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## Dorati duo turn opera into a musical family affair

By CORINNE ABATT

For many months Tonina Dorati has been thinking, Italking, research-ing and sketching Richard Strauss's one-act opera "Elektra." As costume and scenic designer for the production which her father, Maestro Antal Dorati, will direct at Ergel Auditorium Maesh Legel

Maestro Antal Doratt, will direct at Ford Auditorium March 15 and 17, that's the way she works. She takes lots of time to study all aspects of a script or libretto, researches the times in which the work was written and the times in which it is set. She and the times in which it is set. She listens to the music, looks up the small details of daily life that affect the stage production, how people ate, their costumes, jewelry and lifestyle in general. "This opera," she said while in Detroit planning the final details,

"took me a long time to feel it. Only recently has it settled on me and around me."

This is an aspect of her career as scenic designer which she treasures,

ed, guards lovingly. At least un-he house lights dim and the cur-

til the house lights dim and the curtains open.
"You work on something. You love it. You make it. But, no pening night, it's not yours any more."
She recalled doing seven operas in seven months for Joan Sutherland in Australia. She accepted the job blindly not realizing the pace she would have to keep to produce the amount of work necessary for these projects.

pected happened. She was lost for a long time afterwards without the pressures, the rigorous schedule and the demands. Anticipating that something of the same thing would happen as soon as "Elektra" is produced here, she said, "I get very possessive while I am working on It. Once, it opens, it's not mine anymore."

anymore."

Working with her father on the planning didn't present any problems other than her having to follow him around Europe to talk with him. "He told me his ideas and I had yo wn ideas. It was very easy to come to a decision on what we wanted to do."

Island of Crete in the Middle Minoan period, there will be lots of color.
"The costumes they wore were very colorful — flowers, frills and pleats and gold."

One of the challenges, if it can be called that, is to stage the opera effectively and still retain the orchestra shell on stage, put there to improve the accoustics.

"We are working within severe restrictions," Ms. Dorati said.

AS THE MAESTRO'S only child, Ms. Dorati smiled when asked if her father had even tried to impose music as a career upon her. "I'm musical!" she said, "but, I'm lazy. I wanted to play well right away."

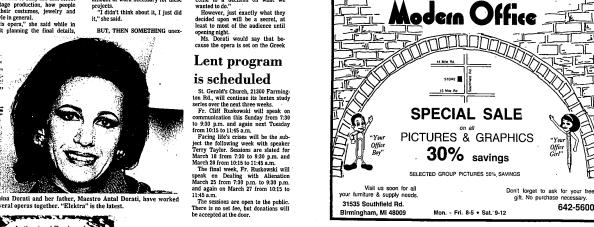
When she went to Mills College was no objective to the way of the said.

major in theater there was no objection, nor was there any adverse comment when she continued her education at Minneapolis School of Art in fashion design, the Central

School of Arts and Crafts in London, Carosa Alta Moda of Rome and the Parravicini Scenic Studio of Rome. She and her husband, Ralph Brown, and seven-year old son, Nicholas, live in Rome and vacation in Greece in the summer.

in Greece in the summer.

She and her father worked together on a Verdi opera in Holland and at her urging, Dorati and Marcelle Marceau made a tape together, the Maestro at the piano, the mine, for a change speaking.



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