La bohème
# Table of Contents

Welcome Letter ................................................................. 1
Lesson Plan Unit Overview and Academic Standards .................. 2
Opera Box Content Checklist ............................................... 9
*La bohème* Reference/Tracking Guide .................................. 10
Opera Box Lesson Plans ...................................................... 12
Opera Box Blank Lesson Plan Form ....................................... 29
Synopsis .................................................................................. 30
Giacomo Puccini – *a biography* ............................................. 35
Catalogue of Puccini’s Operas .................................................. 39
Background Notes ................................................................. 40
Henry Murger and His Circle ................................................... 43
World Events in 1840 and 1896 ................................................ 46
History of Opera ................................................................. 50
History of Minnesota Opera, Repertoire ................................... 61
The Standard Repertory ......................................................... 65
Elements of Opera ............................................................... 66
Glossary of Opera Terms ....................................................... 70
Glossary of Musical Terms ..................................................... 76
Bibliography, Discography, Videography ................................. 79
Word Search, Crossword Puzzle ............................................. 82
Evaluation ............................................................................... 85
Acknowledgements ............................................................ 86

---

**2009-2010 Season**

*The Pearl Fishers*
SEPTMBER 26 – OCTOBER 4, 2009

*Casanova’s Homecoming*
NOVEMBER 14 – 22, 2009

*Roberto Devereux*
JANUARY 30 – FEBRUARY 7, 2010

*La bohème*
MARCH 6 – 14, 2010

*Salome*
APRIL 10 – 24, 2010

FOR SEASON TICKETS, CALL 612.333.6669
Dear Educator,

Thank you for using a Minnesota Opera Opera Box. This collection of material has been designed to help any educator to teach students about the beauty of opera. This collection of material includes audio and video recordings, scores, reference books and a Teacher's Guide.

The Teacher's Guide includes Lesson Plans that have been designed around the materials found in the box and other easily obtained items. In addition, Lesson Plans have been aligned with State and National Standards. See the Unit Overview for a detailed explanation.

Before returning the box, please fill out the Evaluation Form at the end of the Teacher's Guide. As this project is new, your feedback is imperative. Comments and ideas from you – the educators who actually use it – will help shape the content for future boxes. In addition, you are encouraged to include any original lesson plans. The Teacher's Guide is intended to be a living reference book that will provide inspiration for other teachers. If you feel comfortable, include a name and number for future contact from teachers who might have questions regarding your lessons and to give credit for your original ideas. You may leave lesson plans in the Opera Box or mail them in separately.

Before returning, please double check that everything has been assembled. The deposit money will be held until I personally check that everything has been returned (i.e. CDs having been put back in the cases). Payment may be made to the Minnesota Opera Education Department. All forms of payment are accepted.

Since opera is first and foremost a theatrical experience, it is strongly encouraged that attendance at a performance of an opera be included. The Minnesota Opera offers Student Matinees and discounted group rate tickets to regular performances. It is hoped that the Opera Box will be the first step into exploring opera, and attending will be the next.

I hope you enjoy these materials and find them helpful. If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to call or e-mail me any time.

Sincerely,

Jamie Andrews
Community Education Director
Andrews@mnopera.org
612.342.9573 (phone)
mnopera.org
imagineopera.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Title</th>
<th>Minnesota Academic Standards: Arts K–12</th>
<th>National Standards for Music Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – Are you a bohemian?</td>
<td>Music 9.1.1.3.1</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.1.1.3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.1.4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.1.4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual Arts 9.1.1.5.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual Arts 9.1.1.5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.1.3.3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.1.3.3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.3.4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.3.4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual Arts 9.1.3.5.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual Arts 9.1.3.5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.4.1.3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.4.1.3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.4.1.4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.4.1.4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual Arts 9.4.1.5.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual Arts 9.4.1.5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – Understanding the libretto</td>
<td>Music 9.1.3.3.1</td>
<td>6, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.1.3.3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – Puccini, the master of opera</td>
<td>Music 9.1.3.3.1</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.1.3.3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.3.4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.3.4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – Acting scenes from La bohème</td>
<td>Theater 9.1.1.4.1</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.1.4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.4.1.3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music 9.4.1.3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.4.1.4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theater 9.4.1.4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Related Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – Translating <em>La bohème</em> into other genres</td>
<td>Music 9.1.1.3.1, 9.1.1.3.2, 9.1.1.3.3, Theater 9.1.1.4.1, 9.1.1.4.2, 9.1.1.4.3, Music 9.1.2.3.1, 9.1.2.3.2, 9.1.2.3.3, Theater 9.1.2.4.1, 9.1.2.4.2, Music 9.1.3.3.1, 9.1.3.3.2, Theater 9.1.3.4.1, 9.1.3.4.2, Music 9.2.1.3.1, 9.2.1.3.2, 9.2.1.3.3, Theater 9.2.1.4.1, 9.2.1.4.2, Theater 9.2.1.4.3, Music 9.4.1.3.1, 9.4.1.3.2, Theater 9.4.1.4.1, Theater 9.4.1.4.2</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – Miming <em>La bohème</em></td>
<td>Theater 9.1.1.4.1, 9.1.1.4.2, Theater 9.1.1.4.3, Theater 9.1.3.4.1, Theater 9.1.3.4.2, Theater 9.2.1.4.1, Theater 9.2.1.4.2</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – Motives in <em>La bohème</em></td>
<td>Music 9.1.1.3.1, 9.1.1.3.2, 9.1.2.3.1, 9.1.2.3.2, 9.1.2.3.3, 9.1.3.3.1, 9.1.3.3.2, 9.4.1.3.1, 9.4.1.3.2</td>
<td>6, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 – That was a great performance and I know why!</td>
<td>Music 9.4.1.3.1, 9.4.1.3.2, Theater 9.4.1.4.1, Theater 9.4.1.4.2</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – Musical characteristics of <em>La bohème</em></td>
<td>Music 9.1.1.3.1, 9.1.1.3.2, 9.1.3.3.1, 9.1.3.3.2, 9.4.1.3.1, 9.4.1.3.2</td>
<td>6, 7, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MINNESOTA ACADEMIC STANDARDS, ARTS K–12

The Minnesota Academic Standards in the Arts set the expectations for achievement in the arts for K–12 students in Minnesota. The standards are organized by grade band (K–3, 4–5, 6–8, 9–12) into four strands that foster the development of students’ artistic literacy.

The strands are as follows:
1. Artistic Foundations
2. Artistic Process: Create or Make
3. Artistic Process: Perform or Present, and

Each strand has one or more standards that can be implemented in the arts areas of dance, media arts, music, theater and/or visual arts. The benchmarks for the standards in each arts area are designated by a five-digit code. In reading the coding, please note that for code 0.3.1.5.2, the 0 refers to refers to the 0–3 (K–3) grade band, the 3 refers to the Artistic Process: Perform or Present strand, the 1 refers to the first (and only) standard for that strand, the 5 refers to the fifth arts area (visual arts), and the 2 refers to the second benchmark for that standard.

See the Minnesota Department of Education website for more information: education.state.mn.us/mde

Grades 9–12

STRAND: Artistic Foundations

STANDARD 1: Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of the arts area.

ARTS AREA: Music

CODE: 9.1.1.3.1

BENCHMARK: Analyze how the elements of music including melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, tone color, texture, form and their related concepts are combined to communicate meaning in the creation of, performance of, or response to music.

9.1.1.3.2

BENCHMARK: Evaluate how the elements of music and related concepts such as repetition, pattern, balance and emphasis are used in the creation of, performance of, or response to music.

9.1.1.3.3

BENCHMARK: Analyze how the characteristics of a variety of genres and styles contribute to the creation of, performance of, or response to music.

ARTS AREA: Theater

CODE: 9.1.1.4.1

BENCHMARK: Analyze how the elements of theater, including plot, theme, character, language, sound and spectacle are combined to communicate meaning in the creation of, performance of, or response to theater.
9.1.1.4.2  
**BENCHMARK:** Evaluate how forms such as musical theater, opera or melodrama, and structures such as chronological or nonlinear are used in the creation of, performance of, or response to theater.

9.1.1.4.3  
**BENCHMARK:** Evaluate how the characteristics of Western and non-Western styles, such as Kabuki, Noh, Theater of the Absurd or classical contribute to the creation of, performance of, or response to theater.

**ARTS AREA:** Visual Arts  
**CODE:** 9.1.1.5.1  
**BENCHMARK:** Analyze how the elements of visual arts such as repetition, pattern, emphasis, contrast and balance are used in the creation of, presentation of, or response to visual artworks.

9.1.1.5.2  
**BENCHMARK:** Evaluate how the principles of visual art such as repetition, pattern, emphasis, contrast and balance are used in the creation of, presentation of, or response to visual artworks.

**STANDARD 2:** Demonstrate knowledge of and use of the technical skills of the art form, integrating technology when applicable.

**ARTS AREA:** Music  
**CODE:** 9.1.2.3.1  
**BENCHMARK:** Read and notate music using standard notation system such as complex meters, extended ranges and expressive symbols, with and without the use of notation software in a variety of styles and contexts.

9.1.2.3.2  
**BENCHMARK:** Sing alone and in small and large groups (multi-part), or play an instrument alone in and in small or large groups, a variety of music using characteristic tone, technique and expression.

9.1.2.3.3  
**BENCHMARK:** Use electronic musical tools to record, mix, play back, accompany, arrange or compose music.

**ARTS AREA:** Theater  
**CODE:** 9.1.2.4.1  
**BENCHMARK:** Act by developing, communicating and sustaining character; or design by conceptualizing and realizing artistic interpretations; or direct by interpretations dramatic text and organizing and rehearsing for informal or formal productions.

9.1.2.5.1  
**BENCHMARK:** Use technology for purposes of research, feedback, documentation or production.

**ARTS AREA:** Visual Arts  
**CODE:** 9.1.2.5.1  
**BENCHMARK:** Integrate the characteristics of the tools, materials and techniques of a selected media in original artworks to support artistic purposes.

**Minnesota OPERA**
STANDARD 3: Demonstrate understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts that influence the arts areas.

ARTS AREA: Music
CODE: 9.1.3.3.1

BENCHMARK: Analyze how the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts influence the creation, interpretation or performance of music including the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.

9.1.3.3.2

BENCHMARK: Synthesize and express an individual view of the meanings and functions of music.

ARTS AREA: Theater
CODE: 9.1.3.4.2

BENCHMARK: Analyze how the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts influence the creation, interpretation or performance of music including the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.

9.1.4.2

BENCHMARK: Synthesize and express an individual view of the meanings and functions of theater.

ARTS AREA: Visual Arts
CODE: 9.1.3.5.1

BENCHMARK: Analyze how the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts influence the creation, interpretation or performance of music including the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.

9.1.3.5.2

BENCHMARK: Synthesize and express an individual view of the meanings and functions of visual arts.

STRAND 2: Artistic Process: Create or Make

STANDARD 1: Create or make in a variety of contexts in the arts areas using the artistic foundations.

ARTS AREA: Music
CODE: 9.2.1.3.1

BENCHMARK: Improvise, compose or arrange new musical compositions in a variety of styles and contexts using available technology to preserve the creations.

9.2.1.3.2

BENCHMARK: Revise a musical composition or arrangement based on artistic intent and using multiple sources of critique and feedback.

9.2.1.3.3

BENCHMARK: Justify an artistic statement, including how audience and occasion influence creative choices.

ARTS AREA: Theater
CODE: 9.2.1.4.1

BENCHMARK: Create a single, complex work or multiple works in theater such as a script, character or design.
9.2.1.4.2
**Benchmark:** Revise a creation based on artistic intent and using multiple sources of critique and feedback.

9.2.1.4.3
**Benchmark:** Justify an artistic statement, including how audience and occasion influence creative choices.

**Strand 4: Artistic Process: Respond or Critique**

**Standard 1:** Respond to or critique a variety of creations and performances using the artistic foundations.

**Arts Area:** Music

**Code:** 9.4.1.3.1

**Benchmark:** Analyze, interpret and evaluate a variety of musical works of performances by applying self-selected criteria within the traditions of the art form.

9.4.1.3.2
**Benchmark:** Justify choices of self-selected criteria based on knowledge of how criteria affect criticism.

**Arts Area:** Theater

**Arts Area:** Theater

9.4.1.4.1
**Benchmark:** Analyze, interpret and evaluate a variety of works in theater by applying self-selected criteria within the traditions of the art form.

9.4.1.4.2
**Benchmark:** Justify choices of self-selected criteria based on knowledge of how criteria affect criticism.
NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
   A. analyze aural examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices
   B. demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music
   C. identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity, variety, tension and release in a musical work and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques
   D. demonstrate the ability to perceive and remember music events by describing in detail significant events occurring in a given aural example
   E. compare ways in which musical materials are used in a given example relative to ways in which they are used in other works of the same genre or style
   F. analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive

7. Evaluating music and music performances.
   A. evolve specific criteria for making informed, critical evaluations of the quality and the effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations and apply the criteria in their personal participation in music
   B. evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing it to similar or exemplary models
   C. evaluate a given musical work in terms of its aesthetic qualities and explain it to similar or exemplary models

8. Understanding relationships between music, the others arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
   A. explain how elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts and cite examples
   B. compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style and cite examples from various cultures
   C. explain ways in which the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts are interrelated with those of music
   D. compare the uses of characteristic elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles among the arts in different historical periods and different cultures
   E. explain how the roles of creators, performers, and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another in the various arts

9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.
Opera Box Content List

La bohème

There is one (1) of each of the following items:

_____ La bohème LIBRETTO (G. Schirmer)
_____ La bohème FULL SCORE (Dover)
_____ La bohème VOCAL SCORE (G. Schirmer)
_____ DVD La bohème (Australian Opera/Baz Luhrmann)
_____ DVD La bohème (Metropolitan Opera/Levine, Carreras)
_____ CD La bohème (Pavoratti, Freni, von Karajan) (London)
_____ CD La bohème (Tebaldi, Bergonzi, Serafin) (Decca)
_____ BOOK The Complete Operas of Puccini (Charles Osborne)
_____ BOOK Puccini and His Operas (Stanley Sadie)
_____ BOOK La bohème (Metropolitan Opera Classics Library)
_____ BOOK Opera, Composers, Works, Performers (András Batta)
_____ Teacher's Guide

The entire deposit will be withheld until all items are returned. Any damaged items will be charged to renter for the amount of replacement. Thank you for using the Minnesota Opera's Opera Box and teaching opera in your school!
Reference/Tracking Guide

La bohème

This is a chart that coordinates each track or chapter number for the CDs and DVDs in the Opera Box. If you are doing a lesson where you are comparing differing interpretations, this chart shows you where each excerpt is, its relationship to the other recordings and the related pages of the scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FULL SCORE</th>
<th>VOCAL SCORE</th>
<th>DECCA CD</th>
<th>LONDON CD</th>
<th>LUHRMANN DVD</th>
<th>MET DVD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 1</td>
<td>PAGE 4</td>
<td>CD/TRACK 1/1</td>
<td>CD/TRACK 1/1</td>
<td>TRACK 2</td>
<td>TRACK 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 27</td>
<td>PAGE 18</td>
<td>TRACK 1/2</td>
<td>TRACK 1/2</td>
<td>TRACK 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 33</td>
<td>PAGE 21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 34</td>
<td>PAGE 22</td>
<td>TRACK 1/3</td>
<td>TRACK 1/3</td>
<td>TRACK 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 52</td>
<td>PAGE 34</td>
<td>TRACK 1/4</td>
<td>TRACK 1/4</td>
<td>TRACK 5</td>
<td>TRACK 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 74</td>
<td>PAGE 50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 77</td>
<td>PAGE 52</td>
<td>TRACK 1/5</td>
<td>TRACK 1/5</td>
<td>TRACK 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 79</td>
<td>PAGE 55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 80</td>
<td>PAGE 56</td>
<td>TRACK 1/6</td>
<td>TRACK 1/6</td>
<td>TRACK 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 82</td>
<td>PAGE 58</td>
<td>TRACK 1/7</td>
<td>TRACK 1/7</td>
<td>TRACK 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 89</td>
<td>PAGE 64</td>
<td>TRACK 1/8</td>
<td>TRACK 1/8</td>
<td>TRACK 9</td>
<td>TRACK 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 98</td>
<td>PAGE 70</td>
<td>TRACK 1/9</td>
<td>TRACK 1/9</td>
<td>TRACK 10</td>
<td>TRACK 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 110</td>
<td>PAGE 79</td>
<td>TRACK 1/10</td>
<td>TRACK 1/10</td>
<td>TRACK 11</td>
<td>TRACK 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 121</td>
<td>PAGE 87</td>
<td>TRACK 1/11</td>
<td>TRACK 1/11</td>
<td>TRACK 12</td>
<td>TRACK 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 147</td>
<td>PAGE 105</td>
<td>TRACK 1/12</td>
<td>TRACK 1/12</td>
<td>TRACK 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 152</td>
<td>PAGE 109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 164</td>
<td>PAGE 116</td>
<td>TRACK 1/13</td>
<td>TRACK 1/13</td>
<td>TRACK 14</td>
<td>TRACK 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 176</td>
<td>PAGE 122</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 177</td>
<td>PAGE 123</td>
<td>TRACK 1/14</td>
<td>TRACK 1/14</td>
<td>TRACK 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 194</td>
<td>PAGE 139</td>
<td>TRACK 1/15</td>
<td>TRACK 1/15</td>
<td>TRACK 16</td>
<td>TRACK 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 219</td>
<td>PAGE 155</td>
<td>TRACK 1/16</td>
<td>TRACK 1/16</td>
<td>TRACK 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Score</td>
<td>Vocal Score</td>
<td>Decca CD</td>
<td>London CD</td>
<td>Luhrmann DVD</td>
<td>Met DVD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 239</td>
<td>PAGE 179</td>
<td>CD/Track 2/1</td>
<td>CD/Track 2/1</td>
<td>TRACK 18</td>
<td>TRACK 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 250</td>
<td>PAGE 187</td>
<td>TRACK 2/2</td>
<td>TRACK 2/2</td>
<td>TRACK 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 255</td>
<td>PAGE 189</td>
<td>TRACK 2/3</td>
<td>TRACK 2/3</td>
<td>TRACK 20</td>
<td>TRACK 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 271</td>
<td>PAGE 199</td>
<td>TRACK 2/4</td>
<td>TRACK 2/4</td>
<td>TRACK 21</td>
<td>TRACK 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 277</td>
<td>PAGE 203</td>
<td>TRACK 2/5</td>
<td>TRACK 2/5</td>
<td>TRACK 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 282</td>
<td>PAGE 206</td>
<td>TRACK 2/6</td>
<td>TRACK 2/6</td>
<td>TRACK 23</td>
<td>TRACK 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 294</td>
<td>PAGE 213</td>
<td>TRACK 2/7</td>
<td>TRACK 2/7</td>
<td>TRACK 24</td>
<td>TRACK 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 299</td>
<td>PAGE 216</td>
<td>TRACK 2/8</td>
<td>TRACK 2/8</td>
<td>TRACK 25</td>
<td>TRACK 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 319</td>
<td>PAGE 231</td>
<td>TRACK 2/9</td>
<td>TRACK 2/9</td>
<td>TRACK 26</td>
<td>TRACK 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 326</td>
<td>PAGE 236</td>
<td>TRACK 2/10</td>
<td>TRACK 2/10</td>
<td>TRACK 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 335</td>
<td>PAGE 240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 352</td>
<td>PAGE 249</td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 2/11</td>
<td>TRACK 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 353</td>
<td>PAGE 250</td>
<td>TRACK 2/11</td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 365</td>
<td>PAGE 255</td>
<td>TRACK 2/12</td>
<td>TRACK 2/12</td>
<td>TRACK 29</td>
<td>TRACK 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 381</td>
<td>PAGE 266</td>
<td>TRACK 2/13</td>
<td>TRACK 2/13</td>
<td>TRACK 30</td>
<td>TRACK 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 386</td>
<td>PAGE 269</td>
<td>TRACK 2/14</td>
<td>TRACK 2/14</td>
<td>TRACK 31</td>
<td>TRACK 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 398</td>
<td>PAGE 276</td>
<td>TRACK 2/15</td>
<td>TRACK 2/15</td>
<td>TRACK 32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAGE 399</td>
<td>PAGE 277</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TRACK 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Lesson Plan

**Title of Lesson**

Lesson 1: Are you a Bohemian?

