Pagliacci
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Minnesota Opera

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2000 – 2001 Season

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Turandot

Giacomo Puccini

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The Capulets and the Montagues

Vincenzo Bellini

---

Street Scene

Kurt Weill

---

The Barber of Seville

Gioachino Rossini

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Pagliacci/Carmen Burana

Ruggero Leoncavallo
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
### Lesson Plan Unit Overview with Related Academic Standards

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Lesson Title</th>
<th>Minnesota Academic Standards: Arts K–12</th>
<th>National Standards for Music Education</th>
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<td>2 – Discovering Italian Comedy</td>
<td>Music 9.1.3.3.1&lt;br&gt;Music 9.1.3.3.2&lt;br&gt;Theater 9.1.3.4.1&lt;br&gt;Theater 9.1.3.4.2</td>
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<td>3 – That was a great performance and I know why!</td>
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<td>8, 9</td>
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<td>4 – Translating &quot;Vesti la giubba&quot; into other genres.</td>
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<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>LESSON TITLE</td>
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<td>NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION</td>
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<td>7 – Leoncavallo’s Music Choices</td>
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<td>9 – Comparing and contrasting different performances of “Vesti la giubba.”</td>
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**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.

**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.

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

**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.

**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.
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.

9.1.1.4.2
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

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.
**TITLE OF LESSON**

Lesson 1: Life and Times of Leoncavallo

**OBJECTIVE(s)**

Students will understand the life, times and culture of Leoncavallo.

**MATERIAL(s)**

- reference books about Leoncavallo
- **LIFE AND TIMES OF LEONCAVALLO TIMELINE RESEARCH CHECKLIST (see following page)**
- general reference books about 19th-century Europe
- internet access
- poster board

**PROCEDURE(s)**

1. Divide class into groups. Assign research topics related to Leoncavallo to each group. Direct the class to research their specific topics and prepare a presentation for the rest of the class based on their findings. *The nature and scope of the presentations is at the discretion of the teacher.*

   Suggested topics:
   - political and social culture of Europe during Leoncavallo’s lifetime (1857–1919)
   - scientific and technological achievements during Leoncavallo’s lifetime.
   - social life and class divisions in Italy and Europe during Leoncavallo’s lifetime.
   - artistic and musical life in Italy and all of Europe from 1850 to 1920.
     - Verismo in opera
     - Use of realism in literature and music
     - Literary and artistic trends

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 that will be posted on the wall. It is suggested that the teacher predetermine what form the timeline will look like. For example, cut pieces of poster board, mark the time span and topic of each section and mount final piece on the classroom wall. Each piece of the timeline should contain 20 facts.

4. Student groups will give oral presentations based on their topic. Each group should create five questions about their topic that they feel are the most important. Questions are to be submitted to the teacher prior to giving the

**ASSESSMENT(s)**

Assign value for class participation and group cooperation. In addition, assign value to each of the following activities:
- demonstration of checklist completed
- all group members participating in presentation
- correct number of facts, clearly written, for piece of timeline
- evidence of note-taking during all presentations
GROUP MEMBERS

TOCIP

Each item must be completed to earn full point value.

RESEARCH CHECKLIST

_____ List 20 facts related to the topic and how they relate to Leoncavallo.  
_____ Organize all facts into chronological order.  
_____ Write three-sentence descriptions of each fact to be put on timeline.  
_____ Proofread all sentences prior to putting them on the timeline.  
_____ Put each fact on the timeline for public display.

CLASS PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

_____ Prepare an outline of class presentation.  
_____ Based on this outline, create five questions that your group feels address the most important points of the presentation.  
_____ Submit five questions to teacher prior to presentation.  
_____ Assign speaking parts for each group member.  
_____ Practice speech.  
_____ Give presentation.  
_____ Put piece of timeline on wall.

POINTS POSSIBLE FOR EACH ITEM

____ POINTS EARNED

Total
Lesson 2: Discovering Italian Comedy

Students will learn the basic elements and characteristics of the Italian commedia dell’arte.

• DISCOVERING ITALIAN COMEDY CHECKLIST AND RUBRIC HANDOUT (one per student)
• Reference books on Italy circa the Italian Renaissance through the 18th century
• Internet access

(1) Divide class into smaller groups and assign a topic to research in relationship to this topic. Suggested topics are:
   – Influences of the form (i.e. when and where did this occur)
   – Properties used in performances
   – Improvisation
   – Stock Characters
   – Costumes and masks
   – Music
   – Plots/story lines
(2) Each group will create a two paragraph summary of their finds. Each group will then share their summary with the rest of the class.
(3) As a class, create a summary of all the findings. Ask students to identify the main points of each topic.
(4) Combine small groups into large groups (four to six students per group) and assign them the task of creating and performing a mini commedia dell’arte piece. See DISCOVERING ITALIAN COMEDY CHECKLIST AND RUBRIC for more details.

Students are to complete all the steps on the checklist and perform their piece. See DISCOVERING ITALIAN COMEDY CHECKLIST AND RUBRIC for details.
Lesson 2

Directions

(1) Divide into groups of two to three students and choose a topic to research in relationship to commedia dell’arte.
   Suggested topics are:
   – Influences of the form (i.e. when and where did this occur)
   – Properties used in performances
   – Improvisation
   – Stock Characters
   – Costumes and masks
   – Music
   – Plots/story lines

(2) Research this topic and create a two-paragraph summary of your findings. Plan to share these findings with the rest of the class.

(3) Take notes as the class discusses the major ideas found from all the groups.

(4) Join with another group and create your own commedia dell’arte piece. Based on your research and the research from the rest of the class, come up with a story (it can be based on a common commedia dell’arte story) and create some dialogue. Include characteristic use of props, music, masks, etc. The entire piece should last about five minutes.

(5) Assessment will be based on the following checklist and rubric.

Discovering Italian Comedy Checklist

_____ Pick Research Topic (What is your topic? _____________________________)

_____ Create two paragraph summary of your findings (must be turned in at end of assignment).

_____ Evidence of note taking on classroom discussion (must be turned in at end of assignment).

_____ Script of commedia dell’arte piece (must be turned in at end of assignment).

_____ Performance of commedia dell’arte piece.
**DISCOVERING ITALIAN COMEDY RUBRIC**

**COMMEDIA DELL’ARTE PERFORMANCE RUBRIC**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COLLABORATION WITH PEERS</strong></td>
<td>Almost always listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group. Tries to keep people working well together.</td>
<td>Usually listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group.</td>
<td>Often listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group but sometimes is not a good team member.</td>
<td>Rarely listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group. Often is not a good team member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREPAREDNESS</strong></td>
<td>Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.</td>
<td>Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.</td>
<td>The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.</td>
<td>Student does not seem at all prepared to present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EVIDENCE OF CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td>Evidence of 4–5 characteristics of commedia dell’arte.</td>
<td>Evidence of 2–3 characteristics of commedia dell’arte.</td>
<td>Evidence of 1–2 characteristics of commedia dell’arte.</td>
<td>No evidence of characteristics of commedia dell’arte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POINTS EARNED</strong></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE</th>
<th>TOTAL POINTS EARNED</th>
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<tr>
<td>COMPLETED CHECKLIST</td>
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<tr>
<td>PERFORMED PIECE</td>
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<tr>
<td>TURNED IN SUMMARY, CLASS DISCUSSION NOTES AND SCRIPT</td>
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**Minnesota OPERA**

**OPERA BOX LESSON PLANS | 13**
Lesson 3: “That was a great performance and I know why!”

Objective(s)
Students will learn about applying objective and subjective statements toward a musical performance. Students will apply this knowledge of criticism by writing a critique of a performance. Ideally this lesson should be used in conjunction with attending a live performance.

Material(s)
- Pagliacci CD or DVD (any recording will work)
- “That was a great performance and I know why!” Objective/Subjective Chart (see following page)
- Various reviews from newspapers and magazines of opera, concerts, musicals, theater, movies and other media. (not in Opera Box)

Depending on your particular subject area, you may choose to focus on different aspects of reviewing. For example, a music class might choose to limit themselves and only look at musical reviews.

Procedure(s)
1. Play an excerpt from Pagliacci. Suggested excerpts would be A) a complete act, or B) shorter excerpts, such as the Prologue, Act I or Act II.
2. After listening or viewing, ask students to make objective and subjective statements about the performance. Chart and categorize the class comments into two categories, objective and subjective.
   - Discussion points
     - Differences between objective and subjective statements
     - Which is easier to make, subjective or objective statements?
     - Which type of statement provides more information about a performance for a potential listener?
3. Explain that the role of any music critic is to balance the differences between the two. A possible extension for this lesson could be to have students conduct research on the professional critic.
4. Assign students to find and read three reviews from a newspaper, magazine or online source. Students are then to analyze the reviews, identifying the subjective and objective attributes. They will put their answers on the “That was a great performance and I know why!” Objective/Subjective Chart.
5. In class, question students about their findings.
6. Then assign students to write a review about a common, singular topic. For example, everyone will write about their experiences passing in the halls between periods, or eating in the cafeteria. Discuss the subjective and objective nature of the comments given.
7. Assign students to write a review outside of class. This review could be based on the performance the class will attend.
ASSESSMENT(S)

OPTION ONE
Evaluation shall include the successful completion of the reviews found, analyzed and written. Class participation should also be included.

OPTION TWO
Evaluation shall include the successful completion of the reviews found, analyzed, and written. In addition, students are to fill out another “THAT WAS A GREAT PERFORMANCE AND I KNOW WHY!” OBJECTIVE/SUBJECTIVE CHART evaluating an additional excerpt from Pagliacci. (The suggested Pagliacci excerpt is one of the excerpts not used in Step 1 above. Class participation should also be assessed.)

ADDITIONAL COMMENT(S)
Encourage students to write a review about a live performance of another ensemble within the school or a professional group. A group of students could also review a new movie. Also, if possible, inquire if some of these reviews could be included in a school or local newspaper.
**That was a great performance and I know why!**

**Subjective/Objective Chart**

**Lesson 3**

**Directions**

After listening to a piece of music, create a list of five (5) objective statements regarding the overall performance itself, the quality of the piece(s) and the performers. Then make a list of five (5) subjective statements regarding the same criteria. In the “criteria” box, identify what you are (sub) objectifying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OBJECTIVE</td>
<td>SUBJECTIVE</td>
<td>OBJECTIVE</td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 4: Translating “Vesti la giubba” (“On with your costume”) into other genres.

Objective(s)
Students will understand the characteristics of this aria and translate those characteristics into other genres.

Material(s)
• Pagliacci CD
• Pagliacci libretto (one copy of the aria per student
• TRANSLATING “VESTI LA GIUBBA” INTO OTHER GENRES RUBRIC (one copy per student)

Procedure(s)
(1) As a class, read the text of “Vesti la giubba” and discuss the following points:
   – What is the form of the text? Is it a solo, duet, etc.?
   – What is the overall meaning of the text?
   – Does the content of the text have meaning in today’s society?
   – Is there a popular song that deals with the same emotions?

(2) Students are to take the text of “Vesti la giubba” and set it into another musical genre. For example, students may turn the text into a rap, country, or pop song. Encourage the students to modernize the words.

