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Two Hawaiian Careers in Grand Opera

WHEN WE THINK of Hawaiians and music, the sounds of steel guitars and *‘ukulele* are more apt to come to mind than opera or symphony. Native Hawaiian culture, of course, has its own musical tradition, mainly vocal, dating from ancient times; chant or *mele* continues to exist today side by side with other kinds of Hawaiian styles influenced by both classical and popular Western music. Hawaiians are also well-known as composers and performers of Western-influenced Hawaiian popular music, but their contributions to Western classical music are less well-known.

Among Native Hawaiians born in the 19th century, very few became prominent as composers or performers in the Western art tradition, a circumstance which is hardly surprising since the total Hawaiian population, then, as now, is quite small as compared with the total population on which Western music draws. Queen Lili‘uokalani was among those who learned enough about Western music to write down her own songs. Her *Aloha ‘Oe*, for example, was influenced by the style of 19th-century *hīmeni* or Protestant hymns with texts translated into Hawaiian.¹ The part-Hawaiian Charles E. King (1874–1950) composed the operetta, *Prince of Hawaii*, called a “Hawaiian opera” when it was performed in Honolulu in 1925.² Part-Hawaiians and *ali‘i* (aristocrats, nobility) closely affiliated with the royal court attended con-

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certs of Western music at Honolulu's Kawaiaha'o Church in the late 19th century, but most Hawaiians had neither opportunities of this sort nor access to Western concert instruments or teachers of the tradition.

The training of concert instrumentalists and composers in the Western tradition usually begins in childhood. Singers, however, often do not discover the extent of their gift until they are adults and may start their training considerably later in life. A hardy Western-style singing tradition did take root among Native Hawaiians in 19th-century Hawai'i, and it was Hawaiian singers who made their way in the Western concert world rather than composers or instrumentalists. It is understandable that Hawaiian singers had to leave Hawai'i to establish themselves in that world. Careers in music have never been easy in the Islands. The singers who performed King's *Prince of Hawaii* and similar productions cannot be said to have had operatic careers, but in the early decades of the 20th century, four singers of Hawaiian descent had careers in European and European-influenced grand opera.

Two had quite modest careers. Carlos Sebastian, *né* Lot Kaulukou (1884-1959), was a pupil in Honolulu of opera singer Annis Montague Turner (1846-1920). She was the daughter of Amos Starr Cooke, lay missionary to Hawai'i and founder, with Samuel N. Castle, of Castle & Cooke, sugar factors. Sebastian studied in Milan, Italy, and later Paris, where his teacher was the famous Polish tenor Jean de Reszke. Sebastian turned to a career in dancing after performing as a baritone in provincial opera houses in Italy around 1910. Another baritone, Keaumoku Louis, *né* Louis Keaumoku Amoy (1888-1983), sang in productions with opera companies in Los Angeles and San Francisco, probably in the 1920s or early 1930s. His mother was Hawaiian-Caucasian, his father Chinese. He left Hawai'i at the age of 18, returning only to give recitals. When he died at the age of 95, he had been a Glendale, California resident for 58 years.³

I will focus here on two other Hawaiian singers, Ululani McQuaid Robertson (*c.* 1890-1970) and Tandy MacKenzie (1892-1963), who had more substantial careers and offer an interesting contrast to each other (figs. 1 and 2). The parameters of ethnic

identity, sex, and social class were manifested quite differently in their lives, and the American- and European-based society that dominated Hawai'i had then, as now, different expectations for ethnic groups, for men and women, and for persons of differing social classes. A chronology of events in the lives of the two singers is set forth below.

The information available about the two occasionally raises doubts about the reliability of the sources. Ululani McQuaid Robertson herself apparently supplied most of the information about her origin and family background; not all of her assertions can be verified today. Much of what is known about MacKenzie appears in a biography by his second wife, the late Jean Sterling MacKenzie (1904-1989), written many years after his death.⁴

Mrs. Robertson's 1970 obituary gives her age at death as 75, but it is more likely that she was 79 or 80.⁵ According to a 1951 newspaper article, she was the daughter of James H. McQuaid, an Englishman, and Kapulani Kalola Nahienaena Leinaholo Papai-kaniau, who was descended from *ali'i*. On her marriage certificate, however, her mother is listed simply as Emalia with no surname given. Her mother's family supposedly had large holdings in Kupanihi Valley near Pauoa on O'ahu. Among her effects was a genealogy of her family, now in the possession of the Bishop Museum. Late in her life, Mrs. Robertson told an interviewer that she was raised by her grandmother (name not given), a well-known Hawaiian chanter. Her family apparently did not have wealth but enjoyed the prestige of connections with Hawaiian nobility. This would have smoothed her way at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Honolulu, which she may have attended. Many of the pupils at the Sacred Heart school were daughters of wealthy residents. The Belgian nuns at the Convent spoke French and were proficient in needlework. According to Mrs. Robertson, she herself developed a talent for fine needlework at the Academy and "knew French better than she did English in her school days." As a child she may also have been fluent in Hawaiian.⁶

While still in her teens, Ululani McQuaid was married to Judge A. G. M. Robertson, a man of wealth, position, and ambition twice her age. Judge Robertson served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory from 1911 to 1918. Mrs.



