

OPERA SUPERS of Iowa City NEWSLETTER

Vol. I, No. 1, NOVEMBER 1985

Editor: Arthur Canter 338-1217

30 Brookfield Dr. Iowa City, IA 52240

REMINDER: Next scheduled meeting of the Opera Supers is Monday, December 16, 1985, at 7:00 p.m. in the Lounge, Music Building.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Most of you know me, if not by name, by my appearance at various music events, support groups, or reputation. As a long time faculty member and resident of Iowa City who has been involved in the arts as consumer, supporter and amateur musicologist, I decided to volunteer to act as editor of the newsletter, the first edition of which you have in your hand. Bear with me, and help me make this venture succeed.

There are a number of functions the newsletter can perform. It can contain the minutes of meetings of the Opera Supers, report activities that involve the Supers or that may require their participation, inform the Supers of needs the School of Music Opera Theater has that can be met by the group, and serve as a channel of communication between the Supers and the academic and professional staff of the Opera Theater. Personally, I would like to use the newsletter also as a vehicle to inform local opera fans about operatic and related events that may be of interest to them, but not listed in the local papers. Whatever it contains, the newsletter will have value to you only to the extent that it meets your needs and provides a welcomed service. You welcome it by reading it. If you fail to discriminate the Opera Supers Newsletter from the plethora of announcements, advisories, "junk mail" and advertisements that most of you get and throw unread into the wastebasket then you fail us or we have failed you in some way we'll never know. I would like to know the fate of the discarded newsletter, whether discarded by a neglect to read, a habitual toss-into wastebasket of all mimeo materials, disinterest, or rejection after reading. However, if you feel uninformed about meeting times, events or opportunities offered to Supers after having discarded the newsletter without reading it, expect no sympathy from me. Complaints in that context only serve to discourage attempts to create a valuable and functioning support group for Opera Theater.

Read the newsletter. Criticize it, but give me feedback to correct or redirect it. Make suggestions. Supply me with material that you would like to have included. Should the newsletter have a title or name uniquely its own? My home address and phone are contained in the masthead above. I welcome all contributions and suggestions.

REPORT ON MEETING OF OCTOBER 28. 1985

On this particular Monday evening, the Opera Supers held their "reorganizational" meeting under the direction of Mona Shaw, Public Relations Coordinator for the School of Music. About 20 members of the Supers attended, but a number of others had indicated their desires to remain active as members even though unable to attend the meeting.

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Report Continued:

The focus for the revival of the Supers is the presentation of BORIS GODUNOV, with Simon Estes in the title role, by the University Opera Theater scheduled for three performances, April 25, 26, 27, 1986; at 7:00 p.m. in Hancher.

Ms. Shaw introduced members of the faculty and staff involved in the production. Each spoke to the group of the background of the presentation and/or roles in these matters and the possible ways the Supers may contribute their services.

Marilyn Somville, Director of the School of Music related the variety of events that take place in conjunction with the opera's presentation. Beaumont Glass, Director of the Opera Theater, gave us a capsule view of the background of the opera, its composer and Simon Estes our Boris-to-be. He provided members with an "Opera Supers Informational Packet" entitled BORIS GODUNOV, Research and Educational Aspects. He also indicated how the Supers could help with the production both generally and specifically. Larry Eckholt, director of arts fundraising for the Iowa Foundation, gave the group an account of the cost factors for the performance including fees for Mr. Estes appearances. Considering the fact that Mr. Estes will be present for rehearsals, master classes and sing three nights, we are indeed getting a bargain and are most fortunate to be able to do so. Larry also gave a summary of the history and development of the plans for this event which started several years ago. Margaret Wenk, BORIS Designer presented a variety of ways the Supers can help in costume construction, stagecraft, scenery, props, etc. An example is call for "beard makers." Instructions for any of these endeavors will be given to Supers who volunteer their services. Eleanore Bowers, in charge of costuming, described the types of costumes that have to be created. John Hall, Arts Center Relations Director, summarized the types of publicity and marketing procedures that will be followed and the ways that Supers may assist.

Mona Shaw sought volunteers from among those present to serve as chairpersons for the several functional groupings she has formulated. The members were encouraged to fill out the sheets indicating the functions or services they were willing to perform. The Committee Volunteer Chairpersons are listed at the end of this report.

Among the suggestions, recommendations and matters of concern raised by Supers present at the meeting were:

1. The need to improve pre-performance publicity.
2. How to get the Press Citizen committed to such publicity.
3. How to get more interest in and attendance from students in opera theater productions. Prof. Glass was especially concerned about this perennial problem.
4. Ways of educating school children about opera and arousing their interest in the same, especially children in Iowa City Public Schools.
5. Parties should be planned to introduce the public to BORIS.
6. Hold a party for the entire cast after the last performance.

