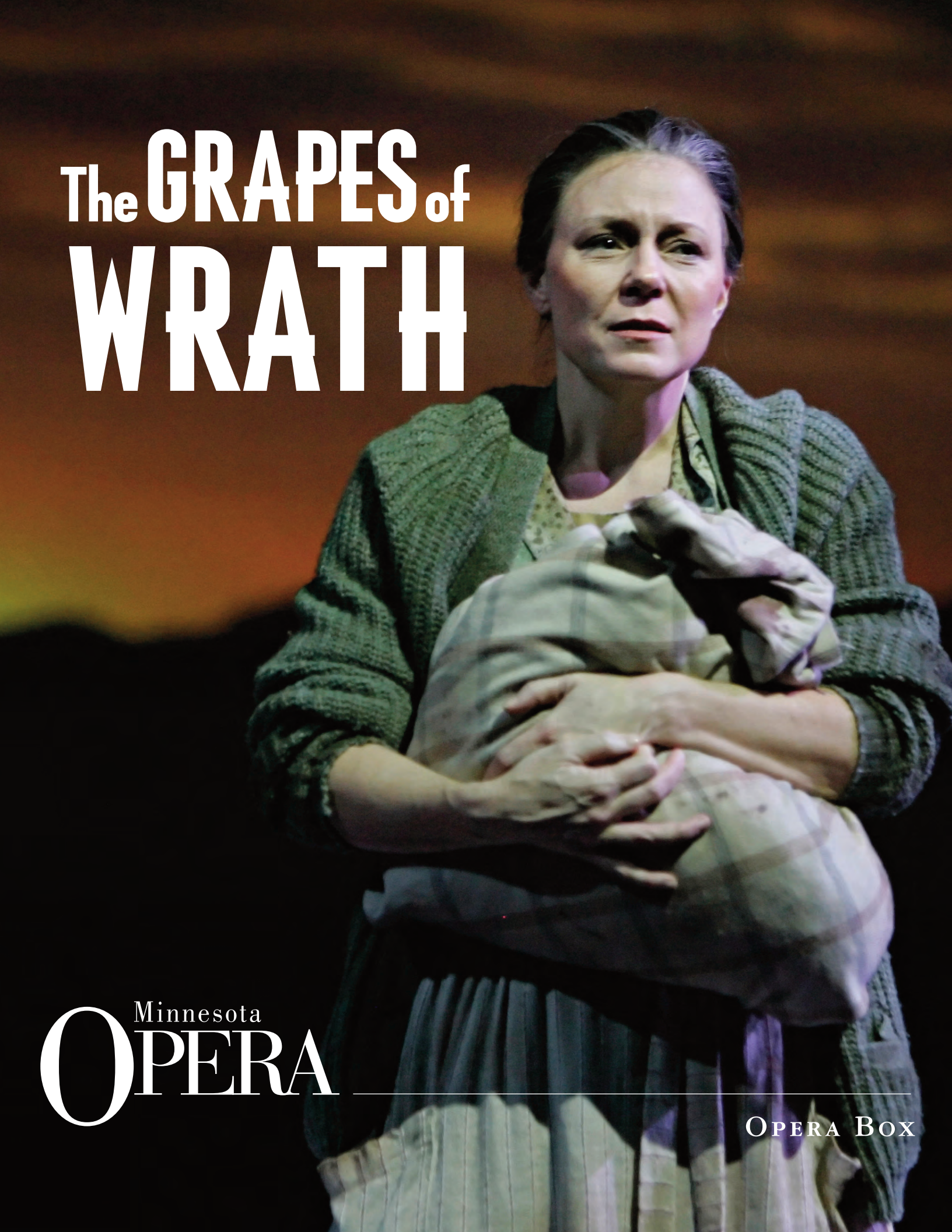

Minnesota OPERA

OPERA BOX

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Minnesota OPERA

620 North First Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Kevin Ramach, President and General Director
Dale Johnson, Artistic Director

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
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612.342.9573 (phone)
mnopera.org
imagineopera.org

Lesson Plan Title Page with Related Academic Standards

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Opera Box Lesson Plans with Related Standards

The lessons in this Teacher Guide are aligned with the current Minnesota Academic Standards, Arts K–12, and the National Standards for Music Education. It is not the intention of these lessons to completely satisfy the standards. This list only suggests how the standards and lesson objectives relate to each other.

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
4. Artistic Process: Respond or Critique.

