. Jänner 1939 im Alter von 56 Jahren einer tückischen Krankheit erlag.

Robert Schumann: Aus dem Liederzyklus "Frauenliebe und Leben" Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan

Nach mannigfachen Schwierigkeiten übersiedelte Lotte Lehmann nach Santa Barbara, Kalifornien, wo sie bei ihrer Freundin Frances Holden bis zu ihrem Tode im Jahre 1976 lebte.

Lotte Lehmann absolvierte zu dieser Zeit viele Konzerttourneen quer durch die Vereinigten Staaten. Erst infolge ihres Wirkens wurde das amerikanische Konzertpublikum mit "The Lied", wie es im anglo-amerikanischen Sprachraum heißt, erst so richtig bekannt-gemacht. Mit Bruno Walter verband sie eine enge Künstlerfreundschaft. Über diese Beziehung verfaßte Lotte Lehmann auch folgendes Gedicht:

Mit Bruno Walter am Klavier ...

Es trägt sein Spiel, das sich mir tief verwebt, Mich fort auf wunderbaren Schwingen. Ich fühle im Zusammenklingen Hinströmend meine Seele singen, Die nun im Willen seiner Hände lebt und aufwärts schwebt zu lichten Höhen. Vermählt in einer Melodie Geführt und führend - hingerissen
Eines dem andern folgen müssen
In tiefstem Voneinanderwissen:
Gemeimnis ist's der Harmonie.
Und wahres, reines Sichverstehen.

Robert Schumann: Aus dem Liederzyklus "Dichterliebe"
Ich grolle nicht
Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen

Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen Aus alten Märchen winkt es Die alten bösen Lieder

Ubrigens war auch ihre schriftstellerische Ader recht gut ausgeprägt. Unter ihren Werken befinden sich 9 Romane und auch einige
Gedichtbände, darunter auch "Verse in Prosa" aus den frühen
zwanziger Jahren, den sie ihren geliebten Eltern widmete. (Daraus
möchte ich gerne den Beginn vorlesen:)

ach langen Tagen, arm an Freude reich an Sorgen, erklingen Abendglocken, und schöner Friede sinkt herab. Die Liebe, die du reich gesäet, blüht auf in reichem Erntesegen. Beglücke lang uns noch die Sonne, der Mutteraugen liebe Sonne! Weitab das Lied der Abendglocken mahnt uns an dunkle Nacht.

Oft faßt mich eine Angst, Du könntest sterben, noch ehe ich das kleine rebumrankte Haus für dich gebaut, wie ich's ersehne. Da sollst du wohnen in dem Frieden grüner Bäume, in deren Wipfeln einer abendlichen Sonne milder Schimmer golden träumt. Die Sorge ging an dir vorüber — du blickst ihr sinnend nach und weißt nichts mehr von ihr. Mild lächelnd siehst du auf in's Licht — Und deiner Kinder Liebe singt von allen Zweigen . . .

as muß ein Großes sein: die Kraft zu tiefster Einsamkeit. Da oben sternennah zu wandeln, so hoch, daß aller Klang der Erde so wie ein Lied der Wogen wird, das ein urewig sprachenloses Rauschen dem Strand entgegenträgt.

Das muß ein Großes sein: den kühlen Odem schneebedeckter Bergesgipfel zu spüren und zu wissen: das heiße Leben, das dort unten in den Tälern glüht, nie findet es den Weg zu mir in meine Einsamkeit. Wo ist die Kraft, die mich hinaufreißt in die Höhen, nach denen einzig meine Sehnsucht geht? Die Hände, die mich halten, heißen Liebe, Güte.

Das muß ein schmerzlich Großes sein: die Kraft, aus lieben, gütigen Händen sich zu lösen und einzugeh'n in stolze Einsamkeit.

