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THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

OPERA THEATRE

presents . . .

*A Dinner
Engagement*

BY LENNOX BERKELEY

LIBRETTO: PAUL DEHN

*Amahl and the
Night Visitors*

BY GIAN-CARLO MENOTTI

PERFORMANCES:

December 10th, 11th,
13th, 14th, 1957
8:30 p.m.

CHILDREN'S MATINEE:

December 14th
3:00 p.m.

*University Playhouse
East 41st & University Way
Seattle*

MUSIC BY LENNOX BERKELEY
LIBRETTO BY PAUL DEHN

A DINNER ENGAGEMENT

Cast (in order of appearance):

The Earl of Dunmow August Werner, *bass*
The Countess of Dunmow Betty Matthias, *soprano*
Susan, their daughter Janet Heller, *soprano*
Mrs. Kneebone, a hired "help" Geraldine Nein, *mezzo-soprano*
H.R.H. The Grand Duchess of Monteblanco Emilie Berendsen
or Gene Sundsten, *contralto*
H.R.H. Prince Phillipe, her son Tommy Goleeke, *tenor*
An errand girl Eva Trembar

PLACE: The Chelsea kitchen of the impoverished Earl of Dunmow

SCENE I

The Earl of Dunmow (formerly Envoy Extraordinary to the Grand Duchy of Monteblanco), and his wife are, with the assistance of a hired weekly "help," Mrs. Kneebone, preparing a dinner to welcome the visiting Grand Duchess and her gastronomic son, Prince Phillipe, whom they secretly hope to interest in their daughter, Susan. At a moment of culinary and emotional crisis, when the dinner's entree (*Tomatoes Monteblanco*) appears irretrievably ruined and Susan has forthrightly refused to wear the *soigné* evening gown her parents have at great sacrifice bought her, the Royal Party arrives through the kitchen back door, which is deceptively larger and more imposing than the house's front entrance.

SCENE II

The Grand Duchess, though at first tactfully refusing to admit that she is in a kitchen at all, takes beneficent cognizance of the Dunmows' financial plight, presents them with a substitute for the ruined entrée, which she has thoughtfully brought with her, and then proceeds with her hosts on a (necessarily) circumscribed tour of the small back garden. In the kitchen Phillipe, after mistaking Susan for the Dunmows' weekly "help," discovers that she has all the qualities—including an interest in cooking—to make him an ideal wife. His declaration of love is supported by the Grand Duchess' insistence that they become betrothed immediately. This suggestion meets with everyone's approval, including Mrs. Kneebone, who is at last able to announce that "Dinner is served."

INTERMISSION

BY GIAN-CARLO MENOTTI AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

Cast (in order of appearance):

	Dec. 10, 11	
	Dec. 14 matinee	Dec. 13, 14
Amahl, a crippled boy	Jimmy Codling <i>soprano</i>	Edward Cadman
His mother	Mary Alexander <i>soprano</i>	Caroline Clarke
The Three Kings:	Melchior... Alan Lund <i>baritone</i>	
	Balthazar... Louis Smart <i>bass</i>	
	Kaspar... Thomas Tavener <i>tenor</i>	
The page	Robert Elfstrom <i>baritone</i>	
The shepherds:		
<i>Singers:</i>	Vera Neufeld, Eva Trembanis, Irving Kranich, James Britt	
<i>Dancers:</i>	Marjorie Carrigan Joan Leipnik Louis Roedel	
	Luise Scripps Carolyn Peterson Mary Lee Capps	
	Charles Dega John Stipanella Nancy Nichols	

SCENE: A shepherd's hut and the yard outside

THE STORY . . .

Somewhere in the world lives a crippled little shepherd called Amahl, with his mother, an impoverished widow. Nothing is left to them of the little they ever had, and they are now faced with hunger and cold in their empty house.

Three Wise Men, on their way to Bethlehem, stop at the hut and ask to be taken in for the night. Amahl and his mother welcome them as well as they can, and are much astonished at the splendor of their robes and the wealth of gifts they are carrying with them. When Amahl's mother realizes that the Three Kings are looking for a newborn babe and that the expensive gifts are destined for him, she becomes bitter and envious. She cannot understand why at least some of these gifts are not to be bestowed upon her own child, who is so poor and sickly.

Under cover of darkness, while the Three Kings are asleep, she attempts to steal some of the gold from them, but is discovered. When she explains to the Three Kings that she needs this gold to feed her starving child, she is readily forgiven. With great tenderness, they try to explain to her who this newborn child is, and how much he needs the love of every human being to build his coming kingdom. Touched by their words, the poor widow not only gives back the stolen gold, but wishes she could add a gift of her own. Little Amahl comes to her rescue. He impulsively hands to the Three Kings his wooden crutch, his most precious possession, and in doing so he is miraculously cured of his lameness.

As dawn appears in the sky, the Three Kings make ready to resume their journey. Amahl begs his mother to let him join them, and he is finally allowed to follow the Kings to Bethlehem to adore and give thanks to the Christ Child.

