

I smile when that splendid baritone Peter Glossop makes his first appearance high up on the prow. The dignity and strength with which he sings his first words "Die Frist ist um" never for a moment reveal that he has spent the previous few minutes clambering over the hydraulic pump unit, through a maze of control lines before ascending an unforgiveably steep ladder. This staunch Yorkshireman is undaunted.

**"Such is damnation's dread decree  
I ask thee, blessed angel of God,  
who won for me the terms of my redemption:  
was I the plaything of thy scorn,  
when deliverance thou didst show me?  
Vain hope! Mere idle fancy!"**

The 20 minute interval before Act II gives little time to complete the change. Although most of the components for all three scenes are on stage throughout the opera, the rock cladding and ships decks have to be removed for the middle act. It is completed with approx. a minute to spare. The curtain goes up on the interior of Daland's House or as we thought more suitable, a warehouse extension to his home. Having to facilitate twenty three ladies at their spinning wheels, a thriving cottage industry seemed to make more sense!

The change to the quayside for Act III proved to be the trickiest. A stage crew running to complete a change in time must be pretty unique. It looked tight on paper but one has to admit this is really pushing it.

The destruction of the ghost ship was achieved by reversing the Act I arrival process having replaced the slides with those of a sinking vessel. The arms of the stage management ladies are now beginning to tire. Garbed in black they have been secretly manipulating the ocean of jap silk in time to the rhythm of the music throughout the piece.

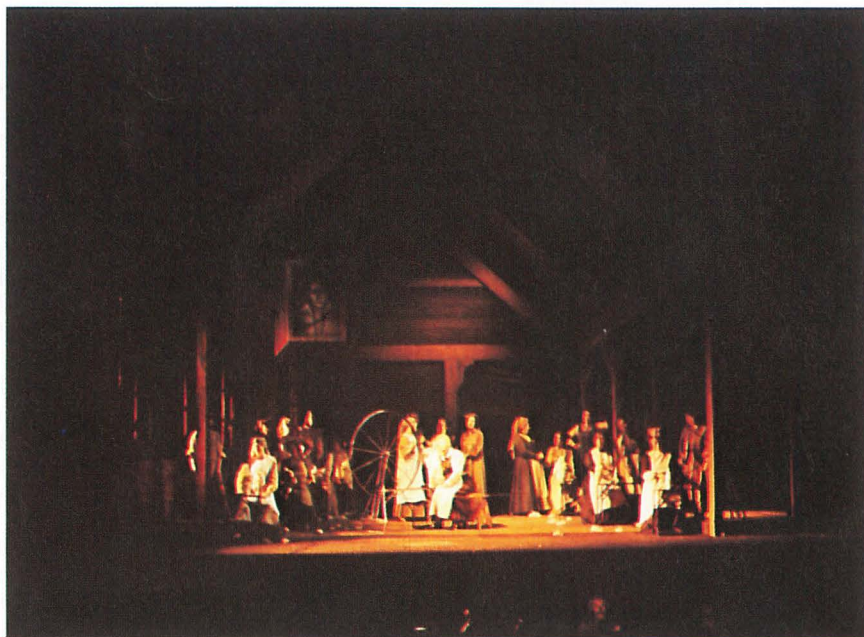
One final swell and the Dutchman's ship slowly sinks below the waves.

