queer a boy and his diva

we hear the phantom of the opera is queer

and his diva

stiffelio prends garde

and his diva

we hear that...
Dolora Zajek will take a one-year sabatical from her burgeoning career to tour in Gertrude Stein, Gertrude Stein, Gertrude Stein. Break a leg, Dolora!

Peter Sellars will bring his production of Haydn’s Il mondo della luna to BAM later this year. The aging wunderkind has, as usual, revised the libretto, setting the opera on the Earth.

"The Meloc in Myneces" is how Don King bills his pay-per-view showing of Elektra starring Gwyneth Jones and Leonie Rysanek. According to the controversial boxing promoter, Gwyn and Leni are the only real heavyweight left.

Michael, an autobiographical "poper" with music and lyrics by Michael Jackson, will open the Metropolitan Opera’s 1997–98 season. The title is as yet uncast, but Kathleen Battle has been chosen to sing the cameo role of "La Toya." James Levine, currently the Met’s Artistic Director, says, "Michael’s a great piece. We’re both really excited about doing it.

Perhaps a bullet or two should be reserved for Robert LaFosse and Lesley Koenig for his xerox-danced-on-Balanchine choreography and his clueless staging. Should the Judgement of Bouillon such attitude (look what happened to La Locouvre, the biggest star of the time)? Did the last of the great Parisian divas round herself around behind feathery fans and throw away their density? And if a director insists on altering the traditional business in an opera, shouldn’t the reason be an attempt to heighten the drama, rather than, as was apparently the case here, an inability to read stage directions in Italian?

Adalgisa has a lot in common with Les Liaisons Dangereuses--that model might shut up once and for all those who still turn up their noses at the show if only the Met would lose their "Mikey-he’ll-eat-anything" attitude toward the audience. Maurizio, we know, was a giggolo who paid for his invasion of Ireland by burning tricks. The Princess and La Duclos, according to some sources, were much more than just close friends. In, and, as can read elsewhere Parterre Box, Michonnet’s more Thelma Ritter than Gay Menich.

Sifiso (3/7) suffers from the "Crying Game syndrome"—the reviews and word-of-mouth have built up such expectations to the point that disappointment is inevitable. To expect a show’s no Travolta, or as Don O’Hearly says in his review of Elektra in London, a bit of a "hysteric low hero." But the Giancarlo Del Monaco production is handsome and moving—would that the Met’s cheeks and voices looked one-quarter as good! Sharon Sweet is a puzzlement—why not her voice? Vladimir Chernov, on the other hand, creates such a beautiful sound with temperament but little sense of drama! But the Giancarlo Del Monaco production is handsome and moving—would that the Met’s cheeks and voices looked one-quarter as good! Sharon Sweet is a puzzlement—why not her voice? Vladimir Chernov, on the other hand, creates such a beautiful sound with temperament but little sense of drama!

It’s Luchino Visconti, that’s who. The man who taught Callas how to move on stage, who directed her in her triumphs: Sonnambula, Traviata, Vestale, Iphigénie. Anna Freni. He didn’t exactly create her, but he did the last couple of revisions. Visconti is a good catch. Too... distinguished, aristocratic, charming. And the Zef is right. On this kinescope of a French talk show (late 60’s, to judge by La Divina’s Fairlo) Callas is relaxed, giggly, dandier for once. She’s Maria. She interrupts his you-had-to-be-there story ("They were throwing vegetables at Maria..." "Radishes and celery!") exactly as if they were the Burtons. They’re delicious together. A perfect match. A fun couple. And Visconti is gayer than I am.

Verwandelt du?

Ariadne auf Naxos is about... is it about transformation? (And for the bonus points, Moby Dick is about this whole... yeah, so Ariadne thinks she’s dying, see. But she’s really coming back to life... just transformed, that’s all: not a woman any more, but a... goddess. Or "diva" as they say in Milan, what a miracle that is. It takes a "transformer" to turn a woman into a diva. (Another function of a transformer is to convert AC to DC and vice versa. But let’s not go too far afield.)

See, nobody in the prologue cares about the Tenor or Harlekin. They’re on their own. But walk into that greenroom in a skirt and the "trans- former" are as thick as flies. And a bunch of queer ducks they are too.

The relationship between the Music Master and the Composer could best be described as "Socratic," even though neither one of them is a philosopher.

parterre box is about remembering when opera was queer and exciting and making it that way again.

www.parterre.com
Then again, the kid is at least deep. ("She is the Symbol of Mankind in its Isolation", he offers the Prima Donna but no, no, no, I'm not giving up. Yes, he's, of course, but would you mind giving me something I can play? The Music Master has his hands full trying to contact whatever planet his protégé's on, but he also gets a chance to direct the Prima Donna. More wise in the ways of the theater, he translates his criticism into her own charming native tongue, Divaspeak: "The contrast between you and that tacky Zerbinetta will make you look even more wonderful than you do already." Well, she'd never looked at it that way.

The Zerbinetta/Composer scene is usually explicated as a sexual awakening and nothing else. She nods. "Onstage I mostly play comedy, but I'm much deeper, than people realize." That was his dick hard? More likely our little Amadeus clone is thinking, "The voice is tiny, but it carries. And she's been around the block. The contrast between that silvery sound and that knowing face is so full of dramatic tension! And she can handle props, too, I've got it! Susanna! Now I can write Notte di Piaga!"

Whether he gets into bed with her or not depends: his first reaction to her is aesthetic, not sexual. And that's what I call queer.

And speaking of what I call queer, let's talk about the Dancing Master for a moment. Honey! "A desert island doesn't have tasteless!" If the Composer is going to make Zerbinetta an artist, the Dancing Master is going to make her a star. He's "her a STAR! Why is the charming Zerbinetta at home in any plot? Because she's always plays herself!" Her first reaction to her is aesthetic, not sexual. She's the kind of stage director who gives Musetta a fire-engine red wig and a fur coat and four white horses. (In one of his final opera stagings, Visconti inserted a nude scene into Manon.) The Dancing Master even comes up with billing for his vedette-to-be: in the unintentionally hilarious standard translation, he predicts the audience will remember her "The Charming Zerbinetta and her Dancing Tricks." Well, it's at least as good as "Dainty June and Her Newsboys."

The Phantom of the Opera is Queer

Yes, he's deformed and evil. Yes, he locks me up in a cage. Yes, his studio smells like a sewer. And yes, he does depraved things I don't even like to think about.

But I feel I'm really singing for the first time in my life!

And the lessons are free...