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

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

Grades 9–12

STRAND: Artistic Foundations

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

ARTS AREA: Music

CODE: 9.1.1.3.1

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

9.1.1.3.2

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

9.1.1.3.3

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

ARTS AREA: Theater

CODE: 9.1.1.4.1

BENCHMARK: Analyze how the elements of theater, including plot, theme, character, language, sound and spectacle are combined to communicate meaning in the creation of, performance of, or response to theater.

9.1.1.4.2

BENCHMARK: Evaluate how forms such as musical theater, opera or melodrama, and structures such as chronological or nonlinear are used in the creation of, performance of, or response to theater.

9.1.1.4.3

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

ARTS AREA: Visual Arts

CODE: 9.1.1.5.1

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

9.1.1.5.2

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

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

ARTS AREA: Music

CODE: 9.1.2.3.1

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

9.1.2.3.2

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

9.1.2.3.3

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

ARTS AREA: Theater

CODE: 9.1.2.4.1

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

9.1.2.5.1

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

ARTS AREA: Visual Arts

CODE: 9.1.2.5.1

BENCHMARK: Integrate the characteristics of the tools, materials and techniques of a selected media in original artworks to support artistic purposes

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

ARTS AREA: Theater

9.4.1.4.1

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

9.4.1.4.2

BENCHMARK: Justify choices of self-selected criteria based on knowledge of how criteria affect criticism.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

1 Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

2 Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

3 Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.

4 Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.

5 Reading and notating music.

6 Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
- A analyze aural examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices
- B demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music
- C identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity, variety, tension and release in a musical work and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques
- D demonstrate the ability to perceive and remember music events by describing in detail significant events occurring in a given aural example
- E compare ways in which musical materials are used in a given example relative to ways in which they are used in other works of the same genre or style
- F analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive

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

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

9 Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Opera Box Content List

The Grapes of Wrath

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

_____LIBRETTO *The Grapes of Wrath*

_____CD *Bright Eyed Joy: The Songs of Ricky Ian Gordon* (Nonesuch)

_____DVD *John Steinbeck: An American Writer* (Biography)

_____DVD *The Grapes of Wrath* movie (20th Century Fox)

_____BOOK *The Grapes of Wrath*

_____Teacher's Guide

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

title of lesson

Lesson 1: The Music of Ricky Ian Gordon

objective(s)

Students will learn the musical characteristics of the songs of Ricky Ian Gordon.

material(s)

- CD player
- CD (*Bright Eyed Joy*)
- writing paper

procedure(s)

(1) As a class, listen to two different Gordon songs. (Suggested selections are: "Heaven," "Run Away," "Wild Swans") Ask the class to compare and contrast the pieces. Create a class list of the responses.

(2) Ask the students to describe each piece individually. Ask the students to describe the accompaniment versus the vocal line, and how the melody reflects the meaning of the words that are being sung. Suggest that they compare and contrast their responses.

(3) Repeat steps 1 and 2. Have students write down their responses as opposed to giving them as a class. (Suggested selections are: "Once I Was," "Joy," "New Moon.")

assessment(s)

Repeat steps 1 and 2 with different selections yet unplayed ("When Sue Wears Red," "I'm Open All Night," "Daybreak in Alabama"). Collect written responses and evaluate.

title of lesson

Lesson 2: John Steinbeck: An American Writer

objective(s)

Students will learn basic facts about the author, John Steinbeck.

material(s)

- DVD *John Steinbeck: An American Writer*
- **John Steinbeck: An American Writer Worksheet** *(one per student)*

procedure(s)

View the DVD *John Steinbeck: An American Writer* with the class. Have the class answers the questions below during its showing.

key

(1) John Steinbeck wrote like **EDWARD HOPPER** painted, and **GEORGE GERSHWIN** composed music.

(2) What were some of the charges brought against Steinbeck by his critics?

"TOO COMMON" **"NOT TRUE ART"** **"DISHONEST"**

(3) Did Steinbeck like writing about prostitutes? **YES**

(4) Steinbeck was born in the year. **1902**

(5) What town did Steinbeck grow up in? **SALINAS, CALIFORNIA**

(6) When Steinbeck told his parents he wanted to be a writer, they thought he would **OUT GROW IT.**

(7) What job did he take in New York that was similar to other great American writers? **REPORTER**

(8) Steinbeck's first novel is titled? **CUP OF GOLD**

(9) The most important man Steinbeck met in Monterey was **ED RICKETTS JR.**

(10) What was Steinbeck's response when asked why he didn't travel like Fitzgerald and Hemmingway?

HE DIDN'T HAVE THE PRICE OF THE TICKET

(11) What is the name of his most comic novel and first success? **TORTILLA FLAT**

(12) "Race wasn't an issue, **CLASS** was" to Steinbeck.