(3) Students are to perform their compositions with the other students serving as the audience.

(4) Discuss as a class which performances were successful. Why or why not? Include discussion of the effectiveness of the text separate from the music.

(5) As a class, listen to the CD recording of “Vesti la giubba.” Compare and contrast the original setting and the student compositions. Discuss which setting is more effective, more entertaining and why.

Assessment(s)
The final class performance will be evaluated on completeness of text and its understandability. The audience can provide feedback by determining the most creative and the most effective performance. Value will be given placed on class participation. See TRANSLATING “VESTI LA GIUBBA” (“ON WITH YOUR COSTUME”) INTO OTHER GENRES RUBRIC for details.
**Lesson 4**

**NAME**

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Read the text of “Vesti la giubba” (“On with your costume”) and discuss the following points:
   - What is the form of the text? Is it a solo, duet, etc.?
   - What is the overall of the text?
   - Does the content of the text have meaning in today’s society?
   - Is there a popular song that deals with the same emotions?

2. Pick a partner and translate the text into another genre. For example, you could turn this duet into a rap, country and western song, a church hymn, a piece of minimalism or Gregorian chant. You can modernize the words if you chose, but try to maintain the original meaning of the text.

3. Perform your composition for the class. You will be assessed by the criteria in the rubric below.

4. At the end, you will listen to the excerpt from Pagliacci and compare and contrast Leoncavallo’s composition to yours.

**PRESENTATION RUBRIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COLLABORATION WITH PEERS</strong></td>
<td>Almost always listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group. Tries to keep people working well together.</td>
<td>Usually listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group.</td>
<td>Often listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group but sometimes is not a good team member.</td>
<td>Rarely listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group. Often is not a good team member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREPAREDNESS</strong></td>
<td>Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.</td>
<td>Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.</td>
<td>The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.</td>
<td>Student does not seem at all prepared to present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STAYS ON TOPIC</strong></td>
<td>Stays on topic all (100%) of the time.</td>
<td>Stays on topic most (99 – 90%) of the time.</td>
<td>Stays on topic some (89 – 75%) of the time.</td>
<td>It was hard to tell what the topic was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LISTENS TO OTHER PRESENTATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Listens intently. Does not make distracting noises or movements.</td>
<td>Listens intently but has one distracting noise or movement.</td>
<td>Sometimes does not appear to be listening but is not distracting.</td>
<td>Sometimes does not appear to be listening and has distracting noises or movements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Title of Lesson**

Lesson 5: Acting out a scene from *Pagliacci*

**Objective(s)**

Students will learn about the physical gestures and vocal inflection needed to create characterization on stage.

**Material(s)**

- Libretto of *Pagliacci* *(one copy per student)*
- *(optional)* "Props" — items for acting out the scene could be a chair, window (Columbine), guitar (Harlequin), table with plates, etc. (Columbine and Harlequin), basket (Taddeo), a small bottle (Harlequin), items for a clown and a knife (Pagliaccio).

**Procedure(s)**

1. Before you do this lesson in class it is recommended that you read through this excerpt. There may be a few words that your students will not understand, and you will want to be comfortable with the roles and story that you will be asking your students to act out. Suggest to the class that a libretto is only the text of what is being sung and the translation is from those words. It’s not meant to be a spoken play.

2. Give one copy of libretto to each student. Have students read and act the following parts: This lesson must be done with all of these parts being acted out.

   **The Characters**
   - Nedda as Columbine
   - Beppe as Harlequin
   - Tonio as Taddeo
   - Canio as Pagliaccio
   - Silvio
   - Audience watching the play

3. Students are to read through the excerpt, take notes and discuss the personalities of the characters. Then they are to read through it again, but they are to act out their roles in front of the classroom. Encourage students to add vocal inflection and gesture to their parts. Their choices will be discussed in the next step.

4. After they finish acting the excerpt, discuss the choices they made in creating their characters. What was done to differentiate the men from the women, nobility from the servants, the young and the old, etc? Why were these choices made? Is there a level of hierarchy being displayed here?

5. As a class, move the discussion to the acceptability of these gestures and inflections. You are moving the discussion towards stereotypes and preconceived ideas. Here are some suggested questions:
   - Are these choices and roles acceptable to our current sensibilities?
   - Are there some gestures and/or vocal inflections that are acceptable and others unacceptable?
   - Why do we have these stereotypes?

6. For the final project, assign the students to create a list of observed gestures of the world around them, i.e. classmates, adults, parents, people on television. These gestures should be an obvious movement that gives a clear meaning to the observer. For example, someone is waving his/her hand, bowing, pointing and making a funny or angry face — all have meaning. Students are to tally the times they see the gesture repeated, and then create a list of the ten most interesting observations. For each of the ten most interesting, they are to write a paragraph explaining why these gestures were interesting and what they signify.

**Assessment(s)**

Value should be given to quality of the reviews of peers, class participation in discussion and acting performance.
**Acting Evaluation Worksheet**

Lesson 5  

NAME OF OBSERVER  

NAME OF PERFORMERS  

**Directions**

Closely observe your peers as they perform from the Act 1 – Finale from *Pagliacci*. Look for the following elements in their performance. Be consistent and fair with each group.

(1) What was the single most effective gesture used by the group?

(2) Did the group performing “follow” each line of the text? Did they physically reinforce everything they were saying?

(3) Did the performers make eye contact with each other and/or audience?

(4) Was the voice of the performers used to create variety and emotion in the scene?

(5) Give one suggestion to the group to improve their performance.
Lesson 6: Looking at Pagliacci through different “lenses.”

Objective(s)
Students will comprehend the drama of Pagliacci through various literary theories. (It is suggested that this lesson follow some other preliminary work on the story of Pagliacci.)

Material(s)
- Pagliacci through the Lenses Worksheet and Rubrics (one copy per student) (see following page)
- various costumes and props for student presentations (not in Opera Box)

Procedure(s)
1. Break class into smaller groups and assign each group a “lens” in which to analyze Pagliacci.
2. As a class, read through the Pagliacci through the Lenses Worksheet. Give additional explanation (as needed) to the class describing the various perspectives.
3. Assign worksheet and possible class time for work.
4. Create a space for the student groups to present their work. Students not presenting will serve as an audience taking notes on each presentation. These notes will be used in the assessment.

Assessment(s)
Each student will be assessed individually and as a member of their assigned group. Value given to group participation and class presentation will follow the Pagliacci through the Lenses Worksheet and Rubrics.

Upon the completion of all presentations, each student is to compose a persuasive essay supporting one of the lenses as superior to the others. All lenses are to be used and cited as supporting material of the argument.
Lesson 6

DIRECTIONS

Read through each description of the various literary theories or “lenses” used to understand literature. In your small group, read through your assigned lens and find examples of this perspective in the libretto of Pagliacci. After your group has collected enough examples in the libretto, create a 10-minute presentation explaining your position. Use a short example of the libretto to act out (with appropriate costumes and props) to demonstrate your position. During the other class presentations, take notes on how each lens is represented in Pagliacci. These notes are to be used in a final persuasive essay supporting one theory. Follow the checklist and rubric to help you complete all the tasks.

Marxist Literary Theory

ASSUMPTIONS

1. The German philosopher Karl Marx argued that the way people think and behave in any society is determined by basic economic factors.
2. In his view, those groups of people who owned and controlled major industries could exploit the rest of the population through conditions of employment and by forcing their own values and beliefs onto other social groups.
3. Marxist criticism applies these arguments to the study of literary texts.

STRATEGIES

1. Explore the way different groups of people are represented in texts. Evaluate the level of social realism in the text—how is society portrayed.
2. Determine the ideological stance of the text—what world view does the text represent.
3. Consider how the text itself is a commodity that reproduces certain social beliefs and practices. Analyze the social effect of the literary work.

Reader-Response Criticism

ASSUMPTIONS

1. An author’s intentions are not reliably available to readers; all they have is the text.
2. Out of the text, readers actively and personally make meaning.
3. Responding to a text is a process, and descriptions of that process are valuable.

STRATEGIES

1. Move through the text in super-slow motion, describing the response of an informed reader at various points.
2. Or describe your own response moving through the text.
3. React to the text as a whole, embracing and expressing the subjective and personal response it engenders.

Postcolonial Literary Theory

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Colonialism is a powerful, destructive historical force that shapes not only the political futures of the countries involved, but also the identities of colonized and colonizing people.
2. Successful colonialism depends on a process of “othering” the people colonized. That is, the colonized people are seen as dramatically different from and lesser than the colonizers.
3. Because of this, literature written in colonizing cultures often distorts the experiences and realities of colonized people. Literature written by colonized people often includes attempts to articulate more empowered identities and reclaim cultures in the face of colonization.

**Strategies**

1. Search the text for references to colonization or current and formerly colonized people. In these references, how are the colonized people portrayed? How is the process of colonization portrayed?

2. Consider what images of “others” or processes of “othering” are present in the text. How are these “others” portrayed?

3. Analyze how the text deals with cultural conflicts between the colonizing culture and the colonized or traditional culture?

**Feminist Criticism**

**Assumptions**

1. The work doesn’t have an objective status, an autonomy; instead, any reading of it is influenced by the reader’s own status, which includes gender or attitudes toward gender.

2. Historically the production and reception of literature has been controlled largely by men; it’s important now to insert a feminist viewpoint in order to bring to our attention neglected works as well as new approaches to old works.

3. Men and women are different: they write differently, read differently and write about their reading differently. These differences should be valued.

**Strategies**

1. Consider the gender of the author, the characters: what role does gender or sexuality play in this work?

2. Specifically, observe how sexual stereotypes might be reinforced or undermined. Try to see how the work reflects, or distorts or recuperates the place of women (and men) in society.

3. Imagine yourself as a woman reading the work.

**Psychological Criticism**

**Assumptions**

1. Creative writing (like dreaming) represents the (disguised) fulfillment of a (repressed) wish or fear.

2. Everyone’s formative history is different in particulars, but there are basic recurrent patterns of development for most people. These patterns and particulars have lasting effects.

3. In reading literature, we can make educated guesses about what has been repressed and transformed.

**Strategies**

1. Attempt to apply a developmental concept to the work (or the author or the characters). For example: the Oedipal complex, anal retentiveness, castration anxiety, gender confusion.

2. Relate the work to psychologically significant events in the author’s life.

3. Consider how repressed material maybe expressed in the work’s pattern of imagery or symbols.
Biographical, Historical, New Historical Criticism

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Meaning is contextual.

2. The context for a literary work includes information about the author, his or her historical moment and the systems of meaning available at the time of writing.

3. Interpretation of the work should be based on an understanding of its context.

STRATEGIES

1. Research the author’s life, and relate that information to the work.

2. Research the author’s time (the political history, intellectual history, economic history, etc.) and relate that information to the work.

3. Research the systems of meaning available to the author and relate those systems to the work.

CHECKLIST

☐ Individually read the Pagliacci libretto. Make citations in the text when you find examples of your theory.

☐ In your small group, discuss your findings.