**Objective(s)**

Students will learn about Paris and the Bohemians during the middle of the 19th century, the time that *La bohème* takes place.

**Material(s)**

- Reference book about Puccini
- General reference books about Paris and the Bohemians (*not in Opera Box*)
- "Is the Bohemian lifestyle still around today?" Interview Guide

**Procedure(s)**

1. Divide class into small groups and assign specific topics related to the life and times of Paris circa 1845. Each group is to find information on various aspects of culture on that time period. Depending on number of groups, topics could also include cultures of other countries at that time.

   Suggested research topics:
   - Social and cultural life in Paris
   - Political life and social classes
   - Artistic life (authors, poets, painters, etc.) in Paris and in Europe
   - The artistic aesthetic during the middle of the 19th century
   - The role and perception of women in European society

2. As a class, discuss the findings of the students. Look for similarities between the topics that demonstrate the importance of artistic beliefs. Themes such as how material wealth like money, food and shelter, is held as inferior to the virtue of the artist suffering for his or her art. Discuss where the political and financial power was. Ask the class if they think these artists who were holding these believes were rich or poor.

3. From this class discussion, students are to create a list of characteristics about persons and society from this time. Do the students see any reoccurring traits and habits? Is the Bohemian lifestyle still alive today? Do they see any of these traits in today’s culture?

4. Assign students to interview someone who is at least 15 years older then themselves. They are to ask the interviewee about the bohemian lifestyle in today’s society. See “Is the Bohemian lifestyle still around today?” Interview Guide on following page.

5. Following the interviews, have the students debate where or not the Bohemian lifestyle is alive today or a thing of the past. Divide the class into two groups, each taking one side of the argument. Each student will be responsible for taking some role in supporting the argument. Encourage students to use all their research, media and other items to enhance their arguments.

   Suggested debate topic points:
   - Salaries and fame of “pop” artists versus serious or classically trained artists
   - Are the ideals of the Bohemian lifestyle still held currently?
   - Do artists today suffer like they did in Paris circa 1845?
ASSESSMENT(s)
Value will be assigned to class participation, quality of research, and quality of responses from interview. Each student is to participate in supporting the argument. Each side must submit an outline of their arguments prior to the debate.

ADDITIONAL COMMENT(s)
Is the Bohemian lifestyle still around today?

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**NAME**

**DIRECTIONS**

Find a person who is at least 15 years older than yourself to interview. Record their answers. Be sure to record what was truly said instead of what you thought was said. Make sure the person you are interviewing knows what the “Bohemian lifestyle” is.

**NAME OF INTERVIEWEE**

**RELATIONSHIP TO INTERVIEWEE**

**Were you a Bohemian?**

- What was the most important part of life your when you were 17–27?
- What type of housing did you live in?
- What were your dreams of the future?
- What was your outlook toward rich people?
- During this time in your life, if you felt that you had a very powerful work of art to create, would you have given up all your material wealth to devote your time and energy for your work of art?

**Do you think like a Bohemian?**

*Suggested questions about the philosophy of the “Bohemian lifestyle.”*

- Do you think that an artist should suffer for his or her art?
- Is art that is created by poor, suffering artists, better or worse?
- Who do you think is a modern day Bohemian artist?

Come up with some of your own questions, too!
**La bohème Opera Box**

**Lesson Plan**

**Title of Lesson**
Lesson 2: Understanding the libretto

**Objective(s)**
Students will read the libretto and understand its literary merits.

**Material(s)**
- LIBRETTO *La bohème*
- DVD *La bohème*

**Procedure(s)**
1. Students are to read the libretto of *La bohème*. Upon completion, have a class discussion on the merit of text. Discuss points such as: is the libretto an effective piece of drama (or poetry)? or, what is the level of characterization within the libretto?
2. Have students add what they think should be included in the story to make a more complete drama. Discuss their responses.
3. Show Act 1 and discuss the merits of the drama. Does the class think that the story, with the music, is more or less effective as drama?
4. Discuss why a play or story must be altered to create a libretto for an opera. Does singing and the orchestra have an effect on the story? Are greater or fewer words needed to tell the story?

**Assessment(s)**
Value will be assigned for class participation. Students are to compose an essay around the topic: “Should a libretto be able to stand on its own as a piece of literature, or is the music necessary?”

**Additional Comment(s)**
This lesson could include debating the libretto as a piece of literature, poetry, or any other literary genre that the students are aquatinted with.
**Lesson Plan**

**Title of Lesson**

Lesson 3: Puccini, the master of opera

**Objective(s)**

Students will learn about Puccini as a master of Italian opera.

**Material(s)**

- Reference books about Puccini
- General reference books about 19th-century Europe (*not in Opera Box*)
- Internet access (*not in Opera Box*)
- Poster board (*not in Opera Box*)

**Procedure(s)**

1. Divide class into groups and assign topics related to Puccini. Direct the class to research their specific topics and to prepare a presentation on that topic. *The nature and scope of the presentations are to the discretion of the teacher.*
   - Possible topics:
     - Political and social culture of Italy during Puccini’s lifetime
     - Scientific and technological achievements
     - Social life and class divisions
     - Artistic and musical life in Italy and Europe
       - The rise of verismo opera
       - German opera and Wagner
2. Offer some guided (in-class) research time with students. Depending on students' ability to conduct research, additional guidance might be needed.
3. Each group is to create a piece of the timeline poster to be posted on the wall. It is suggested that the teacher predetermine what form the timeline will look like. For example, prior to handing out the poster board, mark the years and label the topics of each card. Set the number of facts and to be put on each poster.
4. Students will give oral presentations on their topic. Each group should create five questions about the topic they feel is the most important. Questions are to be submitted to the teacher prior to giving the presentation. The rest of the class should take notes on each presentation for a class-constructed test.
5. Put all questions together from each group and give the test.

**Assessment(s)**

Assign value for class participation and group cooperation. Also, each piece of the timeline must have a certain number of relevant points presented in a clean and clear manner.
To help guide the students in the research, creating a checklist is recommended. Each item may be assigned value. For example:

**TOPIC**

**RESEARCH CHECKLIST**

- Twenty facts of our topic and how they relate to Puccini
- Organize all facts into chronological order
- Three sentences describing each fact to be put on timeline
- Proofread all sentences prior to putting them on the timeline
- Complete by putting each fact on the timeline

**CLASS PRESENTATION CHECKLIST**

- Prepare an outline describing research for class presentation
- Assign speaking parts for each group member
- Practice speech (with other class members observing)
- Give presentation
- Put piece of timeline on wall
**La bohème Opera Box**

**Lesson Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 4: Acting scenes from <em>La bohème</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will act out scenes from <em>La bohème</em> to reinforce the concepts of the importance of acting as part of opera.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • LIBRETTO *La bohème*  
| • Acting Evaluation (see following page) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Have students read all or a portion of Act I (where Mimi enters) and/or the Act IV finale death scene of <em>La bohème</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) In small groups, students will perform this or another portion of the opera. Special attention must be given to physical gestures. Exact reading of the text must also be included (no ad lib will be acceptable). Students should carefully read each line and think about how to physically interpret them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Each group will perform with the rest of the class serving as an audience. Students should take notes on the effectiveness of each performance. Students should be able to make specific comments regarding physical movement and vocal articulation. See the Acting Evaluation example on following page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) After all performances are completed have a class discussion as to effectiveness of each one.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value should be given to quality of the reviews of peers, class participation in discussion and acting performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Comment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This lesson can be taught following various activities that may involve the study of the drama and history of acting. This lesson can be maximized when used as reinforcement of prior activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videotaping the performances and presenting them on a public access or school channel may provide valuable public relations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Acting Evaluation**

Lesson 4

**Name of Observer**

**Names of Performers**

**Directions**

Closely observe your peers as they perform scenes from *La bohème*. Look for the following elements in their acting. Be consistent and fair with each group.

- What was the single most effective gesture given by the group?

- Did the group “follow” each line from the text? Did they act out everything they were saying?

- Did the actors make eye contact with each other?

- Was the voice of the actors used to create variety and emotion in the scene?

- Give one suggestion to the group for them to improve their performance.
# Lesson 5: Translating *La bohème* into other genres

## Objective(s)

Students will become familiar with the characters and their dramatic motivation. Students will have an understanding of the characters to be able to transfer information from one genre to another.

## Material(s)

- *Libretto* *La bohème*
- *Performance Rubric* (see following page)

## Procedure(s)

1. As a class read all of Act I from *La bohème*. Have students read aloud as specific characters. Discuss if the plot realistic or plausible. Ask students if they have read or seen this story in any book, television, or movie.

2. In small groups, have students pick a certain excerpt of Act I libretto and put the text into another genre. For example, a group could take the scene when Mimì and Rodolfo first meet and rewrite the text as a rap, pop, or country song. In the translation, elements of the original text should be included. It is up to the teacher's discretion as to how much variation will be acceptable.

3. Have students perform their rewritten songs. Have students act as the audience and give feedback. Use Performance Rubric for evaluation. Discuss the effectiveness of each performance.

## Assessment(s)

Value should be given for class participation and effectiveness of performance.

## Additional Comment(s)
PERFORMANCE RUBRIC

Lesson 5

NAME OF OBSERVER ____________________________

NAMES OF PERFORMERS ____________________________

DIRECTIONS

Observe each group and assess how they succeed in each category.

(1) Use of words in the translation:

- Used exact words from libretto
- Used most of the words from the libretto
- Used some of the words from the libretto
- Used none of the words from the libretto

(2) Conveyed the “spirit” of original emotion of the selected excerpt:

- Conveyed all the emotion from the excerpt
- Conveyed most of the emotion from the excerpt
- Conveyed some of the emotion from the excerpt
- Conveyed none of the emotion from the excerpt

(3) Creativity of the translation:

- Extremely creative; performance made me think about the text in a new way
- Very creative; performance had some unique ideas that caused me to think about the text in a new way
- Somewhat creative; performance did not make me think about the text in a new way
- Not creative; performance did not make me think about the text in a new way

(4) Create your own category: ____________________________

OPERA BOX LESSON PLANS | 21
**TITLE OF LESSON**

Lesson 6: Miming *La bohème*

---

**OBJECTIVE(s)**

Students will physically recreate scenes from *La bohème* by miming. They will understand the elements of the drama and be able to transfer that knowledge to act out silent scenes.

---

**MATERIAL(s)**

- LIBRETTO *La bohème*
- ACTING EVALUATION (see following page)

---

**PROCEDURE(s)**

1. Students will read selected scenes from the *La bohème* libretto. (See Unit B, lesson 5 for suggested scenes.)

2. Discuss the emotional elements that are of interest in the scene, and identify which emotions can be conveyed through physical actions versus verbal communication.

3. In small groups, students will choose a scene and work together to analyze the emotional make-up of that scene. Then, they will rehearse a scene by miming the actions. This will be acted out in class.

4. Students will mime their selected scenes with the class serving as an audience. Use ACTING EVALUATION as a guide.

---

**ASSESSMENT(s)**

Value will be given to accuracy in miming the scene. Detail and nuance should be emphasized. Class participation will also be assessed.

---

**ADDITIONAL COMMENT(s)**

There are many possible variations with this activity. For example, groups may not announce the scene they will be miming, letting the audience compete to guess what scene it is. The class could compare and contrast each performance and discuss the virtues of each performance.
**Acting Evaluation**

Lesson 6

**Name of Observer**

**Names of Performers**

**Directions**

Closely observe your peers as they perform scenes from *La bohème*. Look for the following elements in their acting. Be consistent and fair with each group.

- What was the single most effective gesture given by the group?

- Did the group “follow” each line from the text? Did they act out everything they were saying?

- Did the actors make eye contact with each other?

- Was the voice of the actors used to create variety and emotion in the scene?

- Give one suggestion to the group to improve their performance.
# Lesson 7: Motives in *La bohème*

**Objective(s)**

Students will learn how dramatic ideas are represented musically with motives (or *leitmotif*) in Puccini's use of the orchestra.

**Material(s)**

- Reference books about Puccini
- Audio recording of *La bohème*
- Full and/or vocal score of *La bohème*

**Procedure(s)**

Prior to teaching this lesson, it is recommended that the teacher read *The Complete Operas of Puccini*, pages 107–114, and *La bohème*, pages 3–25, for a basic understanding of the opera and explanations of motives.

1. Define motive and how it is represented in the music of an opera.

2. Play a few short excerpts (motives) for the class. Ask students to name all the instruments used. For example, in the opening scene, note that Puccini uses every instrument in the score and in various combinations to represent the "Bohemians at work or play." Raise students' awareness to Puccini's speed in developing his ideas and the actual "clock time" as he does this. Suggest to students that these musical devices will be used repeatedly to enhance the story.

3. Play other motives Puccini uses in the opera. Have students describe what they think the music is trying to convey. Have them support their suggestions with musical examples, i.e., the end sounds sad because of the high, slow strings, etc.

4. Play all of Act IV and ask students to raise their hands when they hear a motive. Ask students if they hear the motives in variation or in the original way it was first played.

**Assessment(s)**

Students are to define a motive and be able to describe what motives they hear while listening to *La bohème*.

**Additional Comment(s)**

A variation of this lesson could be, while explaining a motive, use the piano to play the examples. Then play the audio recording with the instrumentation.

A teacher with more knowledge of the score could isolate and play a motive as it reoccurs throughout the opera on the piano. Students, then could be asked to identify every time the motive is sounded.
**La bohème Opera Box**

**Lesson Plan**

**Title of Lesson**

Lesson 8: The was a great performance and I know why!

**Objective(s)**

Students will learn to critically analyze elements of operatic performance.

**Material(s)**

- DVD *La bohème*
- Theater reviews from newspapers, etc. (*not part of Opera Box*)

**Procedure(s)**

1. Have class discussion about theatre, movie, and/or television reviews in newspapers or television. Ask students about quality of these reviews. Do the students find them helpful? Why or why not? Suggest that the writers and readers both must settle on a set of criteria for the review to be successful.

2. Have student find reviews and analyze the criteria that the reviewer basis the review on. For example, acting, production, soundtrack, special effects, etc.

3. Students are to create a visual description (chart) describing the criteria used.

4. Show Act I of *La bohème* and have students evaluate the performance on the DVD based on their criteria on chart. Discuss the similar and dissimilar traits.

5. Have students revise the criteria to be tailored toward opera. Watch additional acts from *La bohème*.

6. Student will write a review of live performance of *La bohème*.

**Assessment(s)**

Value will be given to class participation, quality of evaluation chart and depth of analysis. Review of live performance should contain multiple elements.

**Additional Comment(s)**

This lesson can be extended to include students writing a review about a live performance they attend. For example, this lesson could be started prior to attending a performance of *La bohème* and as a follow-up assignment, have students write a review about their experience. Post reviews on the school web site.
Lesson 9: Musical characteristics of *La bohème*

**Objective(s)**
Students will develop analytical skills to identify the musical characteristics Puccini uses in “Chi è là?–Scusi–Una donna!”, the Act I meeting of Rodolfo and Mimì.

**Material(s)**
- Recording of Act I of *La bohème*
- Full or vocal score of *La bohème*
- **PUCCINI’S MUSICAL CHOICES FOR DRAMA WORKSHEET** (see following pages)

**Procedure(s)**
1. Give handout to the class and give instructions for the lesson. Ask students to give general descriptions about each musical section played. Since this is one scene, students will need to listen very closely to the subtle changes. They are to use key words to describe the fundamentals of music.

2. Listen to the entire scene. Verbally identify the beginning of each section for students.

3. Break down each section by listening again to each section followed by a class discussion based on what the students hear. The full score may be used for more advanced students for further discussion of Puccini’s techniques.

4. Collect charts from each student.

**Assessment(s)**
Value will be assigned to class participation and acceptable answers on the chart.

**Additional Comment(s)**
This lesson can be applied to any section of the opera or other works of music.
# Puccini’s Musical Choices for Drama

## Lesson 9

### Name

---

### Directions

As you listen to the scene where Rodolfo and Mimì first meet, identify its different sections. Use the chart below to describe how musical elements are used to create contrast and movement. Your teacher will verbally identify each section. Page numbers refer to the vocal score. Numbers in “( )” refer to rehearsal numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>56</th>
<th>56</th>
<th>58 (#26)</th>
<th>60 (#27)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Character</strong></td>
<td>Rodolfo, Mimì</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocal Range</strong></td>
<td>tenor, soprano</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tempo</strong></td>
<td>Lento</td>
<td>Agitato</td>
<td>Andante moderato</td>
<td>Un poco più mosso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meter</strong></td>
<td>common time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dynamics</strong></td>
<td>pp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation</strong></td>
<td>short</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Musical Features</strong></td>
<td>Both voices are in their low registers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE</th>
<th>64 (#30)</th>
<th>66 (#31)</th>
<th>67 (#32)</th>
<th>70 (#35)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocal Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tempo</strong></td>
<td>Adagio affettuoso</td>
<td>Andante sostenuto</td>
<td>Andante lento</td>
<td>Andante lento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meter</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dynamics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Musical Features</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCENE</td>
<td>71 (#36)</td>
<td>72 (#37)</td>
<td>73 (#38)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARACTER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOCAL RANGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMPO</td>
<td>Andante calmo</td>
<td>Allegretto moderato</td>
<td>Andante molto sostenuto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DYNAMICS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICULATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER MUSICAL FEATURES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create your own Opera Box Lesson Plan and send it to us.

