

Mattiwilda Dobbs will sing in Sherwood Hall

April 29, 1967

Mattiwilda Dobbs, internationally known American soprano who is a special favorite at the Metropolitan Opera, reigning prima donna of the Hamburg Opera and guest star of the Royal Opera in Stockholm, will appear at 8:30 p.m., Saturday (May 6), Sherwood Hall, La Jolla.

The concert is sponsored by the University of California, San Diego Committee for Arts and Lectures. Tickets are on sale for \$3.00 for the public, and \$1.00 for UCSD students.

Miss Dobbs will sing a number of works by such composers as Gluck, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Rossini, Verdi, Douglas Moore, Menotti and Gounod.

A singer of international achievement, Miss Dobb's biography is a success story. She was born in Atlanta, Georgia, the fifth of six daughters of an Atlanta railway mail clerk. Her father managed to put all six of his daughters through college and lived to see Mattiwilda become celebrated prima donna of the Metropolitan Opera.

Mattiwilda's first assignment, at the age of six, was to sing a "solo duet." A local church had scheduled two of the Dobbs' daughters for a duet. Mattiwilda's sister became ill, so she bravely sang the duet, alone.

She began piano lessons at an early age, and, like Lily Pons, was an accomplished pianist before ever having voice lessons. It was not until college that Mattiwilda took up voice training. In her last year at college, she was invited to New York to meet with Madame Lotte Leonard, noted voice teacher. Madame Leonard has continued to be Mattiwilda's teacher.

Miss Dobbs continued her education, earning a Master's Degree in Spanish at Teacher's College at Columbia University, and studying at the University of Mexico. She is perhaps the only opera singer with a Master of Arts degree.

Mattiwilda has earned a number of scholarships, among them the coveted Marian Anderson Scholarship in voice, and two fellowships: a scholarship in opera workshop from the Mannes School in New York, and the John Hay Whitney Fellowship, which sent her to Paris where she spent two years studying the French school of music with Pierre Bernac.

A crowning point in her career occurred at the International Music Competition in Geneva. Among hundreds of singers from four continents, Miss Dobbs was selected for the finals. In the last day of competition, she sang Constanza's aria from "Abduction from the Seraglio," and she was awarded the first prize.

Mattiwilda Dobbs now divides her time between the United States and Europe. Married to a Swedish writer, she has a home in Hamburg, where she is the leading lyric coloratura soprano of the State Opera; she has a villa on Majorca, where she spends her summers, and she tours the United States every winter.