☐ Prepare a 10-minute presentation* that includes the following:

  • An explanation of the purpose of your lens in general
  • A thorough analysis of how Pagliacci can be seen through your lens including at least 5 quotations found in the libretto supporting your theory.
  • An explanation of how the imagery is used to explicate/illuminate your lens’s interpretation.
  • Identify a small portion of one or two scenes from Pagliacci which demonstrate how the lens can be used to interpret the action/characters. Assign the roles to the groups members to be acted out during the presentation. Use appropriate costumes/props for the presentation.
  • An explanation of which themes are highlighted through the use of your lens

  * Follow the PRESENTATION RUBRIC for parameters of the presentation.

☐ Take notes on the other presentations. Highlight how each lens can be identified in the libretto.

☐ Write a persuasive essay supporting one theory as the best way to describe the opera Pagliacci. Use your notes from the presentations to cite examples either for or against your position. Follow the ESSAY RUBRIC for parameters for your writing.
## Presentation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>4 – Above Standards</th>
<th>3 – Meets Standards</th>
<th>2 – Approaching Standards</th>
<th>1 – Below Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration with Peers</strong></td>
<td>Almost always listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group. Tries to keep people working well together.</td>
<td>Usually listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group.</td>
<td>Often listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group but sometimes is not a good team member.</td>
<td>Rarely listens to, shares with and supports the efforts of others in the group. Often is not a good team member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparedness</strong></td>
<td>Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.</td>
<td>Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.</td>
<td>The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.</td>
<td>Student does not seem at all prepared to present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaks Clearly</strong></td>
<td>Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, and mispronounces no words.</td>
<td>Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, but mispronounces one word.</td>
<td>Speaks clearly and distinctly most (94-85%) of the time. Mispronounces no more than one word.</td>
<td>Often mumbles or can not be understood OR mispronounces more than one word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Props</strong></td>
<td>Student uses several props (could include costumes) that show considerable work/creativity and that make the presentation better.</td>
<td>Student uses 1 prop that shows considerable work/creativity and that make the presentation better.</td>
<td>Student uses 1 prop that makes the presentation better.</td>
<td>The student uses no props or the props chosen detract from the presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stays on Topic</strong></td>
<td>Stays on topic all (100%) of the time.</td>
<td>Stays on topic most (99 – 90%) of the time.</td>
<td>Stays on topic some (89 – 75%) of the time.</td>
<td>It was hard to tell what the topic was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listens to Other Presentations</strong></td>
<td>Listens intently. Does not make distracting noises or movements.</td>
<td>Listens intently but has one distracting noise or movement.</td>
<td>Sometimes does not appear to be listening but is not distracting.</td>
<td>Sometimes does not appear to be listening and has distracting noises or movements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Score**
## Essay Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>4 — Above Standards</th>
<th>3 — Meets Standards</th>
<th>2 — Approaching Standards</th>
<th>1 — Below Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position Statement</strong></td>
<td>The position statement provides a clear, strong statement of the author's position on the topic.</td>
<td>The position statement provides a clear statement of the author's position on the topic.</td>
<td>A position statement is present, but does not make the author's position clear.</td>
<td>There is no position statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence and Examples</strong></td>
<td>All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.</td>
<td>Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.</td>
<td>At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.</td>
<td>Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>All supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.</td>
<td>Almost all supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.</td>
<td>Most supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.</td>
<td>Most supportive facts and statistics were inaccurately reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and Spelling</strong></td>
<td>Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes 1 – 2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes 3 – 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capitalization and Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>Author makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the essay is exceptionally easy to read.</td>
<td>Author makes 1 – 2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the essay is still easy to read.</td>
<td>Author makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.</td>
<td>Author makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupt the flow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Score</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 7: Leoncavallo’s Musical Choices

Objective(s)
Student will actively listen to three selections from Pagliacci and will compare and contract musical characteristics used in each selection.

Material(s)
- Pagliacci CD
- Pagliacci libretto
- Leoncavallo’s Musical Choices Worksheet (one copy per student) (see following page)

Procedure(s)
1. Give each student a copy of the Leoncavallo’s Musical Choices Worksheet and the copy of the text for the three arias used in this lesson. Read through directions with the class.

2. Play the cantabile, “Un tal gioco,” for the class. Students are to follow along with the text. At the end of the selection, stop and let the students fill in the related boxes. Inform students that they be able to write more responses after they listen to each aria. Repeat this step for ballatella, “Hui … Hui … Stridono lassù,” and the arioso, “Vesti la giubba.”

3. After completing the listening portion, have a class discussion to compare and contrast the three arias. Invite students to share their responses written on the worksheet.
   - What do you learn about the character from the aria?
   - Does the accompaniment reinforce the text of the aria?
   - Describe each aria in one word.
   - Describe the color of each voice.

   Keep in mind that the answers in many cases can be interpreted in numerous ways. Use your best judgment when accepting responses.

Assessment(s)
Assign value to the responses given in class and on the worksheet (for example, one point per response). See the Teacher’s Key for suggested responses and points for discussion.
Listen to these three different arias from Act 1 of Pagliacci. Identify the musical elements and describe the characteristics used in each piece. After listening to all three selections, compare and contrast elements between them. Write your responses in the chart below. You will have time to write after each selection. Point value will be given for each response given and participation in the class discussion following the listening portion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENE</th>
<th>cantabile “Un tal gioco” (pp. 49 – 51)*</th>
<th>ballatella “Hui … Hui … Stridono lassù” (pp. 71– 78)</th>
<th>arioso “Tutto è disposto …” (pp. 130 – 133)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHARACTER</td>
<td>Canio</td>
<td>Nedda</td>
<td>Canio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOCAL RANGE</td>
<td>tenor</td>
<td>soprano</td>
<td>tenor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMPO</td>
<td>adagio molto con grande espressione</td>
<td>vivace</td>
<td>adagio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METER</td>
<td>3/4 time</td>
<td>3/8 time</td>
<td>2/4 time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DYNAMICS</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>pp–f</td>
<td>mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSICAL CHARACTERISTICS (a minimum of three responses is required)</td>
<td>A-B-A like form. Simple song-like melody. Solid, secure major key starts the arioso, but moves to more unstable harmony as Canio imagines a possible future. Orchestra changes motive as Canio sings about Nedda betraying him in real life.</td>
<td>Happy, joyous major key. Fast, one beat per bar rhythm. Orchestral accompaniment characterizes the birds that Nedda is singing about. Harmony becomes darker when the text is about “storms” and “wind.”</td>
<td>Very expressive, as though Canio is trying to convey great pain and sadness. He sobs at the end to make sure no one misses the point. Slow, rubato tempo. Very large vocal range. Rhythm is a slow two-beats-to-a-measure pattern throughout.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* page numbers refer to the Schirmer vocal score
**Leoncavallo’s Musical Choices**

**Lesson 7**

**WORKSHEET**

**DIRECTIONS**

Listen to these three different arias from Act 1 of *Pagliacci*. Identify the musical elements and describe the characteristics used in each piece. After listening to all three selections, compare and contrast elements between them. Write your responses in the chart below. You will have time to write after each selection. Point value will be given for each response given and participation in the class discussion following the listening portion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENE</th>
<th>Cantabile “Un tal gioco”</th>
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<tr>
<td>METER</td>
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<tr>
<td>DYNAMICS</td>
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</table>

**Musical Characteristics**

(a minimum of three responses is required)
Lesson 8: Understanding the libretto

Objective(s)

Students will learn about the characteristics of an opera libretto.

Material(s)

- LIBRETTO Pagliacci (pp. 44–45) (one copy per student)
- DVD Pagliacci (Bartoli/Dara DECCA DVD)

Procedure(s)

1. Give a copy to each student of the entire Pagliacci Act II libretto. From the reading, they are to prepare themselves to discuss the merits of the text. Discussion questions:
   - Is the libretto an effective piece of poetry?
   - How “real” are the characters and situations?
   - Do you feel that something is missing? What?
   *This reading could be given as an assignment prior to the lesson.

2. Ask the students to suggest what to include or exclude to make the story more complete or satisfying. Depending on time, they could rewrite part or all of the scene.

3. Show the excerpt of the Pagliacci DVD that was read in class and discuss the merits of the drama. Discussion questions:
   - Do the students think that the story with the music is more or less effective?
   - Is the drama more or less effective with the addition text that they wrote?
   - Does the music “fill in” for the missing text?

Convey to the students that opera composers are very much concerned with the audience’s ability to understand the text. They are similar to a pop singer, playwright or movie director in that fashion. But, composing in this art form requires adjustments to the text that another art form may not need to deal with. For example, singing something generally takes longer than to speak it, or when you are dealing with the very large voice ranges as in opera, there is a point at which the diction is lost. Plus, in opera, you have the use of the orchestra. There can be much “said” instrumentally that does not need to be sung on stage. These examples don’t mean that opera is any more or any less of an art form – it’s just what opera is.

Assessment(s)

Option 1 – Students are to write an essay arguing the merits of an opera libretto. They should one of two positions: either an opera libretto can stand on its own, or that it is only part of the whole and needs the music to be complete. Value should be placed on the quality of the essay. See UNDERSTANDING THE LIBRETTO RUBRIC on following page.

Option 2 – Students are to compose music to the libretto text and the additional text that they wrote. For the sake of time, suggest that they only set a small part from the scene. This can be done in groups with classmates performing the various roles. They are to perform their compositions for the rest of the class.

Additional Comment(s)

The Option 2 assessment doesn’t need to be only for music students. On the contrary, encourage non-music students to attempt this project!
UNDERTANDING THE LIBRETTO RUBRIC

Lesson 8

NAME

DIRECTIONS

(1) Read all or part of the excerpt of Pagliacci libretto. Notice the flow and pace of the text and make notes to be able to answer the following questions:
   – Is the libretto an effective piece of poetry?
   – How “real” are the characters and situations?
   – Do you feel that something is missing? What?

(2) Rewrite part of the libretto to make it seem more complete. Highlight your additions.

(3) Watch the DVD of the same excerpt from Pagliacci and prepare to answer the following questions:
   – Do the students think that the story with the music is more or less effective?
   – Is the drama more or less effective with the addition text that they wrote?
   – Does the music “fill in” for the missing text?

(4) OPTION ONE

You are to write an essay arguing the merits of an opera libretto. You should take one of two positions: either an opera libretto can stand on its own, or that it is only part of the whole and needs the music to be complete. Value will be given based on the quality of the essay. See UNDERSTANDING THE LIBRETTO RUBRIC for grading criteria.