FIG. 1. Mrs. Ululani Robertson Jabulka as Madame Butterfly, 1928. (Bishop Museum.)

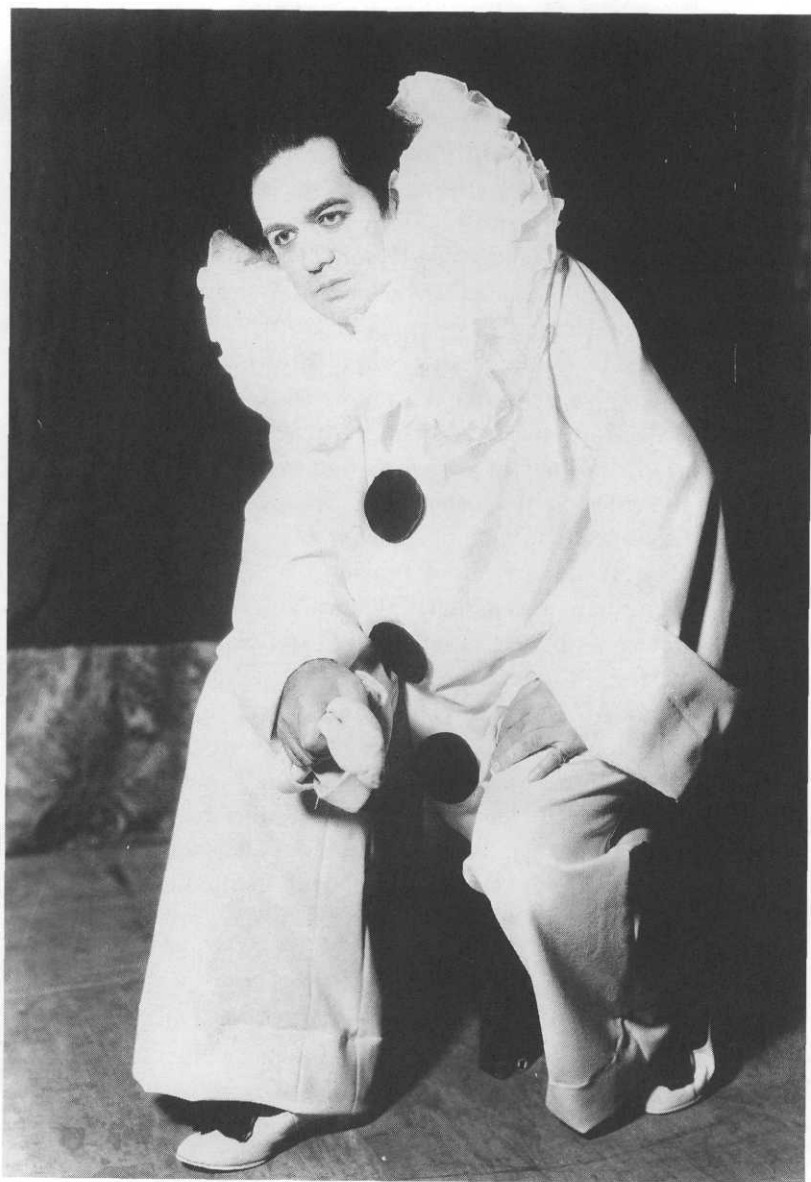


FIG. 2. Tandi Mackenzie as Canio in Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*. (Mrs. Lori Rand photo collection.)

Shane Granicher of Knights Landing, California, the niece of Mrs. Robertson's second husband, possesses a portrait of Mrs. Robertson painted by Theodore Wores (well-known in Hawai'i, particularly for his painting *The Lei Maker*), which shows her as an attractive young woman. After her marriage, she was active as a clubwoman and socialite in Honolulu. She was president of the Outdoor Circle from 1918 to 1920, and she made the planting of night-blooming cereus and bougainvillea on Tantalus Drive her own project. She received voice lessons from a leading Honolulu voice teacher, Mrs. Elizabeth Mackall. Her soprano voice was a social asset, and Hawai'i newspapers attest to her activity as a singer of both Hawaiian repertory and European classical music during the early years of her marriage. In 1918, for example, she sang two selections for a Morning Music Club recital, one of them an aria from Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. She would later specialize in the title role from this work. In 1920, she sang a Hawaiian song for a performance of *Maeli of Hawaii*, a play by a local woman, May H. (Mrs. J. G.) Rothwell.⁷

In the Honolulu newspapers, it was Mrs. Robertson's social position that was stressed rather than her Hawaiian background. When her Honolulu teacher, Mrs. Mackall, became voice instructor at Mills College in California, Mrs. Robertson went to California to study with her. She then went East, with the approval of her husband, to study with the great prima donna Marcella Sembrich in New York. When Sembrich asked her if she wanted a career in music, she answered no; she said that she only wanted to "perfect [her] voice as an accomplishment."⁸ Up to this point in her life, her education had been of the variety offered to the daughters of wealthy Hawai'i residents, and her contact with Hawaiians may have been limited largely to her family. As a young married adult, her activities and pastimes were those typical of a wealthy young Caucasian woman whose husband was "on the rise." Her initiative in going to New York to seek out a great singer as a voice teacher was unusual, but her voice was unusually beautiful, and her endeavor to perfect it "as an accomplishment" had her husband's approval.

