

Metropolitan Opera Soprano Sets 'Pinch Hitter' Record

By GAY PAULEY
UPI Women's Editor

New York—Mary Curtis-Verna, young to the Metropolitan roster, is an old hand at substituting for ailing divas.

The blue-eyed brunette from Salem, Mass., who made her Met debut only four seasons ago, set some sort of record for pinch-hitting a few nights ago when she filled in for Victoria de Los Angeles in a performance of "La Traviata."

"I don't know whether I've done the most substituting," she said, ruefully. "But I'm certainly in the top ten."

Versatility Plus

In her brief career at the Metropolitan, the soprano has

replaced Renata Tebaldi, Zinka Milanov, Antonietta Stella, and Eleanor Steber. One week, she sang in five operas and wasn't even winded. Most divas consider two a full week's work.

But she wants no one classifying her as "always the bridesmaid, never the bride."

"I sing my own roles too," she said, in an interview at her Manhattan apartment. She and her husband were packing for a trip to Italy for operatic appearances.

"When you are doing Tosca, Aida and Cavalleria Rusticana at the Metropolitan, you've arrived. You're a bride. Steber and Milanov did their share of subbing in their early days with the company. After all, that is part of your job."



New York—Mary Curtis-Verna, young to the Metropolitan Opera company roster, is an old hand at substituting for ailing divas. The soprano, who is from Salem, Mass., made her Met debut in 1956. In one week she sang in five operas. Most divas consider two a full week's work. In this photo Miss Curtis-Verna is shown relaxing on a balcony in Milan, Italy, during a vacation. (UPI Telephoto)

Standards For Food To Be Topic

A discussion of proposed standards for food and food products will be held Tuesday, January 26, at a meeting of the Natural Food Associates.

The session will be held at 8 p.m. in Room 30 of the Medford High school.

The discussion will pertain to the promotion and encouragement of principles and standards for food products with emphasis on prevention of disease and the creation of sound health.

Following the discussion the group will begin the compiling of a directory of local producers who meet the standards set up by the Natural Food Associates. When the directory is completed it will be published, it was announced. Individuals who wish to be listed should contact Miss Anna Streed, SPing 2-8576, immediately rather than waiting until their product is ready for market, it was explained.

Miss Curtis-Verna figured that one of the reasons Rudolf Bing, the general manager, calls on her so frequently is not so much her good nature as her extensive repertory. Few sopranos can match her.

"I know 37 operas," she said, "and I'm ready to go on with any of them. When I learn a role, I don't need a lot of rehearsing."

"Some opera singers build a whole career on five operas. I'm in 15 the Met is doing this season, so the odds are that when one of the other sopranos is ill, I'm called. That was the first time I've sung "Traviata" in five years."

MD's Daughter

Born Mary Curtis, the daughter of a surgeon, the singer majored in music at Hollins college in Virginia. After graduation, she came to New York to study with Italian-born Ettore Verna, whose pupils included Martha Lipton, Grace Moore and Milanov.

Verna helped his pupil launch her European debut with the Lyric Opera company in Milan, in 1949. He also fell in love with her. They have been married since 1954, and she has followed the Italian custom of keeping her own name and adding her husband's—hence the Curtis-Verna.

She sang with opera companies in Europe including the famous La Scala, in South America, and with the San Francisco Opera company before she joined the Met.

She rarely hears from the divas whom she replaces. But when she once filled in for Steber, next day she said "there were enough roses and orchids from her to fill this room. My husband is still impressed by that gesture."

Subbing for other prima donnas bothers this soprano not in the least—she believes it has helped her establish an American following. "After all," she said candidly, "with Met singers, it's like with cheese. If it's imported, it's better."

Little Girl Look Used This Spring

United Press International

The little girl look gives a youthful touch to big girls' resort clothes. For example, designer Jeanne Campbell uses checked gingham in a version of a baby's "bishop" dress with smocking around the scoop neck. Kenn Barr of Casino trims a white broadcloth blouse with a pink gingham jabot and teams it with a full, matching gingham skirt. Ruffled and scalloped full skirts in organdies and gingham, lots of crinoline petticoats, and ric rac trim are other style notes.

Travel clothes are on the sophisticated side this season. Denim becomes elegant in a Chanel-type, brass-buttoned suit with a red and white striped shirt. Sheaths are straight and come with matching coats or jackets. Even the cape shows up with a sheath skirt in cavalry twill.

Look for tunics as covers-ups on the beach next summer. They come in every length from three-quarter tunics over bathing suits or pants to short and sleeveless types, worn over brief two-piece swim suits. One tunic consists of a gingham skirt to be worn under the peplum of a bathing suit.

New summer wools feature prints on white flannel. There are all-over floral, snowflake, geometric, and paisley prints in coral, blue, silver, charcoal grey, and red, and plaids in metallic shades. The wool is used in blazers, Bermuda shorts and tapered Capri pants.

Spring lingerie will blossom out in new color combinations—grey lace on pale pink, beige lace on orange nylon, and cinnamon over bisque. Double layers of fabric also are used, such as gold nylon tricot over white, bright pink over light pink, and ivory rose tricot under white sheer.

