

Presentation booklets for HEINRICH CONRIED, one by AMES AND ROLLINSON,  
designers and illuminators  
In German and English, two volumes, illuminated manuscripts on paper and parchment  
New York City, 1898 and 1908

2 vols., comprising (1) one manuscript in German, 12 leaves on paper (with five watercolor illuminated calligraphic text with initials and cartouche, four leaves with a total of 85 signatures presumably of guests in various inks), presentation tribute for 25 years of service to the New York Germania Theater, presented February 23, 1898, signed Ames and Rollinson, *Designers and Illuminators*, New York, on the verso of the third page. ORIGINAL full green leather binding; (2) the second manuscript in English, six parchment leaves, with illuminated cartouche, three partial illuminated folios including manuscript presentation to Heinrich Conried from the Members of the Orchestra of the New York Metropolitan Opera House, and two illuminated cartouches depicting scenes from Parsifal (December 24, 1903) and Salome (January 22, 1907), a pencil signature "Tiffany" in pencil added to the margins, and three pages bearing the signatures of the members of the Metropolitan Orchestra in black ink. ORIGINAL full blue leather binding gilt stamped with dates 1903 to 1908 on the cover, silk endpapers. Dimensions (1) 285 x 215 mm.; (2) 340 x 265 mm.

Extensively autographed and illuminated booklets made for presentation to Heinrich Conried (1855-1909), prominent in the New York music world. The first (1898) signals his twenty-five years as Director of the Germania Theatre in New York, the second (1908) his retirement as Director of the Metropolitan Opera. The second volume includes illuminations of Parsifal's grail and Salome's veil; both were performed for the first time in New York under Conried's leadership, and Salome, cancelled after its opening, which was not performed again until 1934.

#### PROVENANCE

1. Heinrich Conried (d. 1855-1909);
2. Katherine Halliday Walter Trust, St. Louis, Missouri.

#### TEXT AND ILLUSTRATION

Volume one

f. 3v, Ames & Rollinson;

f. 4, center page illumination of lyre, laurel, and ribbon;

f. 5, Dem Direktor... 1898, calligraphic illuminated page with harp in historiated D;

f. 6, Windsung;

f. 7 Nimm hin der guten..., illuminated box at top features a still life with lyre and music sheet;

f. 8, Die gabe..., bas de page illumination features a Cupid playing a trumpet and a banderole with music borne by two butterflies;

ff. 9-12, signatures of important members of New York society.

Volume two

f. 1, illumination of lyre and palm frond;

f. 2, To Heinrich Conried . . . , partial bracket illumination featuring helmet, shield, sword and lance;

f. 3, Parsifal, December 24 1903, head box illumination of a radiating chalice (grail) in a circle superimposed on a landscape with swan, dragon, and medieval castle;

f. 4, Salomé, January 22 1907, head box illumination of veiled Salomé in roundel flanked by jeweled brackets and peacock leaves; marginal pencil "Tiffany," signatures begin at bottom of the page;

ff. 5-6 signatures.

It was not until the turn of the twentieth century that illuminated manuscripts secured a firm place in New World culture. Several landmark exhibitions in 1890 and 1892 brought manuscripts before the public eye, and by the 1890s the millionaire-collectors J. P. Morgan and Henry Walters were actively scouring Europe for treasures. A popular feature of American medievalism was the illuminated diploma or certificate. One of the booklets (perhaps both) described here is by the New York firm Ames & Rollinson (now "The Award Group"), who credits their skill at producing "ancient and prestigious products" to their 250-year practice of calligraphy. Their website hosts examples with illuminations reminiscent of fifteenth-century manuscripts (Online Resources).

These illuminated presentation booklets were given to Austrian born Heinrich Conried (1855-1909), prominent in the New York music world. He was the musical director of the Metropolitan Opera in New York from 1903 until his retirement due to ill health. He started his career as a theater actor in Austria and later moved to New York as director first of the Germania Theater (vol. 1) and later of the Irving Place Theater (1892-1903). He is perhaps best known for his productions of Parsifal at the Metropolitan Opera. Although the first production of the opera outside of Bayreuth was much contested by Richard Wagner's widow, Cosima, it was an enormous state-side. Conried worked with such talents as Gustav Mahler, Enrico Caruso, and Lina Cavalieri. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Metropolitan Opera School and encouraged the development of American opera talent.

The first of these two volumes, in 1898, celebrates Conried's twenty-five years as Director of the Germania Theatre in New York. Its German Gothic script is typical of the many presentation books and certificates made by Ames and Rollinson, still active today as a division of The Award Group in New York and the oldest calligraphic studio on the United States. Their scrolls and documents are predominately "medievalizing," particularly those made at the turn of the century. Illumination, as with this volume, is usually limited to the initials and margins

The second volume, in 1908, celebrates his retirement as Director of the Metropolitan Opera, and includes Impressionist-style illuminations of Parsifal's grail and Salome's veil. His first American production of Salome in 1907 was so hotly contested that Mrs. Herbert Satterlee, daughter of J. P. Morgan, had it cancelled after its opening, and it was not performed again until 1934. Many members of New York society signed each booklet. These include the politician

Charles S. Fairchild (d. 1924), Louis Fleischmann (founder of the famous charity the "Bread Line," d. 1904), newspaper publisher Hermann Ridder (d. 1915), and the architect Theodore W.E. de Lemos (d. 1909). Mrs. Satterlee and J. P. Morgan did not. This volume features more elaborate illustration with gold and silver pigments and rich impressionistic illuminations on folios 4 and 5. The illumination of Parsifal, with its dark and verdant background and medieval architecture, perfectly echoes the opera's medieval theme and other neo-Gothic artistic representation of the play made in the period (the engravings of Franz Stassen, published in the same year, 1903, for instance). The illumination of Salome, certainly done by the same artist, evokes pre-Raphaelite orientalism not only because of the subject but also because of the jeweled neo-Renaissance framing meant to romanticize the subject.

## LITERATURE

Dizikes, John. *Opera in America: A Cultural History*. New Haven, Connecticut, 1995.

Hindman, Sandra, and Nina Rowe. *Manuscript Illumination in the Modern Age: Recovery and Reconstruction*, Evanston, Illinois, Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, 2001.

Koegel, John. *Music in German Immigrant Theater: New York City 1840-1940*, Rochester, 2009.

Moses, Montrose Jonas. *The Life of Heinrich Conried*, New York, 1916.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

The Award Group, Scrolls and Certificates

<http://www.theawardgroup.com/gallery/view/scrolls-certificates>

TM 1030