Tandy MacKenzie was born in 1892 on Maui, the son of a German-Hawaiian woman, Nellie Reuter, and a Scots-Canadian

father, James Francis MacKenzie, said to be a direct descendant of Alexander MacKenzie, the famous explorer after whom the Canadian river is named. His father died before he was born; his mother remarried and moved from Maui to Honolulu. The child was left in the care of his grandmother, as Mrs. Robertson also reports to have been. His German-Hawaiian grandfather, Meinert H. Reuter, was a landowner in the Hāna district of Maui.⁹

When MacKenzie was eight years old he was sent to Honolulu to school, but at an institution quite different from the exclusive convent school where Robertson was educated. MacKenzie attended The Kamehameha School for Boys, established for children of Hawaiian descent. At the time he attended, the emphasis was on training for a blue-collar vocation; MacKenzie studied what was apparently woodworking and participated in military drills. The shop work did not interest him, but in later years he told his wife that the discipline he learned in doing something he did not care to do was valuable when he reached adulthood, enabling him to discipline himself as an artist. As he grew older, his tenor voice attracted some attention, but he decided on a career in medicine, an unusual choice for a man of Hawaiian descent with the kind of training available to him.¹⁰

After graduation from The Kamehameha School for Boys in 1911, MacKenzie was accepted as a working pre-medical student at Northfield Seminary (Mt. Hermon School) in Northfield, Massachusetts, where he joined the Glee Club. At one of the Club's concerts, the famous tenor John McCormack heard his voice, sought him out, and advised him to study singing. Soon after that he decided on a career as a singer. He left Northfield to sing in a musical play about Hawai'i, *Bird of Paradise*, which was running in Boston. After the show closed, he went to New York and began singing in clubs and later at the Biltmore Hotel. A customer at the hotel gave him a ticket for a performance of *I Pagliacci* with Enrico Caruso at the Metropolitan Opera. According to his wife, he did not even know what opera was before this time. He was thunderstruck by Caruso's singing, and he started attending the opera regularly.¹¹

MacKenzie began vocal study with William Thorner, a New York voice teacher, in 1919. After some years of study, a recital

tour was arranged for him by the Metropolitan Musical Bureau for the 1922–1923 season. Before he began it, however, he returned to Hawai‘i and was welcomed like a returning hero. He would receive the same warm welcome when he gave recitals in the Islands in 1927, 1928, and 1932.¹²

Honolulu newspaper reviews of MacKenzie’s concerts, unlike Ululani Robertson’s, usually stressed his Hawaiian descent and the hard work he had sustained in becoming a concert artist. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* welcomed him to Hawai‘i on June 7, 1922, with editorial commentary that underlines an attitude towards persons of Hawaiian ancestry common in establishment newspapers in Hawai‘i during the 1920s:

Welcome home, Tandy! You come back with high honors, won by hard work, intelligence, perseverance—developed by your own determination. . . . Your career has reflected credit on Hawaii. It gives cause for ambition to boys and young men of your race here.¹³

The implications of the editorial are clear. Here at last, the writer seemed to feel, was a Hawaiian who was not lazy, who believed in the work ethic—in short, who acted like a *haole* (Caucasian)!

While MacKenzie was being held up as a role model to male Hawaiians, Mrs. Robertson, on her return, was celebrated by a photograph in the society pages.¹⁴ There was no mention of her Hawaiian descent. She was still the socialite, not yet as famous as MacKenzie, but with her vocal accomplishments an adornment to her powerful Caucasian husband. Her Hawaiian ancestry would be mentioned in an oblique way by Honolulu newspapers when she returned for concerts in 1924. “One of [Hawai‘i’s] own countrywomen, who has inherited the best products of her musical traditions . . .” was the *Star-Bulletin* reference to her.¹⁵

Like MacKenzie, Mrs. Robertson sang publicly in Honolulu in 1922. Her recital on July 12 displayed the fruits of her recent study with Marcella Sembrich. According to the *Honolulu Advertiser* critic’s review, her audience at Mission Memorial Hall was one “that would go to the making of a Honolulu blue book.”¹⁶

Her classical recital, with its representation of opera and solo

song from the early 18th to the 20th centuries, would have appealed to a select audience. Mrs. Robertson apparently sang in Italian and French, the latter perhaps learned at Sacred Hearts Academy. Her recital repertoire was carefully chosen to show off her agile lyric soprano voice. The considerable amount of French music on this and her 1924 Honolulu concert is noteworthy—in 1924 she would sing, among others, arias from Massenet's *Hérodiade* and Gounod's *Faust*. It seemed natural for her to sing in a language that she had learned as a child.

