NBC OPERA Theater History

Compiled by Herbert Seltz

THE OLD MAID AND THE THIEF
March 16th 1949
directed by Roger Muir
music by Gian-Carlo Menotti

Maire Powers as Miss Todd, the old maid
Virginia MacWatters as Laetitia, the maid
Norman Young as Bob, the thief
Ellen Faull as Miss Pinkerton, the village gossip
Liam Sullivan as the Cop

DOWN IN THE VALLEY
Jan 14th 1950
Based on the book by John L. Long and the drama by David Belasco
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Kurt Weill

Marion Bell as Jennie Parsons
William McGraw as Brack Weaver
Ray Jacquemot as Bouche, the villain
Kenneth Smith as the Leader and the Preacher
Francis Monachino as the Guard

SCENES FROM PUCCINI'S MADAM BUTTERFLY
Feb 6th 1950
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Giacomo Puccini

Tomiko Kanazawa as Cio Cio San, Madame Butterfly
Davis Cunningham as Lt. Pinkerton
Conchita Gaston as Suzuki
Holger Sorensen as Sharpless, the American Consul
Johnny Silver as Goro

DIE FLEDERMAUS
March 6th 1950
adapted by Ruth & Thomas Martin
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Johann Strauss

Ethel Barrymore Colt as Rosalinda
Edward Kane as Eisenstein
Joseph Mordino as Alfredo
Adelaide Bishop as Adele
Johnny Silver as Blindman

TALES OF HOFFMANN
May 1st 1950
adapted by Ruth & Thomas Martin
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Jacques Offenbach

David Cunningham as Hoffmann
George Britton as Lindorf, Coppelius and Miracle
Dorothy Etheridge as Olympia
Dorothy Warenskjold as Antonia and Stella
Johnny Silver as Luther, Spelanzani and Frantz

SCENES FROM BIZET'S CARMEN
Dec. 17th 1950
adapted by Lillian Foerster & Townsend Brewster
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Georges Bizet

Vera Bryner as Carmen
David Poleri as Don Jose
Andrew Gainey as Escemillio
Elizabeth Carron as Frasquita
Beatrice Bush-Kane as Mercedes

HANSEL AND GRETEL
Dec 25th 1950
adapted by Townsend Brewster
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Engelbert Humperdinck

Virginia Haskins as Gretel
David Lloyd as Hansel
Claramae Turner as the Witch
Frances Lehnerts as the Mother
Paul Ukena as the Father

GIANNI SCHICCI
Feb 11th 1951
adapted by Townsend Brewster
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Giacomo Puccini

Ralph Herbert as Gianni Schicchi
Virginia Haskins as Lauretta
Robert Marshall as Rinuccio
Jean Handzlick as Zita
Kenneth Smith as Simone

PAGLIACCI
Oct 4th 1951
adapted by Townsend Brewster
directed by Charles Polacheck
music by Leoncavallo

Joseph Mordino as Canio
Elaine Morbin as Nedda
Paul Ukena as Tonio
Jack Russell as Silvio
Paul Franke as Peppe

RSVP
Nov 1st 1951
adapted and staged by Dino Yannopoulos
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Jacques Offenbach

Lawrence Weber as Stuart Offenbach
Virginia Haskins as Ernestine
Paul Franck as Babylas
George Irving as Monsieur Cauliflower
Paul Ukena as Peterman

AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS
De 24th 1951
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Gian-Carlo Menotti

Chet Allen as Amahl
Rosemary Kuhlmann as His Mother
Andrew McKinley as King Caspar
David Aiken as King Melchior
Leon Lishner as King Balthazar
Francis Monachino as Servant

THE QUEEN OF SPADES
Jan. 3rd 1952
scenes from Tchaikovsky's opera
director, Charles Polacheck
adaptation prepared by and conductor, Peter Herman Adler
English translation, Jean Karsavina
music, Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky

Winifred Heidt as Countess Anna
David Poleri as Gherman
Margarita Zambrana as Lisa
Ralph Herbert as Tomsky
Guy Tano as the Doctor-Narrator

THE CLOAK
Feb 14th 1952
adapted by Henry Reese
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giacomo Puccini
music by Giacomo Puccini

Robert Weede as Michel
Elaine Malbin as Georgette
Davis Cunningham as Lucien
Margery Mayer as Babila
Kenneth Smith as Todo

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE
Mar 6th 1952
adapted by Peter Herman
scenes from Rossini's comic opera
directed by, Kirk Browning