The meeting was adjourned with everybody enthusiastic and eager to get going. Some of the males present, including myself, signed up to be Super "supers" to wear costumes and beards for the crowd scenes in BORIS.

AREAS OF ACTIVITIES FOR SUPERS AND WHOM TO CONTACT
(See Chairpersons below)

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>ACTIVITY ADVISOR</u>
1. Costumes	Eleanore Bowers
2. Scenery	Margaret Wenk
3. Rehearsal and Production	Beaumont Glass
a. prompters	Kimm Julian, Assistant
b. "super" roles	
4. Public Relations and Special Projects	Mona Shaw, School of Music
a. hosting parties	Meg Sump, assistant
b. helping with parties	Larry Eckholt, UI Foundation
c. telephoning	John Hall, Arts Center Relations
d. folding and distributing posters, brochures and mailings	
e. contacting local business and service clubs	

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS ELECTED AT MEETING

Scenery:	Mary Wall	1658 Ridge Road, Iowa City, IA 52240 home: 338-2618 office: 338-0581 ext. 562
Costumes:	Shirley Harrison	350 Magowan Ave., Iowa City, IA 52240 337-5729
Parties:	Miriam Canter	30 Brookfield Dr., Iowa City, IA 52240 338-1217
Newsletter:	Arthur Canter	30 Brookfield Dr., Iowa City, IA 52240

NEEDS and NOTES:

Need people to fold and label BORIS mailings. Anyone interested can contact Mona Shaw at 353-5626.

Need someone to chair telephoning committee.

Other needs: a membership person to keep track of the names, addresses and interests of our active members; a secretary to keep minutes at the meetings (Your editor cannot do this, too.); someone to accept responsibility for arranging entertainment (Yes, that's right.) and refreshments for the meetings of the Supers.

The Supers will meet as a group about once every six weeks or as needed.

The Supers are invited to a reception for Simon Estes on April 26, 1986, after the performance, sponsored by the UI Foundation. Note this on your calendar. Details in a later newsletter.

As indicated on the heading of the newsletter: The next meeting of the Supers is scheduled for Monday, December 16th at 7:00 p.m. in the Lounge of the Music Building.

A BORIS GODUNOV QUIZ

The first person to send me the correct answers becomes eligible for a prize of the editor's choosing. Neatness will not count, but additional comments and helpful suggestions for the newsletter will settle ties.

There were three crimes committed in BORIS GODUNOV (based on the laws of the time). The first was the murder of the Czarevitch Dimitri arranged by Boris. What were the other two?

Who was the first American to sing BORIS at the Bolshoi? Which version did he sing?

Who was the librettist for BORIS GODUNOV, the opera?

MISCELLANEOUS

The Opera Department of the School of Music needs good copies of video tapes of the Monteverdi operas first shown on TV several years ago. If anyone has one or more for loan to the department, please contact Beaumont Glass.

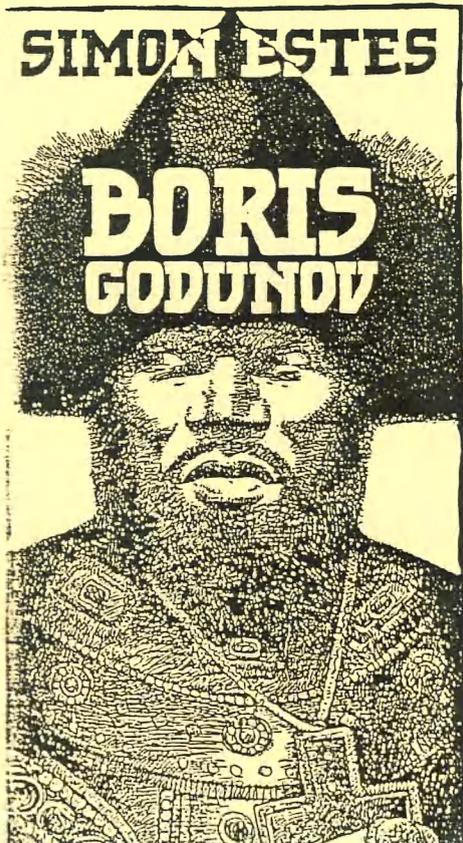
Does anyone have a tape of the Shostakovich orchestration of BORIS to loan your editor? (Audio tape is meant here.)

Prof. Somville is offering a special prize to anyone who brings 10 people to BORIS who have never seen an opera before.

The University of Iowa
School of Music
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

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