(13) Ed Rickett's awakened in him **PHILOSOPHY**, and Carol awakened his **POLITICAL THINKING**.

(14) What year did the Dust Bowl start? **1930**

(15) Who immigrated to California? **POOR FARMERS**

(16) How long did it take Steinbeck to write *The Grapes of Wrath?* **100 DAYS**

(17) *The Grapes of Wrath* was awarded what prize? **PULITZER PRIZE**

(18) Was *The Grapes of Wrath* well received in Salinas, California? **NO**

(19) Who became interested in Steinbeck at this time in his life? **HOLLYWOOD**

(20) What did J. Edgar Hoover think of Steinbeck? **HE WAS A COMMUNIST**

(21) What job did Steinbeck do in World War II? **A REPORTER**

(22) To make money, Steinbeck worked where, doing what? **HOLLYWOOD; REPORTER**

(23) *East of Eden* is the **VENTING OF HIS RECENT PAST** and the retelling of his **EMOTIONAL FAMILY HISTORY.**

(24) Steinbeck's camper trip was his **QUEST TO FIND THE SOUL OF AMERICA.**

(25) Steinbeck won what award in 1962? **NOBEL PRIZE**

(26) Steinbeck was a speech writer for whom? **LYNDON B. JOHNSON**

(27) Steinbeck died in **1968.**

ASSESSMENT(S)

Give one point per correct answer given. 31 total questions are asked.

John Steinbeck: An American Writer Worksheet

LESSON 2 NAME _____

DIRECTIONS

View the DVD *John Steinbeck: An American Writer* with the class.

(1) John Steinbeck wrote like _____ painted, and _____ composed music.

(2) What were some of the charges brought against Steinbeck by his critics? _____

(3) Did Steinbeck like writing about prostitutes? _____

(4) Steinbeck was born in the year _____.

(5) What town did Steinbeck grow up in? _____

(6) When Steinbeck told his parents he wanted to be a writer, they thought he would _____.

(7) What job did he take in New York that was similar to other great American writers? _____

(8) Steinbeck's first novel is titled? _____

(9) The most important man Steinbeck met in Monterey was _____.

(10) What was Steinbeck's response when asked why he didn't travel like Fitzgerald and Hemmingway?

_____

(11) What is the name of his most comic novel and first success? _____

(12) "Race wasn't an issue, _____ was" to Steinbeck.

(13) Ed Rickett's awakened in him _____, and Carol awakened his _____.

(14) What year did the Dust Bowl start? _____

(15) Who immigrated to California? _____

(16) How long did it take Steinbeck to write *The Grapes of Wrath?* _____

(17) *The Grapes of Wrath* was awarded what prize? _____

(18) Was *The Grapes of Wrath* well received in Salinas, California? _____

(19) Who became interested in Steinbeck at this time in his life? _____

(20) What did J. Edgar Hoover think of Steinbeck? _____

(21) What job did Steinbeck do during World War II? _____

(22) To make money, Steinbeck worked where, doing what? _____; _____

(23) *East of Eden* is the _____ and the retelling of his _____.

(24) Steinbeck's camper trip was his _____.

(25) Steinbeck won what award in 1962? _____

(26) Steinbeck was a speech writer for whom? _____

(27) Steinbeck died in _____.

title of lesson

Lesson 3: Exploring the libretto

objective(s)

Students will understand the major characters and their development through the story. They will also be able to identify the major motives, themes and images of the story.

material(s)

- libretto *The Grapes of Wrath* (one per student)
- book *The Grapes of Wrath* (one per student) – optional

procedure(s)

This section of the study guide is designed to acquaint you and your students with the main characters of the opera and their development, as well as with the opera's structure and its major motifs, themes, and images. It assumes the students are not well acquainted with Steinbeck's novel; however, it also tracks and cross-references the above topics within the original work itself so that the classes who are reading the book and seeing the opera can enrich their experiences with both through their integration, comparing and contrasting of the two genres. We suggest that the educator read the first Lisca essay (Appendix A) before guiding the students through the libretto.

Specific aides to the educator will be parenthetical and labeled "NOTE." Additional print and online resources can be found in Appendix D.

ACT ONE

PROLOGUE: A GREEN FIELD (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 1)

(1) Notice that the curtain rises to the sound of "soft rain." The musical section is entitled, "The Last Time There Was Rain." Read the lyrics on P. 1. What picture is being painted of life on an Oklahoma farm during this time? What would you identify as the mood? What images reinforce this mood? Which actual words and phrases?

(2) Look at the final stage direction on P. 1. Then move on to the first column on P. 2. What's happening? What images does the librettist choose to show us the effect of the rain stopping?

