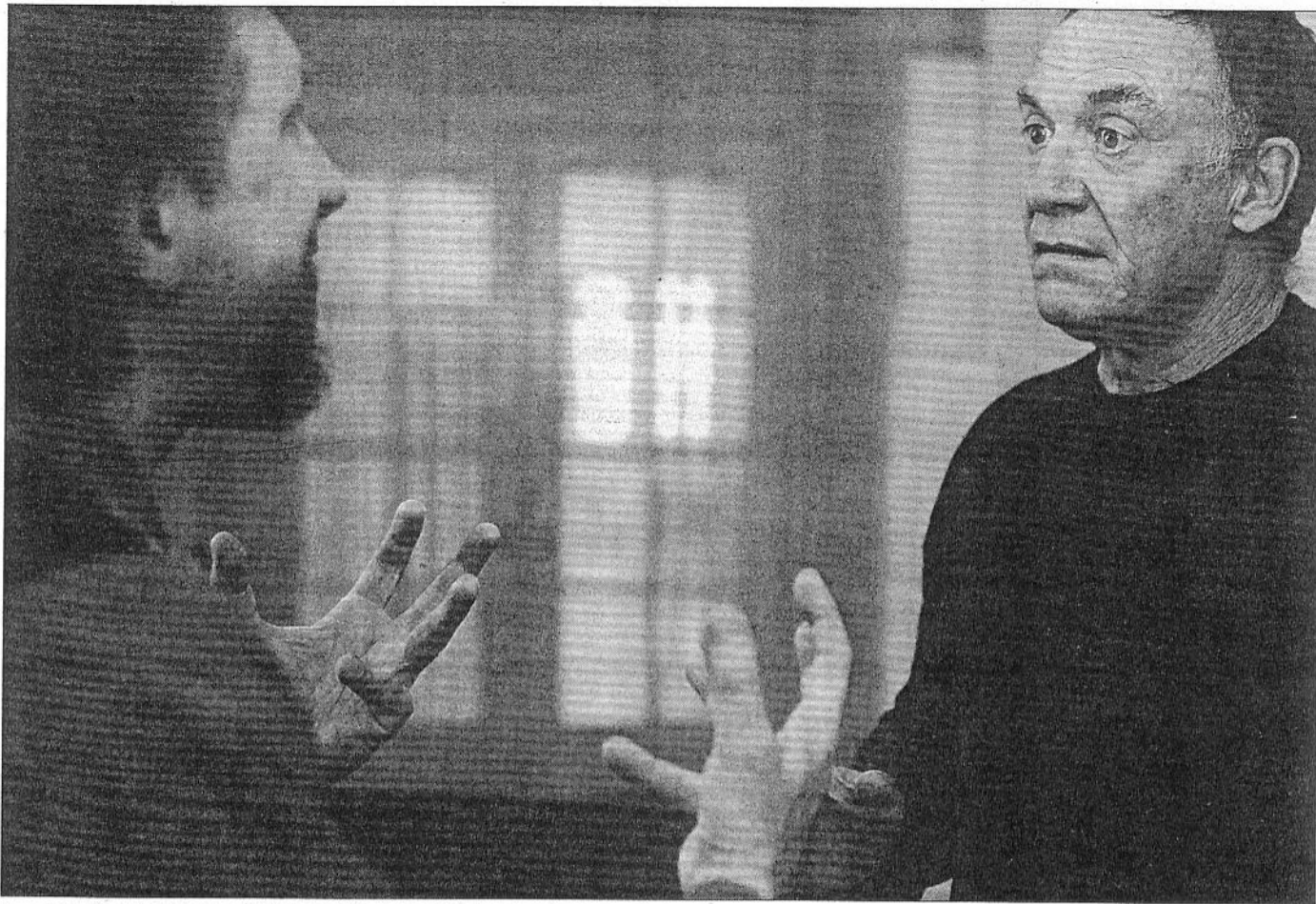


AN OPERA FOR OUR TIMES



Award-winning Bay Area playwright John O'Keefe (right) and Oakland composer Clark Supryn timer collaborated on the Berkeley Opera-commissioned "Chrysalis."

BY SAM HURWITT

It's a classic scene, like something out of an etching: The composer sits at his instrument playing what he thinks to be the last few minutes of his opera while the librettist stands staring intently at the score over his shoulder. If you're picturing them huddled over a harpsichord in powdered wigs, your mental image of opera could use an update.

The instrument in this case is a high-tech control center ringed by musical and computer keyboards.

Clark Supryn timer gazes at one of two stacked computer

screens in a workroom in his south Berkeley house as he discusses the epilogue of his new opera — which plays with themes of cosmetic surgery and designer genes — with collaborator John O'Keefe.

Developed in residence at the Berkeley Opera over the past 2½ years and set to premiere this weekend, "Chrysalis" is the first collaboration between erstwhile East Bay jazz musician Supryn timer and O'Keefe, the award-winning longtime San Francisco playwright and co-founder of Berkeley's legendary Blake