**"On earth there is no fidelity that is eternal.**

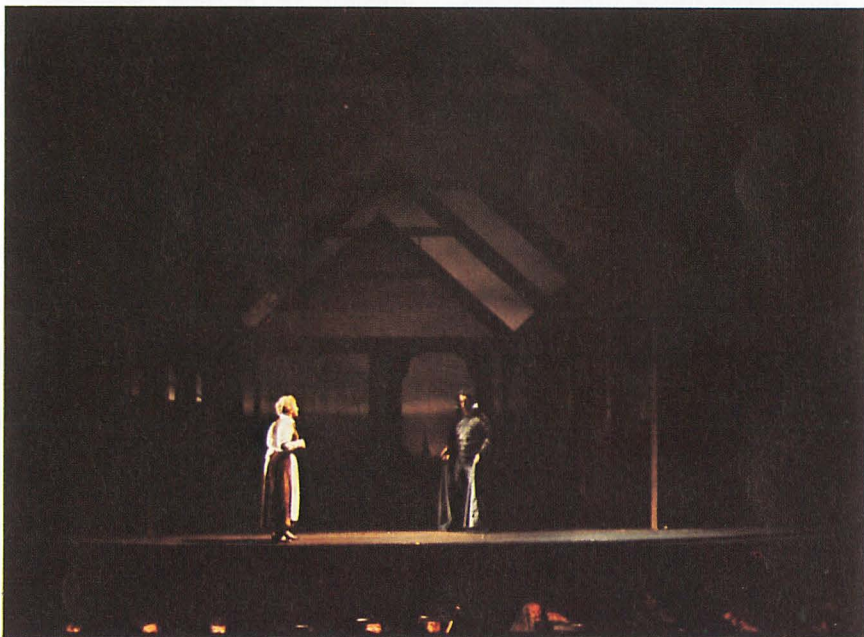
**One hope alone remains to me,  
one alone that is unshattered:  
though Earth's seeds long may flourish,  
yet one day must she perish!  
Day of Judgement! Dread Last Day!  
When will you dawn to end my night?  
When shall resound the knell of doom  
at which the Earth shall burst asunder?  
When all the dead arise,  
then shall I pass into the void.  
Ye planets, end your course!  
Perpetual extinction, engulf me!"**

The curtain falls in the final transfiguration just as we have had a moment to realize that the images formed from the swirling mists are the faces of Senta and her Dutchman.

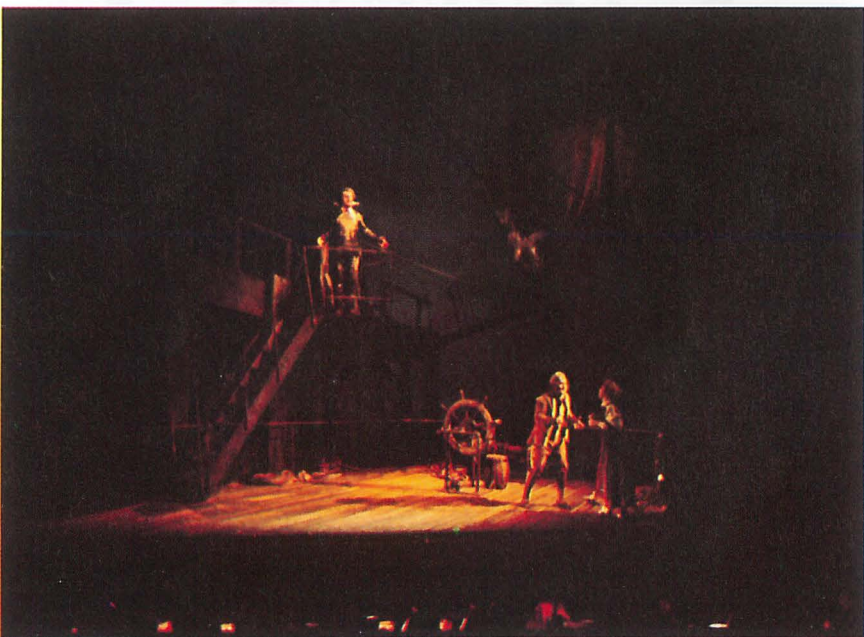
It was a tough ten days. Coming immediately after the Company and Crew had just completed an extensive and gruelling tour with four other operas, their dedication for the Dutchman was supreme. They are a legend in themselves.



The Warehouse.



Senta meets the Dutchman.



The Dutchman departs.