(3) Read the stage direction at the bottom of the first column. What's happening now? Look at the images in the "All" section on the right of P. 2. What words are clues here as to the effect of the dust? (e.g. "thick as stew," "weighted down the trees," etc.) Note the colors mentioned on P. 2. How do they differ from the colors on P. 1? What is the feeling evoked by the men's final section on P. 2: "… like bein' on the moon … marooned"?

(4) Read the women's final stanza on P. 3. What is their observation about "fam'bly"?

(5) Why do you think the librettist (as did Steinbeck) makes the characters in this scene anonymous men and women instead of members of the Joad family? *(NOTE: See the first Lisca essay on the movement from "scenic" to "panoramic" and back, as both Steinbeck and the librettist, Michael Korie, want the Joad story to be seen as a microcosm of what was happening to hundreds of thousands of migrants.)*

(NOTE: The "All" section on P. 2 {right} and the "Women" section just referenced are very close to the novel's phrasing. Students could look these up and compare/contrast.)

1.1: MCALESTER PRISON GATE (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 2)

(1) In "I Keep My Nose Clean," Tom Joad explains his philosophy of life. He extends this philosophy on p. 5 (right). What is his point of view and where did it come from? *(NOTE: Tom's expression, "I keep my nose clean," will become a motif which will help define the arc of his character. Students should be on the lookout for future repetitions and modifications of this line.)*

(2) At the beginning of the section PARKING LOT, Tom hitches a ride with a truck driver. Describe their conversation. Why was he in prison? Why did he get out?

(NOTE: It's important that students understand this individualistic stance as it will change dramatically by the end of the narrative. Also, truck drivers play an important role in a later scene. Students might be alerted to look for what Steinbeck's general feelings toward truck drivers seemed to be.)

1.2: TREE BY THE ROAD (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 4)

(1) In "So Long Savior," what appears to be Casy's current view of religion? What "sin" of his does he dwell on?

(2) Notice that Tom finds Casy sitting by a dead tree. In his song, "Naked Tree Wastin' in the Sun," and the conversation that follows, how does that dead tree become a metaphor for Casy's life? For the lives of others?

(NOTE: This is a central metaphor in the libretto. In the novel, Casy is sitting under a willow tree, but Korie needs the tree to be naked here in order to develop this motif as the musical narration continues throughout.)

1.3: DESERTED JOAD PLACE – THAT NIGHT (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapters 5 and 6)

(1) The conversation between Tom, Casy and Muley in "Gone" morphs into a flashback as Muley recalls how it was when the land he was share-cropping was taken away from him. Summarize Muley's story from PP. 8-9.

(2) In the section entitled MULEY'S PLACE – A FEW DAYS BEFORE, we have the flashback. Read it carefully and list all the people who deny any responsibility for what is happening to the share-croppers. What is the importance of the order in which they appear? Why do you think they don't have actual names, only titles? What is the significance of all these people joining together as a "wall" and the wall having a chorus of its own? What does the wall say on P. 13? How does its message affect the share-croppers? The scene ends as it began, with Muley and his family. What is Korie trying to tell us about how not just Muley but all the farmers feel about their situation? *(NOTE: The character's full name is Muley Graves. Students might be interested in discussing the symbolism of Steinbeck's choice. Another angle the students who have read the novel might explore is how the librettist is able to give a sense of the "panoramic" {see Appendix A} through the "scenic" by having the choric elements be titles instead of actual individuals, incorporating the Joad narrative of Chapter 6 along with the elements in the intercalary Chapter 5.)*

1.4: UNCLE JOHN'S PLACE (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 8)

(NOTE: On P. 15, Tom tells Ma he has been paroled from jail. When Pa asks about whether Casy has been paroled too, the latter responds, "No. Just a pariah! I ain't a preacher no more." Recall that back on P. 6, Tom asked Casy whether he had been in jail, and Casy had answered, "No. Hell." These two references begin a theme about imprisonment which extends from the literal to the metaphoric, from the individuals Tom and Casy, to the entire migrant population. The following questions prompt students to observe the seeds of this theme presented in this scene.)

(1) On P. 16, in "Promise Me, Tommy," Ma tells her son that she had heard that being in prison can "poison your brain with crazy meanness": "Promise me, Tommy nobody hurt you so bad/ 'cause hatred, Tommy, it can drive a man mad." He responds, "I kept my nose clean." Then he observes, "You weren't never this way before," and she answers, "I never had my house tractor'd down before./ My fam'bly tossed out on the road before." What is this section saying about the psychological effects of a loss of independence or freedom of action? How is Ma's situation analogous to Tom's? How are their situations similar to that of Muley in the previous scene?