OPTION TWO

You are to compose music to a portion of the libretto AND the additional text that you wrote. You may use other classmates as performers and/or as musicians. You are to perform your new composition for the rest of the class. Remember that your composition needs to still convey the story and drama to your audience. Your additional text is to be an “enhancement” of the original. See UNDERSTANDING THE LIBRETTO RUBRIC for grading criteria.
UNDERSTANDING THE LIBRETTO RUBRIC

Lesson 8

NAME

DIRECTIONS

OPTION ONE – Compose a persuasive essay

You are to write a persuasive essay taking one of two positions: “an opera libretto can stand on its own” or “an opera libretto is only part of a whole and it needs music to be complete.” The essay should contain reasoned arguments (based on your classroom experience) and good grammar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAMMAR</strong></td>
<td>Excellent! Zero mistakes spelling and syntax.</td>
<td>Good. 3–5 mistakes in spelling and syntax.</td>
<td>Poor. 6 or more mistakes in spelling and syntax.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORTING STATEMENTS</strong></td>
<td>Great! You have used 4 or more solid statements supporting your position.</td>
<td>Good. You used 2 or 3 statements supporting your position.</td>
<td>Poor. You barely used 1 statement supporting your position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR POSITION</strong></td>
<td>Wonderful! Your position is argued with great conviction.</td>
<td>Good. Your position is convincing and logical.</td>
<td>Poor. Your position is not argued with any conviction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL POINTS


OPTION TWO – Compose a new piece of opera including your additional text

You are to compose a new section of *Pagliacci* and include your original text. Your new piece should still convey the story and drama, but be enhanced with your new text. Use classmates as performers and/or musicians. You will perform your new creation in front of the class. Hint: Be creative! Think “outside the box.” Use props and other things around you to create opera.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CREATIVITY</td>
<td>Highly unique – uses props and other items to enhance the story.</td>
<td>Unique – uses some props to enhance the story.</td>
<td>Not unique – no use of props or other items to enhance story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLARITY OF TEXT</td>
<td>Very clear – audience understood all text, audience not distracted.</td>
<td>Clear – audience understood most of the text, audience rarely distracted.</td>
<td>Unclear – audience didn’t understand most of the text, distracting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>Very effective – audience engaged in a strong story.</td>
<td>Effective – audience was engaged in the story.</td>
<td>Ineffective – audience was not engaged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL POINTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lesson 9: Interpretations of “Vesti la giubba”

Objective(s)
Students will learn to compare and contrast musical elements from two recordings of the same piece.

Material(s)
- Pagliacci DVD/CD (two recordings will be needed)
- Interpretations of “Vesti la giubba” Worksheet (see following page) – 2 copies per student
- * Text of “Vesti la giubba” and “Un tal gioco” from libretto
- * Music of “Vesti la giubba” and “Un tal gioco”

Procedure(s)
(1) Play “Vesti la giubba” for the class (*see additional comment(s) below). Students are to write down five facts and five opinions of the performance on the Interpretations of “Vesti la giubba” Worksheet (see following page). You may need to prepare your students for this lesson by defining fact and opinion especially when analyzing music. Ask students if they think there will be a noticeable difference between this recording and the next.

(2) Play the other recording of “Vesti la giubba” for the class. Again, students are to write down five facts and five opinions of this performance.

(3) As a class discuss the similarities and differences between the two recordings. Suggested topics for discussion:
- determine the artistic merits of the two performances
- personal preferences between the two
- why there are differences (the singers are performing the same written music)
- which recording is more dramatic, musical, authentic, etc.

Assessment(s)
Play both performances of “Un tal gioco.” Students are to create a list of five facts and five opinions for each performance. Give the students another copy of the handout for the assessment. Students are then to write a persuasive essay describing the merits of one performance over the other. Their two lists of facts and opinions should be used in the essay.

Additional Comment(s)
* Depending on the musical level (and musical memory) of your students, a variation of this lesson could be to include a copy of the text from the libretto, vocal score or full score. This may help students focus on the music and notice the subtle details between the performances.
**INTERPRETATIONS OF “VESTI LA GIUBBA” WORKSHEET**

**Lesson 9**

**DIRECTIONS**

Write down five facts and five opinions after you listen to the first performance of “Vesti la giubba.” Follow the same procedure after listening to the second performance. Remember that facts are objective. For example, a fact is “one plus one equals two.” However, opinions are subjective, such as “I liked the first performance because it went fast.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>first performance</th>
<th>second performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACT</strong></td>
<td><strong>OPINION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create your own Opera Box Lesson Plan and send it to us.

**Opera Box Lesson Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name(s)</th>
<th>School</th>
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<th>Phone/Email</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Lesson</th>
<th>Class and Grade Level</th>
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<tr>
<th>Additional Comment(s)</th>
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SYNOPSIS AND MUSICAL EXCERPTS

PROLOGUE

Before the performance begins, Tonio addresses the audience directly: Look beyond the costumes and makeup – the drama you are about to experience is a tale of truth, both in the ecstasy of love and the brutality of rage.

(1) SI PUÒ? SI PUÒ? … E VOI PIUTTOSTO (TONIO)

ACT I

A traveling troupe of actors is heartily welcomed by the villagers. Canio encourages them to attend their show that evening, and villagers invite the players for a drink. Tonio lingers and is jibed as a result – he is really staying behind to woo Nedda, as in the commedia dell’arte play they will soon act out. Canio adopts a serious tone. Perhaps on the stage, Pagliaccio might resign himself to his fate if he were to discover Columbine with another man, but if Canio were to catch his wife in an indiscretion, the outcome would be very different.

Left alone, Nedda carefully considers Canio’s words. It is as if he could read her very thoughts – indeed she longs for freedom and has taken on a lover, Silvio.
Nedda is surprised by the sudden appearance of Tonio, who quickly confesses his secret desire for her.

She cruelly repels his advances, equating him with the half-witted commedia character he plays.

Tonio exits in a fury and in comes Silvio, overflowing with affection and concern. The troupe shall soon be off, and he will no longer be able to hold Nedda in his arms. He encourages her to run away with him that very evening after the play has concluded. Nedda hesitates – but only for a moment – then agrees to the plan.

She cruelly repels his advances, equating him with the half-witted commedia character he plays.

Tonio exits in a fury and in comes Silvio, overflowing with affection and concern. The troupe shall soon be off, and he will no longer be able to hold Nedda in his arms. He encourages her to run away with him that very evening after the play has concluded. Nedda hesitates – but only for a moment – then agrees to the plan.
Tonio has led Canio back to witness the secret tryst from a distance. Silvio disappears unrecognized, but Canio has heard enough to berate his wife, demanding to know the name of her secret lover and punctuating his threats with the blade of a knife.

Beppe happens upon the scene in time to break off Canio's attack. He demands that everyone steady their emotions as the show is about to begin. Canio laments his situation – he must put on the costume of Pagliaccio and make people laugh while inside he is ripped apart.

(5) Vesti la giubba (Canio)

Adagio

Ve - sti la giub - ba e la fac - cia in - fa - ri - na.
On with your cos - tume, and your face bright - ly pain - ted.

La gen - te pa - gna e ri - der vu - le qua.
Your pub - lic pays you, and they must be a - mus - ed.

E se Ar - lec - chin rí - vo - la Co - lom - bi - na, ri - di, Pa - gliac - cio...
Though Co - lum - bine and Har - le - quin be - tray you, Laugh, clown, be mer - ry

ACT II

The villagers gather excitedly for the evening's entertainment. The curtain rises with the four players in character: Nedda as Columbine, Beppe as Harlequin, Canio as Pagliaccio and Tonio as Taddeo, prepared to act out the classic tale of the cuckolded man. Assured by the servant Taddeo that Pagliaccio is away, Columbine awaits the appearance of her true love, Harlequin. He serenades her from afar.

(6) O colombina (Beppe)

O Col - lom - bi - na, il te - me - ro fi - do Ar - lec - chin è a te vi - cin'
Col - um - bine, your faith - ful Har - le - quin is near, faith - ful and true!

Di - te chia - man - do, e so - spi - ran - do a - spe - ta il po - ve - rin!
See, I stand a - lone and sigh with long - ing as I wait for you!

Taddeo takes this moment to pour out his true feelings to her, but she heartlessly brushes him off and as soon as Harlequin arrives, Taddeo is ordered away. The lovers dine together and agree to drug Pagliaccio so that they can be together forever. They are interrupted by Taddeo, who warns that Pagliaccio is making an unexpected return. Harlequin rushes out, and Columbine/Nedda's parting words mimic exactly what she had said to Silvio earlier: "Till tonight, and I shall be yours forever."
Pagliaccio observes the supper dishes and Columbine’s guilty demeanor. He demands to know her lover’s name, slipping out of his portrayal of Pagliaccio and into the reality of Canio’s world.

(7) NO! PAGLIACCO NON SON (CANIO)

Nedda is at first carefree, then defiant – if deemed unworthy, she demands to be set free. Again the lines between the comedy and reality are blurred, and blinded by rage over her constant denials, Canio stabs Nedda in cold blood. In her cry for help she blurts out Silvio’s name, but as he rushes to her side, Canio murders him as well. As in the Prologue, Tonio again addresses the audience with the final line: La commedia è finita! – The drama is over.
Scene
The terms and page numbers used to identify each section are from the G. Schirmer vocal score.

Musical Description
The terms used here are the tempo markings in the score. The key given is decided by the tonality at the beginning of the scene. Leoncavallo does shift tonality and change keys which reflects his compositional style. Significant changes in tonality are noted.

Orchestration
Comments given here are general in nature and are intended to give the listener some insight into the use of the orchestra. This is another element Leoncavallo uses to tell the story. Descriptions are not necessarily quotes from Leoncavallo, but they do suggest our understanding of the orchestra at that time.

Theme
Identified here are significant melodies used throughout the opera. The names of the themes are based on the commonly found citations from standard scholarly books about Leoncavallo which can be found in the Opera Box.

There are also non-character themes that are noted throughout the opera.

Drama
This is the basic story line. Main characters’ names are given in shorthand.

DURING THE OPERA:
C = Canio, head of a troupe of strolling players
N = Nedda, his wife
T = Tonio, a member of the troupe
B = Beppe, a member of the troupe
S = Silvio, a villager

DURING THE PLAY:
C/P = Canio as Pagliaccio
N/C = Nedda as Columbine
T/T = Tonio as Taddeo
B/H = Beppe as Harlequin

Related Information
These comments are interesting facts about Leoncavallo and Pagliacci in a larger context, beyond the work itself. The citations are from a book entitled Italian Opera in Transition, 1871–1893 by Jay Nicolaisen. It is published by UMI Research Press (ML1733.N5)
### Pagliacci
#### Flow Chart

**Prologue; Act I (vs pp 2–53)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Prologue VS PP 2–7</th>
<th>VS PP 7–15</th>
<th>Act I – VS PP 16–53</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Musical Description** | 1. *Vivace* (=88) [PP 2–3]  
   KEY: C major | 5. *Largamente* [P 7]  
   KEY: B minor |
   KEY: G major |
| **Orchestration** | 2. “Ridi, Pagliaccio” theme is heard only in the French horns. | | The opening scene, played by trumpet, drums and cymbals, gives a circus band-like quality (very appropriate to create realistic feeling to the drama). |
| **Drama** | 5. T enters and gives the Prologue. He asks the audience to not fear for their suffering. The author has painted a picture of real life, love, hate and grief. That’s the plan, now, let’s hear | | 8. The crowd sees the players coming. They welcome the Pagliacci. |
| | | | 9. C describes the story they will perform that evening. |
| | | | 10. A villager invites C and T for a drink at the tavern. T stays behind so he can observe N. |
| **Related Information** | What T says should be considered the voice of the composer, Leoncavallo. These words describe the nature of operatic composition at the time in which this opera was created, namely verismo. The composer is asking the question, “Where does art end and life begin?” | | 11. C says this is a joke. He loves his wife. |
### Scene