Tandy MacKenzie gave recitals throughout the Islands in 1922 for audiences much less exclusive than Mrs. Robertson's "blue book" supporters. To one of these he invited 20 patients from the Lunalilo Home for the Aged, a facility for the care of elderly Native Hawaiians.

He also performed on Maui, the Big Island of Hawai'i, Kaua'i, and even sang at the leper settlement at Kalaupapa, Moloka'i, where many Hawaiians lived. His wife claimed in his biography that this was the first time that the colony had had someone come from outside to entertain. To sing at Kalaupapa it was necessary for MacKenzie to get permission from the Board of Health, then travel by boat to Moloka'i. Perhaps following MacKenzie's example, Mrs. Robertson gave a recital for the tuberculosis patients at the Kula Sanitarium when she sang on Maui two years later in 1924.¹⁷

MacKenzie's first Honolulu recital, given at the Liberty Theater on June 9, 1922, included selections from grand opera (many of his programs began with Puccini) and selections from the then popular American and British composers and almost always closed with a group of Hawaiian songs. It is in these and in their lesser emphasis on foreign-language operatic selections that MacKenzie's recitals showed a broader appeal than Robertson's. Mrs. Robertson had sung a Hawaiian number as a duet with MacKenzie, at the opening of the Hawaii Theatre in 1922 but began to feature Hawaiian songs only during her interisland recitals in 1924.¹⁸ A *Hilo Tribune-Herald* writer asked her what her teacher Marcella Sembrich thought of her Hawaiian songs. Mrs. Robertson informed him that she thought the Hawaiian numbers "... were beautiful although they were limited in scope as far as technic was

concerned. She desired that she should not in anyway [*sic*] spoil Mrs. Robertson's voice for rendering Hawaiian music."¹⁹

Mrs. Robertson went to Europe about 1925 for voice study. She had planned a New York recital but told a reporter in 1933 that she had to choose between an expensive debut in Aeolian Hall—or a trip to Italy. She chose to go abroad. The sequence of events in her European career is not clear. She studied with Giuseppe Benvenuto, a pupil of Pietro Mascagni. She also had a few lessons with Mascagni himself, best known today for the opera *Cavalleria Rusticana*, but also the composer of many other operas, including *Iris* which Mrs. Robertson was studying at the time. At some point she appeared in Puccini's *La Bohème* in Milan, Italy.²⁰

Her recital debut at the Salle Comoedia in Paris on July 7, 1926 presented repertoire she had sung in Honolulu, but with the addition of a group of Hawaiian songs. In Paris in March 1927, she made her operatic debut in the title role of *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini's opera about the love of a Japanese geisha for a perfidious American naval officer. One of her managers thought the role especially suited her and advised her to specialize in it. She sang under contract for several seasons in France, Italy, and Belgium, billed as Madame la Princesse Ululani, emphasizing her Hawaiian name and her "noble" descent.²¹

She was praised for her gestures and acting as well as her singing. When she sang *Butterfly* at the Théâtre Royale in Liège, Belgium in April 1928, the reviewer of the Liège newspaper *La Meuse* wrote:

As for Madame Ululani, she was ravishing as Madame Butterfly. Never have we seen an artist who has penetrated the character of this role so well, or who so thoroughly understood the . . . part. She was truly a priceless little Japanese doll. Madame Ululani showed extremely original attitudes, precise gestures which were charming and enchanting. . . . Madame Ululani is not only an artist of unusual ability, but she is a remarkable little Butterfly who dances and sings this role with a unique personality. When one has seen her one can never forget her.²²

The role she specialized in reflected her early life in Honolulu. Like the Japanese geisha she portrayed, Mrs. Robertson had married young. She would have had ample opportunity in the

Islands to observe the gestures and mannerisms of Japanese immigrant women; perhaps these observations were of assistance in her interpretation of *Butterfly*.

She performed *Madama Butterfly* at the Opera-Comique in Paris before an enthusiastic audience in 1931. This year seems to have been the high point of her career. She returned to Honolulu in 1933.²³

On May 14, 16, and 18, 1936, Mrs. Robertson starred in *Madama Butterfly* at McKinley High School, a joint presentation by the Morning Music Club and the Honolulu Community Theatre. *Butterfly* would surely never have been presented if Mrs. Robertson, fresh from her European successes, had not been on the scene. Fritz B. Hart, conductor of the Honolulu Symphony and musical director for the production, led a cast of about 50. Operettas, especially those of Arthur Sullivan, were occasionally presented in Honolulu between the two World Wars. However, a 1928 presentation of Von Flotow's *Martha* by the short-lived Honolulu Opera Association and a 1936 production of *Butterfly* were the only presentations of grand opera during this time and *Butterfly*, presented in Italian, the only one in a foreign language.²⁴

From Paris, one of the most important centers of Western music, to Honolulu was an artistic step down for Mrs. Robertson, a circumstance of which she must have been fully aware at the time. Although the tenor who sang Lieutenant Pinkerton in the production, Aroldo Collini (*né* Frank Colson), was brought from San Francisco, most of the other singers in the Honolulu production were local amateurs, and the instrumentalists were drawn from a community orchestra that in 1936 had more amateurs than professionals.

