

# Camerata director gives

By Richard Dyer  
GLOBE STAFF

Joel Cohen, longtime artistic director of the Boston Camerata, has denounced his own organization to the National Endowment for the Arts.

The NEA has established a new panel to investigate complaints "from any reliable source" concerning obscenity in works supported by federal grants.

For his example of obscenity, Cohen draws attention to the Boston Camerata's best-selling recording "Tristan et Iseult," which won the prestigious Grand Prix du Disque in France in 1989. He points to explicit instances of premarital sex, adultery, partner-swapping, drunkenness, blasphemy and sacrilege in this music drama drawn from celebrated medieval poetic sources that has been performed to international acclaim in festivals over the last three seasons.

"Since I am the music and artistic director of the Boston Camerata, I hope you will agree that I am a 'reliable source,'" Cohen said in a letter mailed to Julianne Ross Davis, general counsel to the National Endowment, who is a member of the obscenity-review panel.

Cohen's object in writing the letter and distributing it to the press is to dramatize the "dangerous absurdity of the Endowment's recent positions" on obscenity and to confront directly "the current regressive trends at the National Endowment."

Garrison Keillor returns to the Wang Center Sept. 14 to give a benefit performance of "Lake Wobegon Loyalty Days" for the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra.

This is Keillor's second benefit for the orchestra, whose concertmaster, Kristina Nilsson, hails from An-

oka, Minn., the model for Lake Wobegon. "I knew Garrison's entire family," says Nilsson. "I used to date his younger brother, and his cousin was my debate partner in high school. A few years ago I wrote to him and made reference to a story he had written about a rock group that could only get attention by eating live chickens onstage. I said unless we got some help the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra might have to resort to that! He came and donated his services, and he's doing that again."

The program features the "Young Lutheran's Guide to the Orchestra," which Nilsson characterizes as "darling" - "he says that a Lutheran can be a percussionist because a percussionist is faithful, waiting, trusting and filled with fervor, just as the Scripture requires. He has a very deferential attitude toward classical musicians, which harkens back to his days of being a tenor in Ruth Hallenberg's high school choir. And he says he can't believe that someone from Anoka is a professional musician - he inscribed a copy of one of his books to me with a reference to the 'boulevards and bowers of Anoka, Minnesota!'"

Soprano Angelina Reaux's bad luck turned into a bit of good fortune for Boston soprano Jayne West. Reaux was in Omaha for performances of "Stranger Here Myself," her one-woman Kurt Weill show that was a highlight of the Boston Conservatory's Weill festival last fall and for the American premiere of "Golem," a new opera by British composer John Casken. Reaux stepped onto a cobblestone that wasn't there, tripped and broke her foot; West flew to Omaha to replace her in "Golem," although Reaux will go ahead with her Weill show, singing from a