**Act I – VS PP 53-78**

**Scene and Chorus of the Bells**
- *Meno* (=160) [PP 53–67]
  - KEY: C major

**Scene Two**
- *Andante con moto* (=88) [PP 68–71]
  - KEY: C major–D major
  - *Ballatella* [PP 71–78]
  - KEY: F-SHARP major

---

**Musical Description**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Musical Description</th>
<th>Orchestration</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Drama</th>
<th>Related Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scene and Chorus of the Bells</td>
<td><em>Meno</em> (=160) [PP 53–67]</td>
<td>Church bells are used to call parishioners to Mass (another realistic touch).</td>
<td>12 Church bells are used to call parishioners to Mass (another realistic touch).</td>
<td>16 The church service is about to start. The bells are ringing.</td>
<td>12 This section is arguably the weakest part of the opera. It provides no movement in the story and structurally is only fair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Two</td>
<td><em>Andante con moto</em> (=88) [PP 68–71]</td>
<td><em>Ballatella</em> [PP 71–78]</td>
<td>13 <em>C</em>'s jealousy theme (cellos) [P 68]</td>
<td>15 T has been watching N. He says he loves her. She laughs at him. T tires to kiss N, but she hits him. T exits.</td>
<td>17 &quot;Musically the entire duet is as strongly unified a scene as one will find in late 19th-century Italian opera. It's tonally rounded in D flat with extended excursions only in the most closely related keys, while the love theme provides an explicit motivic unity.&quot; (Nicolaisen, p 251)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14 Fate theme [P 91]</td>
<td>16 Fate theme [PP 108–109]</td>
<td>13 N is scared of T finding out about her secret. She then sings of her love for S.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 Love theme [PP 92, 95, 109, 112, 116]</td>
<td>17 Fate theme [PP 117, 120–121]</td>
<td>13 C enters and greets N. He says he came incognito. They sing of what just happened with T, their love for each other and running away. T returns and sees the lovers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16 Fate theme [PP 92–109]</td>
<td>18 C's jealousy [PP 120, 123]</td>
<td>18 C pulls a knife on N. He is about to stab her, but B enters and stops him. They prepare for the show.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Orchestration**

12 Church bells are used to call parishioners to Mass (another realistic touch).

13 Violin tremolos, flutes and harp color N's words about birds. [PP 70–71]

---

**Drama**

16 N and S finally sing together "united." [P 115]

17 "Ridi, Pagliaccio" theme [PP 132–133]

---

**Related Information**

12 This section is arguably the weakest part of the opera. It provides no movement in the story and structurally is only fair.

17 T holds back C and plans to surprise them. S and N plan to meet at midnight after the show. C chases S. T laughs at N. C returns and asks N to name her lover. She refuses.

18 "Ridi, Pagliaccio" theme [PP 132–133]
### Flow Chart

**Pagliacci**

**Intermezzo**; **Act II (vs pp 134–189)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Intermezzo – VS PP 134–136</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Musical Description** | 20 *Sostenuto assai* (=50) [PP 134–135]  
KEY: B minor  
21 *Cantabile* (=58) [PP 135–136]  
KEY: E major |
| **Act II – VS PP 137–178** | 22 *Marziale deciso* (=112) [PP 137–162]  
KEY: A major  
Scene Two – The Play  
23 *Tempo di Minuetto* (=69) [PP 163–170]  
KEY: C major  
Comic Scene  
24 *Moderato e sostenuto* [PP 171–178] |
| **Orchestration** | 22 Act II opens with the same trumpet and drum theme. The chorus, instead of announcing the arrival of the actors, announces the beginning of the play.  
24 Love theme is heard in the cellos as a counterpoint to the vocal line. |
| **Themes** | 20 “Ridi, Pagliaccio” theme [P 135–136]  
24 N’s infidelity theme [P 172]  
24 N/C-T/T theme [P 176]  
24 Love theme [P 177] |
| **Drama** | 22 B plays a trumpet and T hits a drum. Audience prepares for the show. S enters without C seeing him.  
23 N/C is waiting for her husband. B/H serenades N/C.  
24 T/T enters and says that he loves only N/C. She asks for the food and tells him to leave. N/C signals out the window. T/T continues to speak of his love for her. N/C and B/H gaze at each other.  
25 This melody will return as N/C tries to return to the play after C/P becomes angered. [P 180]  
26 Love theme [P 183]  
26 C’s jealousy [P 184] |
| **Related Information** | 25 Andantino sostenuto e grazioso  
*Tempo di Gavotta* (=56) [PP 180–183]  
KEY: E major  
Scene and Duet (Finale)  
26 *Larghetto affettuoso* (=88) [PP 183–189]  
KEY: E-FLAT major |

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**Scene One**

**Scene Two**

**Comic Scene**

**N/C and B/H prepare to eat. B/H gives a bottle to N/C to give to her husband that will make him sleepy so they can escape. T/T enters yelling C/P is coming. B/H exits.**

**C/P hears N/C use the same words that she used with her lover. C/P confronts N/C about the extra place setting. She says it was T/T. He enters and supports N/C. C/P wants to know the name of N/C’s lover.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Act II – VS PP 189–206</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musical Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27</strong> Allegro moderato ( =144) [P. 189–198]</td>
<td>KEY: E-FLAT minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>28</strong> Movimento di Gavotta come nella Commedia [P 198–206]</td>
<td>KEY: E-FLAT major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>28</strong> Movimento di Gavotta theme from [P 180] returns as N/C tries to continue with the play. [P 198]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>28</strong> Love theme [P 200–202]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>28</strong> “Ridi, Pagliaccio” theme [P 206]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>27</strong> C/P says he’s not a clown and that his face is white from shame. The audience senses that he’s not acting. N/C suggests that he send her away since she is so vile. C/P wants her to stay until she reveals her lover’s name.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>28</strong> N/C continues to say that the other person was T/T. C/P doesn’t believe it. The audience continues to see that they are not acting. N/C tries to escape but is stabbed by C/P. He then stabs S.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Related Information</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Ruggero Leoncavallo was born to a household of comfortable means. Though the family originally was from Naples, his father’s career as a magistrate led them to other cities (including Montalto, which has some bearing on Pagliacci). Leoncavallo studied music at the Neapolitan Conservatory, then at Bologna University. It was there that he met Richard Wagner, who was in town for that city’s premiere of Rienzi, and the encounter had significant repercussions on the younger composer’s future works. He soon produced his first opera, Chatterton, set to text he had written himself.

After brief stints in Egypt and Paris (where he met a number of influential figures and lived la vie bohémienne), Leoncavallo settled down in Milan. He intended to create an epic work, an Italian “Ring Cycle,” titled Crespusculum. The first installment, I Medici, was submitted to the publishing house of Ricordi, which paid for the score but was in no hurry to produce the work; instead they asked Leoncavallo to work on Puccini’s libretto for Manon Lescaut. He would be one of five to attempt to satisfy the troublesome young maestro.

Victor Maurel, an acquaintance from Paris (and Verdi’s first Iago and Falstaff), was instrumental in making the Ricordi contacts. In return Leoncavallo wrote Pagliacci for him to perform and provided an extended prologue for his character Tonio. Somewhat indignant about I Medici, Leoncavallo offered Pagliacci to another publisher, Sonzogno, who snatched it up immediately and reaped the rewards. Sonzogno also purchased I Medici from Casa Ricordi and produced it the following year.

Leoncavallo’s next work was an adaptation of Murger’s Scènes de la vie de bohème for the operatic stage. This led to one of the more heated rivalries of the late 19th century, for Puccini announced he also was planning to produce an opera based on Henry Murger’s book, an intention he claimed to have had for several months. A contest soon ensued with the two composers airing their differences in the Italian newspapers. Of course Puccini’s La bohème would later earn its place in posterity.

The composer is noted for a third work, Zazà, which was also well-received. The popularity of Leoncavallo’s operas in Germany led to a commission from the Kaiser. Der Roland von Berlin was the result, achieving nearly 40 performances. Following its premiere, Leoncavallo’s career seemed to wane. He tried his luck at operetta (La jeunesse de Figaro), followed by a return to verismo (Il piccolo Marat and Zingari), then a string of additional operettas. Toward the end of his life he endeavored to treat subjects of a more serious nature, but Edipo re and Prometeo lay incomplete at the time of his death in 1919.
Staged Works by Ruggero Leoncavallo

Chatterton (composed 1876) Rome, Teatro Argentina, March 10, 1896 melodramma in 4 acts; libretto by the composer after Alfred de Vigny

Pagliacci Milan, Teatro Dal Verme, May 21, 1892 dramma in prologue and 2 acts; libretto by the composer

I Medici Milan, Teatro Dal Verme, November 9, 1893 azione storica in 4 acts; libretto by the composer intended to be part of a trilogy entitled Crepusculum (parts 2 and 3 incomplete)

La bohème Venice, Teatro la Fenice, May 6, 1897 commedia lirica in 4 acts; libretto by the composer after Scènes de la vie de bohème by Henri Murger

Zazà Milan, Teatro Lirico, November 10, 1900 commedia lirica in 4 acts; libretto by the composer after Pierre Berton and Charles Simon

Der Roland von Berlin Berlin, Städtische Oper, December 13, 1904 historisches Drama in 4 acts; libretto by the composer after Willibald Alexis

La jeunesse de Figaro ? New York, November, 1906 opera buffa in 3 acts; libretto by the composer after Les premières armes de Figaro by Victorien Sardou and Maurice Vaucaire

Maià Rome, Teatro Costanzi, January 15, 1910 dramma lirico in 3 acts; libretto by A. Nessi after P. de Choudens

Malbruk Rome, Teatro Nazionale, January 19, 1910 fantasia comica medioevale in 3 acts; libretto by A. Nessi after Boccaccio

La reginetta delle rose Rome, Teatro Costanzi, and Naples, Politeama Giacosa, June 24, 1912 operetta in 3 acts; libretto by Giovacchino Forzano

Zingari London, Hippodrome, September 16, 1912 dramma lirico in 2 acts; libretto by E. Cavicchioli and G. Emanuel after Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin

Are You There? London, Prince of Wales Theatre, November, 1913 farce in 3 acts; libretto by A. de Courville and E. Wallace
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>La candidata</em></td>
<td>Rome, Teatro Nazionale, and Turin, Politeama Chiarella</td>
<td>February 6, 1915</td>
<td>operetta in 3 acts</td>
<td>libretto by Giovacchino Forzano</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Goffredo Mameli</em></td>
<td>Genoa, Teatro Carlo Felice</td>
<td>April 27, 1916</td>
<td>azione storica in 2 acts</td>
<td>libretto by the composer and G. Belvederi</td>
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<td><em>Prestami tua moglie</em></td>
<td>Montecatini, Casino</td>
<td>September 2, 1916</td>
<td>operetta in 3 acts</td>
<td>libretto by E. Corradi</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>A chi la giarrettiera?</em></td>
<td>Rome, Teatro Adriano</td>
<td>October 16, 1919</td>
<td>operetta in 3 acts</td>
<td>libretto by the composer</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Edipo re</em></td>
<td>Chicago, Opera</td>
<td>December 13, 1920</td>
<td>grand opera in 1 act</td>
<td>libretto by Giovacchino Forzano after Sophocles; completed by G. Pennacchio</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Il primo bacio</em></td>
<td>Montecatini, Salone di Cura</td>
<td>April 29, 1923</td>
<td>operetta in 1 act</td>
<td>libretto by L. Bonelli</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>La maschera nuda</em></td>
<td>Naples, Politeama</td>
<td>June 26, 1925</td>
<td>operetta in 3 acts</td>
<td>libretto by L. Bonelli and F. Paolieri completed by S. Allegra</td>
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Unlike many of his contemporaries (including Puccini), Ruggero Leoncavallo was a man of letters and in touch with the avant-garde trends of the day, including Italy’s giovane scuola. This “young school” of writers was guided by the philosophy that the author’s hand should not be apparent to the reader. Events should come about naturally, a “slice of life,” with no editorial comment. The darker side of existence seemed to have greater appeal, and their resultant plots were often single-minded and fast-paced, accelerating toward an inevitably brutal conclusion. After witnessing the overwhelming success of Pietro Mascagni’s opera, *Cavalleria rusticana* (based on one of these verismo plays), Leoncavallo was determined to take a stab at the genre himself.