### Opera Box Lesson Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>NAME(S)</strong></th>
<th><strong>SCHOOL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PHONE/EMAIL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TITLE OF LESSON</strong></th>
<th><strong>CLASS AND GRADE LEVEL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>OBJECTIVE(S)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MATERIAL(S)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PROCEDURE(S)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ASSESSMENT(S)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ADDITIONAL COMMENT(S)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please include any original materials, if possible.
The opera opens with a very brief, spirited introduction.

(1) OPENING BARS

Allegro vivace

La bohème
Music by Giacomo Puccini
Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica
after Henry Murger’s novel
Scènes de la vie de bohème (1851)

World premiere at the Teatro Regio, Turin
February 1, 1896
Sung in Italian

CAST OF CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rodolfo, a poet</td>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimi, a seamstress</td>
<td>Soprano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcello, a painter</td>
<td>Baritone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcello, a painter</td>
<td>Baritone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musetta, a belle of the Latin Quarter</td>
<td>Soprano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colline, a philosopher</td>
<td>Bass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schaunard, a musician</td>
<td>Baritone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parpignol, a toy vendor</td>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benoit, the landlord</td>
<td>Bass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcindoro, Museetta’s wealthy admirer</td>
<td>Bass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A customs official, students, working girls, townfolk, shopkeepers, street vendors, soldiers, waiters, children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Setting: Paris during the 1840s
ACT I

Marcello, a painter, and Rodolfo, a writer, work on their respective pursuits in an ill-heated attic atelier. Marcello complains of the cold and of the coldheartedness of his ex-mistress, Musetta. Rodolfo offers to warm the room by burning his manuscript. Colline, a philosopher, blusters in – no pawn shop will take his books on Christmas Eve. Schaunard, a musician, suddenly bursts into the room with much-needed food, wine and firewood. He relates the story of an eccentric nobleman who hired him to play his violin until his parrot died. After three long days, Schaunard was able to collect his fee only by feeding the bird some poisoned parsley.

Schaunard advises them to save the food for later – Christmas Eve should be celebrated with dinner at the Café Momus. While dividing the remaining money, they are interrupted by the insistent knocking of Benoit, who demands payment of the rent, long past due. The Bohemians invite him in and after priming him with wine, get the old man to admit he has a young mistress. Shocked to discover he also has a wife, the four men pretend to be horrified and quickly usher him out of the room. As the others leave for the café, Rodolfo stays behind to finish an article. He promises to catch up with them later.

Hearing another knock at the door, Rodolfo is surprised to find an attractive young woman, a neighbor whose candle needs a light. He notices her harsh cough and pale complexion, and she soon faints in his arms. Once revived she prepares to leave only to find her key is missing. A draft puts the room into total darkness, and together they begin to hunt for the key. Rodolfo silently pockets the key and suggests they wait for the moonlight to aid their search. He takes a moment to describe himself – a poor poet, rich only in his dreams and visions, who has now found love in the eyes of a stranger.

Her name is Mimi, she says, a seamstress, who in her little room, embroiders flowers that are her private symbols of love and springtime.

(2) CHE GELIDA MANINA (RODOLFO)

TRANSLATION: HOW COLD YOUR LITTLE HAND IS. LET ME WARM IT.

(3) MI CHIAMANO MIMI (MIMI)

TRANSLATION: THEY CALL ME MIMI BUT MY REAL NAME IS LUCIA. MY STORY ISN'T LONG: I EMBROIDER ON LINEN AND SILK.

Life’s fairest flower is love, and she returns his adoring affection.
Rodolfo’s friends call from the street, and he tells them to hold two seats at the café.

**ACT II**

The Latin Quarter bustles with shoppers and vendors on Christmas Eve.

**5 OPENING TO ACT II (ORCHESTRA)**

Schaunard examines some musical instruments, Colline buys a rare book and Rodolfo buys Mimì a bonnet. Parpignol appears with his cart and dazzles the young children with toys. The Bohemians gather at the Café Momus as planned and soon after, Musetta appears in the company of Alcindoro, her wealthy, aging admirer. Trying to catch Marcello’s jealous eye, she openly describes herself as alluring to all men.

**6 QUANDO M’EN VO’ (MUSSETTA)**

In a ruse to distract Alcindoro, she pretends her shoe hurts and sends him off to the cobbler. Once reunited with Marcello, Musetta and the other Bohemians escape the café amidst a military band, assuring the waiter that Alcindoro will pick up the tab when he returns.

**ACT III**

Act III opens with orchestration evocative of snowflakes.
On a dreary winter morning, Mimì appears at the Barrière d’Enfer (“Hell’s gate”) bordering the edge of the city. She approaches the tavern where Marcello and Musetta are living, he by painting and she by singing. Mimì asks for his help – Rodolfo has become insanely and unjustifiably jealous. After cruelly demanding that she find another lover, he stormed out the night before. Marcello assures her that he is inside and promises to talk to him. The sound of his voice puts Mimì into hiding. When interrogated, Rodolfo reveals the real reason for the split – Mimì’s health is getting worse, and the squalid conditions of his apartment will only hasten her illness. Mimì’s coughing betrays her hiding place, and Rodolfo rushes to her. Marcello hears Musetta flirting with a stranger and angrily goes inside. Mimì bids Rodolfo adieu, but listening to Marcello and Musetta fight, they agree to stay together until spring.

ACT IV

Months later, Marcello and Rodolfo are again at work in the garret, having broken off with their respective mistresses. Neither can concentrate, however, as their thoughts are consumed by the women. Colline and Schaunard arrive with lunch, and the four make a mockery of the meager offering by pretending it is a lavish banquet. At the height of their merriment, Musetta bursts in with news that Mimì has collapsed on the stairs. Musetta found her alone, almost dead. Her dying wish is to see Rodolfo one last time. Her hands are cold, and Mimì asks for a muff. Musetta takes off her earrings and tells Marcello to sell them for medicine and to find a doctor. She leaves with him to fetch the muff. Colline takes off his beloved coat, and preparing to pawn it, he and Schaunard leave the lovers alone.
Mimì admits she still loves Rodolfo, and the two reminisce about their happy past.

(10) SONO ANDATI? (MIMÌ)

Suddenly she is racked by a coughing fit. The Bohemians return with the necessary provisions. As Rodolfo turns away for a moment, Schaunard observes that Mimì has just died. Comforted by his friends, Rodolfo cries out her name in anguish.
Giacomo Puccini was born into a family of court composers and organists in the historic city of Lucca, Italy. With a strong feeling of tradition in the Puccini family, it was expected that Giacomo would assume his deceased father’s position as *Maestro di Cappella* when he came of age. By 14 he already was playing organ in a number of the town’s churches.

Albina Magi, the composer’s mother, also came from a family of musicians. Her brother, Fortunato, became her son’s first music teacher. His uncle was a strict instructor and was known to kick Puccini when he made mistakes. For his part, Puccini was unruly, easily bored and preferred to hunt for bird’s nests rather than study. Seeing little progress, Albina decided a new teacher was in order and sent the boy to Carlo Angeloni, a former pupil of her husband. Giacomo’s attitude and study habits quickly changed.

Money was scarce for the family, and to supplement his church earnings Puccini would play piano at the local bars and at houses of “ill repute.” He withheld a small percentage of his earnings for cigarettes and began the bad habit of smoking (which ultimately caused his death). As a young man, Puccini was determined to be rich and independent. His teacher introduced him to opera through the study of Verdi’s piano scores. Then in 1879, Puccini attended his first opera performance, *Aida*, and was deeply moved – his destiny was to be a composer for the theater.

He knew it was necessary to study in the Italian operatic capital, Milan. After completing studies at the Pacini Institute of Music in Lucca, Puccini enrolled at the Milan Conservatory in 1880 under the auspices of a royal scholarship. His living expenses were provided by a loan from an uncle but money was always tight. Puccini lived the bohemian life of a poor student and became acquainted with many important musical and literary figures. For a short while, he shared a room with the composer Pietro Mascagni, who became famous for his one-act opera *Cavalleria rusticana*. To save money, the two of them would cook meals in their room and, as this was strictly forbidden, one would play the piano loudly to drown out the noise of pots and pans. One can see how the composer drew from his own life experiences in the writing of his opera, *La bohème*.

In 1883 at the age of 25, Puccini graduated with a diploma in composition from the Milan Conservatory. His thesis composition, *Capriccio sinfonico*, was played by the student orchestra and received high praise from influential critics. This was the start of a celebrated career.
Puccini was not a prolific composer. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he produced his operas at long intervals, partly because of his fastidiousness in choosing subjects, several of which he took up only to abandon after several months, and partly because of his constant demands for modifications of the texts. Much of his time, too, was spent in hunting in the marshes around his home and in trips abroad to supervise revivals of his works.

The composer’s first work for the stage, Le villi, was originally submitted to a contest sponsored by the wealthy music publisher, Edoardo Sonzogno. The one-act opera received not even honorable mention, but Puccini was certain of its merit. He and librettist Ferdinando Fontana began to canvass the opera to the broader circle of the Italian intelligentsia. One of these individuals was the highly influential librettist and composer, Arrigo Boito, who was instrumental in getting Le villi staged.

The reception to the new work was mixed, but the revised two-act version was staged in a number of cities outside of Italy (a remarkable feat for such a young composer). Puccini’s next opera, Edgar, however, was a resounding critical failure, yet the astute publisher, Giulio Ricordi, found fault in the libretto only and promise in the music. He pitted himself against the shareholders of his publishing house who demanded that Puccini be released from retainer. Ricordi’s confidence was rewarded with Manon Lescaut, Puccini’s first true success.

In 1884, Puccini became acquainted with Elvira Gemignani who was encouraged by her husband, a pharmacist and former classmate of Puccini’s, to take voice lessons with the composer. Shortly after his mother’s death, he was joined by Elvira and her daughter, Fosca, in Milan. She left her son, Renato, with her husband. Two years later she gave birth to their only child, Antonio, which caused a great scandal in Puccini’s birthplace of Lucca – his family, very conventional and religious, was outraged. He seldom visited that city again in his lifetime.

With the popularity of Manon Lescaut, Puccini was now generally considered by the Italian art circle to be Verdi’s successor (even by the great composer
himself). As the royalties began rolling in, Puccini began to show a predilection for machines and gadgets, in particular fast automobiles and motor boats. His solitary nature drew him to a purchase a villa near the sea, surrounded by the mountains at Torre del Lago. Through the years, this villa became a home base where he could enjoy his passion for hunting and fishing, along with the nature and silence of the surroundings.

During the 1890s, Puccini began working with Luigi Illica, who worked out the scheme and drafted the dialogue, and the poet and playwright Giuseppe Giacosa, who put the lines into verse. Although they had participated on Manon Lescaut (in a string of several librettists) their first true collaboration was La bohème in 1896, followed four years later by Tosca and then Madame Butterfly four years after that. Giacosa died in 1906, putting an end to the successful team that produced three of Puccini’s most enduring works.

In 1904, Giacomo and Elvira were finally married legally, following her first husband’s death. Their relationship, however, was a constant storm. She was insanely jealous, and a letter, written prior to their union, stated her decision to leave him. Many of her accusations about him were not unfounded. The composer had quite a weakness for women and carried on many extramarital affairs throughout his life.

While Puccini was recuperating from an automobile accident, a young girl named Doria Manfredi was hired as a nurse and maid. She remained in the household as the Puccinis’ maid. Elvira saw the makings of an affair and immediately discharged her. But that was not enough. She continued her slanderous accusations through the small village, and the townspeople, aware of her husband’s past philandering, quite naturally believed her. The innocent girl, totally humiliated, took poison and died after five days of unbearable suffering. Giacomo took refuge in Rome and Elvira fled to Milan. Doria’s family sued Elvira following an autopsy that proved Doria’s virginity.

Puccini and his wife lived apart for four months while Elvira persisted in defending her legal position. The case was tried and she was sentenced to five months’ imprisonment – but Puccini made a large financial settlement with the Manfredi family and the lawsuit was dropped. In September of 1909, Giacomo, Elvira and Antonio were reunited at Torre. A month later he wrote, “In my home I have peace – Elvira is good – and the three of us live happily together.”

Puccini’s later operas were quite varied in their styles and subjects. La fanciulla del West, set in the American West, is notable for its advanced impressionistic orchestration and composition. La rondine was designed to be a musical comedy in the Viennese style but seemed more related to La traviata than to Die Fledermaus. Il trittico was an evening of one-act operas that are quite a mixed bag: Il tabarro was Puccini’s bow toward the verismo style; Suor Angelica is a gripping emotional drama set in a nunnery; Gianni Schicchi is a comic masterpiece that features Puccini at his most exuberant. There is a thought that Puccini was mocking his own success with this piece.

At the age of 60, the composer set out to write an opera that was atypical of his past style. He studied the developments in contemporary music and based the new work on Count Carlo Gozzi’s fable about the cruel Chinese princess Turandot. The completion of the work was cut short due to his ill-health.
Puccini had been dealing with a persistent cough for months. He began complaining of stinging sore throats and his diagnosis revealed cancer of the throat. He traveled to Brussels to receive radium therapy, accompanied by his son and stepdaughter – Elvira had bronchitis and remained in Milan. Radioactive needles were inserted into the tumor. Initially, the doctor was optimistic, but four days later, the composer suffered a heart attack. Puccini died on November 29, 1924 and his remains are now entombed in the chapel of his villa at Torre.

Although *Turandot* was left unfinished, the conductor Arturo Toscanini entrusted its completion to another Ricordi composer, Franco Alfano. In 1926, the opera premiered under the baton of Toscanini. Out of respect for the composer, the maestro stopped where Puccini had written his last notes. He turned to the audience and emotionally said, “At this point the master laid down his pen.”

Puccini has been much maligned for his flirtation with popular music, but he had an uncanny feel for a good story and talent for enthralling yet economical music. His experiments with tonality and form, while constant, were always subtle, and, unlike his contemporary Stravinsky, he did not seem to need to be controversial. His melodies are mostly simple stepwise vocal lines, yet with them he managed to create arias of astonishing beauty. The use of orchestra is economical and to the point – few operas of his have overtures and Puccini often captures the right dramatic moments with just a splash of colorful chords. Though his personal life was plagued with self-doubt and laborious perfectionism, Puccini profoundly influenced the world of opera with a deep understanding of music, drama and humanity.

*A scene from Minnesota Opera’s 1995 production of Turandot*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Premiere</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Le villi</em> (The Willis)</td>
<td>Milan, Teatro dal Verme, May 31, 1884</td>
<td>leggenda drammatica; libretto by Ferdinando Fontana, after Alphonse Karr’s Les willis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Edgar</em></td>
<td>Milan, Teatro alla Scala, April 21, 1889</td>
<td>dramma lirico; libretto by Ferdinando Fontana, after Alfred de Musset’s La coupe et les lettres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Manon Lescaut</em></td>
<td>Turin, Teatro Regio, February 1, 1893</td>
<td>dramma lirico; libretto by Domenico Oliva and Luigi Illica, after Abbé Prévost’s L’histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La bohème</em></td>
<td>Turin, Teatro Regio, February 1, 1896</td>
<td>opera; libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, after Henry Murger’s Scènes de la vie de bohème</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tosca</em></td>
<td>Rome, Teatro Costanzi, January 14, 1900</td>
<td>melodramma; libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, after Victorien Sardou’s La Tosca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Madama Butterfly</em></td>
<td>Milan, Teatro alla Scala, February 17, 1904</td>
<td>tragedia giapponese; libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, after David Belasco’s stage version of a magazine story by John Luther Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La fanciulla del West</em></td>
<td>New York, Metropolitan Opera, December 10, 1910</td>
<td>opera; libretto by Guelfo Civinini and Carlo Zangarini, after David Belasco’s The Girl of the Golden West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(The Girl of the Golden West)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La rondine</em> (The Swallow)</td>
<td>Monte Carlo, Opéra, March 27, 1917</td>
<td>commedia lirica; libretto by Giuseppe Adami, after A. M. Willner and Heinz Reichert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Il trittico</em> (The Triptych)</td>
<td>New York, Metropolitan Opera, December 14, 1918</td>
<td>three one act operas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– <em>Il tabarro</em> (The Cloak)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– libretto by Giuseppe Adami, after Didier Gold’s La bouffelande</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– <em>Suor Angelica</em> (Sister Angelica)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– libretto by Giovacchino Forzano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– <em>Gianni Schicchi</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>– libretto by Giovacchino Forzano, developed from a few lines in Dante’s Inferno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Turandot</em></td>
<td>Milan, Teatro alla Scala, April 25, 1926</td>
<td>dramma lirico; Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni, after Carlo Gozzi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Let the public judge” — brave words for an insecure composer like Giacomo Puccini, who wavered between his choices for operatic treatment with great uncertainty. Yet that was the composer’s response when confronted by Ruggero Leoncavallo (of Pagliacci fame), who claimed Puccini had stolen his idea to set Henry Murger’s scenes of Bohemian life in the 1830s.

Leoncavallo probably was not too far off the mark, as Puccini would reveal his penchant for poaching when he stole Sardou’s Tosca from Alberto Franchetti. He had shown Puccini a libretto for La bohème as early as 1892, and Puccini had a predilection for honing in on a subject once someone else had displayed an interest in it. Privately, he didn’t think much of Leoncavallo’s libretto-writing skills (he had also been one of the first of five in the preparation of the book for Manon Lescaut). Nonetheless, Puccini obviously didn’t have his thoughts together when they accidentally met in a Milan coffee shop one March afternoon. He let it be known his intentions for his own Bohème, and the slip of the tongue left the two colleagues bitter enemies. They resorted to airing their differences in the local Italian papers.

Puccini’s publisher, Giulio Ricordi, immediately inquired about obtaining the rights. Unfortunately there were two published versions of Murger’s stories, which first appeared in a Parisian newspaper as a series of short vignettes. In 1849, Théodore Barrière had approached Murger about a possible play adaptation, which turned into La vie de bohème. The success of the play led to a lucrative book deal in 1851, entitled Scènes de la vie de bohème. While the play was still controlled by Barrière and subject to copyright laws, the book had fallen into the public domain with the death of an heirless Murger in 1861. Exclusivity to a single composer was not an option.