Virginia Haskins as Rosina
Ralph Herbert as Figaro
Davis Cunningham as Almaviva
Emile Renan as Doctor Bartolo
Carlton Gauld as Don Basilio

BILLY BUDD
Oct 19th 1952
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Benjamin Nritten

Theodor Uppman as Billy Budd
Andrew McKinley as Captain Vere
Leon Lishner as Claggart, master-at-arms
Warren Galjour as the First Lieutenant
Paul Ukena as the Sailing Master

GIANNI SCHICCHI
May 1st 1952
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giacomo Puccini

Ralph Herbert as Gianni Schicchi
Virginia Haskins as Lauretta
Robert Marshall as Rinuccio
Jean Handzlick as Zita
Kenneth Smith as Simone

TROUBLE IN TAHITI
Nov 16th 1952
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Leonard Bernstein

Beverly Wolff as Dinah
David Atkinson as Sam
Performers: jazz trio, Constance Brigham, Robert Kole, William Harder

THE MARRIAGE, A QUITE UNBELIEVABLE STORY
Feb 7th 1953
directed by John Bloch
music by Bohuslav Martinu

Donald Gramm as the Bachelor
Leon Lishner as the Servant
Winifred Heidt as Marriage Broker
Michael Pollock as the Bachelor's Friend
Sonia Stollin as the Girl

SISTER ANGELICA
Mar 7th 1953
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giacomo Puccini

Elaine Malbin as Sister Angelica
Winifred Heidt as the Princess
Joan Moynagh as Sister Genevieve
Virgina Viney as the Abbess
Sandra Warfield as the Monitor of Novices

ROSENKAVALIER Part I
Apr 25th 1953
adapted by John Gutman
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Richard Strauss

Frances Bible as Octavian
Wilma Spence as the Marschallin
Ralph Herbert as Baron Ochs
Virginia Haskins as Sophie
Manfred Hecht as Faninal

ROSENKAVALIER Part II
May 2nd 1953
adapted by John Gutman
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Richard Strauss

Frances Bible as Octavian
Wilma Spence as the Marschallin
Ralph Herbert as Baron Ochs
Virginia Haskins as Sophie
Manfred Hecht as Faninal

SCENES FROM CARMEN
Oct 31st 1953
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Georges Bizet

Vera Bryner as Carmen
Robert Rounseville as Don Jose
Warren Galjour as Escemillo, the toreador
Nadja Witkowska as Fresquita
Emalina de Vita as Mercedes

MACBETH
Nov 28th 1953
adapted by Giovanni Cardelli
story by Shakespeare
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Guiseppe Verdi

Warren Galjour as Macbeth
Patricia Neway as Lady Macbeth
Lee Case as Banquo
William Boehm as Macduff
David Williams as Malcom

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO Part I
Feb 6th 1954
adapted by Edward Eager
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Virginia Haskins as Susanna
Ralph Herbert as Figaro
Ann Crowley as Cherubino
William Shriner as Count Almaviva
Laurel Hurley as Countess Almaviva

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO Part II
Feb 13th 1954
adapted by Edward Eager
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Virginia Haskins as Susanna
Ralph Herbert as Figaro
Ann Crowley as Cherubino
William Shriner as Count Almaviva
Laurel Hurley as Countess Almaviva

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
Mar 13th 1954
written by William Shakespeare
directed by John Bloch
music by Vittorio Giannini

John Raitt as Petruchio
Susan Yager as Kate
Sonia Stollin as Bianca
John Alexander as Lucentio
Donald Gramm as Hortensio

PELLEAS AND MELISANDE
Apr 10th 1954
directed by John Bloch & Kirk Browning
music by Claude Debussy

Virginia Haskins as Mélisande
Davis Cunningham as Pelléas
Carlton Gauld as Golaud
Lee Case as Arkel
Mary Davenport as Geneviève, the Queen

SALOME
May 10th 1954
adapted by Charles Polacheck
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Richard Strauss

Elaine Malbin as Salome
Lorna Sidney as Herodias
Andrew Mckinley as Herod
John Cassavetes as Jokanaan
Davis Cunningham as Narraboth

THE ABDUCTION FROM THE SERAGLIO
Oct 31st 1954
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Davis Cunningham as Belmonte
Virginia Haskins as Blonda
Nadja Witkowska as Costanza
David Lloyd as Pedrillo
Leon Lishner as Osmin

