



THE RAYMOND F. KRAVIS CENTER  
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

presents in  
Marshall E. Rinker, Sr. Playhouse

April 17, 2010

**MARIA, the life  
and loves of Maria Callas**  
by Alma H. Bond;  
Edited and Directed by Bill Taylor

# WHO'S WHO

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Setting: November 11, 1974: Ms. Callas' dressing room in Sapporo, Japan the evening of her final public performance, a concert with Giuseppe di Stefano.

This play comes from *The Autobiography of Maria Callas: A Novel* by Alma H. Bond. It is a work of fiction. The events and ideas in the play are rooted in historical records, letters, diaries, interviews and other research. The work is based on the informed interpretation of Maria Callas' character and events during her life and career.

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Since her debut in the role of Cinderella in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* in 1965 with Greater Miami Opera, **JOY DAVIDSON** has performed some 45 roles throughout Europe and North America, including appearances with the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, Bayerische Staatsoper, La Scala Milano, Teatro Reggion, Maggio Musicale, New York City Opera, Netherlands Opera, Welsh National Opera, Madrid Opera, Teatro Liceo, Rio de Janeiro, Opéra de Lyon, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dallas Civic Opera, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Vancouver Operas, and many other regional opera companies in the U.S. and Canada.

Her signature role has been that of Bizet's *Carmen*, which she has

performed more than 300 times. Other frequently performed roles: Rosina (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Rossini), Cenerentola (*La Cenerentola*, Rossini), Baba the Turk (*Rake's Progress*, Stravinsky), Dalila (*Samson et Dalila*, Saint-Saëns), Adalgisa (*Norma*, Bellini), Charlotte (*Werther*, Massenet), the leading Verdi mezzo-soprano roles – Azucena (*Il Trovatore*); Amneris (*Aida*); Preziosilla (*La Forza del Destino*); Fenena (*Nabucco*) – and the leading roles in the operas of Menotti, Penderecki and Stravinsky.

Davidson has sung two world premieres and several American premieres of operatic works. She has also appeared in the great comprimario roles such as Mamma Lucia (*Cavalleria Rusticana*,

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Mascagni); Berta (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Rossini) and the Marquise in *La Fille du Régiment* (Donizetti). Her farewell operatic performance was as Gertrude in the 1995 Florida Grand Opera production of *Roméo et Juliette* (Gounod). Davidson has been a frequent guest soloist with major orchestras such as Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Leningrad and the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale. Best known were her appearances as alto soloist in the orchestra works of Mahler, Stravinsky, Ravel and Beethoven. She was also a concert and recital artist for Columbia Artists Community Concert Association. Unique to her repertoire are narrations of *Peter and the Wolf* (Prokofiev) and *Façade* (Edith Sitwell, William Walton, composer).

Throughout her career Davidson has been a judge and adjudicator for local and national competitions such as the Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions, the Dealy awards in Dallas and National Association of Teachers of Singers competitions. Often these appearances are combined with master classes for the competitors.

Following retirement from the operatic and concert stage, Davidson headed the department of vocal/opera studies in the Music Division of New World School of the Arts, Miami, where she began teaching in 1989. In addition to designing a curriculum specific to students seeking a professional career in serious vocal music, she taught voice, lyric diction, sacred and symphonic vocal literature, vocal pedagogy, opera history and directed the Opera Theatre Ensemble. She

produced and directed twice-yearly opera productions, a total of 30.

Davidson was named a recipient of the Charles A. and Carrie Mastronardi Endowed Chair for 1995-1998. In addition NISOD named Davidson a recipient of the 1996 Excellence award for outstanding "contribution to teaching and learning." She also received the coveted Roberta Rymer Balfe "Shooting Star" award from the Florida Grand Opera for her lifetime commitment and achievement in Opera Education. Davidson was called back to the theater in 1999 when she appeared as Maria Callas in the Tony Award-winning play *Master Class*, by Terrance McNally. A review of these performances in Montgomery, Alabama was headlined: "Virtuosic performance sustains production of *Master Class*." Theater critic Allan Swafford wrote: "To call Joy Davidson's Callas a bravura creation is simply to understate her accomplishments so various in her exploration of the Callas persona that we are not allowed to disconnect from the performance. She binds us to this character by chains of fascination ... Brava, la Divina." Davidson also just completed another tour-de-force performed at the Philharmonic Center of the Arts in Naples, *Alice*, a one-woman play about Alice Roosevelt Longworth, authored by Kitty Felde of National Public Radio.

Joy Davidson and husband Dr. Robert Davidson (formerly at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Miami) are retired, spend winters in Naples and travel extensively in the summers. Five children and seven grandchildren enhance their lives.

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## CREDITS

Production .....	Theatre Conspiracy
Violin underscoring .....	Glenn Basham
Costume .....	Beth Fredstrom
Wig .....	Isaura White