Ricordi decided to go forward anyway and engaged Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa as librettists. The two had also been involved in Manon Lescaut and already had experienced Puccini’s prickly demeanor in respect to text modifications. Still, they probably didn’t imagine the job that was in store when they signed on the dotted line.

The problem was with the book itself. Murger’s Scènes is a disconnected sequence of events with a loose configuration of often unrelated characters. The librettists began by envisioning their work in terms of a series of tableaux instead of acts. Guided by a sense of impressionist theater, they developed captivating atmospheric episodes around the fairly thin plot line involving Mimi and Rodolfo’s love story. In fact, very few of Murger’s original scenes survive in the final version of Puccini’s opera.

Puccini also drew on his real-life experiences. As a young music student in Milan, he lived on a scant diet of onions,
The specifics of the libretto became a hot issue as the project evolved, and the first drafts of the opera also bear little resemblance to what we understand to be La bohème today. Originally it was to begin with the present Act II setting in the Latin Quarter, but early on it was conceived to both open and close in the artists’ garret, giving the piece a certain degree of unity. Greater roles were assigned to Colline and Schaunard, the latter being given his own Act IV aria about the capriciousness of women. One of the greatest changes was the deletion of an entire act set in the courtyard of Musetta’s lodgings – bringing threats of resignation by the librettists who were retained only by the cool handling of Ricordi. The scene in question involves the eviction of Musetta on the day she has planned a party. As her furniture is removed, the Bohemians decide to have the soirée out front. The scene has little continuity with any other part of the opera except that it is here Mimi meets the ethereal Vicomte while she is dressed in one of Musetta’s gowns. Her flirting and eventual departure with the young nobleman leaves Rodolfo in a jealous frenzy and gives credence to his later denunciations in Act III. Puccini wished that Mimi’s character remain untarnished, a femme fragile in direct opposition to Musetta’s femme fatale. He got his way, though some dramatic issues remain unresolved. With Rodolfo’s now-unsubstantiated declarations of Mimi’s infidelity in Act III, the Vicomte receives a casual, unprepared reference in Act IV as Mimi’s live-in companion after her split with Rodolfo.

Act IV also posed some problems, and here the librettists carried the day. Puccini wanted to open with Mimi on her deathbed, but Illica and Giacosa feared this bore too close a resemblance to the final scene of La traviata. Their suggestions of a political dialogue for Schaunard and a brindisi toasting the Water Drinkers (a pseudo-Freemasonesque group Murger had sponsored for those too poor to drink wine) were fused into the Bohemian’s hijinks just prior to Mimi’s arrival. Further continuity was drawn between Act I and Act IV by opening them similarly – with Rodolfo and Marcello alone together in their garret dwelling, bemoaning
their current condition, first without heat, later without women.

The end product is a truly remarkable work. Out of enough material, as Illica quipped, “for 10 operas,” Puccini crafted a surprisingly concise score, complete with short recurrent melodic references (though not nearly as codified as Wagner) and a brilliant use of the orchestral palette. Equally impressive is his handling of side-by-side comedy and pathos – something not easily achieved – and his ease in carrying us from one emotion to the other. In contrast, with its closer adherence to the original material, Leoncavallo’s opera is weighted by the overall tragedy and its adaptation to more traditional operatic formulas, leading to its virtual eclipse some 10 years after the premiere. Puccini won the day, as the popularity of his La bohème continues to hold true.
La vie bohémienne is a phenomenon not unique to the Latin Quarter of 19th-century Paris. Its timelessness is evidenced throughout history, from the Moulin Rouge of late 19th-century France and early 20th-century Weimar-era Berlin, New York’s Greenwich Village and Harlem Renaissance, the Beat Generation of the 1950s and Andy Warhol’s Pop Art Factory, to Europe’s nomadic gypsies living a marginal existence, their origins lending the lifestyle its descriptive name. The vogue for Bohemianism in Paris during the 1830s was, in part, a reaction to the overthrow of the restrictive Bourbon monarchy and subsequent triumph of the bourgeoisie. But it was Henry Murger who was at ground zero, giving the Bohemian life its widespread appeal a decade later by way of twenty-two vignettes, first serialized in the newspaper Le Corsaire-Satan, then presented as a play (La vie bohème) and finally published as a novel (Scènes de la vie de bohème).

Murger’s tales were adapted from his personal experiences as a starving artist – early in his professional life he turned his back on law and pursued a career in writing. By the time he had been appointed to the provocative French newspaper in 1845, he and his friends had lived through most of the events detailed in the Scènes, often in appalling poverty and destitution. Bohemia was seen as a passage for any serious artists in their 20s who sought to make a name for themselves. State sponsorship had slackened, yet painters, writers and musicians still required a significant amount free time to hone their craft. Art was created for its own sake for a speculative market consisting of the bourgeois philistine rather than the royal patron. Consequently, many were reduced to near financial ruin – debt, disease and death were constantly on the horizon. The dark labyrinth of pre-Haussmann Paris afforded a variety of itinerant living opportunities. One of Murger’s group of impoverished Water Drinkers (who drank water as not to offend those who couldn’t afford wine), known only as Karol, slept in a tree; another, evicted from his lodgings, walked the streets for hours, only to drop from hunger and exhaustion; and yet another, known as le Christ, was one of many to fall victim to tuberculosis after a long bout with the illness. An acquaintance, Gaspard-Félix Tournachon, better known today as Nadar, was forced to walk around Paris for several days dressed as a Turk because he didn’t have sufficient funds to pay for a costume rental and redeem his street clothes. Murger himself jokes of a time when he was unable to receive a visitor because he had no trousers – he and his roommate shared a single pair.

Murger’s circle is a varied group, encompassing both the famous and the forgotten, many of whom found...
their way into the tales. The novel’s poet, Rodolphe is, of course, the author himself. The painter Marcel is an agglomeration of two artists, Tabar and Lazare, and a work referenced in the novel (and opera), Passage of the Red Sea, is an actual epic painting Tabar was unable to complete due to lack of resources. (It was reworked into Niobe and Her Children and presented at the Salon of 1842.) Colline is another mix of two personages, the philosophers Jean Wallon and Jean Trapadoux. Wallon was known for his outer garment with enormous pockets filled with books, and Trapadoux was called “the green giant” because of his unusual height and long green topcoat. Schaunard is derived from Alexandre Schanne, first a painter, then a musician, whose musical composition The Influence of Blue in the Arts is cited in the novel, and whose episode with the poisoned parrot is relayed in the opera. Another philosopher from the Scènes, Barbemouch, didn’t quite make it into the opera, which is probably just as well since Murger didn’t much care for the two people he used for inspiration—the writers Charles Barbara and Charles Baudelaire.

Of the women, Murger coupled both Schaunard and Colline, encumbrances that were later removed for Puccini’s opera. Schaunard’s belle, Phémie Teinturière has no historical counterpart, nor does the mysterious Madame Colline, who is only spoken of but never seen—she prefers to stay at home to edit her husband’s manuscripts. Musette, on the other hand, was based on a notorious vixen of the Latin Quarter, Marie-Christine Roux. A pitch-deprived chanteuse and frequent artist’s model (including Ingres), she survives in posterity through her nudes with the photographer Nadar—the photos were the first studies of that genre to be printed. She was depicted with less flattery than those of a bourgeois girl, and the grisette unimpeded by respectable society’s morality.

The character of Mimi is a more complicated affair and can be summarized as an aggregation of all of the women in Murger’s life. The nicer qualities are derived from the author’s first love, Angèle, a cousin who later married someone else, and a married woman, Marie Fonblanc, whom he befriended. A completely unrelated tale in his oeuvre, “Francine’s Muff,” gives us much of the operatic Mimi—the first meeting of the lovers, the extinguished candle, the lost key (which she hides instead of him), the search in the moonlight and the persistent cough. She represents Murger’s version of the era’s much-sought-after feminine ideal, the grisette which had achieved mythical proportions by the 1840s. Diametrically opposed to the nefarious lorettes (a group of femme fatales to which Musetta belongs), the grisette typically was a woman from the country, 18 years old and unmarried, who finds lodgings in the Latin Quarter, at that time relatively inexpensive because of abundance of young students who lived there. She generally did handiwork at home (i.e. making artificial flowers), as Paris was at that time a major center for manufacturing. Her mores were slightly looser than those of a bourgeois girl, and the grisette

The Bohemians know everything and go everywhere, according as they have patent leather pumps or burst boots. They are to be met one day leaning against the mantelshelf in a fashionable drawing room, and the next seated in the arbor of some suburban dancing place. They cannot take ten steps on the Boulevard without meeting a friend, and thirty, no matter where, without encountering a creditor.

— Henry Murger
Preface to Scènes de la vie de bohème

The influence of Blue in the Arts is cited in the novel, and

[Scènes de la vie de bohème, Chapter xix]
had no qualms about moving in with a man to ease her financial burden. She was generally thought of as compassionate, thoughtful and understanding, the only drawback being her willingness to withdraw if a better offer came along. Students, idle young bourgeois and even minor nobility found them very appealing as temporary, yet caring companions. These women were a denial of female intellect and creativity, instead pursuing romantic love.

The darker side of the grisette is glaringly apparent in the less flattering portrayal of Lucille Louvet, with whom Murger had a long, tempestuous relationship. Little of Lucille made it into Mimì of the opera, other than a passing reference to her real name (“I’m called Mimì, although my name is Lucia . . .”) and her death by consumption. It is true Mimi shacks up with a rich viscount midway through the opera, but nothing compares to the living hell Murger vividly chronicles in his Scènes with his Mimi. After several failed attempts to be together (and Lucille/Mimi’s various flings with other men), Murger/Rodolphe cannot bring himself to visit his dying ex-lover in the hospital. Prompted by his friends to claim her body, Rodolphe waits too long, her corpse ending up on the dissection table.

In spite of this veil of death and destitution, the Scènes are told with witty repartee and élan. Murger and his companions keep landlord Benoit and various other creditors at bay, while entertaining lavish midnight parties and expensive dinners at the Café Momus, an actual restaurant Murger and his friends inhabited (during leaner times they would take over the smoking room with the initial outlay of only five sous, the cost of a single cup of coffee). It appears Murger’s characters are not necessarily short of financial opportunity, but whatever cash is earned seems to slip through their fingers with relative ease. One senses that Murger’s Bohemians have deeper pockets than they let on via their bourgeois roots – among the author’s real-life friends, more than one came from families of considerable means.

Murger himself warned of distinguishing serious Bohemians from aristocratic or bourgeois poseurs (those living the life to spite their families or because it was fashionable), yet he also cautioned that one should not remain in Bohemia for too long and punctuated his masterpiece with a chapter on that subject, “Youth is Fleeting.” Marie-Christine Roux managed to escape by amassing a small fortune as a high-priced call girl, only to die with it as her ship sank in the Mediterranean. Lazare moved into a house inherited from his father, Schanne took over the family toy factory, Baudelaire became famous and dandified, and three days after signing his book deal, Murger left the Latin Quarter for good, taking residence in the comfortable surrounds of Paris’ Right Bank. The author never felt he had betrayed his Bohemian roots, though he would never find a literary success equal to his Scènes. And, with greater irony, he would die an early death at the age of 38, from the unhealthy consequences of his unbridled youth.
1840 (YEAR OF THE OPERA’S SETTING)

**HISTORY AND POLITICS**

- Queen Victoria marries her first cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.
- Following the Durham report of 1838, in which union was recommended, an act is passed uniting British provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. Canada is awarded independence by this British statute.
- In China the formal beginning of the Opium War is declared.
- On the death of Prussian king Frederick William III, his son Frederick William IV succeeds to the throne. Welcomed by liberals for his “romantic” reputation, he quickly disappoints them and comes under the influence of an effective, conservative court clique.
- A Spanish slave ship, the Amistad, arrives in Connecticut with 53 Africans in command. Slaves on board the ship rebelled while the ship was en voyage from one Cuban port to another, killing the captain and all but two of the crew.
- France, Britain and Russia enter the war between the Ottoman empire and Egypt on the side of the Ottomans.
- William Henry Harrison is elected President of the United States, having won the hearts of the electorate with his “Log Cabin and Hard Cider” campaign emphasizing his links with the common people.
- The ashes of Napoleon I are buried at Les Invalides in Paris.
- In France, Louis Napoleon (later Emperor Napoleon III) is jailed after staging a coup to overthrow the king of France.
- Britain claims New Zealand as a colony. Many of the native islanders, the Maori, object to the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- José Francia, dictator of Paraguay, dies.
- William II ascends the throne of the Netherlands after the abdication of his father, William I.
- Afghan forces surrender to the British Army, ending the Afghan war.

1896 (YEAR OF THE OPERA’S PREMIERE)

**HISTORY AND POLITICS**

- Czar Nicholas II visits Paris and London.
- Utah becomes the 45th state of the Union.
- William McKinley is elected the 25th president of the United States.
- Britain and France sign an agreement on their respective spheres of influence in southeast Asia. Both countries guarantee the independence of Siam (Thailand) and the French protectorate over Laos is recognized.
- A Christian rebellion against Ottoman rule breaks out on the island of Crete.
- The Italians are decisively defeated by the Ethiopians under Menelik at the battle of Adowa. Italy sues for peace and withs its protectorate.
- The Chinese diplomat Li Hongzhang leaves Shanghai on a goodwill tour of Russia Germany, France, Britain and the United States.
- In Johannesburg, an attempt to overthrow the Transvaal regime of Paul Kruger, the Boer Leader, is crushed by a force of Boer commandos.
- A military alliance is made between Transvaal and the Orange Free State.
- France and Italy sign a convention by which Italy recognizes the French protectorate over Tunisia and the status of Italian residents in Tunis is resolved.
- Russia and China sign the Manchuria Convention.
- Great Britain establishes a protectorate over Sierra Leone, naming it a crown colony within its present boundaries, following an Anglo-French territorial agreement to settle disputed territory in West Africa.
- Kumasi, the inland capital of the Ashanti Kingdom (in present Ghana), was conquered by an expeditionary force sent by William Maxwell, the British governor of the Gold Coast. On August 16 the region was made a British protectorate to prevent French or German claims to the area.
- Madagascar is proclaimed a French colony.
- The United States Supreme Court handed down a decision in the case of Plessy vs. Ferguson that separate public facilities for different races were constitutional.
LITERATURE

• The first episodes from a new novel, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, by the popular novelist Charles Dickens, appear.
• James Fenimore Cooper’s *The Pathfinder* becomes a bestseller.
• Alphonse Daudet, French novelist, is born.
• Thomas Hardy, English novelist and poet, is born.
• Alessandro Manzoni publishes republishes his romantic novel *I promessi sposa* (The Betrothed) in a revised form in the Tuscan dialect.
• Prosper Mérimée (author of *Carmen*) writes the Corsican short story *Colomba*.
• Giovanni Verga, Italian novelist, is born.
• Émile Zola, French novelist, is born.

VISUAL ARTS

• Sir Charles Barry begins the building of the Houses of Parliament in London (completed 1860).
• Nelson’s Column is erected in London’s Trafalgar Square.
• Eugène Delacroix, French romantic painter, exhibits *Entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople* at the Louvre in Paris.
• Caspar David Friedrich, German romantic painter, dies.
• Claude Monet and Pierre Auguste Renoir, French impressionist painters, are born.
• Auguste Rodin, French sculptor, is born.

MUSIC

• Niccolò Paganini, composer and master of the violin, dies.
• Gaetano Donizetti premieres three operas in Paris: *La fille du régiment*, *Les martyrs* and *La favorite*.
• Giovanni Pacini premieres his most popular opera, *Saffo*, at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples.
• Giuseppe Verdi premieres his second opera, *Un giorno di regno, o sia Il finto Stanislao*, at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. It is a resounding failure.
• French instrument maker Alexandre François Debain construct the first harmonium (*orgue expressif*), patented in 1842.
• Robert Schumann marries Clara Wieck.
• Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky, Russian composer, is born.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

• The essayist Alexis de Tocqueville publishes *Democracy in America*, a work of penetrating analysis that brings him almost instant fame.

under the Fourteenth Amendment if they were “separate but equal.” Thus, local Jim Crow laws, enacted by various southern states to circumvent the Civil Rights Act of 1875, were encouraged.
• José Rizal, the national hero of the Filipinos, was executed by Spain for fomenting revolt. Though Rizal did not take part in the insurrection begun by the Young Philippines on August 26, he was tried and convicted of being implicated. The uprising came to an end with promises of concessions by Spain in return for the departure of their revolutionary leader.
• Wilfrid Laurier becomes the first French Canadian prime minister of Canada. During his term he promoted favorable relations with the United States and Great Britain, promoted immigration, and stressed the internal development of Canada, especially in the western provinces. He supported the union of all Canadian people and paved the way for Canada’s later independence within the British Commonwealth of Nations.
• An earthquake and accompanying tsunami, caused by disturbances at the sea bottom near Sanriku on Honshu island, kills 27,000 people.
• In Rhodesia, a Matabele revolt is put down by Baden-Powell.

LITERATURE

• Paul Verlaine, Symbolist poet, dies.
• Harriet Beecher Stowe, American novelist, dies.
• William Morris, English poet and artist, dies.
• Pierre Louys, French novelist, writes *Aphrodite*.
• Anton Chekhov, Russian dramatist, writes *The Sea Gull*.
• *The Red Badge of Courage*, a second novel by Stephen Crane, about the Civil War, is published.
• In Spain the novelist Vicente Blasco Ibanez publishes *Tierras Malditas*.

VISUAL ARTS

• In London, the National Portrait Gallery moves from Bethnal Green to Westminster.
• John E. Millais, English painter, dies.
• Odilon Redon, French symbolist painter, publishes his lithograph *Beatrice in L’Album d’estampes originales de la Gallerie Vollard*.
• Pierre Bonnard, French artist, paints *The Bridge at Chatou*.
• Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, French artist, begins a series of lithographs entitled *Elles* depicting life in the Parisian brothels.
• Paul Cézanne, French post-impressionist, paints *Bathers*.
• Paul Signac, French pointillist, paints *View of Saint Tropez*. 
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

• In Prussia the Army adopts the artillery shell developed in 1836/7 by the gunsmith Nicholas Dreyse which combines the fuse, charge and projectile states.
• The Anglo-Canadian shipowner Samuel Cunard founds the first regular steamship line from Liverpool to Boston and New York.
• The Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, the first dental college in the country, is founded.
• The chemist Justus von Liebig publishes Organic Chemistry Applied to Agriculture and Physiology, one of the earliest works of agricultural chemistry.
• German Physician Karl A. von Basedow describes exophthalmic toxic goiters (Basedow’s or Graves’ disease).