Franz Schubert: Gretchen am Spinnrad Wiegenlied (Schlafe, holder süßer Knabe) Die junge Nonne

Im Jahre 1945 nahm sie mit der Rosenkavalkier-Marschallin Abschied von der Opernbühne. Doch sie legte ihre Hände nicht in den Schoß. Sie unterrichtete an der Academy of the West in Santa Barbara Gesang und hatte nun auch Zeit für ihre anderen mannig-

faltigen Talente. Sie malte, machte kunstgewebliche Arbeiten in den verschiedensten Techniken, schrieb Bücher und erntete auch damit Lob und Anerkennung. Dann kam der 16. Februar 1951. Madame Lehmann, wie sie von den Amerikanern überall genannt wurde, gab in der New Yorker Town-Hall ihr Abschiedskonzert.

Franz Schubert: Aus dem Liederzyklus "Die schöne Müllerin" Danksagung an den Bach Der Neugierige

(Vor dem Abschluß noch einige Stücke aus Schuberts "Winterreise".)

Franz Schubert: Aus dem Liederzyklus "Winterreise" Der Lindenbaum Frühlingstraum Der stürmische Morgen

Täuschung

Mut

Die Künstlerin erhielt zahllose Auszeichnungen und Ehrungen. Sie wurde noch zu ihren Lebzeiten zur Legende und zu einem Maßstab. Einem Maßstab, der heute manchmal schon fast verlorengegangen scheint. Einem Maßstab für Aufrichtigkeit, Einfühlungsvermögen, personliche Ausstrahlung sowie eine natürliche Innigkeit. Alles, was sie tat. tat sie mit ihrem Herzen. Lotte Lehmann schrieb einmal: "Je stärker die Individualität eines Künstlers, um so weniger gilt für ihn der Begriff Konkurrenz", und das traf auf sie selbst in ganz besonderen Maße zu. Die Künstlerin starb am 26. August 1976, 88-jährig, in ihrem Heim in Santa Barbara, und ihre Urne wurde in einem Ehrengrab auf dem Wiener Zentralfriedhof beigesetzt.

Jeder, der sie persönlich, von der Bühne, vom Konzertpodium oder nur durch ihre Schallplatten kennt, wird diese außergewöhnliche Frau. die ihr ganzes Leben der Kunst weihte, niemals vergessen.

Franz Schubert: An die Musik

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#### Ein Abend für Lotte Lehmann

anläßlich der 100. Wiederkehr des Geburtstages der Künstlerin am 27. Februar 1988

Zusammenstellung und verbindende Worte: Gerhard Hnatek

Mitglied der Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Wiener Bezirksmuseen

#### Programm

Johann Sebastian Bach: Bist du bei mir

Eugen d'Albert: Zur Drossel sprach der Fink op.9/4

W. A. Mozart: Arie der Gräfin aus "Die Hochzeit des Figaro"

Richard Wagner: Erzählung der Elsa aus "Lohengrin"

Hermann Leopoldi: Wien, sterbende Märchenstadt

Richard Strauss: Monolog der Marschallin aus "Der Rosenkavallier"

Giacomo Puccini: Arie der Mimi aus "La Boheme"

Ludwig van Beethoven: Arie der Leonore aus "Fidelio"

Richard Wagner: Erzählung der Sieglinde aus dem 1. Akt "Die Walkure"

Robert Schumann: Die Lotosblume op. 25/7

Pause

Richard Strauss: Ständchen op. 17/2

Robert Schumann: Aus dem Liederzyklus "Frauenliebe und Leben"

Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan

Aus dem Liederzyklus "Dichterliebe"

Ich grolle nicht

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Franz Schubert: Gretchen am Spinnrad

Wiegenlied (Schlafe, holder süßer Knabe)

Die junge Nonne

Aus dem Liederzyklus "Die schöne Müllerin"

Danksagung an den Bach

Der Neugierige

Aus dem Liederzyklus "Die Winterreise"

Der Lindenbaum Frühlingstraum

Der stürmische Morgen

Täuschung

Mut

An die Musik



This is the American Judy Sutcliffe's response to the official Vienna Opera Lotte Lehmann Centennial.

