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From the Director's Desk

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This issue marks the tenth year of publication of the *Verdi Newsletter* and a full decade of AIVS activities. During this period we have been both productive and fortunate, fortunate in our archivists and administrative staff, our Executive and Advisory Boards, and in the support of New York University and our members.

Among our achievements, most significant, I think, has been the growth of the Verdi Archive from a dream of the director to a reality in Bobst Library. As a result of acquisitions, gifts, and grants, today it is perhaps the best balanced Verdi research collection in the World: unparalleled in numbers of musical scores and parts, librettos, and production materials, together with an impressive number of letters and documents both from and to Verdi, his wife Giuseppina Strepponi, and their circle, and with much archival material from opera houses and elsewhere. Most of these items as well as the Institute's many 19th century periodicals and chronicles of opera houses are, of course, on microfilm. Materials have been gathered from Italy, France, England, Belgium, Austria, and the United States, with the splendid cooperation of such institutions as the Casa Ricordi, the Istituto di Studi Verdiani, the British Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Nationalbibliothek of Vienna, the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, and the Fondazione Giorgio Cini of Venice; of conservatory libraries such as those of Brussels, Milan, Rome, Naples, Parma, Florence, Turin, Padua, and our own Juilliard; American university libraries such as those of Berkeley, Columbia, and Princeton; of theatrical libraries, museums, and archives such as those of the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden, l'Opéra in Paris, La Fenice in Venice, La Scala in Milan, the Teatro Regio in Parma, and the Teatro Giuseppe Verdi in Trieste; of city and state libraries such as those of Brussels, Florence, Parma, Venice, Rome, Naples, Turin, Palermo, and Milan; as well as, finally, the generosity and kindness of individuals: the Carrara-Verdi family, Andrew Porter, David Lawton, David Rosen, Sidney Cox, George Martin, H. Robert Cohen, Marcello Conati, Elvio Farello, Nancy Ford, and many others. These generous contributors have either allowed reproduction of their

materials or donated materials outright. Funding has been received from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Martha Baird Rockefeller Music Fund, the Ford Foundation, New York University, and our members, several of whom have enabled us to receive matching donations from the corporations employing them. With the support of several of these grants, and including a gift from Ben Meiselman, during this tenth year we have purchased an IBM Personal Computer and begun the important task of creating a Verdi database. This will make information about the materials in our archive more readily available to all persons (members and nonmembers alike) interested in the life or music of the greatest 19th century Italian composer, the incomparable Verdi. To date we have entered complete bibliographic information for more than 2,000 librettos of Verdi's operas, including casts where given, as well as begun entering letters and documents either verbatim or in abstract. To facilitate matters for users of the archive, these are being indexed as they are entered. By the time this Newsletter reaches you, we should have loaded upwards of 1,000 letters in the machine.

However, this is not the sum total of our activities. We have either mounted or cosponsored two International Congresses of Verdi Studies, an annual series of scholarly papers, and several Verdi exhibitions. While observing restrictions placed on use by donors, we have assisted opera companies and individual performers with Verdi materials and, when requested, information; have provided scores, librettos, and production materials to the individual volume editors of the new Verdi edition, and made available information, materials and access to the archive to scholars, students, college teachers from the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminars, and others seriously interested in the composer or his music. Furthermore, we have sponsored or cosponsored operatic performances (staged or in concert form), as well as concerts and recitals of Verdi's music and, finally, have enabled Institute members to attend rehearsals of Verdi's operas, and private showings of video performances.

To celebrate our dynamic decade we are inaugurating a new series of lectures combined with the showing of video tapes of significant Verdi performances. The first of these will begin in June at the new Music and

Media Center of Bobst Library, New York University. At that time the Verdi Archive will move into new quarters in the same location.

As a bonus for members and subscribers, in this issue of the *Newsletter* we are reprinting a piano solo arrangement of a chorus by Verdi "Sorge un canto," written by the composer for a revival in Genoa of his first opera, *Oberto*. This music, whose text was known from the libretto, till now has been unknown both to modern audiences and to Verdi specialists alike. It was discovered at the library of the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan by our Archivist, Luke Jensen, during a Fulbright year in Italy, while he was conducting research for his doctoral dissertation.

With regard to previously unpublished materials, we are pleased to bring to your attention the recently printed "*Gattopardo* Waltz," edited by Institute member, scholar, and teacher, Stephen Casale, who, as you may recall, enabled us to print a previously unknown letter from Verdi to his French publisher, Léon Escudier, and wrote a fine article about that document in *Newsletter* 11 (1983). Should you be interested in this composition, first heard in the Visconti film *The Leopard*--therefore the title--it is published by Musica Obscura Editions (Post Office Box 2586, Quincy, Massachusetts 02269) and may be ordered from the Joseph Patelson Music House (160 West 56th St., New York, NY 10019) for \$2.

Interest in the Institute continues to grow. With the guidance and advice of our Executive and Advisory Boards coupled with your continued support and enthusiasm, we look forward to another decade of vigorous activity and substantial achievement.

Martin Chusid

"The Royal Opera House's ill-fated engagement of Placido Domingo, the Italian tenor, was abruptly halted yesterday when the singer cancelled his performance in *Simon Boccanegra* at Covent Garden hours before rehearsals were due to begin.... He is to be replaced by Gabriele Adorno, who will fly to London from Rome tomorrow and go straight into rehearsals."

--(London) *Sunday Times*