DAILY LIFE

• In Britain Sir Rowland Hill’s proposals for a system of penny postage are implemented despite bureaucratic opposition. Senders may purchase an adhesive tag bearing the queen’s head (a “stamp”), which is attached to the envelope.
• A census shows that the population of the United States has grown by a third over the last decade to just over 17 million people.
• The S. S. Britannia is awarded the Blue Riband for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic.
• Botanical Gardens at Kew, London open.
• Transportation of criminals from England to New South Wales comes to an end.
• The game of ninepins reaches its peak of favor in America.
• 2,816 miles of railroad are in operation in the United States; 1,331 miles in England.
• Legislation is enacted by the United States Government establishing a maximum 10-hour work day for all federal employees.
• The first public arboretum is opened in Derby. It reflects the Victorian enthusiasm for the study of horticulture and the natural sciences.

MUSIC

• Anton Bruckner, composer, dies.
• Clara Wieck-Schumann, German pianist, dies.
• Richard Strauss’s Also Sprach Zarathustra, a symphonic poem, is premiered in Frankfurt.
• Umberto Giordano’s opera, Andrea Chénier, is premiered in Milan.
• Ruggero Leoncavallo’s first opera, Chatterton, receives a belated premiere at the Teatro Regio in Turin.
• Jean Sibelius’s only opera, Jungfrun i tornet (The Maiden in the Tower), premieres in Helsinki.
• Hugo Wolf’s opera, Der Corregidor, premieres in Mannheim.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

• The Hungarian Jewish writer Theodor Herzl publishes The Jewish State, in which he advocates the formation of a Jewish state to solve the Jewish Question.
• Five annual Nobel Prizes are established for those people who, during the preceding year, have conferred the greatest benefits on mankind in the fields of physics, physiology and medicine, chemistry, literature and peace.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

• William Ramsay discovers helium.
• Niagara Falls hydroelectric plant opens.
• Henri Becquerel, French physicist, identifies the radioactivity of uranium.
• Otto Lilienthal, one of the great pioneers of aviation, dies in a glider accident in Germany.
• Ernest Rutherford defines the magnetic detection of electrical waves.
• Alfred Nobel dies.

DAILY LIFE

• After a gap of over 1,500 years, the first modern Olympics are held in Athens.
• The first Alpine ski school is founded at Lilienfeld, Austria.
• The Klondike gold rush begins in Bonanza Creek, Canada.
• A new newspaper, The Daily Mail, begins publication in Britain.
• Audiences flock to moving picture shows, almost simultaneously invented by Thomas Edison in America and the Auguste and Louis Lumière in France.
History of Opera

In the beginning ...

Jacopo Peri 1561–1633
Claudio Monteverdi 1567–1643

Although often considered an Italian innovation, opera had its debut in Ancient Greece, where drama frequently incorporated singing, declamation and dance to tell a narrative tale. Ecclesiastical music dramas of the Middle Ages were also important precursors. But the operatic art form familiar to us today has its roots in Florence, between 1580 and 1589, where a group of musicians, poets and scholars explored the possibility of reviving tragic drama of the ancients.

The circle was known as the camerata and consisted of writers, theorists and composers, including Giulio Caccini, Ottavio Rinuccini and Vincenzo Galilei (father of the famed astronomer). Their efforts exacted musical compositions that took special care to accentuate the dramatic inflection of their chosen text, to evoke its precise emotional shading and to find the ideal marriage between words and music. Jacopo Peri, a rival of Caccini and a collaborator with Rinuccini, produced the first known (but no longer existing) opera, Dafne, in 1597.

The Camerata met at the home of the nobleman Giovanni de’ Bardi. Thus, no sooner had opera had its first appearance than it became a court activity, which fit the social and political conditions of the day. As a result of Bardi’s influence, these composers were hired by the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinand I, who gave them their first wide exposure. When his daughter, Marie de’ Medici, married Henry IV of France, Peri’s Euridice was produced at the ceremony, and Italian opera gained its first international premiere. Even though Euridice was a simply staged production accompanied by a small group of strings and flute, in 1600 this type of musical drama was considered revolutionary.

Claudio Monteverdi’s Orfeo (1607) is the most significant opera of this period, more so than those works of the Florentines. The boldness of his harmonies and the richness of his orchestration dramatically developed the art form, and this work, along with L’incoronazione di Poppea (1642) are still popular pieces performed today.

Opera in Venice

Francesco Cavalli 1602–1676
Antonio Cesti 1623–1669

The new art form quickly spread to other Italian cities. By 1636, the first public opera house was opened in Venice and opera became quite popular among the people. Le nozze di Teseo e di Peleo, the first of Francesco Cavalli’s thirty-plus operas for the Venetian stage, premiered two years later. Competing with Monteverdi and Antonio Cesti (who took a post in Innsbruck after producing only two works for Venice), Cavalli quickly rose to the top.

At the same time, Italian stage designers were fast improving their techniques and were able to produce stupendous special effects, a happy coincidence for the new operatic art form. The use of the proscenium arch allowed the spectator to view the stage from a narrower angle, thus producing a better illusion of perspective. The proscenium also hid elaborate flying apparatus, and allowed for quick and seamless scene changes with drops from the top and flaps from the side wings. Spectacular stage effects became a speciality of French opera, and with the inclusion of ballet, became the part of established style of France by the 18th century.
North of Italy, Hamburg composer Reinhard Keiser (1694 – 1739) became the director of one of the first public opera houses in Germany. He often set libretti by Venetian librettists.

Baroque Opera in France, England and Germany

Jean-Baptiste Lully 1632–1687
Henry Purcell 1658/59–1695
George Frideric Handel 1685–1759
Christoph Willibald Gluck 1714–1787

In 1646, Giovanni Battista Lulli arrived in France from Florence and tried to establish Italian opera in the French Court. He was unsuccessful because the reigning monarch, Louis XIV, preferred dance. Nonetheless, Jean-Baptiste Lully, as he became known, rose in royal favor by composing ballets for the king and eventually gained control of the Académie Royale de Musique, the official musical institution of France. Through Lully’s influence in this important position, and by way of his own compositions, a distinctive French operatic form began to emerge and thrive on its own.

The Italian and French forms of opera were slow to catch on among the English, who preferred spoken theater. A compromise was reached in a form referred to as semi-opera, featuring spoken dialogue alternated with musical masques (which often included dance). Henry Purcell’s The Fairy Queen (1692) is one popular example from this period. Purcell’s first opera, Dido and Aeneas (1689), is his only opera in the Italian style and continues to be occasionally revived in modern times.

A major player in the early part of the 18th century was George Frideric Handel, who began his career in Hamburg. As early as 1711, Handel enjoyed success in England and would remain there for the next forty years. During that time, he wrote 35 operas (many in the Italian style), most of which focused on historical, classical or romantic subjects. His inventive musical style began to set new standards for the art form, and his works redefined the dramatic potential of opera as a vital and vivid experience.

Another German, Christoph Willibald Gluck, arrived in England on the heels of Handel’s last London operas, and later moving to Vienna, he began to see what he found to be flaws in the conventional Italian opera of the day. Singers had taken control of the productions, demanding solo arias and sometimes adding their own pieces to show off their vocal technique. Operas were turning into a collection of individual showpieces at the sacrifice of dramatic integrity. Although Gluck wrote some operas which shared these flaws, one work, Orfeo ed Euridice (1762), reasserted the primacy of drama and music.
by removing the da capo (repeated and embellished) part of the aria, by using chorus and instrumental solos only to reinforce the dramatic action, and by not allowing the singers to insert their own music. Gluck completed his career in Paris, where he became a master of French opera’s serious form, the tragédie lyrique.

During the 18th century, opera began to fall into two distinct categories: opera seria and opera buffa. Opera seria (serious opera) focused on historical, religious or Greco-Roman subjects. The glorification of saints, kings and gods went hand-in-hand with the grandiose baroque style and the spectacular stage effects of court opera. Librettist Pietro Metastasio provided 28 libretti that continued to serve composers again and again well into the 19th century. Opera buffa (comic opera) had its roots with the popular audience, each country specializing in its own distinct form. In France, Charles-Simon Favart’s operas of the 1740s parodied the serious tragédie lyriques of Lully (the Opéra-Comique, the Paris theater for comic opera, would later be named after him). In Naples, Italy, the intermezzi (short comic works inserted in between acts of a serious opera), of Giovanni Battista Pergolesi paved the way to the development of opera buffa in the latter half of the 18th century. His masterpiece, La serva padrona (1733), is considered a milestone in the development of comic opera.

Opera during the Classical Period

GIUSEPPE SARTI 1729–1802
FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN 1732–1809
GIOVANNI PAISIELLO 1740–1816
DOMENICO CIMAROSA 1749–1801
ANTONIO SALIERI 1750–1825
VICENTE MARTIN Y SOLEÑ R 1754–1806
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756–1791

Two composers are invariably linked to the Classical Period – FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN and WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART. Of the former, few of his operas are produced today even though he wrote over 25, most of which were created and performed for his employer, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy. Mozart’s operas, however, remain in repertory as some of the most frequently produced works. Of the five most favorite – The Abduction from the Seraglio (1782), The Marriage of Figaro (1786), Don Giovanni (1787), Cosi fan tutte (1790), The Magic Flute (1791) – two are singspieles (a popular German form, replacing sung recitative with spoken dialogue), two opera buffas and one opera “semi-seria.” Two opera serias (the form Mozart preferred, incidently) frame his adult career – Idomeneo (1781) was his first mature opera and La clemenza di Tito (1791) was his last commission.

Lesser composers of this period include ANTONIO SALIERI (born in Legnago, settling later in Vienna), who served the court of Emperor Joseph II. Through the emperor’s influence with his sister, Marie Antoinette, Salieri made headway in Paris as well, establishing himself as a worthy successor of Gluck in the serious vein of his tragédie lyriques. Returning to Vienna in 1784, Salieri found himself in strict
competition with other leading composers of the day, Giovanni Paisiello and Vincente Martín y Soler. These two composers were known partly from their brief service to Catherine the Great of Russia, along with several other advanced Italian composers including Giuseppe Sarti and Domenico Cimarosa.

After the Revolution – French Grand Opera

Luigi Cherubini 1760–1842
Ferdinando Paer 1771–1839
Gaspare Spontini 1774–1851
Daniel-François-Ésprit Auber 1782–1871
Giacomo Meyerbeer 1791–1864

In the decades following the French revolution, French grand opera developed extensively, moving from a private entertainment for royalty to an art form eagerly consumed by the upwardly mobile bourgeoisie. Opera in France at the turn of the 19th century was dominated by expatriate Italian composers. First and most notable was Luigi Cherubini, who established residence in Paris in 1785. Eventually rising to the position of director of the national conservatory, he virtually ceased composing operas in 1813. The most lasting work in his oeuvre is Médée of 1797.

Ferdinando Paër came to prominence during the first empire of Napoleon I – he was engaged as the Emperor’s maître de chapelle in 1807 and later became the director of the Opéra-Comique. Just before Napoleon’s abdication, Paër assumed directorship of the Théâtre Italien, a post he held until it was yielded to Rossini in 1824. None of his many operas survive in the modern repertory, although the libretto he wrote for one, Leonora (1804), served to inspire Ludwig van Beethoven’s only opera, Fidelio (1805). Gaspare Spontini was another Italian who moved to Paris and eventually ran the Théâtre Italien, a theater devoted to producing Italian works in their native language. Most popular among his repertoire were La Vestale (1807) and Fernand Cortez (1809).

French grand opera came into its own through the efforts of two composers: Daniel-François-Ésprit Auber and Giacomo Meyerbeer. Collaborating with Eugène Scribe (whose plays would later serve as inspiration for a number of Verdi operas), Auber produced La muette de Portici (1828), the first definite grand opéra of this period, which proved extremely popular with French audiences. Characteristic of the genre was a five-act framework that incorporated spectacular stage effects, large crowd scenes and a ballet. A specific, mannered formula for the drama’s unfolding was also inherent in the art form.

Meyerbeer brought grand opera to fruition first with Robert le diable (1831), then with Les Huguenots (1836), and with these works, also established a close relationship with Scribe. Two later works of note include La prophète (1849) and L’Africaine (1865), also cast in the grand opera schema.
Early 19th-century Italy – The Bel Canto composers

GIOACHINO ROSSINI 1792–1868
GAETANO DONIZETTI 1797–1848
VINCENZO BELLINI 1801–1835

Back in Italy, opera saw the development of a distinctive style known as bel canto. Bel canto (literally “beautiful singing”) was characterized by the smooth emission of tone, beauty of timbre and elegance of phrasing. Music associated with this genre contained many trills, roulades and other embellishments that showed off the particular singer’s technique. Traditionally, a bel canto aria begins with a slow, song-like cantabile section followed by an intermediate mezzo section with a slightly quicker tempo. It ends with a dazzling cabaletta, the fastest section, where the singer shows off his or her talents. Often these were improvised upon, or replaced with “suitcase” arias of the singers’ own choosing, much to the consternation of the composer.

GIOACHINO ROSSINI was the first and perhaps best known of the three composers associated with this style. In his early years, between 1813 and 1820, Rossini composed rapidly, producing two or three operas a year. The pace slowed after he moved to France in 1824 – there he produced five works for the Paris Opéra, several of which show tendencies of the French grand opera style. William Tell was his last opera – Rossini retired at age 37 with 39 more years to live.

GAETANO DONIZETTI and VINCENZO BELLINI were two other Italian Bel Canto composers who premiered operas in both Paris and Italy. A tendency that began with Rossini and continued into their works was the practice of accompanied recitatives. Opera to this point had been organized in a very specific manner with more elongated “numbers” (arias, duets, ensembles) alternated with recitative (essentially dialogue set to music, intended to move the action along). In Mozart’s day, these recitative would be played by a harpsichord or fortepiano (sometimes doubled with cellos and basses) and was known as recitativo secco. As Rossini’s style progressed, the orchestra took over playing the recitatives which became known as recitativo accompagnato. The practice continued into Verdi’s day.
Three Masters of Opera

GIUSEPPE VERDI 1813–1901
RICHARD WAGNER 1813–1883
GIACOMO PUCCINI 1858–1924

GIUSEPPE VERDI’s roots began in bel canto but the composer transformed the Italian style into a more fluid, less structured form. With a legacy of 26 operas, Verdi is never out of the repertory and four of these (Rigoletto, 1851; Il trovatore, 1853; La traviata, 1853; Aida, 1871) are some of the most familiar of the art form.

Verdi’s contemporary, RICHARD WAGNER, is also considered one of the greats. Taking the idea of “fluidity” one step further, Wagner developed his operas into freely flowing music-dramas united by melodic motifs that become associated with persons, places and things. Taking the grandeur of French opera one step further, he crafted his own libretti out of Nordic legends and created spectacular operatic moments. Wagner also greatly expanded the orchestra and developed his own particular brass instruments for greater impact. A Wagnerian singer is one with great stamina – they must sing over a large orchestra in an opera that can be up to four hours long.

Italian opera’s successor to Verdi turned out to be GIACOMO PUCCINI. With a gift of popular melody and musical economy, his operas La bohème (1896), Tosca (1900) and Madame Butterfly (1904) remain at the top of the standard repertory.
Later French Opera

HECTOR BERLIOZ 1803–1869
CHARLES-FRANÇOIS GOUNOD 1818–1893
JACQUES OFFENBACH 1819–1880
EDOUARD LALO 1823–1892
CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS 1835–1921
LÉO DELIBES 1836–1891
GEORGES BIZET 1838–1875
JULES MASSNESET 1842–1912
GUSTAVE CHARPENTIER 1860–1956

The grand opera schema continued into the latter half of the 19th century in such works as HECTOR BERLIOZ’S Les Troyens (composed 1856–58), and CHARLES-FRANÇOIS GOUNOD’S Faust (1859) and Roméo et Juliette (1867). An element of realism began to slip into the French repertoire, seen in works by GEORGES BIZET (Carmen, 1875) and GUSTAVE CHARPENTIER (Louise, 1897). JACQUES OFFENBACH revolutionized the art of comic operetta in such works as Orphée aux enfers (1858), La belle Hélène (1864) and La Périchole (1868). Other composers of this period include CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (Samson et Dalila, 1877), EDOUARD LALO (Le Roi d’Ys, 1875) and JULES MASSNESET (Manon, 1884; Werther, 1892; Cendrillon, 1899).

Verismo in Late 19th-century Italy

RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO 1857–1919
PIETRO MASCAGNI 1863–1945
UMBERTO GIORDANO 1867–1948

A realist vein began to penetrate Italian opera toward the end of the 19th century, influenced in part by naturalism in French literature of the period and by the writings of an Italian literary circle, the SCAPIGLIATURA. Translated as the “dishevelled ones,” the Scapigliatura displayed their distaste for bourgeois society in works of gritty realism, often bordering on the morbid and the macabre. Nearly all the members of the group (lead by GIOVANNI VERGA) led tragic lives ending in early death by alcoholism and suicide.
Operas to come out of the resulting verismo school include Pietro Mascagni’s *Cavalleria rusticana* (1890), Ruggero Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci* (1892) and Umberto Giordano’s *Mala vita* (1892). Other works are attributed to this movement by nature of their rapid action with passionate tension and violence quickly alternating with moments of great sentimentality.

**Opera in Russia**

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka 1804–1857  
Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky 1840–1893  
Nikolay Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov 1844–1908  
Modest Petrovich Musorgsky 1839–1881  
Sergei Prokofiev 1891–1953  
Dmitri Shostakovich 1906–1975

Opera was introduced in Russia during the succession of powerful czarinas that culminated in the reign of Catherine the Great (ruled 1762 – 1796). She employed a number of important Italian composers (see above) and established St. Petersburg as a major city for the production of new opera, later to be elevated to the same par as London, Paris and Vienna by her descendant, Nicholas I (ruled 1825 – 1855). Of native Russian composers, the first to come to prominence was Mikhail Glinka with *A Life for the Tsar* (1836), and later, *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1842). Pyotr Tchaikovsky, now known more for his ballets and symphonies, was a prolific composer of opera. His best works include *Eugene Onegin* (1879), *Mazepa* (1884) and *The Queen of Spades* (1890). Other Russian composers of the latter 19th century include Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov (*The Snow Maiden*, 1882; *The Tsar’s Bride*, 1899; *The Golden Cockerel*, 1909) and Modest Mussorgsky (*Boris Godunov*, 1874).

Russian opera continued into the 20th century with works by Sergei Prokofiev composed *The Love for Three Oranges* (1921) and *The Gambler* (1929), among others. His crowning achievement, written toward the end of his life, was *War and Peace* (1948), based on the novel by Leo Tolstoy. Dmitri Shostakovich’s most notable work is *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1934). Both artists suffered censure from the Soviet government.