In a 1952 interview Mrs. Robertson said:

In 1932 when Alec [her husband] came over I realized that he needed me in Honolulu. I was grateful for the wonderful opportunity I had had to develop my voice, but I decided that the time had come for me to go home.²⁵

Her obituary asserted that her husband's health had failed. Nevertheless, he lived on until 1947.²⁶ Perhaps she was merely tired of

the frenetic pace and competitive life that an opera singer must lead.

The 1936 *Butterfly* was the last important musical event of Mrs. Robertson's career; she seems to have been content to settle down as a housewife. She continued to be active in the Outdoor Circle; she was a member of the Garden Club, the Hawaiian Civic Club (an organization for Native Hawaiians), IMUA (an organization formed to combat Communism in the Territory), and was named to the City and County Board of Public Parks and Recreation in 1947. She was civic-minded and probably conservative in her political affiliations. After her husband's death in 1947, she married Jan Jabulka, Managing Editor of the *Honolulu Advertiser*. Like her first husband, Jabulka was an ardent proponent of statehood for Hawai'i, and in 1951 he was named Executive Director of the Hawaii Statehood Commission. From then until 1959, she and her husband spent most of the year in Washington, D.C. She died in Honolulu in 1970.²⁷ The Jabulka Pavilion at the Bishop Museum was built in her memory with funds provided according to the will of her second husband.

In summary, she acknowledged her Hawaiian ancestry in the presentation of Hawaiian songs in her later concerts and in her stage name, Madame la Princesse Ululani. In Honolulu, her interests and activities were typically those of a socially prominent woman of her time. She was careful to obtain her first husband's approval of her career. She apparently had no regrets at abandoning that career when it was still at its height.

Tandy MacKenzie in 1923 married an older woman, Maud Irene Goodspeed (also known as Lolita Lorae), who had been married to, among others, Enrico Caruso's accompanist, Enzo Dell'Orefice. MacKenzie seems to have been attracted to strong-minded women; Maud took over the management of her husband's career. MacKenzie's second wife and biographer, Jean Sterling MacKenzie, whom he married in 1955 after his first wife's death, seems never to have met Maud. However, she blamed her for MacKenzie's failure to achieve in his career all that he might have.²⁸

MacKenzie went to Italy in 1926, about the same time as Mrs. Robertson. He auditioned for Arturo Toscanini in Milan, and on the maestro's advice, he began study in that city with Vincenzo

Pintorno di Geraci. During MacKenzie's 1927 concert tour in the Islands, local Honolulu businessmen raised \$12,000 to enable him to continue his study in Italy, an amount that at that time would probably have supported him abroad for several years.²⁹

MacKenzie's opera debut occurred in June 1929 in Cannes, France where he sang Rodolfo opposite Grace Moore as Mimi in *La Bohème*. Grace Moore would become much better known after her success in a 1934 motion picture, *One Night of Love*. The same year guest appearances were arranged for MacKenzie in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. Mrs. Robertson, incidentally, appeared in *Madama Butterfly* in Pilsen the day after MacKenzie was seen there in *Cavalleria rusticana* and *I Pagliacci*. She and MacKenzie had probably been friends since the early 1920s when they had both studied in New York. In 1929, MacKenzie sang leading roles in Verdi's *Aida* and Puccini's *La Bohème* at the Nationaltheater in Munich, Germany to critical acclaim. He returned to the U.S. and in 1930 auditioned with Giulio Gatti-Casazza, Manager of the New York Metropolitan Opera, but was turned down. In the early 1930s, according to his wife and biographer Jean MacKenzie, he auditioned repeatedly for Gatti-Casazza, but he was not awarded a contract. She attributed the refusal to his former teacher Thorner's boast to Gatti-Casazza that MacKenzie was a better tenor than Caruso. Gatti-Casazza held Caruso in the highest esteem. After Gatti-Casazza's retirement, according to Mrs. MacKenzie, her husband was offered a contract by Edward Johnson, Gatti-Casazza's successor at the Metropolitan Opera, but lost the offer due to his wife Maud's insistence that he be paid a bigger salary.³⁰

MacKenzie returned to Europe in late 1929 or early 1930 to begin a five-year contract with the Bavarian State Opera (Bayerisches Staatsoper) in Munich. Barbara Wagner-Galdea, assistant to the press officer of the Staatsoper, wrote to me that "he was one of the best and most liked tenors by the [Munich] audience at that time." Nevertheless, MacKenzie requested that the contract be cancelled:

