

## That Evening: Another Visit to the Opera

Refreshed from the walk in the park, King Kalākaua quickly changed his clothes and left to pay his third visit to the Royal Opera. The King and his companions arrived shortly after the production – Meyerbeer’s “Afrikanerin” – had begun. The party was seated in the first row of the boxes they had occupied on the previous evenings. At the end of the third act, the King and his entourage went backstage, where the singer, Mrs. Friedrich-Materna, was presented to him. King Kalākaua expressed his appreciation of the artist’s performance, saying “Your singing is the most beautiful I have ever heard.” At the end of the performance, the King applauded enthusiastically, remaining until the final curtain closed.<sup>66</sup> Kalākaua was not only pleased by the performances of the artists, but also by the opera itself; “Die Afrikanerin”, set in the Age of Exploration at the end of the 15th century, was much to the King’s liking.<sup>67</sup>



Signe Hebbe as Selika in Meyerbeer’s “Afrikanerin”; 1871.

Kalākaua truly enjoyed that August Sunday, taking part in both the musical and cultural offerings of Vienna with immense enthusiasm.

## A Nighttime Excursion to the Prater

Back at the hotel, Kalākaua spontaneously decided to make a nighttime excursion to the Prater, to enjoy the music and dancing at the Third Coffeehouse. The “Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung”<sup>68</sup> of August 8 carried a supplement to its morning

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<sup>66</sup> Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, no. 518, p. 2, Aug. 8, 1881.

<sup>67</sup> Schnoor 1964: 302, 303.

<sup>68</sup> No. 518, p. 2, Aug. 8, 1881.



Reitsportpalast and Moulin Rouge inside theme park "Venedig in Wien" / Prater; ca. 1890.

edition under the title "Court Ball at Ronacher's Establishment", which had to be added late at night to the type already set. The report was continued in the midday edition of the same newspaper the next day. This had become necessary because the report had to be at the printer's by 1:45 a. m., but King Kalākaua had not been willing to go home that early.

The events of that summer evening in 1881 unfolded as follows, as reported by the "Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung" and the "Morgen-Post". Upon returning from the opera, the King and all of his companions spent some time together at the hotel in the royal apartments. Then, Field Marshal Tiller, Frigate Captain Czedik, and the representatives of the Hawaiian consulate, Mr. Schönberger and Mr. Reisewitz paid their respects and left. Most of the gas lights in the vestibule had already been extinguished for the night when King Kalākaua, accompanied by Mr. Judd and a young Viennese nobleman (the Viennese playboy Baron P.) left the hotel in the semi-darkness at about 11 p. m. Their departure was hardly noticed by the employees of the hotel. The three gentlemen stepped into a carriage and reached Ronacher's Third Coffeehouse at the Prater ten minutes later. Dance music, conducted by the bandleader Oser, was being played in the large ballroom, and a lively crowd danced to the merry tunes.

The King and his companions sat down in a gallery box, and ordered some beer. Watching the colorful dancers with great interest, Kalākaua began to smoke a short pipe, occasionally whispering comments to his companions. Gradually, the boxes around the King began to fill up with attractive ladies, and as chance would have it, a friendly young lady who was fluent in English took her place in the box next



The Wurstelprater, Vienna, Austria-Hungary; ca. 1895.



Restaurant inside theme park "Venedig in Wien" / Prater; ca. 1890.

to His Majesty's. At first, the young lady conversed with Kalākua's escorts, but then she raised her glass to the King, who returned the compliment by instructing Mr. Judd to invite the young lady to sit next to him. The King, now in very good spirits, purchased a portion of a flower girl's fragrant wares. When the flower girl had gone, the King's companions followed her example, leaving His Majesty alone with the pretty young woman. During this tete-a-tete, which was noted by all present with great amusement, the King made a decision. Following the lead of Mr. Ronacher and the dancing master Mr. Rabensteiner, Kalākua – with the



Pertl's Grand-Etablissement (Drittes Kaffeehaus) / Prater Hauptallee; 1906.