**Into the 20th Century**

Claude Debussy 1862–1918  
Richard Strauss 1864–1949  
Paul Dukas 1865–1935  
Arnold Schoenberg 1874–1951  
Igor Stravinsky 1882–1971  
Alban Berg 1885–1935  
Darius Milhaud 1892–1974  
Paul Hindemith 1895–1963  
Kurt Weill 1900–1950  
Benjamin Britten 1913–1976
Claude Debussy’s impressionist score for Pelléas et Mélisande (1902) paved the way for the radical changes in 20th-century opera. Also based on a Symbolist text by Maurice Maeterlinck was Paul Dukas’ Ariane et Barbe-Blanche (1907), an opera about the notorious Bluebeard and his six wives. But causing the most sensation was Richard Strauss’ Salome (1905), which pushed both tonality and the demands on the singers to the limits. He followed that opera with an even more progressive work, Elektra (1909), drawn from the Greek tragedy by Sophocles.

Important innovations were taking place in Vienna. Arnold Schoenberg made a complete break with tonality in his staged monodrama Erwartung (1909), giving all twelve tones of the chromatic scale equal importance. He codified this approach in his twelve-tone system where a theme is created with a row of notes using all twelve notes of the chromatic scale. This “row” can be played in transposition, in reverse, upside-down, or in any combination of the three. Schoenberg also evolved a particular style of singing, sprechstimme, an intoned speech halfway between singing and speaking.

Sprechstimme was well suited to the expressionist nature of operas being produced at this time. Schoenberg’s student, Alban Berg, employed it in Wozzeck (1925) and used the serialized twelve-tone method in his opera Lulu (1937). Another avant-garde composer, Paul Hindemith, created a series of expressionist one-act operas that shocked audiences of the day: Murder, Hope of Women (1921), Das Nusse-Nuschi (1921) and Sancta Susanna (1922). Two later operas include one based on a short story by E.T.A. Hoffmann (Cardillac, 1926) and a satire on modern social behavior (News of the Day, 1929). At about the same time Kurt Weill was causing an uproar with his new works: The Threepenny Opera (1928), The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny (1930) and Der Silbersee (1933). The up-and-coming Nazi party did not favor his works, and he was forced to leave the country, eventually to settle in America.

In Paris, Russian Igor Stravinsky was shocking audiences and causing riots with his ballet music. His early operas include The Nightingale (1914) and Mavra (1922). Oedipus Rex (1927) is representative of his first neoclassical works, using forms from the 18th century with modern tonality and orchestration. His later (and longest) opera, The Rake’s Progress (1951), is a culmination of this neoclassical style. French composer Darius Milhaud was extremely prolific in all genres of music. In opera, he produced the one-act Le pauvre matelot (1927) and a large-scale work in the tradition of grand opera, Christophe Colomb (1930). Later in his life he composed La mère coupable (1966), based on the Beaumarchais Figaro trilogy (which includes The Barber of Seville and The Marriage of Figaro).

In England, Benjamin Britten emerged as one of Britain’s foremost composers of opera since Henry Purcell. Out of his 16 original works for the stage the most popular include Peter Grimes (1945), Billy Budd (1951), Gloriana (1953) and The Turn of the Screw (1954).
20\textsuperscript{th}- and 21\textsuperscript{st}-century American Composers of Opera

\textbf{Virgil Thomas} 1896–1989
\textbf{George Antheil} 1900–1959
\textbf{Samuel Barber} 1910–1981
\textbf{Gian Carlo Menotti} 1911–2007
\textbf{Carlisle Floyd} 1926–
\textbf{Dominick Argento} 1927–
\textbf{Conrad Susa} 1935–
\textbf{Philip Glass} 1937–
\textbf{John Corigliano} 1938–
\textbf{John Adams} 1947–

Paris in the 20s served to inspire the next generation of composers, several of which were expatriates from America. \textbf{George Antheil} was the first American composer to have an opera premiered in Europe – his work, \textit{Transatlantic}, was written in France but premiered in Frankfurt in 1930. Compatriot \textbf{Virgil Thomson} studied with famed teacher Nadia Boulanger and later produced \textit{Four Saints in Three Acts} (1934) and \textit{The Mother of Us All} (1947), both to texts by Gertrude Stein. \textbf{Samuel Barber} stayed on American soil, studying at the newly founded Curtis Institute in 1935. He went on to compose \textit{Vanessa} (1958), and to open the new Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center, \textit{Antony and Cleopatra} (1966).

On \textit{Vanessa}, Barber collaborated with another composer, \textbf{Gian Carlo Menotti}, who wrote the libretto. Also the author of 25 libretti for his own operas, Menotti is best known for \textit{The Medium} (1946), \textit{The Consul} (1950), \textit{Amahl and the Night Visitors} (1951) and \textit{The Saint of Bleecker Street} (1954). Another American composing at about the same time was \textbf{Carlisle Floyd}, who favored American themes and literature. His most important works include \textit{Susannah} (1955), \textit{Wuthering Heights} (1958), \textit{The Passion of Jonathan Wade} (1962) and \textit{Of Mice and Men} (1970).

During the sixties and seventies, the \textbf{Minnesota Opera} was the site of many world premieres of lasting significance: \textbf{Conrad Susa’s} \textit{Transformations} (1973) and \textit{Black River} (1975), and \textbf{Dominick Argento’s} \textit{The Masque of Angels} (1964), \textit{Postcard from Morocco} (1971), \textit{The Voyage of Edgar Allen Poe} (1976), \textit{Miss Havisham’s Wedding Night} (1981) and \textit{Casanova’s Homecoming} (1985; revived in 2009). Other Argento works of merit include \textit{Miss Havisham’s Fire} (1979) and \textit{The Aspern Papers} (1988).

Other composers currently at the fore include \textbf{Philip Glass}, \textbf{John Corigliano} and \textbf{John Adams}. The Minimalist music of Philip Glass has won popular acclaim among even non-opera-going audiences – his oeuvre includes \textit{Einstein on the Beach} (1976), \textit{Abknaten} (1984), and most recently, \textit{The Voyage} (1992), commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera to commemorate the 500\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of Columbus’ discovery of America. The Met also commissioned \textit{The Ghosts of Versailles} from \textbf{John Corigliano} in 1991 – like Milhaud’s opera of 1966, its text involves Beaumarchais’ third part of the Figaro trilogy with the playwright himself appearing as the lover of 18\textsuperscript{th}-century Queen of France Marie-
John Adams’ focus on contemporary events lead him to compose *Nixon in China* (1987) and *The Death of Klinghoffer* (1991). Opera continues to be a living and vital art form in the revival of many of these works as well as the commissioning of new pieces. Among world premiers in the last two decades include Tobias Picker’s *Emmeline* (1996) by Santa Fe Opera, Daniel Catán’s *Floresta en el Amazonas* (1996) by Houston Grand Opera, Myron Fink’s *The Conquistador* (1997) presented by San Diego Opera, Anthony Davis’ *Amistad* (1997) presented by Lyric Opera of Chicago and *Central Park* (1999) by Glimmerglass Opera, a trilogy of short operas set by three composers. Recent seasons included such new works as Poul Ruders’ *The Handmaid’s Tale* (Royal Danish Opera; 2000), Bright Sheng’s *Madame Mao* (Santa Fe Opera; 2003), Daniel Catán’s *Salsipuedes* (Houston Grand Opera; 2004), Richard Danielpour’s *Margaret Garner* (Michigan Opera Theatre; 2005), Ricky Ian Gordon’s *The Grapes of Wrath* (Minnesota Opera; 2007), Jonathan Dove’s *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (Opera North, Leeds; 2008), Howard Shore’s *The Fly* (Los Angeles Opera; 2009), Jake Heggie’s *Moby Dick* (Dallas Opera; 2010), Kevin Puts’ *Silent Night* (Minnesota Opera; 2011) and Douglas J. Cuomo and John Patrick Shanley’s *Doubt* (Minnesota Opera; 2013).
Minnesota Opera combines a culture of creativity and fiscal responsibility to produce opera and opera education programs that expand the art form, nurture artists, enrich audiences and contribute to the vitality of the community.

Minnesota Opera’s roots were planted in 1963 when the Walker Art Center commissioned Dominick Argento to compose an opera (The Masque of Angels) for its performing arts program, Center Opera. Center Opera focused on the composition and performance of new works by American composers, and, under the influence of the Walker Art Center, emphasized visual design. The company grew steadily, and in 1969 became an independent entity, changing its name in 1971 to The Minnesota Opera.

Throughout the first 12 years of its history, The Minnesota Opera was known as a progressive, “alternative” opera production company, a complement to the traditional orientation of the annual Metropolitan Opera tour and the productions of the St. Paul Opera. In 1976, The Minnesota Opera merged with the St. Paul Opera, adding a focus on traditional repertory to its program of contemporary opera.

In January 1985, The Minnesota Opera entered a new era with the opening of the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul, one of the nation’s most respected performance halls. Today, the company presents its entire season at the Ordway.

In September 1990, the company moved its scenic and costume shops, rehearsal facilities and administrative offices to the 51,000 square-feet Minnesota Opera Center, which comprises three renovated warehouses on the Mississippi riverfront in Minneapolis. Winner of a 1990 Preservation Alliance of Minnesota Award, the Minnesota Opera Center is one of the finest opera production facilities in the nation and has served to strengthen the company both artistically and institutionally.

Throughout the 1990s, the company gained a national reputation for its high-quality, innovative productions of standard repertoire operas like Aida, Carmen and Turandot, which were seen on stages across the nation, and firmly established Minnesota Opera’s reputation as a lead coproducer in the industry. In that decade, Minnesota Opera also grew institutionally, launching an artistic development campaign to establish a foundation for the expansion of its season and increased artistic quality.

In 1997, the company launched its Resident Artist Program to bridge the gap between an artist’s academic training and their professional life on the world stage. The RAP is acclaimed for its exceptional, intense and individualized training as well as the elite group of young artists it produces. Alumni have earned engagements at prestigious houses such as the Metropolitan Opera, the Salzburg Festival and Covent Garden.

In 2000, Artistic Director Dale Johnson articulated a new artistic vision for the company inspired by bel canto (“beautiful singing”), the ideal upon which Italian opera is based. Bel canto values, which emphasize intense emotional expression supported by exquisite technique, inform every aspect of the company’s programs, from repertoire selection, casting and visual design to education and artist training. As one manifestation of its philosophy, Minnesota Opera is committed to producing one work from the early 19th-century Bel Canto period each season, attracting luminary singers like Bruce Ford, Vivica Genaux, Brenda Harris and Sumi Jo to its stage.
Minnesota Opera is also recognized for its progressive and far-reaching educational programs. Residencies in schools, opera education classes and pre-performance discussions are building an audience for tomorrow and enhancing the enjoyment of audiences today.

Throughout its history, Minnesota Opera has attracted international attention for its performances of new operas and innovative productions of masterworks. Among its most renowned world and American premieres are: Dominick Argento’s *Postcard from Morocco*, The Voyage of Edgar Allan Poe and *Casanova’s Homecoming*, William Mayer’s *A Death in the Family*, Libby Larsen’s *Frankenstein*, The Modern Prometheus, Oliver Knussen and Maurice Sendak’s *Where the Wild Things Are*, Conrad Susa’s *Transformations* and *Black River*, PDQ Bach’s *The Abduction of Figaro*, Robert Moran’s *From the Towers of the Moon*, Gioachino Rossini’s *Armida*, Evan Chen’s *Bok Choy Variations*, George Antheil’s *Transatlantic*, Poul Ruders’ *The Handmaid’s Tale*, Laurent Petitgirard’s *Joseph Merrick dit Elephant Man*, Saverio Mercadante’s *Orazi e Curiazi*, Ricky Ian Gordon’s *The Grapes of Wrath*, Reinhard Keiser’s *The Fortunes of King Croesus*, Jonathan Dove’s *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, Kevin Puts’ Pulitzer Prize-winning *Silent Night* and Douglas J. Cuomo’s *Doubt*.

Building on the legacy of its commitment to new work and following the overwhelming success of its commission of *The Grapes of Wrath* in 2007, Minnesota Opera launched the New Works Initiative, a landmark program designed to invigorate the operatic repertoire through the production and dissemination of new commissions and revivals of contemporary American works. The seven-year, $7 million program includes an international coproduction (*The Adventures of Pinocchio*, 2009), three revivals (*Casanova’s Homecoming* in 2010; *Wuthering Heights* in 2011 and *The Dream of Valentino* in 2013) and three commissions (*Silent Night* in 2011; *Doubt* in 2013 and *The Manchurian Candidate* in 2015).

On the Minnesota Opera stage, talented national and internationally known artists are brought together to create productions of the highest artistic integrity, emphasizing the balance and total integration of theatrical and musical values. Throughout the past five decades, the company has presented such artists as Tim Albery, Isabel Bayrakdarian, John Lee Beatty, Harry Bicket, Richard Bonynge, William Burden, John Conklin, Roxana Constantinescu, David Daniels, Bruce Ford, Elizabeth Futral, Vivica Genaux, Colin Graham, Denyce Graves, Greer Grimsley, Nancy Gustafson, Brenda Harris, Jason Howard, Judith Howarth, Robert Indiana, Robert Israel, Sumi Jo, Kelly Kaduce, Antony McDonald, Catherine Malfitano, Daniel Massey, Johanna Meier, Suzanne Mentzer, Erin Mills, Sherrill Milnes, Julia Migenes, Fernando de la Mora, James Morris, Suzanne Murphy, Maureen O’Flynn, Susanna Phillips, Ashley Putnam, Patricia Racette, James Robinson, Neil Rosenshein, William Shimell, James Valenti, David Walker and Keith Warner.

Minnesota Opera, now the 13th largest opera company in the nation with an annual budget of $10.2 million (Fiscal Year 2012), is guided by President and General Director Kevin Ramch and Artistic Director Dale Johnson.

Today Minnesota Opera is enjoying unprecedented stability and unity of mission, working toward its vision to create a new, dynamic opera company model based upon innovation, world-class artistic quality and strong community service.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Opera Title</th>
<th>Composer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>Manon Lescaut</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arabella</td>
<td>Strauss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Machtet</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Dream of Valentino</td>
<td>Argento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Die Zauberflöte</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nabucco</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anna Bolena</td>
<td>Donizetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>§ Dido</td>
<td>Cuomo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turandot</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cosi fan tutte</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>§ Silent Night</td>
<td>Puts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Werther</td>
<td>Massenet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucia di Lammermoor</td>
<td>Donizetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madame Butterfly</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orfeo ed Euridice</td>
<td>Gluck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La Cenerentola</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maria Stuarda</td>
<td>Donizetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La traviata</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wuthering Heights</td>
<td>Herrmann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Les pêcheurs de perles</td>
<td>Bizet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casanova’s Homecoming</td>
<td>Argento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roberto Devereaux</td>
<td>Donizetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La bohème</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salome</td>
<td>R. Strauss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Il trovatore</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Die Entführung aus dem Serail</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faust</td>
<td>Gounod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* The Adventures of Pinocchio</td>
<td>Dove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Un ballo in maschera</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L’italiana in Algeri</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roméo et Juliette</td>
<td>Gounod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Cenerentola</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rusalka</td>
<td>Dvořák</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006–2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La donna del lago</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Les contes d’Hoffmann</td>
<td>Offenbach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>§ The Grades of Wrath</td>
<td>Gordon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lakmé</td>
<td>Delibes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La nozze di Figaro</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005–2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Giovanni</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Orazii e Carissimi</td>
<td>Mercadante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Joseph Merrick dit Elephant Man</td>
<td>Pettigird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004–2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madame Butterfly</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maria Padilla</td>
<td>Donizetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carmen</td>
<td>Bizet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nixon in China</td>
<td>Adams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003–2004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rigoletto</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucrezia Borga</td>
<td>Donizetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>Sondheim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Die Zauberflöte</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002–2003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Die lustige Witwe</td>
<td>Lehár</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Norma</td>
<td>Bellini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Der fliegende Holländer</td>
<td>Wagner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La traviata</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* The Handmaid’s Tale</td>
<td>Ruders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001–2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucia di Lammermoor</td>
<td>Donizetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La clemenza di Tito</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La bohème</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little Women</td>
<td>Adamo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Carlo</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000–2001</td>
<td>Turandot</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I Capuleti ed i Montecchi</td>
<td>Bellini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Street Scene</td>
<td>Weill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Il barbiere di Siviglia</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pagliacci/Carmen</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* The Barber of Seville</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999–2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Der Rosenkavalier</td>
<td>R. Strauss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Machtet</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semiramide</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Le nozze di Figaro</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* The Marriage of Figaro</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998–1999</td>
<td>Otello</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madame Butterfly</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Turn of the Screw</td>
<td>Britten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faust</td>
<td>Gounod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Madame Butterfly</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997–1998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aida</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La Cenerentola</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Transatlantic</td>
<td>Antheil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tosca</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Cinderella</td>
<td>Rossini, Massenet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996–1997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La traviata</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Die Zauberflöte</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Rake’s Progress</td>
<td>Stravinsky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carmen</td>
<td>Bizet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Carmen</td>
<td>Bizet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995–1996</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La bohème</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don Giovanni</td>
<td>Mozart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pelléas et Mélisande</td>
<td>Debussy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Les contes d’Hoffmann</td>
<td>Offenbach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* The Bohemians</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994–1995</td>
<td>Turandot</td>
<td>Puccini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Il barbiere di Siviglia</td>
<td>Rossini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rigoletto</td>
<td>Verdi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>§ Bok Choy Variations</td>
<td>Chen and Simonson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Figaro’s Revenge</td>
<td>Rossini, Paisiello</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

§ World Premiere  
* American Premiere  
† Commissioned by The Minnesota Opera  
* Tour production  
* Outreach/Education tour  
* New Music-Theater Ensemble production
### Eighteenth Century

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756–1791
- *The Abduction from the Seraglio* 1782
- *The Marriage of Figaro* 1786
- *Don Giovanni* 1787
- *Così fan tutte* 1790
- *The Magic Flute* 1791

### Nineteenth Century

Ludwig van Beethoven 1770–1827
- *Fidelio* 1805

Gioachino Rossini 1792–1868
- *The Barber of Seville* 1816
- *La Cenerentola* 1817

Gaetano Donizetti 1797–1848
- *The Elixir of Love* 1832
- *Lucia di Lammermoor* 1835
- *Don Pasquale* 1843

Vincenzo Bellini 1801–1835
- *Norma* 1831

Richard Wagner 1813–1883
- *The Flying Dutchman* 1843
- *Tannhäuser* 1845
- *Lohengrin* 1850
- *Tristan und Isolde* 1865
- *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* 1868
- *The Ring Cycle* 1876
  - Das Rheingold, Die Walküre, Siegfried and Götterdämmerung
- *Parsifal* 1882

Giuseppe Verdi 1813–1901
- *Rigoletto* 1851
- *Il trovatore* 1853
- *La traviata* 1853
- *La forza del destino* 1862
- *Don Carlos* 1867
- *Aida* 1871
- *Otello* 1887
- *Falstaff* 1893

Charles-François Gounod 1818–1893
- *Faust* 1859
- *Roméo et Juliette* 1867

### Nineteenth Century (continued)

Jacques Offenbach 1819–1880
- *Les contes d’Hoffmann* 1881

Georges Bizet 1838–1875
- *Carmen* 1875

Modest Mussorgsky 1839–1881
- *Boris Godunov* 1874

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky 1840–1893
- *Eugene Onegin* 1879

Engelbert Humperdinck 1854–1921
- *Hänsel und Gretel* 1893

Ruggero Leoncavallo 1857–1919
- *Pagliacci* 1892

Pietro Mascagni 1863–1945
- *Cavalleria rusticana* 1890

### Twentieth Century

Giacomo Puccini 1858–1924
- *Manon Lescaut* 1893
- *La bohème* 1896
- *Tosca* 1900
- *Madama Butterfly* 1904
- *Turandot* 1926

Claude Debussy 1862–1918
- *Pelléas et Mélisande* 1902

Richard Strauss 1864–1949
- *Salome* 1905
- *Elektra* 1909
- *Der Rosenkavalier* 1911
- *Ariadne auf Naxos* 1912

Alban Berg 1885–1935
- *Wozzeck* 1925
- *Lulu* 1937

Benjamin Britten 1913–1976
- *Peter Grimes* 1945
- *Albert Herring* 1947
- *Billy Budd* 1951
- *The Turn of the Screw* 1954
The Elements of Opera

Often called “all the arts in one,” opera includes the Aristotelian elements of drama: theme, spectacle, plot, diction, movement and music. A production is truly successful only when these components work together. Many individuals are engaged to accomplish this purpose.