SISTER ANGELICA
Dec 5th 1954
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giacomo Puccini

Elaine Malbin as Sister Angelica
Shannon Bolin as Princess
Joan Moynagh as Sister Genevieve
Mary Kreste as Abbess
Ruth Kobart as Mistress of Novices

TOSCA
Jan 23rd 1955
adapted by John Gutman
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giacomo Puccini

Leontyne Price as Floria Tosca
David Poleri as Mario Cavaradossi
Josh Wheeler as Baron Scarpia
Thomas Stewart as Cesare Angelotti
Emile Renan as Sacristan

THE WOULD-BE GENTLEMAN
Feb 27th 1955
adaptation by George & Phyllis Mead
directed by John Schwartz
music by Richard Strauss

Wally Cox as M. Jourdain, the Would-Be Gentleman
Jacques Aubuchon as the Music Master
George Gaynes as the Dancing Master
Roy Dean as the Fencing Master
Frederic Tozere as the Philosopher
Wilma Spence as Ariadne
Robert Marshall as Bacchus
Loren Driscoll as Brighella

THE SAINT OF BLEECKER STREET
Ma 15th 1955
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Gian-Carlo Menotti

Virginia Copeland as Annina, the Saint of Bleecker Street
Richard Cassilly as Michele, her brother
Maria di Gerlando as Carmela, Annina's friend
Leon Lishner as Don Marco, the priest
Rosemary Kuhlmann as Desideria

GRIFFELKIN
Nov 6th 1955
adapted by Lukas Foss
directed by Kirk Browning
produced by Samuel Chatzinoff
music director Peter Herman Adler
sets & costumes by Rouben Ter-Arutunian
choreography by Robert Joffrey
makeup by Dick Smith

Adelaide Bishop as Griffelkin
Mary Kreste as the Devil's Grandmother
Alice Richmond as Mother
Rose Geringer as Girl
Oliver Andes as Boy
Lee Cass as Policeman
Robert Holland as Shopkeeper
Paul Ukena as Uncle Skelter
Margery Gray as the Statue
Gerald Arpino as the Letter Box
Voices: Mignon Dunn as the statue
Andrew McKinley as the letter box

MADAME BUTTERFLY
Dec 4th 1955
adapted by Ruth & Thomas Martin
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giacomo Puccini

Elaine Malbin as Madame Butterfly
Davis Cunningham as Pinkerton
Conchita Gaston as Suzuki
Warren Galjour as Sharpless
Johnny Silver as Goro

THE MAGIC FLUTE
Jan 15th 1956
adapted by W.H. Auden and Chester Kallman
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Leontyne Price as Pamina
William Lewis as Tamino
John Reardon as Papageno
Adelaide Bishop as Papagena
Laurel Hurley as Queen of the Night

THE TRIAL AT ROUEN
Apr 8th1 1956
adapted by Norman Dello Joio
directed by Kirk Browning

Elaine Malbin as Joan of Arc
Hugh Thompson as Bishop Pierre Cauchon
Chester Watson as Friar Julien
Paul Ukena as the Jailor
R.W. Barry as Inquisitor

LA BOHEME
Nov 18th 1956
adapted by Joseph Machlis
directed by Kirk Browning
produced by Samuel Chotzinoff
music by Giacomo Puccini

Dorothy Coulter as Mimi
John Alexander as Rodolfo
Jan McArt as Musetta
Richard Torigi as Mardello
Thomas Tipton as Schaunard

WAR AND PEACE
Jan 13th 1957
adapted by Joseph Machlis
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Sergei Prokofiev

Norman Rose as Narrator
Helena Scott as Natasha
Morely Meredith as Andrey

LA GRANDE BRETECHE
Feb 10th 1957
directed by John Schwartz
music by Stanley Hollingsworth

Gloria Lane as Countess Marie
Hugh Thompson as Count Robert, her husband
Adelaide Bishop as Rosalie, Countess Marie's maid
Davis Cunningham as Bagos, the Spanish prisoner and lover
Jimi Beni as Gorenflot, the handyman who blocks the door.