This letter is to notify you that it is impossible for me to sing in German. It has taken me ten years to acquire my present production. Since signing the contract to sing at the Staatsoper in Munich

in German, I find after numerous trials that, if I sing in German, it is necessary to change my production; this I would not do, as it would damage the quality and the position of my singing. I request that the contract be cancelled immediately.³¹

Returning again from Europe, MacKenzie spent the rest of his career in the U.S. He sang a season with the San Francisco Opera Company in 1932, was a featured soloist in operas at the Hollywood Bowl from 1934 to 1938, and performed in major roles with the San Carlo Opera Company touring North America in the 1930s and 1940s. The San Carlo Company, organized by the Italian impresario Fortune Gallo in 1909, was a touring company until it disbanded in 1955. Self-supporting, it helped to spread a love for opera in the U.S. and Canada. Most of San Carlo's singers were young and unknown.³²

MacKenzie also sang in four Hollywood films: *Goin' to Town*, 1935; *Anthony Adverse* and *San Francisco*, 1936; and *There's Magic in Music*, 1942. After 1948, his career, already in decline, went downhill even more rapidly. According to his biography, he had appeared in major roles in 21 operas during his career, a considerable contrast to Mrs. Robertson's emphasis on a single role, Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*. During the last few years of his life, he tutored some voice pupils and also worked for the post office in the Los Angeles area. He died in a California freeway accident in 1963.³³

As far as can be determined, Mrs. Robertson made no sound recordings. MacKenzie began recording for the Columbia Phonograph Company about 1919, mostly popular songs and so-called "light classics." In 1976 and 1977, long-playing recordings of MacKenzie's singing (apparently none from the Columbia discs) were issued by Island Heritage and Lehua Records, respectively. The Island Heritage album included recordings of Western operatic arias made between 1933 and 1940 and Hawaiian songs made by the singer for 1936 Hollywood radio broadcasts sponsored by Dole Pineapple. The Lehua album consisted of Hawaiian songs only, probably also from the 1936 broadcasts.³⁴

The operatic selections include two by Giuseppe Verdi: the tenor aria *La donna è mobile* from *Rigoletto* and the duet for soprano

and tenor *Parigi o cara* from *La Traviata* (with an unnamed soprano), and tenor arias by Massenet and Leoncavallo, *Ah! Fuyez, douce image* from *Manon*, and *Vesti la giubba* from *Pagliacci*, respectively. The Verdi and Massenet selections were taken from radio broadcasts (Verdi, 1937; Massenet, 1940), and Leoncavallo's *Vesti* from a live performance of the opera in Los Angeles in 1933. MacKenzie's performance of these selections contains numerous errors: wrong notes, omitted notes, sloppy diction, mispronunciations. Since they were taken from live performances, however, it is likely that they do not represent the singer's best efforts.

Bringing a well-developed Western singing technique to the performance of Hawaiian repertory, MacKenzie did not sing the language as a Native Hawaiian speaker would sing it. He often omits the glottal stops, essential to the language's meaning. Judging from these latter-day recordings, MacKenzie's voice was one of lyric beauty, but not of the calibre claimed for it by enthusiastic reviewers of the Honolulu newspapers, understandably hyperbolic in their praise, or by his wife, untrained as a musician.

Robertson's and MacKenzie's lives and careers reflect recognition of their Hawaiian backgrounds in very different ways. MacKenzie's programming of Hawaiian songs on his recitals from the earliest stages of his career shows his eagerness to display the beauties of Hawaiian music; his donation of tickets for one of his recitals to aged Hawaiians in Honolulu, and his taking the trouble to visit and give recitals at Kalaupapa suggest that he was more in touch with average Hawaiians in the Islands than was Mrs. Robertson.

Successful opera singers must have superlative voices and musicianship (the two do not always go together), patience, overwhelming ambition, and a great deal of good luck. It takes nothing away from the achievements of either MacKenzie or Mrs. Robertson to affirm that not all these ingredients were present in their careers. Both had minor careers as opera singers. Still, it seems quite likely that the two never reached their full potentials as performing artists. Fate, society, and the personalities of the singers themselves intervened to limit their achievement.

MacKenzie seems to have had his share of bad luck. If his first wife impeded his career, as his biographer asserts, he was unable

or unwilling to do anything about it. He was the toast of Munich in 1929, but he was seldom able to capture the sympathy of either Mainland audiences or potential employers in the U.S. in spite of good reviews.

Mrs. Robertson seems to have wearied of her career in the 1930s and was probably content to come home to Hawai'i to her comfortable social position. The plaudits of sophisticated Parisian audiences had rung in her ears, and she was satisfied in the knowledge that she had successfully communicated Cio-Cio-San to European audiences.

Both Ululani Robertson and Tandy MacKenzie gave a great deal of pleasure to audiences during their lifetimes, and one can hope that everyone who loves the Islands and the dynamic mixture of peoples who inhabit them will long remember and honor them for their abilities and accomplishments.