## VIENNA CELEBRATES LOTTE LEHMANN CENTENNIAL



Lotte Lehmann's unforgettable voice soared once again to the golden heights of the Vienna State Opera on February 28 during an enthusiastic celebration of her 100th birthday. Her voice was tape-recorded, but the tears of remembrance and the enthusiastic applause of a full house were real.

Lehmann, who died in her Santa Barbara home in 1976, was termed "the greatest artist in the world" by conductor Arturo Toscanini. She last sang at the Vienna Opera in 1938, yet Vienna remembered her a half century later with—in addition to the memorial celebration—four radio programs, a half-hour TV program, a Vienna Opera performance of Der Rosenkavalier dedicated to her on her birthday, February 27, and an exhibition of photographs and memorabilia in the opera's intermission hall.

"I think most Santa Barbarans would have been astonished to see in what reverence the namesake of Lotte Lehmann Hall is held in Vienna," said Judy Sutcliffe, a local artist who attended the festivities in the Austrian capital with Santa Barbara attorney Eric Hvolboll. "Lotte had not sung on that stage for 50 years and yet all these people, young and old, thronged the seats and the boxes to celebrate her centennial."

"It was immensely impressive," added Hvolboll. "We know her in Santa Barbara as the founder of the Music Academy, but the degree of her reputation in Europe as a singer and person-

ality is really unappreciated here."

"The sound system of the Vienna Opera is magnificent," commented Sutcliffe, "and Dr. Marcel Prawy interspersed his two and a half hour lecture on Lotte's career with recordings of her voice—she recorded hundreds of songs between 1914 and the 1950's. The recorded voice was clear and vibrant, and it filled that beautiful opera house as if she were really there.

"A past director of the opera, Egon Seefehlner, was asked by Prawy to describe the indescribable, Lotte's voice. He said that Lotte Lehmann's voice was the only one that could make him weep. And there were few dry eyes in that place. I could hear the sniffles in the handkerchiefs every time Lotte's voice rang

out."

As a special tribute to Lehmann, one of her most famous students, soprano Grace Bumbry, came to the stage to talk with Prawy about Lehmann's influence as a teacher of lieder and opera interpretation. Miss Bumbry had studied with Lehmann at the Music Academy of the West and in private lessons as well.

Miss Bumbry sang Auf dem Kirchhofe twice to demonstrate how Lehmann had taught her students to dramatically as well as mu-

sically express the emotion and meaning of a song.

Added Sutcliffe, "I was delighted to see that Capra Press' new biography of Lehmann was lying on the table by Marcel Prawy, and that he was holding it on the TV show as well. An advance copy of the just-published book by Beaumont Glass had been air-expressed to Prawy just two weeks before the birth-day celebration. Many of the rare photos in the book were blown up for use on TV and in the exhibition." During his lecture, Prawy personally thanked several people associated with the Lotte Lehmann Centennial and the Lehmann Archives at UCSB: Frances Holden, Lehmann's longtime friend; UCSB Library Director Joseph Boissé; biographer Beaumont Glass; discographer Gary Hickling; Centennial coordinator Daniel Jacobson, and Ms. Sutcliffe, who assisted Capra Press in book design and production.

"I had brought two copies of the new biography with me," relates Sutcliffe, "one for Hertha Schuch, a friend of Lotte and of Frances Holden. I wasn't sure to whom I would give the second copy. One day Eric and I were wandering around the streets behind the opera house and came upon a book store which had a small exhibition of books written by Lotte Lehmann in the window. She wrote a novel and poetry as well as

several books on song interpretation.

I was so happy to see this that I went inside and thanked the proprietor, a white-haired Mr. Heidrich. He said Lotte used to buy books at his shop, and that he had a collection of her books. He told me to come back the next day for copies he would make of Vienna newspaper articles about Lotte's part in the dedication of the rebuilt opera building in 1955. I gave him my extra biography when I went back, and he was very touched, and said that he had sent in an order for books for his shop from Capra Press earlier that morning.