*Pagliacci*, however, is not based on a work by the giovane scuola. It is an original plot, or so most thought until one French playwright, Catulle Mendès, claimed Leoncavallo had plagiarized his play, *La femme de Tabarin*. Mendès backed down when it was soon discovered that his play resembled several others, which put himself in jeopardy, but in the process of sorting it all out the composer was still forced to defend himself. Leoncavallo claimed the source of *Pagliacci* was an event from his own life – as a boy in his father’s courtroom he had witnessed the trial of an actor who had murdered his wife after she had had an affair. In fact, he claimed to have at his disposal the murderer himself, recently released from prison and prepared to testify on Leoncavallo’s behalf. Still, a close comparison of libretto and play reveal the composer’s debt to Mendès and others, whose dramas became familiar to him during his Parisian stay, but it was all within the boundaries of 19th-century artistic license.

What is not commonly known is that the true facts are not exactly as Leoncavallo had laid out – the real-life drama was a little closer to the composer’s heart. Thanks to a little expert detective work by Matteo Sansone (*Music and Letters*, LXX (1989), 342–62), we now have the real story. The victim, Gaetano Scavello, was caretaker of young Ruggero. Scavello leapt to the defense of a young Montaltan woman who had been insulted by her lover, Luigi D’Alessandro. Publicly humiliated, D’Alessandro and his brother met Scavello as he left the theater one night and knifed him.

For his personal account and later his opera, Leoncavallo embellished the details a bit – the murder happened “right in front of him,”
the murderer was a commedia dell’arte actor who had found a love note from Scavello in his wife’s belongings, and the wife was also killed. The exact date of the double homicide was moved from March 5, 1865, to August 15, a holy festival day, to give credence as to why the traveling commedia troupe might be in the small town of Montalto.

Though Pagliacci was written for a famous baritone, Victor Maurel, it is really a tenor’s opera. The role of Canio and his aria “Vesti la giubba” was quickly apprehended and exploited by leading singers of the day. The singularity of the tenor’s plight dominates the opera and pushes to the very end – in fact early Canios went as far as appropriating the final line, “La commedia è finita” from Tonio, and this practice was eventually published in the piano-vocal score. However, Tonio, by uttering the final line, completes the dramatic framework initiated in the Prologue, drawing to a close the play-within-a-play-within-a-play. In modern interpretations of the opera, directors commonly respect the composer’s original intent.
Commedia dell’arte

Of Italian origin, commedia dell’arte evolved during the 16th century from improvisatory scenes played at county fairs and marketplaces into a somewhat codified art form involving stock characters with predictable behavior and costume. The use of masks (derived in part from the custom of more frequent commedia dell’arte performances during Carnival) further obscures the identity of the actual person and reinforces the character “type.” First brought to France by Catherine de’ Medici during the reign of her son, Charles IX, commedia dell’arte underwent a revival in 18th-century France.

The operatic genre has been lightly influenced by commedia dell’arte. The characters in the Rossini’s Il barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville) and Mozart’s Le nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro) are derived from these stock characters: the prima donna in love (Isabella – Rosina (the Countess); her virtuous maid, who is also a confidante (Columbina – Susanna); the crafty valet, left as a foundling but thinks he is the son of a noble (Arlecchino – Figaro); the enamored young man in pursuit of the prima donna (Lindoro, the Count’s assumed name in The Barber of Seville, and in a younger incarnation, Cherubino in this opera); the doddering, stingy older man in search of a young bride (Il dottore – Dr. Bartolo as he was in Barber); the slander-wielding, shifty go-between (Brighella/Scapino – Don Basilio).

Even Don Curzio’s stammering can be found in the tradition of the stuttering Tartaglia. Equally important is the pace of the action. The slapstick comedy of characters hiding behind chairs and inside closets, jumping out windows and receiving blows meant for others are all descended from the commedia dell’arte (the puppet show Punch and Judy is a modern descendant).

Commedia dell’arte was in decline by the 18th century, but an Italian playwright, Carlo Goldoni hoped to bring it new life by eliminating much of the buffoonery and introducing new realism, with the actors conforming to predetermined text instead of improvisation, and requiring the largely middle-class
audience to face its own vices and virtues. A contemporary rival, Carlo Gozzi, preferred a more traditional approach – though also forcing his characters to adhere to specific lines, he interwove the traditional masked characters into his own world of fantasy and fable. Gozzi believed he could attract large audiences with frivolously titled, unrealistic plots.

Gozzi’s plays were exceedingly popular, requiring Goldoni to leave his beloved Venice, where he had also been a successful opera buffa librettist, and seek his fortune elsewhere. Though the latter would achieve greater posterity in history, Gozzi’s star continued to rise, albeit outside of Italy. With the onset of Romanticism, his dramas were of particular interest to the German leg of that movement. Schiller would make a translation/adaptation of Turandot to be directed by Goethe (Schiller’s version would later be translated back into Italian by Andrea Maffei, Verdi’s good friend and sometimes collaborator). Gozzi’s dark-edged fantasy also fueled the imagination of E.T.A. Hoffmann, who was not only a writer but also a composer of some merit, as well as the similarly morose American poet Edgar Allen Poe, who referred to Gozzi’s Il corvo when he wrote The Raven. Wagner adapted La donna serpente to become his early opera Die Feen, and Puccini’s first opera, Le villi, owns a debt of gratitude to the playwright as well. Act II of Leoncavallo’s I pagliacci’s features a “play-within-a-play” with four of the stock characters – Pagliaccio, Arlecchino, Taddeo and Colombina – in a well-served scenario, the cheating spouse.

Interest in Gozzi would continue into the 20th century, with a legendary production of Turandot by Max Reinhardt (Berlin, 1911), Prokofiev’s The Love for Three Oranges (Chicago, 1921) and Henze’s König Hirsch (based on Il re cervo (The Stag King); Berlin, 1956). Turandot became the most frequently adapted of Gozzi’s fables, set five times during the 19th century, then by Busoni in 1917 and Puccini in 1926. More recently, the 21st century witnessed two more operas with commedia scenes and characters: Dominick Argento’s Casanova’s Homecoming (premiered in 1985 by Minnesota Opera and revived in 2010) and Jonathan Dove’s The Adventures of Pinocchio (premiered in America by Minnesota Opera in 2009).
The Many Faces of Verismo

Verismo is one of those operatic terms that can lead to confused interpretations. One might mention it in the same breath as works by Leoncavallo, Mascagni, Giordano, Cilea and Puccini with regard to subject matter, brevity of compositional style and shocking dramatic impact, but to the purist, verismo is a very specific intellectual ideal.

Realism and naturalism dominated artistic thought from the middle to the latter part of the 19th century, marking a departure from the formal emphasis of Classicism and fantastic imagination of Romanticism. France seemed to be the forerunner of the new genre – already by 1845 Henry Murger had begun writing his Scènes de la vie de bohème, a truthful portrayal of his life as a starving artist. In 1848 Alexandre Dumas fils wrote La dame aux camélias, detailing his personal affair with the notorious courtesan Marie Duplessis – this would become Verdi’s La traviata five years later. Visual artists Jean-François Millet, Gustave Courbet and Édouard Manet broke with the official Academy’s predilection for the heroic and the mythic by painting ordinary people in their daily milieu, paving the way for the Impressionists, who were realist in choice of topic and point of view.

Inspired by this trend in realism and Bohemianism in France, during the 1860s the artistic avant-garde of Milan became known as the Scapigliatura. Taking their name from an 1858 novel, La Scapigliatura e il 6 Febbraio by Cletto Arrighi, the “disheveled ones” counted among their numbers Emilio Praga, Camillo and Arrigo Boito, Iginio Ugo Tarchetti, Carlo Dossi, Tranquillo Cremona and Franco Faccio. In response to the chaotic aftermath of the Risorgimento, the scapigliati revolted against established bourgeois values and subjugated Victorian sexuality, taking their cue from Charles Baudelaire’s highly sensational poems Les fleurs du mal and Gustave Flaubert’s scandalous novel Madame Bovary (both published in 1857). Their high-minded approach translated into a slap in the face of Alessandro Manzoni, one of Italy’s most popular writers of the 19th century and in music, Giuseppe Verdi, its foremost composer (Arrigo Boito’s infamous comments debasing Italy’s stagnant cultural life dates from this period and would be remembered by Verdi for years to come – they were only able to mend the fence years later when Boito was engaged to write the libretti for Verdi’s final works, Otello and Falstaff; brother Camillo would eventually design Verdi’s final legacy, the Casa di riposo, a rest home for retired musicians). The works of the scapigliati
would impact the operatic world through Boito’s *Mefistofele* (1868, to his own text) and Faccio’s *I profughi fiamminghi* (1863, to a text by Praga) and *Amleto* (1865, to text adapted by Boito), as well as inspiring verismo opera later in the century. Scapigliatura writings, tended to explore the darker side of the human psyche and lent themselves to later fin-de-siècle decadent literature. Several of its members led dissolute lives, subject to drinking, amorality and short mortality – Praga died at age 36, Tarchetti at age 28.

The next generation, the giovane scuola, whose members included Giovanni Verga, Luigi Capuana and Federico de Roberto, emphasized a naturalist writing style in which the author’s personal style should not be conspicuous and which featured contemporary stories and settings, the very “truth” verismo’s literal translation would seem to indicate. Devoid of any political message (unlike their French counterparts), the Italians focused on country life and elemental passions. *Cavalleria rusticana*, an opera based on one Verga’s stories that involved a peasant village racked by jealousy and murder, was an instant hit when it premiered in 1890, drawing attention from Verdi as “a new genre … without pointless longueurs.” It was almost by accident – its composer, Pietro Mascagni, had submitted the opera to Edoardo Sonzogno’s competition sponsoring the composition of one-act operas, and concision was a key requisite. Eager for success, other composers quickly followed suit. Ruggero Leoncavallo, who had spent his early adulthood in Paris and was also familiar with the naturalist trend, premiered *Pagliacci* two years later. The two operas frequently appear as a double bill.