NOTES

I wish to thank the following persons for their help in the preparation of this article: Amy Stillman, Dorothy Gillett, Albert Schutz, David Swift, and Chieko Tachihata; and Tandy MacKenzie's niece, Elizabeth Lau, of Kāne'ohe, and grandniece, Lori Rand, of Honolulu. Mrs. Rand allowed me access to materials in her possession used by Jean S. MacKenzie in the preparation of the biography of her husband.

¹ Amy Stillman, "Published Hawaiian Songbooks," *Music Library Association Notes* 44, no. 2 (December 1987): 221-39. Stillman has identified four Hawaiian song types influenced by Western music: *hīmeni*, *hīmeni*-type with secular texts, *hula ku'i*, and *hapa-haole* or part Hawaiian.

² George Kanahele, ed., *Hawaiian Music and Musicians* (Honolulu: U P of Hawaii, 1979) 214-17. "Hawaiian operas" were Western-influenced productions that vary greatly in their integrity: see "Hawaiian Opera: Who's on First?" in *Ha'Ikono Mele* 3, no. 7 (July 1977): 6. The first such production was *Pele and Lohi'au* (1925), its music drawn from diverse sources and its libretto by Fred Beckley (1874-1943), Hawaiian music and folklore authority. King's *Prince of Hawaii* was first performed a few weeks after *Pele* in 1925. An earlier production, *Bird of Paradise*, opened in New York in 1912 as a stage play with a Hawaiian setting, Hawaiian songs, and an ensemble of guitar, 'ukulele, steel guitar, and ancient Hawaiian instruments. See Kanahele, *Hawaiian Music* 45-6.

³ On Sebastian, see Clarice Taylor, "Tales About Hawaii," *HSB*, 18-20, 22,

and 24–26 Apr. 1950; on Louis, see “Kecamoku Lewis [*sic*] to Tour the Islands,” *HSB*, 15 Nov. 1932, and *Santa Barbara News-Press*, 14 Mar. 1983 (obituary); Pauline Amoy (niece), interview, Honolulu, 21 Oct. 1989. Two more recent singers deserve mention: Charles K. L. Davis (1925–1991), active as an entertainer in Hawai‘i, had a successful operatic career: see Mantle Hood, “Artist in Profile,” *Ha‘Ilono Mele* 1, no. 11 (Nov. 1975): 2–4. Keith Ikaia-Purdy (1959–), a graduate of The Kamehameha Schools, has recently received considerable acclaim in Europe: Fidelia Purdy (mother), interview, Aiea, 23 Sept. 1991.

⁴ Jean S. MacKenzie, *Tandy*, ed. Luke A. Dozois (Norfolk Island, Australia: Heritage Limited, 1975), provides a wealth of detail, hereinafter cited as MacKenzie, *Tandy*. Some family descendants have criticized her portrayal of MacKenzie’s first wife. Mrs. MacKenzie’s death certificate, county of Los Angeles, is the source of her dates. She was a British citizen by birth. Also, *Who’s Who in America*, vol. 17, 1932–1933 (Chicago: A. N. Marquis, 1932), and *Who Was Who In America With World Notables*, vol. 4, 1961–1968 (Chicago: Marquis—Who’s Who, Inc., 1968).

⁵ *SSB & A*, 11 Oct. 1970 (obituary). No record of Mrs. Robertson’s birth has been found. The Hawaii 1910 Census, Honolulu district 29, 6B, no. 43, is most likely correct—it gives her age as 20, making her birth date about 1890. Mrs. Robertson’s second husband was considerably younger than she, and she may have made herself out to be younger in her later years.

⁶ *HSB*, 8 Dec. 1951; Grace Tower Warren, “Island Hostess: Ululani Robertson Jabulka,” *PP*, 65, no. 2 (Feb. 1953): 30, hereinafter cited as Warren, “Island Hostess.” Sister Marie Celeste, Sacred Hearts Academy Principal, has stated that she can find no trace of Mrs. Robertson in the school’s records.

⁷ *F*, 65, no. 7 (July 1907); George F. Nellist, ed., *The Story of Hawaii and Its Builders . . .* (Honolulu: *HSB*, 1925) 736; Warren, “Island Hostess” 30–1; *PCA*, 10 Feb. 1918 and 10 Jan. 1920.

⁸ Warren, “Island Hostess,” probably relied on Mrs. Robertson’s memory, understandably vague after the passage of 30 years. Warren asserts that after Mrs. Robertson followed Mrs. Mackall to the West Coast in 1921, she went to New York to meet Marcella Sembrich; there, due to illness, she missed Caruso’s final (Metropolitan Opera) performance of Halevy’s *La Juive*, an event known to have occurred 24 Dec. 1920.

⁹ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 13–4; Bureau of Conveyances, Grantee Index 207, 1870–1884, and 209, 1885–1894.

¹⁰ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 17–9.

¹¹ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 23, 26, 31, 34, 36–7, 45, 48–51, and 55.

¹² MacKenzie, *Tandy* 64, 74–5, 80, 137–47, 159, and 230–39.

¹³ *HSB*, 7 June 1922.