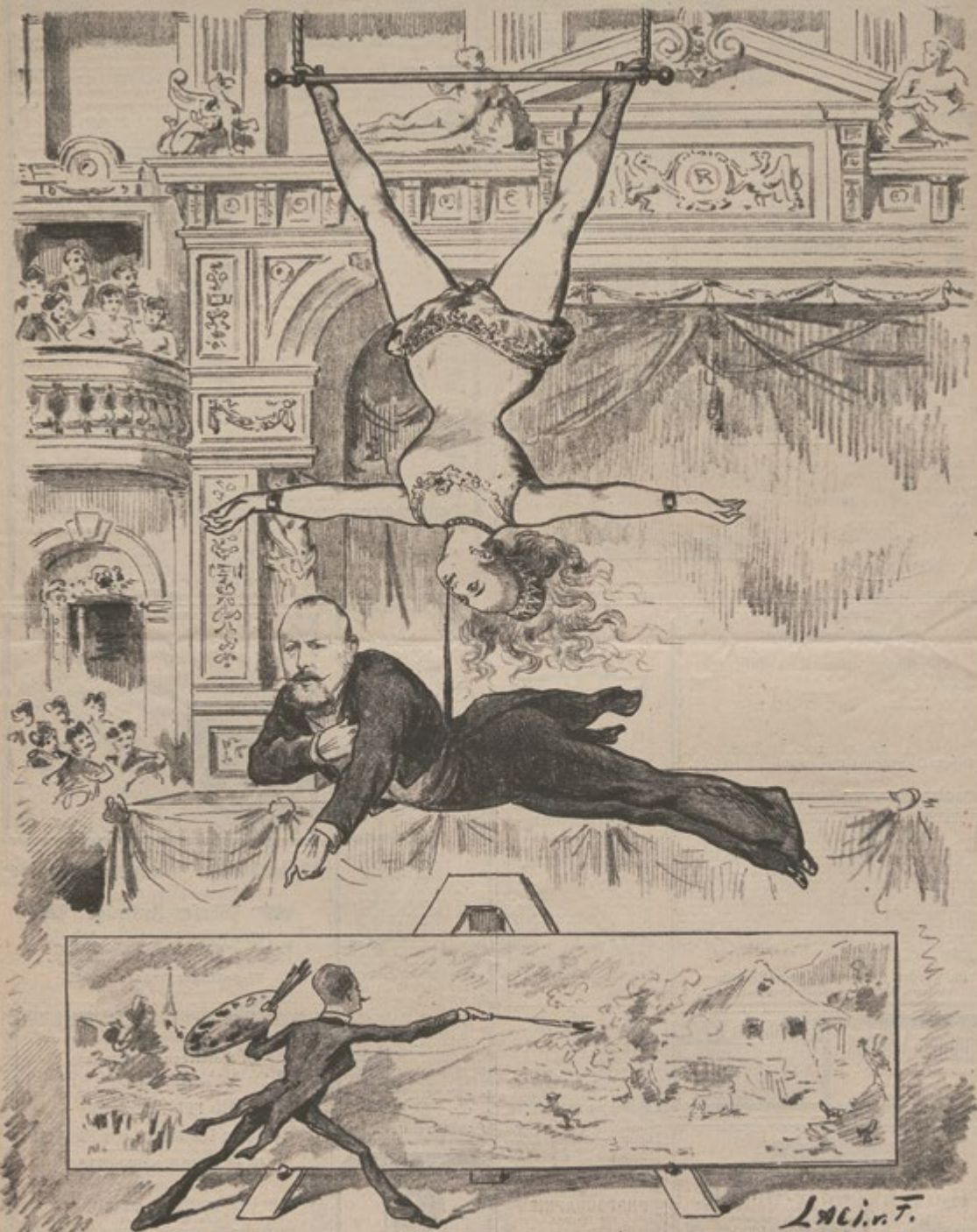
young lady on his arm – descended the stairs to the dance floor, where he took the young woman by the hips and began to dance in a lively manner to the strains of a waltz. At first, a few hisses could be heard, but then good sense prevailed and thundering applause followed. The King thanked his audience with a graceful bow. Toward the end of the waltz the King and his partner were alone on the dance floor, and as the last chords of the music faded away, the audience cheered “Bravo, Kalākaua!”, “Long live Kalākaua!”, and “That’s some king!”, etc. The King did not return to his box, but took a seat at a table in the ground-floor gallery, only to stand up again after a short rest to dance a polka with the same young lady. The joyous mood of the other guests increased from moment to moment, the King himself was radiant with pleasure, while the envious glances of hundreds of young ladies rested upon the lucky dancing partner of His Majesty. The King ordered more beer from an English-speaking waiter, and requested a dancing piece by Strauss. Immediately

the orchestra began to play a piece by Josef Strauss, giving the King another opportunity to demonstrate his prowess as a dancer. Kalākaua waved to his dancing partner to come down from the box and join him, and his entourage stayed behind him as he began to dance to the Strauss quadrille “Die Glocken von Corneville”. When Kalākaua faced the famous Viennese dancing master Mr. Rabensteiner, it was apparent that the King was quite his equal. Stepping lightly and elegantly, Kalākaua danced the quadrille, bowing like a true cavalier as often as the dance required, which caused great embarrassment for the young woman who was the recipient of such an honor.

The journalists could not wait for the evening to come to an end before handing in their reports for the evening edition. But when they returned to the Third Coffeehouse to gather material for the morning edition, King Kalākaua was still there. As the “Morgen-Post” reports, the King had withdrawn once again to his box in the gallery with his two male companions and the young woman so favored by His Majesty that evening. In the last hour, a number of new guests, mostly female, had arrived, for word had been sent out all over the city to where certain nighttime cafes are located, and carriages full of light-footed, light-hearted peo-



# Ronacher's Grand Café-Restauration im Prater.



Das „dritte Kaffeehaus“ im Prater in seiner neuen Gestalt wird hienur unter den Vergnügungs-Etablissements einen hervorragenden Platz einnehmen. Namentlich das nach Pariser Muster neu errichtete Chantant wird das Auserlesenste in diesem Genre bringen. Mit großem Luxus ist das Auserhete des Etablissements ausgestattet; die Decoratoure bieten das Auserordentlichste auf. Wiß Leona Dore ist über den Sommer engagirt. Wie unser Bild zeigt, hängt sich Herr Ronacher an seine mittelmäßige Kraft. (Näheres siehe Wiener Chronik.)



