is the ideal queer hero—he's young, he's beautiful, and he's misunderstood. I mean, he saves the life of a rape victim, and she curses him. Don't we all have days like that? • "I am differently organized from other men. The world ought to give me what I need."--R. Wagner, 1855. His friends began to refer to these sentiments as "Sigmundisms." • Have you seen this Heldentenor? A prominent mezzo-soprano once said, "If the tenor doesn't have a hard-on by the time I finish the Habanera, I'm not doing my job right." Similarly, a good Siegmund should leave the audience, well, uneasy (as he says, "I was drawn to men and women"). Peter Hofmann's Walhall as Rock Star is but a fond memory now, but, wow, was he ever Trouble ("Wehvalt")! Imagine Jim Morrison rewritten by John Rechy, and you're almost there. • A rival soprano once said of Lotte Lehmann, "She does on stage things I wouldn't do at home with my husband!" Now I know what she meant. I was at Hofmann's last NY Walkure, when he and Rysanek looked ready to devour big chunks of each other. He played the wolfboy as a cute mess who didn't live by other men's rules (he fucks his sister without a second thought, the last thing he does in this world is to smile at his murderer). A great portrayal, a dangerous portrayal, a queer portrayal in the best sense of the word. Hofmann will probably never sing in NY again, but console yourself with "Halsey the Rising Sun" from his "Rock Classics" LP. This man knows.

Scandal at the Royal Opera! Dame Kiri te Kanawa has withdrawn from the new Philip Glass opera The Life and Times of Sunny von Bulow. The diva was accused of "lip-synching" the title role to pre-recordings made by Glenn Close.
Renata Scotto plans a surprise return to the stage in London this summer. She will sing the role of Norma, replacing Patti LuPone, who has scheduled a well-deserved crise de nerfs.

Following his resounding success in the media circus On the Town, Thomas Hampson is going into the studio to record an all-Leonard Bernstein recital, appropriately entitled I'm so lucky to be me. Meanwhile, Hampson's Rogue. Reggae, Reggae co-star Cecilia Bartoli will collaborate with Prince on a crossover CD to be entitled "Se 2 mami." The disc will feature "Al di la" sung as a duet with Bartoli's biological mother, Connie Francis.

Producer Mark Lamos is the proud recipient of the "Yellow Ribbon" award for his refusal to explore the "political context" of I Lombardi: an opera about a wealthy and powerful Western nation at war with a Persian Gulf dictator for reasons of profit and offended pride. Says Lamos, "It's important to be trendy, but not at the expense of making people think."

Dmitri Hvorostovsky has signed an exclusive six-figure contract to promote designer underwear in a series of "tasteful" TV spots airing later this year. The hunky baritone will be seen in white tie and Calvin Klein briefs crooning "Farabejniki (Oh, the little box is full)" from his hit "Dark Eyes" CD.

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