IN THE BEGINNING
A subject is selected by a composer. It may be mythical, biblical, historical, literary or based on current events. A librettist is employed to adapt the story into poetic verse and the composer then writes the music (or score).

THE OPERA COMPANY
An opera company’s artistic director agrees to stage the work. In many cases, an opera has already been written and staged many times.

ADMINISTRATION
The company’s marketing department sells tickets and the development department raises funds through donations to cover the costs of the production. The finance department controls costs and balances the production’s budget. The education department prepares the audience for what they are going to see on stage.

CASTING
The opera company’s artistic director selects performers from auditions. These performers are divided into principals, comprimarios (singers in secondary roles), choristers, and players for the orchestra. Often in a production, supernumeraries are employed (people who act but do not sing). Sometimes the opera has a ballet which requires dancers, or a banda which requires orchestra members to play on stage.

SETS AND COSTUMES
A design team is assembled consisting of a stage director, set designer and costume designer. They agree on a visual concept for the opera and sets and costumes are created.

REHEARSAL
The production goes into rehearsal. Principals, choristers and the orchestra often rehearse separately until the director begins staging. The conductor of the orchestra attends staging rehearsals which are accompanied by a répétiteur, or rehearsal pianist. The orchestra joins the singers for the first time at the sitzprobe. During tech week, sets and lighting are put into place at the theater. Several dress rehearsals (with the performers in costume and the orchestra in the pit) occur before the first performance of the opera. Sometimes these rehearsals are attended by a select audience.
## The Premiere

The first presentation of the opera to the general public is known as the premiere. Long before the curtain goes up, preparations are being made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td><strong>Continuity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stagehands (1) set the scenery for the first act of the production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:15 PM</td>
<td><strong>Makeup calls</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Principals</strong> and <strong>Comprimarios</strong> (2) begin to arrive at the theater to be put into costume by <strong>Dressers</strong>, then are wigged by the <strong>Wigmaster</strong> (1a) and made up with theatrical makeup.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td><strong>House opens</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opera patrons are admitted to the <strong>Auditorium</strong> (4) and seated by <strong>Ushers</strong> (5). The <strong>House Manager</strong> (6) oversees the activities in the front of the house, including the ushers and concession sales. The <strong>Box Office Manager</strong> (7) takes care of any last minute ticket purchases. Patrons may remain in the <strong>Lobby</strong> (8) to attend an informational session of <strong>Opera Insights</strong>, led by the Opera’s music staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:45 PM</td>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The <strong>Stage Director</strong> may give last minute instructions to the cast before the performance begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td><strong>Warm-ups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Principals</strong> and <strong>Comprimarios</strong> (2) warm-up in their dressing rooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:15 PM</td>
<td><strong>Chorus and orchestra warm-ups</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The <strong>Chorus</strong> (10), who have already put on their costumes, warms up with the <strong>Chorusmaster</strong>. The <strong>Orchestra</strong> warms up in the <strong>Orchestra Pit</strong> (11).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:25 PM</td>
<td><strong>Places</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The <strong>Production Stage Manager</strong> (12) calls places. Two other <strong>Stage Managers</strong> (13) are posted stage left and stage right to cue the entrances of the singers and choristers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:28 PM</td>
<td><strong>Orchestra tune</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The principal oboe gives a concert “A” to which the <strong>Orchestra</strong> tunes. The <strong>Surtitle Prompter</strong> (15) cues the preshow titles. The <strong>Conductor</strong> shakes the <strong>Concertmaster</strong>’s hand and mounts the podium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
<td><strong>Curtain</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The house lights go out, and the <strong>Flyman</strong> (1a) raises the <strong>Curtain</strong> (16). The show begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:25 PM</td>
<td><strong>Intermission</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The audience returns to the <strong>Lobby</strong> (8) for refreshments while the <strong>Stagehands</strong> (1) reset the <strong>Stage</strong> (14) for the next act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 PM</td>
<td><strong>Curtain calls</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The performance ends, and the <strong>Stage Director</strong>, <strong>Designers</strong>, <strong>Conductor</strong> and <strong>Singers</strong> get to take a bow for all their hard work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Stagehands** move scenery and props and handle lighting. **Dressers** help the cast into their often elaborate costumes.

**Principals** sing the major roles, **Comprimarios** sing minor named roles. **Choristers** make up the rest of the singing cast and are prepared by the **Chorusmaster**.

The **Conductor** leads the orchestra. The **Stage Director** instructs the cast where to move onstage. He or she generally stays only for the premiere.

The **Orchestra** rehearses several times independently from the singers. The first rehearsal during which singers and orchestra perform together is called a **sitzprobe**. The **Concertmaster** is the first violin and is responsible for “bowing” the string parts so the performers all move their bows together.

The **Production Stage Manager** “calls” the show, announcing entrance and lighting cues. Two other **Stage Managers** assist in getting the cast and chorus on and off the stage. The **Surtitle Prompter** cues the English translations projected above the stage from the control booth.
The Elements of Opera – The Singers

The most important part of the opera is the singers. They are categorized into six different voice types.

**The Soprano**
High-voiced woman. Voted “Most Likely to Die Before the Curtain Goes Down.” Putty in the hands of the tenor, baritone and occasionally even the mezzo (especially if she is in pants).

**The Mezzo-Soprano**
Middle- to lower-voiced woman. Nobody’s pawn. May hook up with the baritone, unless she’s playing a young man, in which case she usually gets the soprano.

**The Contralto**
Lowest-voiced woman. Usually the mother, maid or duenna (an older woman charged with monitoring the virtue of the impressionable soprano). Generally the contralto calls herself a mezzo in order to get more work.

**The Tenor**
High-voiced man. Whether comic or tragic, most often the misunderstood romantic role. Often kill themselves; almost always get the girl.

**The Bass and Baritone**
Middle- to lowest-voiced man. Usually the bad guy, the father or guardian, or the hero’s best friend. If he hooks up with another singer, it’s usually a mezzo.

**The Fat Lady**
There is no fat lady in helmet and horns—that is a myth. It ain’t over till the curtain goes down for the last time and everyone around you is clapping.
# Glossary of Opera Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acoustics</td>
<td>The science of sound; qualities which determine hearing facilities in an auditorium, concert hall, opera house, theater, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act</td>
<td>A section of the opera, play, etc. usually followed by an intermission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area lights</td>
<td>Provide general illumination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aria</td>
<td>A formal song sung by a single vocalist. It may be in two parts (binary form), or in three parts (see da capo) with the third part almost a repetition of the first. A short aria is an arietta in Italian, ariette or petit air in French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arioso</td>
<td>Adjectival description of a passage less formal and complete than a fully written aria, but sounding like one. Much recitative has arioso, or songlike, passages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azione teatrale</td>
<td>(It.: ‘theatrical action’, ‘theatrical plot’). A species of Serenata that, unlike many works in this genre, contained a definite plot and envisioned some form of staging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atonality</td>
<td>Lack of a definite tonal focus, all sharps and flats being applied in the score when necessary. With no key and therefore no sense of finality, such music sounds odd to the conservative ear, but with practice the listener can find pleasure in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic Director</td>
<td>The person responsible for the artistic concept of the opera – the overall look and “feel” of the production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backdrop</td>
<td>A large, painted surface at the rear of the stage, associated with old-fashioned stage settings, two-dimensional, but often striving with painted shadows and perspective to suggest a third dimension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backstage</td>
<td>The area of the stage not visible to the audience, usually where the dressing rooms are located.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballad Opera</td>
<td>A play with many songs; the number has ranged from fifteen to seventy-five. In the early eighteenth century its music was drawn from popular folk song or quite sophisticated songs appropriated from successful operas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banda</td>
<td>A group of musicians who perform onstage or slightly offstage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baritone</td>
<td>The male singing voice which is higher than a bass but lower than a tenor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baroque</td>
<td>A style of art and music characteristic in particular of the Louis XIV period in France and the Charles II period and after in England. Baroque pictorial art is associated with theatrical energy and much decoration but nevertheless respects classical principles. The music theater of the Baroque, highly pictorial, developed the opera seria, with comic intermezzi between the acts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>The lowest male singing voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bel canto</td>
<td>Although meaning simply “beautiful song,” the term is usually applied to the school of singing prevalent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Baroque and Romantic) which gave much attention to vocal purity, control, and dexterity in ornamentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravo (a) (i)</td>
<td>An acknowledgement of a good performance shouted during moments of applause (the ending is determined by the gender and the number of performers).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravura</td>
<td>Implying brilliance and dexterity (bravura singing, a bravura aria, etc.). Intended for display and the technical execution of difficult passages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A fast, contrasting short aria sung at the close of or shortly following a slower aria (called a cantabile, often for vocal effect only but sometimes dramatically motivated).

A resting place or close of a passage of music, clearly establishing tonality.

An elaborate passage near the end of an aria, which shows off the singer’s vocal ability.

A group of musicians, poets and scholars who met in Florence in 1600 and created opera.

Originally a little song, but now generally referring to smooth cantabile (It: ‘singable,’ or ‘singing’) passages.

Originally an aria without a repeated section. Later used casually in place of aria.

A group of singers (called choristers) who portray townspeople, guests or other unnamed characters; also refers to the music written for these people.

Person who prepares the chorus musically (which includes rehearsing and directing them).

A group attending performances in the larger opera houses and paid by leading singers to encourage and direct applause (a member of which is a claqueur).

A voice that can sing music with many rapid notes, or the music written for such a voice.

Masked comedy or improvised Italian comedy of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. A popular theatrical form with a sketched-out plot and stock characters, a pair of lovers without masks surrounded by comedians—Arlecchino, Brighella, Pantalone, Dottore, etc. Some of Mozart’s and Rossini’s operas retain the vestiges of these characters. Strauss, Busoni, and other recent composers have deliberately used them.

A small singing role, often a servant or other minor character.

The person who supervises all musical detail, rehearsals and leads the orchestra and advises the artistic director about the hiring of singers and musical staff (also called the music director).

The lowest female singing voice.

The highest natural male voice, not a castrato. True male altos may be heard in choirs. The term falsettist is sometimes used but disputed.

A curved curtain or wall enclosing the playing area of the stage and hiding the work areas behind it.

(It: ‘from the top, or back to the beginning’). A familiar direction in music. A da capo aria of the Baroque period repeats the first part of the aria, with different embellishments, after the singing of a contrasting second part.

The person who creates the lighting, costumes or sets.

The muscle which separates the chest cavity from the abdominal cavity. It is used by singers for breath control and it allows them to “project” their voices to the back of the auditorium.

The person who instructs the singer/actors in their movements on stage and in the interpretation of their roles.

The front of the stage nearest the audience.

(It: dramma lirico). Modern term for opera, not necessarily of a lyrical character. The English term “lyrical drama” is used in the same way.
**Dramma per musica**
A term that refers to text expressly written to be set by a composer and by extension also to the composition. The term was the one most commonly used for serious Italian opera in the eighteenth century (as opposed to the modern term opera seria, with which it is in effect interchangeable).

**Duet**
Music written for two people to play or sing together.

**Embellishment**
Decoration or ornament. A grace-note addition to the vocal line (also instrumental) of any kind, a four-note turn, or a trill.

**Ensemble**
Three or more people singing at the same time, or the music written for such a group.

**Falsetto**
The falsetto voice is of high pitch and produced by the vibrations of only one part of the vocal folds. The normal male voice sounds strained and effeminate in falsetto, but a natural alto or high tenor can produce effective vocal sound by this method. It is a singing mannerism to produce high tenor notes in falsetto.

**Festa teatrale**
(It.: ‘theatrical celebration’). A title applied to a dramatic work. Feste teatrali fall into two quite distinct classes: opera and serenatas.

**Finale**
The last musical number of an opera, or of an act of an opera.

**Fioritura**
(It: ‘flowering’, ‘flourish’; plural fioriture). When a composition for the voice contains decorative writing such as scales, arpeggios, trills and gruppetti (the groups of notes sometimes known in English as ‘turns’), it is described as ‘florid’ and the decorations themselves will be described collectively as ‘fioritura’. It is a more accurate term than ‘coloratura’, which is frequently used as an alternative.

**Flats**
Stretched canvas and wood panels on which scenery is painted.

**Flies**
The space above a stage where scenery is “flown” when not in use. A counterweight system simplifies raising and lowering flats, larger set pieces, and back drops.

**Full dress rehearsal**
The final rehearsal before opening night with all singers present in full costume.

**Grand opera**
Traditionally, a serious epic or historical work in four or five acts which makes extensive use of the chorus and also includes a ballet. Also contains magnificent special effects.

**Grid**
Gridiron. Framework from which lines are hung and battens attached for the “flying” of scenery. The grid is situated high in the flies just beneath the ceiling of the fly loft.

**Handlung für Musik**
(Ger: ‘action in music’). Term used by Wagner to describe the libretto for Lohengrin and Tristan und Isolde; it has occasionally been used since.

**Interlude**
A short piece of instrumental music played between scenes or acts to fill in delays brought about by scenery changes.

**Intermezzo**
An instrumental interlude played between acts, or short two-act comic opera played between the acts of an opera seria.

**Leitmotiv**
A recurring musical figure used to identify a person, event or idea.

**Legato**
A smooth, flowing line. In vocal music it demands steadiness of emission and a sensitivity to phrasing.

**Libretto**
The words of an opera.
**Masking**  
A scenic frame or device to prevent the audience from seeing into the wings of the stage. Door and window openings are usually masked, often with realistic backings.

**Masque**  
An entertainment popular in the late sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth. A form of “total theater,” it combined music, scenic splendor, poetry, and some drama. Milton’s *Comus*, with music by Henry Lawes, is the most celebrated.

**Melodrama**  
A basically serious play, frequently using comedy for relief, it only outwardly resembles tragedy. The conflicts and calamities are more interesting in themselves than are the characters, who tend to be stereotyped, good and bad. Passion, excitement, and action, often unmotivated, are emphasized. Intended for undiscriminating audiences, it uses much music to stimulate the emotions and much scenic effect to please the eye.

**MéloDrame**  
In addition to being the French word for melodrama, this term refers to a technique, which became popular during the eighteenth century, of playing orchestral music under or between the phrases of spoken dialogue.

**Melodramma**  
Dramma per musica (drama for music) and Melodramma (sung drama) antedate by many years the term opera, now in general use for works of this kind.

**Mezza voce**  
Half-voice, with reference to a passage required to be sung softly throughout. A similar term, messa di voce, has the different meaning of beginning a tone softly, swelling it gradually, and then softening it again.

**Mezzo-soprano**  
The middle female singing voice, lower than soprano but higher than contralto.

**Motive**  
A short musical idea on which a melody is based.

**Musical play**  
A convenient but inexact designation which has become popular in English-speaking countries to distinguish the more ambitious works in the popular field of lyric theater from (a) European operetta or imitations thereof, (b) musical comedy of the vaudevillian sort, and (c) opera, especially in New York where the form is supposed to belong to the Metropolitan and the New York City Opera Company and is somewhat provincially considered “poison at the box office.” David Ewen regards *Show Boat*, 1927, as the first work of the new genre, the musical play. By the 1930s, this term had become a catchall.

**Opera**  
A term now used to cover musical-dramatic pieces of all kinds except musical comedy and operetta, although comic opera comes very close to these forms. The seventeenth-century Italian term for opera was Dramma per musica or Melodramma.

**Opera buffa**  
A precise Italian definition, meaning Italian comic opera of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Musical numbers are strung along a continuum of dry recitative.

**Opéra comique**  
French light opera of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Strictly speaking, any theater piece written with spoken dialogue between the musical numbers (*Faust*, *Carmen*, and *Manon*) whether a comedy or not. The Paris Opéra Comique is also called the Salle Favart and was originally the home of all works using spoken dialogue, while the Opéra confined itself to through-composed works.

