



## ARDIS OPERA DECADE

The ARDIS OPERA DECADE is named in honor of the dynamic general director of the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the late Ardis Krainik. From 1981 to 1996 Miss Krainik's visionary leadership secured its financial foundation and established the Lyric Opera as a company renowned for artistic excellence and commitment to contemporary operas. The Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra's ARDIS OPERA DECADE was made possible through a gift from Elizabeth Upjohn Mason, a close friend of Miss Krainik since their college days at Northwestern University.

Mrs. Mason reminisces that "Ardis' belief in education for the arts, audience building, community involvement, and collaboration among cultural institutions had an impact far beyond Chicago. As a former performer herself, she was most sensitive to the needs of singers and wonderfully supportive. She also was a dear friend. To honor her memory here with our own Kalamazoo Symphony gives me great joy."

The Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra is deeply grateful to Elizabeth Upjohn Mason for the ARDIS OPERA DECADE which will give our community five biennial opera productions, along with superb vocal soloists on alternate years. Thank you, Mrs. Mason, for this extraordinary gift of beauty!

[Note: The following bio information should appear "separately" – in a box or something that makes it "distinct" from the above information.]

ARDIS KRAINIK dedicated her career to the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Under her leadership as general director from 1981 to 1996, the Lyric became one of the great opera companies of our time. She was a true American success story, joining the company as a singer and typist in 1954, and working her way quickly through the ranks to the top management position. Her talent, artistic savvy and financial expertise brought the Lyric Opera out of a deep deficit and into sold-out seasons. Bass Samuel Ramey said, "Because of her loving heart, her acute intellect, and her keen sense of humor, she created an opera company unlike any other in the world." Henry Fogel, past president of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and League of American Orchestras calls her "one of the few people to whom the overused word 'legend' applies."