"Seefehlner, who recently retired as Vienna Opera director, spoke very beautifully about Lotte Lehmann during the celebration. He first heard her sing when he was fourteen, and many

times after until the war. He met her again during the 1955

festivities at the reopening of the Vienna Opera.

"Then he said that his next meeting with Lehmann was in 1976 when he sat in his office at the Opera, staring in disbelief at a small bronze box on his desk labeled Lotte Lehmann. 'All that was left of that glorious voice and presence was a mere handful of sand,' he said." The urn of ashes sent from Santa Barbara was given a funeral ceremony on the marble steps of the Opera entryway and then buried in the Vienna cemetery.

Eric Hvolboll relates, "We went to the cemetery to put flowers on the grave for Frances Holden. Lotte Lehmann's grave is in the section reserved for Vienna's greatest musicians, artists and scientists. We went with Hertha Schuch, a musician and a friend of Lehmann since 1931. The black gravestone has on it in gold a German phrase by Richard Strauss that means 'When she sang, she moved the stars.'

"Hertha told us that during the years of Allied bombing raids on Vienna she always carried her collection of Lehmann records, letters and photos on her back into the bomb shelters. The first communication she received from Lotte after the war

was a big CARE package sent from Santa Barbara."

Hertha Schuch and her husband Michael, a retired geophysics professor, will be flying to Santa Barbara for the Lotte Lehmann Centennial celebration to be held at UCSB during Memorial Day weekend, May 28, 29 and 30. Participants scheduled to take part include former director of the Music Academy of the West Maurice Abravanel, soprano Carol Neblett, NYU professor Dr. Edward Downes, music critic Alan Rich, biographer Beaumont Glass, discographer Gary Hickling, and many others.

Reservations for the three-day symposium and a list of events may be obtained by sending \$25 to the Lotte Lehman Centennial, care of Dr. Joseph Boissé, UCSB Library, Santa Barbara 93106.

Lotte Lehmann's grave with the special centennial wreathes of 27 February 1988.



# Ring

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of Honor" from the Orchest	ra
of the State Opera.	
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The first mention of the "Ring of Honor" that was to become the "Lotte Lehmann Honor Ring" mentioned in the following articles and letter.

### Lehmann received the "Lotte Lehmann Honor Ring" from the Vienna State Opera, 1955.

The Vienna Opera bestowed on Lehmann the Lotte Lehmann Honor Ring (*Lotte Lehmann-Gedächtnisring*) in 1955, the year of the re-opening of the Vienna Opera. The proclamation read, in part: "In appreciation of Lehmann's great merit as one of the most important artists in the history of opera, and who contributed to the glory of Vienna Opera between the two World Wars."

After Lehmann wore it for decades, the famous ring was returned to the Vienna Opera, along with Lehmann's specification that the ring was to be given to the female singer designated unanimously by the artists' union, and thereafter to be passed on to the artist named in that singer's will. On 15 September 1979, the great Leonie Rysanek was the second recipient of the Lehmann ring.

Upon her death in 1998, Rysanek specified that it should pass to Hildegard Behrens, who passed away in 2009 without stipulating its successor. The artists' union was again convened to choose the new holder of the Lotte Lehmann Honor Ring. They solidly elected Kammersängerin Waltraud Meier. On 21 April 2011, at the conclusion of the Vienna Opera's performance of *Parisifal*, Meier, who had sung Kundry, was presented with the Lotte Lehmann Honor Ring.





After Lehmann's death, her close friend, Hertha Schuch wrote to the administration of the Vienna Opera to make sure that the "Lehmann Ring" would be awarded to a German singer as was Lehmann's wish.

Wien. 15.Juni 1979.

An den Verband der Solisten der Wiener Staatsoper Wiene n.