Giacomo Puccini would also tag along, albeit in a different direction. Though both he and Leoncavallo would create operas after Murger’s *Scènes*, Puccini’s subsequent work, *Tosca*, was decidedly set in the Napoleonic past. Yet he still drew from the verismo style’s base passions – jealousy, torture, suicide – as well as its characteristic musical shorthand. The composer also began to meticulously research his subjects for realistic accents: the morning bells of *Tosca’s* Rome, authentic Japanese melodies for *Madame Butterfly*, American popular tunes for *La fanciulla del West*. In the latter two works, he caught up with David Belasco, then a leading proponent and innovator of naturalist theater. Then there are all the possibilities that never made it to the stage. While looking at Verga’s *La lupa*, Puccini consulted with the author and visited the countryside to get a sense of rustic local color. And while at the same time considering *Butterfly* as a potential opera, he also seriously explored the adaptation of Zola’s *La faute de l’Abbé Mouret*, a typically sordid novel suitable for verist interpretation.

It is interesting that Puccini only composed one opera, *Il tabarro*, which meets the absolute criteria set forth by *Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria*. This brings us to the term as it continues to befuddle musicologists, who employ the word inconsistently. All of these composers wrote works with more traditional themes – Leoncavallo’s *I Medici*, Giordano’s *Andrea Chénier*, Cilea’s *Adriana Lecouvreur* and the later works by Mascagni (who would eventually turn his back on the style) – which don’t have quite the same sensational impetus and hardly feature a primary tenet of verismo, a whiff of lowborn criminality fueled by common people reacting violently to their irrepressible emotions. These works are often lumped with the others by nature of musical economy and period of composition, yet in its strictest sense true verismo remains isolated to only a handful of works, of which Leoncavallo and Mascagni’s peasant dramas best exemplify.
World Events in 1892

History and Politics

- An office is opened on Ellis Island to cope with the flood of immigrants to the United States.
- Grover Cleveland is re-elected president, defeating Benjamin Harrison.
- Russia signs a military convention with France.
- The Congress of Italian Workers splits into two factions, the socialists and the anarchists.
- Russia is devastated by a severe famine, which began last year.
- Count Alfred von Schlieffen, the chief of the German general staff, devises a plan for offensive military action to invade France and to ward off a subsequent Russian advance on the eastern front.
- Jose Marti founds the Cuban Revolutionary Party while in exile in New York City.
- William Ewart Gladstone becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain.
- A pan-Slav Conference is held at Cracow.
- Josip Broz Tito, Yugoslavian statesman, is born.
- Iron and steel workers strike in the United States.
- The first iron ore is shipped from the Mesabi Range of Minnesota.

Literature, Art and Music,

- Poet Walt Whitman dies.
- Alfred, Lord Tennyson, poet laureate since 1850, dies.
- The play Pelléas and Mélisande by Maurice Maeterlinck receives its premiere in Belgium.
- George Bernard Shaw writes Mrs. Warren's Profession.
- Rudyard Kipling writes Barrack-Room Ballads.
- Émile Zola writes La Débâcle.
- Oscar Wilde writes Lady Windermere’s Fan.
- Henrik Ibsen writes The Master Builder.
- George John Romanes publishes Darwin and after Darwin.
- The playwright Gerhardt Hauptmann premieres his play Die Weber, a dramatization of the Silesian weavers’ revolt of 1844.
- Claude Monet begins his series of paintings on the Rouen Cathedral.
- Henri Toulouse-Lautrec paints At the Moulin Rouge.
- Paul Cézanne paints The Card Players.
- Georges Seurat begins his painting Place de la Concorde, Winter.
- Anton Bruckner premieres his Symphony No. 8 in Vienna.
- Antonín Dvořák becomes director of the New York National Conservatory of Music.
- Alfredo Catalani’s opera La Wally premieres in Milan.
- Alberto Franchetti’s Cristoforo Colombo premieres in Genoa for the anniversary of the explorer’s discovery of the Americas.
- Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov’s Mlada premieres in St. Petersburg.
- Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky’s Iolanta premieres in St. Petersburg in a double-bill with his new ballet The Nutcracker.
- French composer Arthur Honegger is born in Le Havre.
- Gabriel Fauré begins to compose his song cycle La bonne chanson, inspired by and eventually dedicated to the singer Emma Bardac, who would become Claude Debussy’s second wife.
- French composer Darius Milhaud is born in Aix-en-Provence.

Daily Life

- A railway from Cape Colony through the Orange Free State to Johannesburg is completed.
- The German engineer Rudolf Diesel patents the first internal combustion engine.
- Vogue magazine begins publication.
- Thomson-Houston Electric and Edison General Electric merge to form the General Electric Company.
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 made 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 Teti e di Pele, 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 SOLER 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), Così fan tutte (1790), The Magic Flute (1791) – two are singspiels (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 Paer 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, Paer 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 Massenet 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 Massenet (*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’ich 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 descendent, 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-Bleue (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 Nusch-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).
20th- and 21st-century American Composers of Opera

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

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

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

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

Other composers currently at the fore include Philip Glass, John Corigliano and John Adams. The Minimalist music of Philip Glass has won popular acclaim among even non-opera-going audiences – his oeuvre includes Einstein on the Beach (1976), Abknaten (1984), and most recently, The Voyage (1992), commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Columbus’ discovery of America. The Met also commissioned The Ghosts of Versailles from 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 18th-century Queen of France Marie-

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 premieres in the last two decades include Tobias Picker’s Emmeline (1996) by Santa Fe Opera, Daniel Catán’s Florencia 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, Erie 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.

2013–2014
Manon Lescaut (Puccini)
Arabella (Strauss)
Machiet (Verdi)
The Dream of Valentino (Argento)
Die Zauberflöte (Mozart)

2012–2013
50th Anniversary Season
Nabucco (Verdi)
Anna Bolena (Donizetti)
§ Τ Doubt (Cuomo)
Hamlet (Thomas)
Turanond (Puccini)

2011–2012
Così fan tutte (Mozart)
Werther (Massenet)
Lucia di Lammermoor (Donizetti)
Madame Butterfly (Puccini)

2010–2011
Orphée et Eurydice (Gluck)
La Cenerentola (Rossini)
María Stuarda (Donizetti)
La traviata (Verdi)
Wuthering Heights (Herrmann)

2009–2010
Les pêcheurs de perles (Bizet)
Casanova’s Homecoming (Argento)
Roberto Devereux (Donizetti)
La bohème (Puccini)
Salome (R. Strauss)

2008–2009
Il trovatore (Verdi)
Die Entführung aus dem Serail (Mozart)
Faus (Gounod)
* The Adventures of Pinocchio (Dove)
Il barbiere di Siviglia (Rossini)

2007–2008
Un ballo in maschera (Verdi)
L’italiana in Algeri (Rossini)
Roméo et Juliette (Gounod)
* Croesus (Keiser)
Rusalka (Dvořák)

2006–2007
La donna del lago (Rossini)
Les contes d’Hoffmann (Offenbach)
§ Τ The Grapes of Wrath (Gordon)
Lakmè (Delibes)
Le nozze di Figaro (Mozart)

2005–2006
Tosca (Puccini)
Don Giovanni (Mozart)
* Orazi et Curiazi (Mercadante)
* Joseph Merrick dit Elephant Man (Petitgirard)

2004–2005
Madama Butterfly (Puccini)
Maria Padilla (Donizetti)
Carmen (Bizet)
Nixon in China (Adams)

2003–2004
Rigoletto (Verdi)
Lucrezia Borgia (Donizetti)
Passion (Sondheim)
Die Zauberflöte (Mozart)

2002–2003
Die lustige Witwe (Lehár)
Norma (Bellini)
Der fliegende Holländer (Wagner)
La traviata (Verdi)
* The Handmaid’s Tale (Ruders)

2001–2002
Lucia di Lammermoor (Donizetti)
La clemenza di Tito (Mozart)
La bohème (Puccini)
Little Women (Adamo)
Don Carlos (Verdi)

2000–2001
Turandot (Puccini)
I Capuleti ed i Montecchi (Bellini)
Street Scene (Weill)
Il barbiere di Siviglia (Rossini)
Pagliacci/Carmen (Leoncavallo/Orff)
* The Barber of Seville (Rossini)

1999–2000
Der Rosenkavalier (R. Strauss)
Macbeth (Verdi)
Semiramide (Rossini)
Le nozze di Figaro (Mozart)
* The Marriage of Figaro (Mozart)

1998–1999
Otello (Verdi)
Madama Butterfly (Puccini)
The Turn of the Screw (Britten)
Faust (Gounod)
* Madame Butterfly (Puccini)

1997–1998
Aida (Verdi)
La Cenerentola (Rossini)
* Transatlantic (Antheil)
Tosca (Puccini)
* Cinderella (Rossini, Massenet)

1996–1997
La traviata (Verdi)
Die Zauberflöte (Mozart)
The Rake’s Progress (Stravinsky)
Carmen (Bizet)
* Carmen (Bizet)

1995–1996
La bohème (Puccini)
Don Giovanni (Mozart)
Pelléas et Mélisande (Debussy)
Les contes d’Hoffmann (Offenbach)
* The Bohemians (Puccini)

1994–1995
Turandot (Puccini)
Il barbiere di Siviglia (Rossini)
Rigoletto (Verdi)
§ Τ Bok Choy Variations (Chen and Simonson)
* Figaro’s Revenge (Rossini, Paisiello)