LA TRAVIATA
Apr 11th 1957
adapted by Joseph Machlis
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giuseppe Verdi

Elaine Malbin as Violetta
John Alexander as Alfredo
Igor Gorin as Germont
Emile Renan as Marquis
Bonnie Murray as Flora

DIALOGUE OF THE CARMELITES
Dec 8th 1957
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Francis Poulenc

Rosemary Kuhlman
Elaine Malbin as Blanche de La Force
Robert Rounseville as Chevalier de La Force
Patricia Neway as Madame de Croissy, first prioress
Leontyne Price as Madame Lidoine, new prioress
Arthur Newman as Marquis de La Force

RIGOLETTO
Feb 16th 1958
adapted by Joseph Machlis
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Giuseppe Verdi
conducted by Jean Morel

Igor Gorin as Rigoletto
Kirk Oreste as Duke of Mantua
Dorothy Coulter as Gilda
Joshua Hecht as Sparafucile
Gloria Lane as Maddalena
Mark Elyn as Monterone

MARIA GOLOVIN
Mar 8th 1958
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Gian-Carlo Menotti

Franca Duval as Maria Golovin
Richard Cross as Donato
Ruth Kobart as Agata, maid
Patricia Neway as the Mother
Herbert Handt as Dr. Zuckertanz, the tutor
Chester Ludgin as the Prisoner
Craig Sechler as Trottolo, the boy

COSI FAN TUTTI
Apr 6th 1958
adapted by Ruth & Thomas Martin
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

James Pease as Don Alfonso
Mac Morgan as Guglielmo
John Alexander as Ferrando
Phyllis Curtin as Fiordiligi
Frances Bible as Dorabella
Helen George as Despina

FIDELIO
Nov 8th 1959
adapted by Joseph Machlis
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Ludwig von Beethoven

Irene Jordan as Leonora
John Alexander as Florestan
Chester Watson as Rocco
Lee Case as Don Pizarro
Judith Raskin as Marcellina

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA
Jan 31st 1960
adapted by Joseph Machlis
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Pietro Mascagni

Virginia Copeland Gordon as Santuzza
David Poleri as Turiddu
Jan McArt as Lola
Chester Ludgin as Alfio

DON GIOVANNI
Apr 10th 1960
adapted by W.H. Auden & Chester Kallman
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Cesare Siepi as Don Giovanni
James Pease as Leporello
Leontyne Price as Donna Anna
Helen George as Donna Elvira
Judith Raskin as Zerlina

DESERET
Jan 1st 1961
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Leonard Kastle

Judith Raskin as Ann Louisa Brice
Kenneth Smith as Brigham Young
John Alexander as Captain James Dee
Mac Morgan as Mr. Brice
Marjorie McClung as Mrs. Brice

BORIS GODUNOV
Mar 26th 1961
adapted by John Gutman
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Modeste Moussorgsky

Giorgio Tozzi as Boris Godunov
Andrew McKinley as Prince Shuisky
Frank Porretta as Grigori-Dimitri
Richard Cross as Pimen
Gloria Lane as Marina

AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS
Dec 24th 1961
by Gian Carlo Menotti

Kirk Jordan as Amahl
David Aiken as King Melchior
Leon Lishner as King Balthasar
Andrew McKinley as King Gaspar
Rosemary Kuhlmann as Mother.

THE LOVE OF THREE KINGS
Feb 25th 1962 (rebroadcast Jan 27th 1963)
adapted by Joseph Machlis
based on Sem Benelli's Italian libretto.
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Italo Montemezzi
Alfred Wallenstein conducts

Phyllis Curtin as Fiora
Giorgio Tozzi as Archibaldo
Richard Torigi as Manfredo
Frank Porretta as Avito
Nicholas Di Virgilio as Flaminio

LABYRINTH
Mar 3rd 1963
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Gian-Carlo Menotti

Judith Raskin as the Bride
John Reardon as the Bridegroom
Nikiforos Naneris as the Bellboy
Elaine Bonazzi as the Spy
Robert White as the Old Man

Opera: AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS
Dec 25th 1963
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Gian-Carlo Menotti

Kurt Yaghjian as Amahl
Martha King as the Mother
Richard Cross as King Melchior
Willis Patterson as King Balthazar
John McCollum as King Caspar

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR
Jan 19th 1964
adapted by Anne Grossman
directed by Kirk Browning
music by Gaetano Donizetti

Linda Newman as Lucia di Lammermoor
Michael Trimbel as Edgardo of Ravenswood
Richard Torigi as Enrico, Lord Ashton, Lucia's brother
Chester Watson as Raimondo, a priest
Jerold Siena as Arturo, Lord Bucklaw
Joan Caplan as Alicia, Lucia's companion
Nico Castel as Normanno, Ashton's retainer