#### Betr.: LOTTE LEHMANN-RING.

Anläßlich meines Besuches in Santa Barbara, dem letzten Heim unserer unvergeßlichen LOTTE LEHMANN, zeigte mir deren Preundin Mrs. Frances HOLDEN unter den vielen Ehrenzeichen auch den Ring, den Lotte Lehmann von den Solisten der Wiener Staatsoper gewidmet erhielt.

Auf meine Initiative kamen wir überein, diesen Ring als "LOTTE LEHMANN-RING" weiter zu geben, und zwar an eine deutschsprachige Sängerin, die sich um die Wiener Oper verdient gemacht hat und dem Rollenfach Lotte Lehmann's am nächsten kommt.

Die Weitergabe des Ringes soll, ähnlich dem "Iffland-Ring" des Wiener Burgtheaters, entweder testamentarisch oder durch Rückgabe en den Solistenverband der Wiener Staatsoper zur weiteren Vergebung in obigem Sinne erfolgen.

Die Erstvergabe bedarf der Zustimmung der Spenderin Mrs. Holden, weshalb ich ersuche. Ihre Vorschläge bekannt zu geben.

> Hertha Schuch-Stodolowsky Gumpendorferstr, 22/12 1060, Wien.

WOCHENEND-MAGAZIN — New Yorker Staats-Zeitung u. Herold, 29./30. SEPTEMBER 1979

### Jetzt trägt Leonie Rysanek den "Lotte Lehmann Ring"

Eine grosse Ehrung für die Wiener Künstlerin

Kammersängerin Leonie Rysanek erhielt dieser Tage in der Wiener Staatsoper vom Präsidenten des Solistenverbandes "Lotte Lehmann-Gedächtnis-Ring". Dieser Ring wurde vor 30 Jahren vom Wiener Solistenverband für Lotte Lehmann gestiftet, um die großen Verdienste der Künstlerin um die Wiener Staatsoper zu würdigtn.

Lotte Lehmann bestimmte, daß nach ihrem Tode der Ring der würdigsten Sängerin des Hauses am Ring auf Lebzeiten weiterzureichen ist. Der Solistenverband der Staatsoper beschloß einstimmig, daß dieser Ring Leonie Rysanek, als erster Trägerin nach Lotte Lehmann, gebühre.

Die Wiener Sopranistin dankte gerührt und sagte, daß es für sie die größte Auszeichnung ist, die sie erhalten könne, zum einen, weil sie die erste Trägerin des Ringes nach Lotte Lehmann sein darf, zum anderen, weil Sängerkollegen, die um die Schwere des Berufes wissen, sie dafür für würdig befunden haben.

Die Verbindung Leonie Rysaneks mit Lotte Lehmann ist leicht erklärbar. Beide verbinden ihre Karriere mit dem berühmten Wiener Bariton Alfred Jerger. Für Lotte Lehmann war er der große Partner auf der Bühne (Scarpia, Mandryka), für die Rysanek war er ihr Entdecker. Beide verbinden viele Partien: von der Myrtocle (Die toten Augen) bis zur Marschallin, von der Tosca bis zur Desdemona, von der Fidelio-Leonore bis zur Sieglinde, Elsa, Tannhäuser-Elisabeth, von der Agathe bis zu den großen Strauß-Partien.

Menschlich verbindet beide die Natürlichkeit, der Ernst, mit dem sie sich ihrer Berufung verschrieben haben und beide feierten Triumphe an allen großen Opernhäusern der Welt, an denen Leonie Rysanek heute noch zu Hause ist.

Beider Karrieren sind auch eng mit dem Namen Strauß verbunden: Lotte Lehmann erarbeitete alle diese Partien mit dem Komponisten selbst, Leonie Rysanek zählt zu den führenden Strauß-Interpretinnen der Bühne unserer Zeit.

Der "Lotte Lehmann - Gedächtnis - Ring" erhält für die Oper nun die Bedeutung, wie der Iffland-Ring im Schauspiel und der Nikisch - Ring bei den Dirigenten. Diese Ringe tragen zur Zeit Josef Meinrad und Karl Böhm.