§ World Premiere
* American Premiere
† Commissioned by The Minnesota Opera or by The Minnesota Opera Midwest Tour
▲ Tour production
• Outreach/Education tour
• New Music-Theater Ensemble production
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production</th>
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<tr>
<td>1993–1994</td>
<td>Julius Caesar (Handel) * Diary of an African American (Peterson) II Trovatore (Verdi) § The Merry Widow and The Hollywood Tycoon (Lihar) ▲ Don Giovanni (Mozart)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988–1989</td>
<td>Don Giovanni (Mozart) Salome (R. Strauss) The Mikado (Gilbert &amp; Sullivan) The Jupiter Tree (Glass &amp; Moran) Show Boat (Kern &amp; Hammerstein) § † Without Colors (Wellman &amp; Shiflett) § † Red Tide (Selig &amp; Sherman) § † Newest Little Opera in the World (ensemble) ▲ Cinderella (Rossini) ▲ Tintypes (Kyte, Marvin, Pearle)</td>
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<td>1987–1988</td>
<td>Dix Fledermaus (J. Strauss) Rigoletto (Verdi) Rusalka (Dvorak) § † Cowboy Lipy (Greene &amp; Madsen) § † Fly Away All (Hutchinson &amp; Shank) • Book of Days (Monk) Oklahoma! (Rogers &amp; Hammerstein) ▲ Carmen (Bizet) ▲ Jargonauts, Ahoy! (McKeel)</td>
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<td>1986–1987</td>
<td>Les pêcheurs de perles (Bizet) The Postman Always Rings Twice (Paulus) Ariadne auf Naxos (R. Strauss) South Pacific (Rogers &amp; Hammerstein) ▲ Hansel and Gretel (Humperdinck) § † Jargonauts, Ahoy! (McKeel)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985–1986</td>
<td>* Where the Wild Things Are/Hiiglety Pigglety Pop! (Knussen/Sendak) La traviata (Verdi) L’elisir d’amore (Donizetti) The King and I (Rogers &amp; Hammerstein) § † Opera Tomorrow ▲ The Fantasticks (Schmidt) ▲ The Magic Flute (Mozart) § † The Music Shop (Wargo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984–1985</td>
<td>* Animalen (Werle) § † Casanova’s Homecoming (Argento) The Magic Flute (Mozart) ▲ La bohème (Puccini) ▲ Marnie, back at Cinderella’s (Arlan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982–1983</td>
<td>Hansel and Gretel (Humperdinck) Lucia di Lammermoor (Donizetti) § A Death in the Family (Mayer) Kiss Me Kate (Porter) ▲ The Barber of Seville (Rossini) ▲ The Frog Who Became a Prince (Barnes) ▲ Zatubet (Barnes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981–1982</td>
<td>Hansel and Gretel (Humperdinck) The Village Singer (Paulus) Gianni Schicchi (Puccini) The Barber of Seville (Rossini) § Feathertop (Barnes) § The Mask of Evil (Mollicone) ▲ Hansel and Gretel (Humperdinck) § Rosina (Titus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979–1980</td>
<td>The Abduction from the Seraglio (Mozart) The Pirates of Penzance (Gilbert &amp; Sullivan) La bohème (Puccini) § † Rosina (Titus) ▲ A Christmas Carol (Sandow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978–1979</td>
<td>The Love for Three Oranges (Prokofiev) § The Jovial Gallist (Stokes) The Passion According to St. Matthew (J. S. Bach) La traviata (Verdi) The Consul (Menotti) ▲ Viva la Mamma (Donizetti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977–1978</td>
<td>§ † The Good Soldier Schweik (Kurka) The Marriage of Figaro (Mozart)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975–1976</td>
<td>§ † Black River (Susa) El Capitan (Sousa) Coi fan fan tutte (Mozart) § † The Voyage of Edgar Allan Poe (Argento)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974–1975</td>
<td>§ † Gallimani (Minnesota Opera) § Galliner (Blackwood, Kaplan, Lewin) The Magic Flute (Mozart) Albert Herrng (Britten)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973–1974</td>
<td>El Capitan (Sousa) Transformations (Susa) Don Giovanni (Mozart) § † The Newest Opera in the World (Minnesota Opera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972–1973</td>
<td>The Threepenny Opera (Weill) Postcard from Morocco (Argento) The Barber of Seville (Rossini) § † Transformations (Susa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970–1971</td>
<td>§ † Christmas Mummeries &amp; Good Government (Marshall) § † Faust Counter Faust (Gessner) The Coronation of Poppea (Monteverdi) The Mother of Us All (Thomson)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969–1970</td>
<td>§ † Oedipus and the Sphinx (Marshall) * Punch and Judy (Birtwistle) * 17 Days and 4 Minutes (Egk) § † The Wanderer (Paul and Martha Boesing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968–1969</td>
<td>Coi fan fan tutte (Mozart) § † Horipal (Stokes) The Wise Woman and the King (Orff)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967–1968</td>
<td>The Man in the Moon (Haydn) A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Britten)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966–1967</td>
<td>The Mother of Us All (Thomson) The Sorrows of Orpheus (Milhaud) * The Harpies (Blitzstein) Socrattis (Satie) Three Minute Operas (Milhaud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965–1966</td>
<td>The Abduction from the Seraglio (Mozart) The Good Soldier Schweik (Kurka)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964–1965</td>
<td>The Rape of Luvetta (Britten) The Wise Woman and the King (Orff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963–1964</td>
<td>§ † The Masque of Angels (Argento) The Masque of Venus and Adonis (Blow) Albert Herrng (Britten)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
eightrteenth 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 Musorgsky 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.

6:00 PM  Continuity
STAGEHANDS (1) set the scenery for the first act of the production.

6:15 PM  Makeup calls
PRINCIPALS and COMPRIAMOROS (2) begin to arrive at the theater to be put into costume by DRESSERS, then are wigged by the WIGMASTER (1a) and made up with theatrical makeup.

6:30 PM  House opens
Opera patrons are admitted to the AUDITORIUM (4) and seated by USHERS (5). The HOUSE MANAGER (6) oversees the activities in the front of the house, including the ushers and concession sales. The BOX OFFICE MANAGER (7) takes care of any last minute ticket purchases. Patrons may remain in the LOBBY (8) to attend an informational session of Opera Insights, led by the Opera’s music staff.

6:45 PM  Notes
The STAGE DIRECTOR may give last minute instructions to the cast before the performance begins.

7:00 PM  Warm-ups
PRINCIPALS and COMPRIAMOROS (2) warm-up in their dressing rooms.

7:25 PM  Chorus and orchestra warm-ups
The CHORUS (10), who have already put on their costumes, warms up with the CHORUSMASTER. The ORCHESTRA warms up in the ORCHESTRA PIT (11).

7:28 PM  Orchestra tune
The principal oboe gives a concert "A" to which the ORCHESTRA tunes. The SURTITILE PROMPTER (15) cues the preshow titles. The CONDUCTOR shakes the CONCERTMASTER’s hand and mounts the podium.

7:30 PM  Curtain
The house lights go out, and the FLYMAN (1a) raises the CURTAIN (16). The show begins.

8:25 PM  Intermission
The audience returns to the LOBBY (8) for refreshments while the STAGEHANDS (1) reset the STAGE (1c) for the next act.

10:15 PM  Curtain calls
The performance ends, and the STAGE DIRECTOR, DESIGNERS, CONDUCTOR and SINGERS get to take a bow for all their hard work.

STAGEHANDS move scenery and props and handle lighting. DRESSERS help the cast into their often elaborate costumes.

PRINCIPALS sing the major roles. COMPRIAMOROS sing minor named roles. CHORISTERS make up the rest of the singing cast and are prepared by the CHORUSMASTER.

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 SURTITILE 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

acoustics
The science of sound; qualities which determine hearing facilities in an auditorium, concert hall, opera house, theater, etc.

act
A section of the opera, play, etc. usually followed by an intermission.

area lights
Provide general illumination.

aria
(*air, English and French; ariette, French*). 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.

arioso
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.

azione teatrale
(*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.

atonality
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.

artistic director
The person responsible for the artistic concept of the opera – the overall look and “feel” of the production.

backdrop
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.

backstage
The area of the stage not visible to the audience, usually where the dressing rooms are located.

ballad opera
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.

banda
A group of musicians who perform onstage or slightly offstage.

baritone
The male singing voice which is higher than a bass but lower than a tenor.

baroque
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.

bass
The lowest male singing voice.

bel canto
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.

bravo (a) (1)
An acknowledgement of a good performance shouted during moments of applause (the ending is determined by the gender and the number of performers).

bravura
Implying brilliance and dexterity (bravura singing, a bravura aria, etc.). Intended for display and the technical execution of difficult passages.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabaretta</td>
<td>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).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cadence</td>
<td>A resting place or close of a passage of music, clearly establishing tonality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cadenza</td>
<td>An elaborate passage near the end of an aria, which shows off the singer’s vocal ability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camerata</td>
<td>A group of musicians, poets and scholars who met in Florence in 1600 and created opera.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cantilena</td>
<td>Originally a little song, but now generally referring to smooth cantabile (It: ‘singable,’ or ‘singing’) passages.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cavatina</td>
<td>Originally an aria without a repeated section. Later used casually in place of aria.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>A group of singers (called choristers) who portray townspeople, guests or other unnamed characters; also refers to the music written for these people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chorus Master</td>
<td>Person who prepares the chorus musically (which includes rehearsing and directing them).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claque</td>
<td>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 claquer).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coloratura</td>
<td>A voice that can sing music with many rapid notes, or the music written for such a voice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commedia dell’arte</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprimario</td>
<td>A small singing role, often a servant or other minor character.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conductor</td>
<td>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).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contralto</td>
<td>The lowest female singing voice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Countertenor</td>
<td>The highest natural male voice, not a castrato. True male altos may be heard in choirs. The term falsettist is sometimes used but disputed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyclorama</td>
<td>A curved curtain or wall enclosing the playing area of the stage and hiding the work areas behind it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Da Capo</td>
<td>(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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer</td>
<td>The person who creates the lighting, costumes or sets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diaphragm</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>The person who instructs the singer/actors in their movements on stage and in the interpretation of their roles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downstage</td>
<td>The front of the stage nearest the audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drame Lyrique</td>
<td>(It: dramma lirico). Modern term for opera, not necessarily of a lyrical character. The English term “lyrical drama” is used in the same way.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Drama 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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adagio</td>
<td>Slowly and smoothly.</td>
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<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; grievously.</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 f
Loud.

FORTISSIMO ff
Very loud.

FURIOUSO
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.

LAGHETTO
Somewhat less slowly than largo.

LARGO
Broadly and slowly.

LEGATO
Smoothly and connectedly.

LEGGIERO
Light; airy; graceful.

LENTO
Slow.

MAESTOSO
Majestic; stately; grand.

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

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.

OBLIGATO
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 p
Soft.

PIANISSIMO pp
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.
POLYTONAL  The use of several tonal schemes simultaneously.

PORTAMENTO  A continuous gliding movement from one tone to another.

PRESTO  Very fast; lively; quick.

QUAVER  An eighth note.

RALLENTANDO  Gradually slower.

RITARDANDO  Gradually slower.

RITENUTO  Held back; slower.

RITORNELLO  A short recurrent instrumental passage between elements of a vocal composition.

ROMANZA  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.

ROULADE  A florid vocal embellishment sung to one syllable.

RUBATO  A way of playing or singing with regulated rhythmic freedom.

SEMITONE  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.

SEMPlice  Simply.

SEMPRE  Always.

SENSA  Without.

SERIAL MUSIC  Music based on a series of tones in a chosen pattern without regard for traditional tonality.

SPORZANDO  With accent.

SORDINO  Muted.

SOSTENUTO  Sustained.

SOTTO  Under; beneath.

STACCATO  Detached; separated.

STRINGENDO  Hurried; accelerated.

STROFHE  Music repeated for each verse of an aria.

SYNCOPATION  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.

TACET  Silent.

TEMPO  Rate of speed.

TONALITY  The organization of all the tones and harmonies of a piece of music in relation to a tonic (the first tone of its scale).

TRISTE  Sad.

TWELVE-TONE  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.

VELOCE  Rapid.

VIBRATO  A “vibration”; a slightly tremulous effect imparted to vocal or instrumental tone for added warmth and expressiveness by slight and rapid variations in pitch.

VIVACE  Brisk; lively.
BIBLIOGRAPHY, DISCOGRAPHY, VIDEOGRAPHY

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John W. Freeman
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### DISCOGRAPHY

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<td><strong>RCA VICTOR RED SEAL</strong> 50168</td>
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### VIDEOGRAPHY

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<td><strong>DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON</strong></td>
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