**Opera seria**  
Literally “serious opera.” An opera form of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries which uses historical, biblical or mythological subjects with a focus on revenge, danger and death.
operetta  A loosely used term, often used interchangeably with comic opera, opéra bouffe, and musical comedy. In Italian it originally meant “little opera,” a short, light musical work. It has come to mean a full-length piece on a light subject, with musical numbers and spoken dialogue, and characterized by ingratiating tunes, decorative dances, colorful settings, social irresponsibility, a slender dramatic line, and the requirement of at least two well-trained voices.

oratorio  A musical-dramatic work originating in the twelfth century, now generally performed, in contradistinction to opera, without action, costumes, and scenery. They are invariably associated with sacred subjects.

orchestra pit  The sunken area in front of the stage where the orchestra sits.

overture  An orchestral introduction to the opera, usually played before the acting begins.

parlando  (It: ‘in speaking style’). An informal and realistic technique occasionally used in Italian opera, bringing singing close to speaking.

portamento  An Italian singing term, asking the voice to glide from one note to another at some distance. An authentic and effective device, to be distinguished from the mannerism of scooping.

principal  A major singing role, or the singer who performs such a role.

proscenium  The stage opening, resembling a three-sided picture frame. Immediately behind it and concealing the acting areas is the curtain. The proscenium arch was originally created in the 1700s to conceal the machinery used to create special stage effects.

quartet  Four singers, or the music written for that group.

recitative  Musical singing in the rhythm of speech.

recitativo accompagnato  A sung passage with orchestral accompaniment, lacking the formality of an aria, yet more declamatory and agitated than recitativo secco.

recitativo secco  Dry recitative. A sung passage so close to everyday speech that although the pitches and time values are respected, a conversational quality prevails. A keyboard instrument generally supplies the sketchy accompaniment. Commonly used in Italian opera seria and opera buffa.

repertory  A system of stage production in which a number of works are played, virtually in rotation, by a resident company throughout a season.

répétition  French term for “rehearsal.” A répétition générale is a dress rehearsal to which critics and guests are invited.

revolve  Revolving stage. Turntable. A section of the stage floor (permanently established) or a circular construction on a central pivot which revolves, to change scenery or supply movement of objects as well as people.

ritornello  A short instrumental piece, literally meaning repetition or refrain. In Monteverdi’s works it usually consists of a few bars played between the verses of a strophic song.

rococo  In art, associated with the late Baroque period and the late eighteenth century. In contrast to the dignity, heaviness, and occasional pomposity of Baroque, Rococo art is playful, lighter in tone and color, and adorned with scrolls, acorns, and shells.

role  The character that a singer portrays.
ROMANTICISM  The movement strongly associated with nineteenth-century Germany, but felt through all Europe and responsible for far-reaching changes in all forms of art. Rebels against the establishment (which was founded on a deep respect for the classics), the romanticists opposed authority and advocated freedom from formal regulations. They encouraged a subjective, strongly emotional approach as an antidote to classical decorum.

SCORE  The music of an opera or other musical work in which the parts for different performers appear vertically above one another.

SCRIM  A thin curtain, often painted. When lit from behind, one can see through it.

SERENATA  A dramatic cantata, normally celebratory or eulogistic in intent, for two or more singers with orchestral accompaniment. In dramaturgical respects the serenata most closely resembles the Baroque oratorio.

SINFONIA  A symphonic work the precedes an opera (English: overture); a shorter version is referred to as a prelude.

SINGSPIEL  A German form of comic opera with spoken dialogue.

SITZPROBE  A sit-down rehearsal where the performers sing with the orchestra for the first time.

SOPRANO  The highest female singing voice.

SPRECHSTIMME  A form of declamation halfway between speech and song. Instead of exactly notated pitch an approximation is given. The time, however, is given exactly and the singer is not allowed absolute license. Notations up and down are also meant to be respected. This style of singing is found in the works of Schoenberg and Berg.

STAGE LEFT  The left side of the stage from the performer’s perspective as s/he faces the audience.

STAGE RIGHT  The right side of the stage from the performer’s perspective as s/he faces the audience.

STRETTA  An accelerated passage at the end of an aria, scene, or act.

TENOR  The highest male singing voice.

TESSITURA  Literally “texture.” The approximate range of a role or an aria.

THROUGH-COMPOSED  Through-composed opera is a continuous music drama uninterrupted by spoken dialogue or obviously recognizable recitative.

TRAGÉDIE LYRIQUE  A French term associated mainly with Lully and Rameau. Tragédie lyrique comes somewhat closer to the spoken play in dramatic expressiveness than does the Italian opera seria of the same period, which may exceed it in vocal expressiveness.

TRILL  A musical ornament requiring the rapid alternation of two adjacent notes.

TROUSER ROLE  Also called “pants role.” The part of a male character sung by a woman, usually a mezzo-soprano.

UNDERSTUDY  A replacement for a particular role in case of illness or emergency (also called a “cover”).

VERISMO  A type of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Italian opera that emphasized realistic subjects.

WANDELPROBE  Musical rehearsal which allows the conductor to hear what the singers sound like when they perform on the set.

WINGS  The sides of the stage where the performers wait before making their entrances.

Sources:
New York City Opera Education Department, Edmonton Opera
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adagio</td>
<td>Slowly and smoothly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ad libitum</td>
<td>As you please; freely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affectuoso</td>
<td>Expressively; tenderly; lovingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agitato</td>
<td>Agitated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alberti bass</td>
<td>Stereotyped figures of accompaniment, consisting of broken chords.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allargando</td>
<td>Slowing and broadening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allegretto</td>
<td>Fairly lively; not as fast as allegro.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allegro</td>
<td>Lively; fast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a mezzo voce</td>
<td>With half the voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>andante</td>
<td>Going; moving; at a moderate rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>andantino</td>
<td>Slightly faster than andante.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animato</td>
<td>With spirit; animated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appoggiatura</td>
<td>An extra or embellishing note preceding a main melodic note or tone. Usually written as a note of smaller size, it shares the time value of the main note.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arpeggio</td>
<td>Producing the tones of a chord in succession but not simultaneously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assai</td>
<td>Very; very much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a tempo</td>
<td>At the preceding rate of speed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atonal</td>
<td>Music that is not anchored in traditional musical tonality; it uses the chromatic scale impartially, does not use the diatonic scale and has no keynote or tonal center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>augmentation</td>
<td>The presentation of a melody in doubled values so that, e.g. the quarter notes become half notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bar</td>
<td>A vertical line across the stave that divides the music into units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buffo, buffa</td>
<td>Comic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cadenza</td>
<td>A flourish or brilliant part of an aria commonly inserted just before a finale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cantabile</td>
<td>Songlike; singingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cantata</td>
<td>A choral piece generally containing scriptural narrative texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>con brio</td>
<td>With spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuo</td>
<td>A bass part (as for a keyboard or stringed instrument) that was used especially in baroque ensemble music; it consists of a succession of bass notes with figures that indicate the required chords. Also called figured bass, thoroughbass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterpoint</td>
<td>Music consisting of two or more lines that sound simultaneously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crescendo</td>
<td>Gradually getting louder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diatonic</td>
<td>Relating to a major or minor musical scale that comprises intervals of five whole steps and two half steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diminuendo</td>
<td>Gradually getting softer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diminution</td>
<td>The presentation of a melody in halved values so that, e.g. the quarter notes become eighth notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dissonance</td>
<td>A mingling of discordant sounds that do not harmonize within the diatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dolorosamente</td>
<td>Sadly; grievingly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DOMINANT
The fifth tone of the diatonic scale: in the key of C, the dominant is G.

FERMATA
Pause sign; prolonged time value of note so marked.

Forte
Loud.

Fortissimo
Very loud.

FURioso
Furious; violent.

GIOcoso
Playfully.

GIUSTO
Strict; exact.

GLISSANDO
A rapid sliding up or down the scale.

GRANDIOSO
With grandeur; majestically.

GRAVE
Slow; heavy; solemn.

GRAZioso
Elegantly; gracefully.

LAMENTOSO
Mournfully.

LARGHETTO
Somewhat less slowly than largo.

LARGO
Broadly and slowly.

LEGATO
Smoothly and connectedly.

LEGGERO
Light; airy; graceful.

LENTO
Slow.

MAESTRO
From the Italian “master”: a term of respect to conductors, composers, directors, and great musicians.

MAESTOSO
Majestic; stately; grand.

MARCATO
Marked.

Mezzo
Half; middle; medium.

MISTERIOSO
With mystery.

MODERATO
Moderately; at a moderate rate.

MOLTO
Much; very.

MORENDO
Dying away.

MOSSO
Moved; agitated; lively.

MOTO
Motion; movement.

OBBLIGATO
An elaborate accompaniment to a solo or principal melody that is usually played by a single instrument.

OCTAVE
A musical interval embracing eight diatonic degrees: therefore, from C¹ to C² is an octave.

ORNAMENTATION
Extra embellishing notes – appoggiaturas, trills, roulades, or cadenzas – that enhance a melodic line.

OVERTURE
An orchestral introduction to an act or the whole opera. An overture can appear only at the beginning of an opera.

OSSIA
Or; or else; an alternate reading.

PENTATONIC
A five-note scale, like the black notes within an octave on the piano.

PIACERE
To please.

PIANO
Soft.

PIANISSIMO
Very soft.

PITCH
The property of a musical tone that is determined by the frequency of the waves producing it.

PIÙ
More.

PIZZICATO
For bowed stringed instruments, an indication that the string is to be plucked with a finger.

POCO
Little.

POLYPHONY
Literally “many voices.” A style of musical composition in which two or more independent melodies are juxtaposed in harmony; counterpoint.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Synonym</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POLYTONAL</td>
<td>The use of several tonal schemes simultaneously.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PORTAMENTO</td>
<td>A continuous gliding movement from one tone to another.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESTO</td>
<td>Very fast; lively; quick.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUASER</td>
<td>An eighth note.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RALLENTANDO</td>
<td>Gradually slower.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RITARDANDO</td>
<td>Gradually slower.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RITENUTO</td>
<td>Held back; slower.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RITORNELLO</td>
<td>A short recurrent instrumental passage between elements of a vocal composition.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMANZA</td>
<td>A solo song that is usually sentimental; it is usually shorter and less complex than an aria and rarely deals with terror, rage and anger.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROULADE</td>
<td>A florid vocal embellishment sung to one syllable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUBATO</td>
<td>A way of playing or singing with regulated rhythmic freedom.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEMITONE</td>
<td>One half of a whole tone, the smallest distance between two notes in Western music. In the key of C, the notes are E and F, and B and C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEMPLICE</td>
<td>Simply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEMPRE</td>
<td>Always.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENZA</td>
<td>Without.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERIAL MUSIC</td>
<td>Music based on a series of tones in a chosen pattern without regard for traditional tonality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPORZANDO</td>
<td>With accent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SORDINO</td>
<td>Muted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOSTENUTO</td>
<td>Sustained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOTTO</td>
<td>Under; beneath.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STACCATO</td>
<td>Detached; separated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRINGENDO</td>
<td>Hurried; accelerated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STROPE</td>
<td>Music repeated for each verse of an aria.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYNCOPATION</td>
<td>Shifting the beat forward or back from its usual place in the bar; it is a temporary displacement of the regular metrical accent in music caused typically by stressing the weak beat.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TACET</td>
<td>Silent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMPO</td>
<td>Rate of speed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TONALITY</td>
<td>The organization of all the tones and harmonies of a piece of music in relation to a tonic (the first tone of its scale).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRISTE</td>
<td>Sad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWELVE-TONE</td>
<td>The 12 chromatic tones of the octave placed in a chosen fixed order and constituting with some permitted permutations and derivations the melodic and harmonic material of a serial musical piece. Each note of the chromatic scale is used as part of the melody before any other note gets repeated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VELOCE</td>
<td>Rapid.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIBRATO</td>
<td>A “vibration”; a slightly tremulous effect imparted to vocal or instrumental tone for added warmth and expressiveness by slight and rapid variations in pitch.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIVACE</td>
<td>Brisk; lively.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**BIBLIOGRAPHY – PUCCINI AND LA BOHÈME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher and Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY – OPERA IN GENERAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher and Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Publisher and Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
John Warrack and Ewan West
The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera.

William Weaver
Golden Century of Italian Opera.

Herbert Weinstock and Wallace Brockway
The World of Opera.

**DISCOGRAPHY**

**PHILIPS**
416 492-2
Ricciarelli, Carreras, Putnam, Wixell, Hagegard, Lloyd
Davis; Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

**LONDON**
421 049-2
Freni, Pavarotti, Harwood, Panerai, Maffeo, Ghiaurov
Karajan; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

**RCA**
3969-2RG
Moffo, Tucker, Costa, Merrill, Tozzi, Maero
Leinsdorf; Rome Opera Orchestra

**ERATO**
2292-45311-2
Hendricks, Carreras, Quilico, Blasi
Conlon; Orchestre National de France and Chœurs et Maitrise de Radio France

**RCA**
RCD2-0371
Caballé, Domingo, Milnes, Blegen, Sardinero, Raimondi
Solti; London Symphony Orchestra

**VIDEOGRAPHY**

**DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON**
Scotto, Pavarotti, Niska, Wixell

**DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON**
Stratas, Scotto, Carreras, Stilwell, Monk

**EMI CLASSICS**
Gheorghiu, Arteta, Vargas, Tezier, Kelsey

**GENEAN**
Stratas, Carreras, Scotto, Stilwell, Monk (Zeffirelli)

**KULTUR VIDEO**
Shicoff, Donlan, Gibbs, Nesterenko, Rawnsley
1. The opera takes place in _____________, France.
2. The role of Rodolfo is sung by a ______________ (voice type).
3. Alcindoro was Musetta’s ________________.
4. Musetta really was in love with ________________.
5. The Bohemians had dinner at Café Momus on ____________.
6. Rodolfo uses his drama ___________ to start a fire in his cold apartment.
7. The landlord Benoit admits he likes to ___________ with the ladies.
8. Mimi drops her __________ in Rodolfo’s apartment.
9. Rodolfo helps Mimi to a chair when she grows faint from ____________.
10. Mimi loves to keep fresh ___________ in her apartment to enjoy the sweet fragrance.
11. The Bohemians leave an enormous ____________ for Alcindoro to pay upon his return from the shoemaker.
12. Musetta gives Marcello her ___________ to be sold for medicine and a doctor.
13. Mimi asks Musetta to get her a ___________ to warm her cold, frail hands.

Answers can be found in the following articles:
1. Synopsis
2. Puccini biography
3. About the writing of La bohème
Crossword Puzzle

Down

1. ________ dies at the end of the opera.
2. Puccini was born in this Italian city.
3. Puccini had a seaside villa near this town.
4. La bohème premiered in this Italian city.
5. In Act I ________ “shocks” the Bohemians when they discover he has a young mistress.
6. Rodolfo buys Mimi a ________ in Act II.
7. Benoit unexpectedly shows up in Act I looking for the overdue ________.
8. ________ “shocks” the Bohemians when they discover he has a young mistress.
9. Rodolfo buys Mimi a ________ in Act II.
10. ________ was Puccini’s last opera.

Across

1. At the end of Act II Rodolfo, Mimi and their friends escape Alcindoro by hiding amongst a ________ ________.
2. Puccini liked to drive fast but eventually was hurt in a ________ ________.
3. In Act II the Bohemians dine outdoors at the ________ ________.
4. The characters of La bohème are referred to as ________ after this region in Czechoslovakia.
5. ________ was Puccini’s last opera.
6. In Act III ________ pretends to be jealous of Mimi because he says she’s a flirt but really he’s concerned for her health.
7. Puccini died of a ________ attack after undergoing treatment for cancer.
8. Arturo ________ conducted the first performance of La bohème.
9. As a young man ________ played piano in a house of ill-repute to help support his family.
10. ________ ________ is the author of Scènes de la vie de bohème upon which the opera is based.
11. ________ ________ is the author of Scènes de la vie de bohème upon which the opera is based.
12. ________ ________ is the other librettist who worked on La bohème.
13. In Act IV, Colline pawns his beloved ________ to help raise some money quickly.
15. ________ ________ is the name of Puccini’s wife.

Answers can be found in the following articles:

1. Synopsis
2. Puccini biography
3. About the writing of La bohème
1. Paris
2. tenor
3. admirer
4. Marcello
5. Christmas Eve
6. manuscript
7. flirt
8. key
9. coughing
10. flowers
11. bill
12. earrings
13. muff
La bohème

1. I teach this subject and grade level(s):

2. I found the Opera Box useful:
   
   YES          NO

3. These are the items I used: (check all that apply)
   
   _____ La bohème Libretto (G. Schirmer)
   _____ La bohème Full Score (Dover)
   _____ La bohème Vocal Score (G. Schirmer)
   _____ DVD La bohème (Australian Opera/Baz Luhrmann)
   _____ DVD La bohème (Metropolitan Opera/Levine, Carreras)
   _____ CD La bohème (Pavarotti, Freni, von Karajan)
   _____ CD La bohème (Tebaldi, Bergonzi, Serafin)
   _____ BOOK The Complete Operas of Puccini (Charles Osborne)
   _____ BOOK Puccini and His Operas (Stanley Sadie)
   _____ BOOK La bohème (Metropolitan Opera Classics Library)
   _____ BOOK Opera, Composers, Works, Performers (András Batta)

4. I wish I had the Opera Box for more time:
   
   YES          NO

4A. If you said YES, how much more time would you like to have?

5. Rental cost for the Opera Box was:
   
   LOW          ACCEPTABLE          HIGH

6. I used the material in this Opera Box to: (circle all that apply)
   
   Introduce my students to opera
   Continue my students’ study of opera
   Prepare students prior to a performance
   Meet a Minnesota High Standard

7. Would you like to receive some training related to the content in the Opera Box?
   
   YES          NO

8. Items I would like to see in future Opera Boxes:

9. I would attend a summer workshop about how to teach opera (with graduate credit available):
   
   YES          NO

10. I used, or directed my students to, imagineopera.org website.
    
    YES          NO

11. Please offer any further comments or suggestions on the back of this form.
Acknowledgments

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the generous help received in creating this Teacher Guide from these very busy and talented individuals. Without their comments and ideas, this project would never have gotten off the ground.

Marcia Aubineau (University of St. Thomas, St. Paul)
Sandy Kaslow (Forest Lake Public Schools)
Jane Kolp-Andrews (Valley View Middle School, Edina)
Dr. Doug Orzolek (University of St. Thomas, St. Paul)
David Sander (Dramaturg, Minnesota Opera)
Dan Weinstein (Intern, Minnesota Opera)

The Minnesota Opera's Education Department is supported through the generous contributions from the following sponsors:

Gifts of $20,000+
- 3M
- Ameriprise Financial
- Comcast
- Medtronic Foundation
- Travelers
- UnitedHealth Group

Gifts of $10,000–$19,999
- Anna M. Heilmaier Charitable Foundation
- Education Minnesota Foundation
- Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen Foundation
- Twin Cities Opera Guild

Gifts of $1,000–$9,999
- Allianz Life Insurance of North America
- Bobby and Steve’s Auto World Youth Foundation
- The Lillian Wright & C. Emil Berglund Foundation
- Cleveland Foundation
- Enterprise Rent-a-Car
- Harian Boss Foundation for the Arts
- The Pentair Foundation
- RBC Foundation – USA
- Sewell Family Foundation
- Target
- Xcel Energy Foundation