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## From the Director's Desk

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**American Institute for Verdi Studies**

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## *From the Director's Desk*

During the eight short months of its existence, the growth of the Institute has been remarkable, reflecting the wide interest in the composer's music and a large reservoir of sympathy with our organization's aims: to encourage and facilitate both the performance and the study of Verdi's music, and to bring these activities into close, fruitful relationship. The first objective of the Institute's founding group, to establish and then expand the archive of Verdi resources, is well under way. It is a pleasure to report that two requests for grants have been approved. The National Endowment for the Humanities has funded a major project to film the Verdi correspondence and other selected items in the library of the Istituto de Studi Verdiani at Parma. The grant period extends from 1 February 1977 to 31 January 1979, and when the filming is finished a brochure will be printed describing the total resources of the archive (including the Stringham collection, the Verdi materials acquired at New York University before the archive was established, and all acquisitions made before the closing date of the grant). The brochure will be distributed on request to interested individuals and organizations; members of the Institute will automatically receive a copy.

The second grant was made by the trustees of the Martha Baird Rockefeller Music Fund to film Verdi materials in private collections, a category of holdings to which scholars and performers normally have little or no access. Filming will begin in November this year and should be complete before the NEH grant goes into effect in February. In addition, the archive has been enriched by some valuable individual donations and pledges, described elsewhere in the *Newsletter*.

In the same period, the Institute was happy to respond to requests for copies of materials by, among others, Sarah Caldwell of the Boston Opera; Kurt Herbert Adler of the San Francisco Opera; Floyd Herzog of the Centre College Regional Arts Center, in conjunction with performances by the Kentucky Opera Association; Cecilia Bustamante, Director of the Verdian Opera Group in Mexico City; and David Rosen of the University of Wisconsin. Further, the Institute facilitated access to Verdi materials in a private collection for Vincent LaSelva of the New York Grand Opera.

Finally, the Institute has expanded its already impressive Advisory Board; launched its initial membership drive; and designated the first Fellow of the Institute, Doug Coe, currently serving as a Production Intern at the New York City Opera Company for its fall 1976 and spring 1977 seasons. With the assistance of Mary Jane Matz, Floyd Herzog, Mario Medici, and others, we have begun planning a Congress of Verdi Studies to take place in October of 1977; have held our inaugural lecture, by Andrew Porter, on October 22; and, with the assistance of Martin Smith, have planned our major event of the fall: a day devoted to Verdi. On Saturday, 4 December, there will be papers on the music of Verdi in the morning; and a symposium on the six extant production books printed by Ricordi in the 19th century, based on performances directed by Verdi himself, in the afternoon. The event is sponsored by the Institute jointly with the Greater New York Chapter of the American Musicological Society and the American Opera Center at Juilliard.

Other projects are to expand the archive, provide additional fellowships, and support publications such as the Verdi Congress Reports for Chicago (September 1974) and Kentucky (October 1977); but these are contingent on finding additional sources of funding. Suggestions and contributions for specific projects such as these are welcome and should be sent to the Director. With the recent grants for the archive, and the continued strong support of the Advisory Board and individual members, we anticipate further new and exciting achievements in the months ahead.

MARTIN CHUSID