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Camp Fire Girls

Silver Blue Birds

The Silver Blue Birds group of Central Point held their weekly meeting at the home of Mrs. Leo Trautman. For their field trip the leader and assistant, Mrs. Munn took the children, Diana Barnard, Debra Readour, De Ann Trautman, Judy Price, Linda Reynolds, Pamela Whitehead, Sharon Munn, Sherry Graves, Martha Middlesworth, Janice Gorman, Pamela Calhoun to the Crater Rock Museum. They were shown the contents and learned many facts of interest.

The group will begin making place mats for their birthday dinner at the next few meetings. They enjoy their monthly singing held in the home of Martha Middlesworth.

Book Cover

Transparent covers are ideal for school books. Buy them ready-made or tough, tear-resistant plastic film or make them at home in gay patterns and colors. Either way, there's the added appeal to children of easy look-see and the great advantage of washability. Just wipe covers with hot suds to keep books

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National Artists Group To Play for Civic Music

The National Artists Symphonette which appears in Medford Monday, February 1, under the auspices of the Jackson County Civic Music association is a distinguished ensemble of first-chair virtuosi drawn from major orchestras of the country.

William Haaker of the Virginia Symphony orchestra is leader and Amparo Iturbi, pianist, is the featured soloist. Haaker has enjoyed a notable career as both pianist

Extension Unit Organized for Foothills Area

Foothills—The recently organized Foothills Home Extension unit met January 19 at the home of Mrs. Frank Daily. The business meeting was conducted by the vice chairman, Mrs. E. J. Parsons, in the absence of chairman, Mrs. Hubert Smith.

Mrs. Glenn DeJanvier is secretary-treasurer for the unit.

Mrs. Letsy Miller and Mrs. Effie Birdseye gave a brief summary on the project planning meeting they attended in Medford.

Each member was asked to select two projects from a list of suggestions read or present two of their own ideas at the next meeting. The group will then select five of the projects most preferred to be sent into the program planning committee.

Couple Returns From Honolulu

Mr. and Mrs. Ed W. Pease, 130 Vernada place, returned Tuesday from a two weeks vacation in Hawaii. The couple flew by jet to the Islands from Portland and stayed in Honolulu.

Highlight of the trip was a night flight over the erupting volcanoes.

There are an estimated 500,000 cases of pneumonia in the United States each year.

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De Molay Order, Mothers' Club Slate Meetings

Medford Order of De Molay will hold a stated meeting Wednesday, January 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Medford Masonic Temple. Master Councilor Robert Baker will preside.

Medford De Molay Mother's club will meet at 7:30 p.m. the same evening in the dining hall. All mothers of De Molay boys are invited to attend. Election of officers is planned.

Janie Smith Receives Incentive Cash Award

Janie V. Smith, formerly administrative officer on the Rogue River National forest, has received a cash award of \$15 for developing a new time saving accounting form according to Merlin C. Shipley, administrative officer.

The cash awards are a part of the Incentive Award program available to all government employees through the Government Employees Incentive Award Act of Sept. 1, 1954.

GOLDEN LINK CLASS ANNOUNCES MEETING

Women of the Golden Link class of First Baptist church Sunday school will meet at the home of Mrs. Minnie Albert, 1003 West 11th street, Thursday, Jan. 28.

A 1 o'clock dessert luncheon will be followed by a devotional and business meeting.

Explains Adolescence?

New York—UPI—Dr. William Dilger, of Cornell University, studies birds in the hope of shedding light on human behavior.

As young birds become larger and less dependent on their parents, he reports, they become increasingly aggressive toward them. It seems to be part of the growing up process, Dr. Dilger said.

A method of computing weather patterns for several weeks uses a mathematical model and a computer.

Western States Nurse Shortage Declared Acute

Boulder, Colo. — The 13 Western states must greatly expand their schools of nursing and set up a number of new schools to keep pace with the population growth of the West. Otherwise, the people of the West will not receive the nursing care they need and want.

This is the major conclusion of a report on nursing needs and resources published by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. The report, "Nurses for the West," was prepared by the commission with the assistance of the West's collegiate

schools of nursing. The schools are members of WICHE's regional nursing council, which endorsed the conclusions of the study.

Today, the West has relatively fewer nurses than it did a decade ago. In 1950, the West had 62,000 nurses. Since that time although the actual number of nurses has increased, the population has increased much faster. As a result, the ratio of nurses to population dropped from 318 nurses per 100,000 population in 1950 to 275 nurses per 100,000 population in 1957. This is considerably below the ratio

of 300 nurses per 100,000 population recommended as a minimum for adequate nursing care.

The outlook for the West's nursing supply in the coming years is gloomy. According to "Nurses for the West," present graduations from Western nursing schools are not even enough to replace nurses leaving active service, much less to meet the needs of the expanding population.

To maintain the present nurse-population ratio, the West must double its graduations of new nurses. For the next decade, the West needs

5600 new nurses each year, compared to the present graduation rate of only 2600 annually.

In the immediate future, the shortage will be particularly acute for nurses with special educational preparation for teaching and supervising. Thus the greatest bottleneck to expanding schools of nursing is the current shortage of well-prepared teachers.

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