

"MAROUF" SENSATION OF RAVINIA SEASON

Review of Season's Program Reveals Incidents of Summer Opera's Greatest Year

By Critic

Seventy-two nights of opera and twenty-two orchestral concerts—such is the record that must be set down to the credit of Ravinia when the seventeenth season of this artistic institution came to a close Monday night, September 3. Of the concerts, one has been given on Monday night, eleven on Sunday afternoons, and ten—these for the children—on Thursday afternoons. During the ten weeks and three days of the season, which began June 23, thirty-three operas were brought to production—an achievement with which to conjure when one takes into consideration what it means to arrange such a repertoire as that which has been presented at Ravinia this year. This fact sets a new record for Ravinia, for never before in the history of this opera house have so many works been produced. It is equally matter of moment that two of these operas, "Marouf" and "L'Heure Espagnol" were entirely new to the Ravinia repertoire, while "Le Chemineau" "Don Pasquale," and the famous garden scene from "The Jewels of the Madonna" were revived after several seasons absence.

When Louis Eckstein issued his initial prospectus last spring, there was much in it to stimulate the interest of all those who are devoted to the art of music in its finer phases, and the season just closing has not only been the most brilliant which this opera house has ever enjoyed, but it has been one of the most brilliant ever given anywhere. Exercising his usual care in selecting artists, Mr. Eckstein brought to Ravinia a galaxy of world stars capable of interpreting the greatest operatic works in superlative manner. In fact, the Ravinia roster this year was more extensive than ever before, and the stars whose names adorned it, were utilized in a repertoire of such broad scope that the tastes of all opera patrons have been fully satisfied.

Present Varied Casts

In accordance with the season's first announcement, the standard repertoire has, of course, been given full consideration, and this is as it should be. Not only have the standard works been presented, but they have been given with casts of such merit, and such care has been lavished upon each production, that they have been elevated to a plane quite out of the ordinary. And in addition to these beloved works, without which no opera season would be complete, there have been some interesting revivals and novelties, including one opera which was never heard west of New York before—all of which have added zest to the general program.

The complete list of works produced, together with the number of times each was presented, follows: "La Traviata," 1; "Don Pasquale," 1; "The Jewels of the Madonna," 3; "L'Heure Espagnol," 2; "Lucia," 2; "Rigoletto," 1; "The Barber of Seville," 1; "Manon Lescaut," 2; "Carmen," 1; "L'Elisir d'Amore," 2; "Marouf," 4; "Thais," 1; "Fedora," 2; "Tosca," 2; "Le Chemineau," 2; "Fra Diavolo," 3; "Romeo and Juliet," 3; "Martha," 4; "La Juive," 2; "Il Trovatore," 2; "Manon" (Masseten) 3; "Lohengrin," 3; "Andrea Chenier," 3; "The Masked Ball," 2; "Madame Butterfly," 3; "Aida," 4; "Faust," 2; "Samson and Delila," 2; "La Boheme," 3; "The Love of the Three Kings," 2; "Louise," 2; "Cavalleria Rusticana," 3; "Pagliacci," 4.

It will be seen from this that "Pag-

liacci," "Aida," "Martha" and "Marouf" hold first place in the number of performances, each having been given four times. But one of the most remarkable things that comes to light in an analysis of the season is that it was possible to reduce the number of repeat performances to the minimum. With the exception of the operas mentioned above as having been given four times each during the season, there were only nine operas which were given three times, while the majority—fourteen to be exact—were given twice each. Six works were brought to performance only once.

Like Engineering Feat

Repeat performances are inevitable in any season of opera, and for several reasons. Working out the schedule in such a manner that each artist may be given the number of performances during the season that is stipulated in their contracts, that they shall sing the

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