¹⁴ “Hawaii’s Tenor, Tandy MacKenzie, Scores Triumph,” *HSB*, 10 June 1922; photograph of Mrs. Robertson, *HSB*, 10 June 1922.

¹⁵ *HSB*, 16 Feb. 1924.

- ¹⁶ "Mrs. Robertson Scores Triumph With Recital," *HSB*, 13 July 1922. Mrs. Robertson also sang two solos and two duets with Tandy MacKenzie at the opening of the Hawaii Theater on September 6, 1922. One of the duets was Charles E. King's *Imi Au Ia 'Oe*: *HSB*, 7 Sept. 1922.
- ¹⁷ MacKenzie's Island recitals during 1922 were: Honolulu, 9, 10, 13, 17, and 24 June, 4 and 12 Sept.; Hilo, 30 June and 3 July; two on Maui, Kahului, 8 July, and Wailuku, 10 July; and two or possibly three on Kaua'i, Lihue, 22 July, Makaweli, 24 July, and Kilauea, 25 July. MacKenzie, *Tandy* 102-05, mentions the trip to Moloka'i; "Songstress Wins Hearts on Maui," *Maui News*, 7 Mar. 1924.
- ¹⁸ Program of Mackenzie's first Honolulu concert, *HSB*, 10 June 1922; "MacKenzie [*sic*] Wins Hearts of Audience," *HA*, 10 June 1922.
- ¹⁹ "Musical Artists Seek Inspiration from Madame Pele," *Hilo Tribune-Herald*, 10 Mar. 1924. Mrs. Robertson also gave recitals (see n. 17) on Maui and Kaua'i on 26 and 27 Mar. 1924.
- ²⁰ "Gorgeous Cio Cio San Returns to Honolulu After Absence Abroad," *HSB*, 16 Dec. 1933; "Mrs. Robertson Makes Successful Debut in Paris," *HA*, 7 Aug. 1926, quoting from Paris edition of *The New York Herald-Tribune*; "Ululani Robertson To Be Soloist April 24 . . .", *HA*, 15 Apr. 1934.
- ²¹ Program, BPBM; "Mrs. Robertson Triumphs . . . in Paris . . .", *HA*, 31 Mar. 1927; *SSB & A*, 11 Oct. 1970.
- ²² "Mrs. Robertson Makes Pronounced Hit in . . . Belgium . . .", *HA*, 15 Apr. 1928.
- ²³ "Mrs. Robertson Scores Hit in Paris Opera," from United Press, Paris, *HA*, 24 Nov. 1931; *HA*, 15 Apr. 1934.
- ²⁴ "Local Opera Is Hit With Mme. Robertson Star," *HA*, 15 May 1936; ". . . Brilliant Production," *HSB*, 15 May 1936. "Sheer Merit of Opera 'Martha' . . .", *HSB*, 8 Dec. 1928.
- ²⁵ Warren, "Island Hostess" 32.
- ²⁶ *SSB & A*, 11 Oct. 1970.
- ²⁷ Warren, "Island Hostess" 35; *HSB*, 14 May 1947; *SSB & A*, 11 Oct. 1970.
- ²⁸ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 127-28.
- ²⁹ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 150-51. Jean MacKenzie is in error in asserting that Vincenzo Pintorno came out of retirement expressly to teach her husband. Giuseppe Pintorno, of Milan, Italy and Vice President of Amici di Puccini e della musica, letter to the author, 2 July 1989, states that the elder Pintorno (1862-1968), a distant relative, taught at the Milan Conservatory until 1932. He died at the age of 106, surely one of the more durable musicians of renown in recorded history, and actually outlived MacKenzie. Businessmen raised \$12,000: *MacKenzie*, *Tandy* 145.
- ³⁰ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 161 and 164; opera bills for MacKenzie's and Robertson's appearance in Pilsen, BPBM; *Tandy*, MacKenzie 173-74, 184, 200, 226, and 189-93.
- ³¹ Barbara Wagner-Galdea, letter to author, 25 Jan. 1989, including photocopy

of MacKenzie, letter to Baron von Frankenstein of the Bayerisches Staatso-per, cancellation of contract. MacKenzie, *Tandy* 202, asserts that all foreigners' contracts at the Bayerisches Staatso-per had been cancelled when Hitler came to power. As Charles Frankel noted in his review of Mrs. MacKenzie's book, however, Hitler did not come to power until 1933: *SSB & A*, 9 May 1976.

³² MacKenzie, *Tandy* 209-29, 254-56, 264, and 275; David Ewen, *The New Encyclopedia of the Opera* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1973) 256 and 614.

³³ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 261, 364, 336, and 356-57.

³⁴ MacKenzie, *Tandy* 365-66. Typical titles of Columbia recordings (MacKenzie gives a complete list) include *My Buddy*, *Roses of Picardy*, *I'm Falling in Love With Someone*. Reissues of 1930s recordings are: "Tandy MacKenzie Sings," Limited Edition, by Island Heritage, which published MacKenzie's *Tandy*; and "Tandy MacKenzie: A Rare Hawaiian Experience," by Lehua Records.