Amusement seekers in theme park "Venedig in Wien" / Prater; ca. 1890.

ple were continually arriving, in the hopes of profiting from the goodwill of His Majesty King Kalākaua. The King, however, seemed quite content to rest on his laurels, and the English-speaking young woman retained her place at his side. The King was among the last guests to leave the establishment, and the young woman, who of course accompanied him, sat to his left in the carriage which took the two of them into the city. For hours afterward, Ronacher's cafe and the other Prater cafes continued to buzz with excitement, as the guests recounted the events of the evening they were so happy to have witnessed.<sup>69</sup>

King Kalākaua's carefree night at the Third Coffeehouse – the Hawaiian monarch not only danced half the night away but also appeared on the dance floor in his shirt sleeves – has gone down in the history of the Vienna Prater.<sup>70</sup>

## Monday – More Sightseeing in Town

On Monday, August 8, another day of sightseeing in the capital city was scheduled. The King rose somewhat later that morning, as the events of the preceding day had been quite tiring. At 10 o'clock, accompanied by Field Marshal Tiller and Frigate Captain Czedik, the King left the hotel. The King's carriage drove at a slow tempo along the Ringstrasse so that the King could have a look at the

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69 Morgen-Post, vol. 31, no. 218, p. 2, Aug. 9, 1881; Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, no. 518, p. 2 and midday edition, p. 3, Aug. 8, 1881.

70 Pemmer-Lackner 1935: 118 and 1974: 251.





King Kalākaua drove along Vienna's Ringstrasse, which encircles the city center and served as a promenade for the Viennese. The magnificent buildings were brand new at the time, such as the Vienna State Opera.

new buildings once again. Then, it pulled up in front of the Votivkirche (Votive Church). Upon entering the church, the King admired its splendid stained glass windows, and inspected the side aisles as well as the numerous votive windows. Just as Kalākaua had reached the exit, the notes of an organ suddenly sounded, inducing the King to walk back to the middle aisle of the church and stand there. His eyes directed toward the organ, Kalākaua listened to the improvised concert with interest. First, the musician executed a prelude, followed by the Austrian national anthem, which faded away in a quiet adagio. King Kalākaua remained standing until the organ concert was over, and then he left the Votivkirche.<sup>71</sup>



The Viennese Votivkirche, built in the neo-Gothic style, had only been consecrated two years before Kalākaua's visit.

The King and his companions then drove slowly across the Schottenring to the K. K. Telegraf Central (Imperial-Royal Telegraph Center) on Wipplinger-

<sup>71</sup> Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, no. 518, midday edition, p. 3, Aug. 8, 1881 and Morgen-Post, vol. 31, no. 218, p. 2, Aug. 9, 1881.



The Imperial-Royal Telegraph Center in Vienna was the main building of the Austrian postal and telegraph administration at the time of Kalākaua's visit.

strasse. As no preparations had been made for this unexpected visit, Field Marshal Tiller announced the arrival of the King to the porter. The King was shown the various departments, as well as the instrument room, where he sent a telegram of greeting to the Emperor in Bregenz. Subsequently, the King and his companions drove to the Renngasse to pay a visit to the editorial office of the “Deutsche Zeitung”. The next stop was the printing office of the “Wiener Zeitung” in the Herrengasse. Kalākaua's interest in the editorial and printing offices was due, of course, to his own journalistic activity, for he himself was co-owner and editor of the “Hawaiian Gazette”, as already has been mentioned. Afterwards, the party drove to a pipe store on the Graben, where Kalākaua made some purchases. Next, the King visited the Zamarski print shop in the Gumpendorferstrasse.<sup>72</sup> Around midday the King visited a number of shops at the center of town, acquiring various small objects as souvenirs of the city he had so quickly grown so fond of. Upon his return to the hotel, Kalākaua took his accustomed afternoon rest before dinner.

Before leaving the hotel to drive to the railway station, the King expressed his heartfelt thanks to Field Marshal Tiller and Frigate Captain Czedik for their services, and awarded Field Marshal Tiller the highest rank of the Kamehameha order and Captain Czedik the next following rank of the same order.<sup>73</sup>

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72 Morgen-Post, vol. 31, no. 218, p. 2, Aug. 9, 1881; Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, no. 518, p. 3, midday edition, Aug. 8, 1881.

73 Neues Wiener Tagblatt, vol. 15, no 218, p. 4, Aug. 9, 1881.