(2) On P. 17, Ma tells Tom to "stay gentle" after he's told her, "I ain't mad…. Or not so mad…/ Though when I see'd what they done to our house…!" What might this exchange possibly foreshadow in terms of Tom's character development?

(3) In "You Can't Keep a Joad in Jail" (PP. 18–21), the whole family rejoices that Tom is home, and each Joad has their own theory about how he got out. What are some of these theories? What do these responses say about how the family views itself? Why can't you "keep a Joad in jail"? Given what we have already learned about the situation the share-croppers are in right now, what is ironic about Tom being freed from McAlester?

(NOTE As the novel and the libretto continue, it becomes increasingly clear that Tom is really moving from one kind of jail, i.e. a physical loss of freedom, to another – a loss of economic, political, and personal freedom of action. Students should be looking for clues as to how this occurs throughout the opera. However, the song about not keeping a Joad in jail also foreshadows the spirit of all human beings to move toward freedom, to "find a chink" or "bust out.")

(4) Look at Connie's speech on P. 20. What does it mean within the context of the jail song? Why does Uncle John tell him to "Shut up!!"? What does Uncle John say to Rosasharn? What seems to be going on here? *(NOTE This sequence foreshadows the future death of Rosasharn's baby quite vividly. Bookmark it for the students to return to.)*

(5) In "Not My Fault," the anonymous characters from scene 1.3 reappear and threaten the family with being bulldozed the next morning, reprising the theme of "not my fault." After they leave, what do we learn about Tom's situation?

(6) Read Tom's final lines on P. 22: "Scary how a place can smell/ same as some old prison cell/ with or without bars./ Had enough of ours?/ I'm for jumpin' jail." Grampa and the whole family respond. Relate the end of the scene to the observations made during the exploration of question #3.

1.5: USED CAR LOT – THE SAME MORNING (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 7)

(NOTE: Korie has taken this scene, which is based on an intercalary chapter, and incorporated it into the Joad narrative, again preserving the "panoramic" through the anonymous choric hucksters who chant their pitch through Al's lines.)

(1) At the beginning of the scene, through the use of the chorus of hucksters, what do we learn about the situation of the average share-cropper who has been forced off his land and now has to migrate to California?

1.6: UNCLE JOHN'S PLACE (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapters 10 and 9)

(NOTE: Korie has taken this scene, which is based on an intercalary chapter, and incorporated it into the Joad narrative, again preserving the "panoramic" through the anonymous choric hucksters who chant their pitch through Al's lines.)

(1) In "Tricky Old Devil," Grampa introduces the image of grapes. Find the references. He also decides he doesn't want to leave Oklahoma. What is his reason? How do they get him to go? (NOTE: This part of the scene is significantly different in detail from the novel. Students who are reading the original [Chapter 10] might want to compare and contrast the two texts and hypothesize why Korie made the changes he did.)

(2) The EMPTY ROOM section begins with Ma singing "Us." What details make up her song? What is their significance? What is the connection between these references and her repeated "is us"?

(3) In the novel from which the opera is derived, Steinbeck, in describing the situation the tenant farmers are in, has them collectively say to the people who are offering them pennies on the dollar for their household goods,

> You're buying years of work, toil in the sun; you're buying a sorrow that can't talk. But watch it mister. There's a premium goes with this pile of junk and the bay horses – so beautiful – a packet of bitterness to grow in your house and to flower, some day. We could have saved you, but you cut us down, and soon you will be cut down and there'll be none of us to save you.... The anger of a moment, the thousand pictures, that's us. This land, this red land, is us; and the flood years and the dust years and the drought years are us. We can't start again. The bitterness we sold to the junk man – he got it all right, but we have it still. And when the owner man told us to go, that's us; and when the tractor hit the house, that's us until we're dead. To California or any place – every one a drum major leading a parade of hurts, marching with our bitterness. And some day – the armies of bitterness will all be going the same way. And they'll all walk together, and there'll be a dead terror from it.

This sequence comes from Chapter 9 in the original, which is an intercalary chapter featuring anonymous tenant farmers sorting through their belongings, trying to sell some of them, being cheated by the buyers, having to decide what to take and what to leave behind. Contrast how Korie creates the "scenic" from the "panoramic" here. Is one approach more powerful than the other? What is the effect of putting a speech that was originally spoken by a collective of tenant farmers into the song of one woman whom we know?

(4) In UNCLE JOHN'S YARD (Chapter 10), we have the entire Joad family singing "The Plenty Road" as they begin their drive to California. In what terms do they describe their destination? How do they plan to make a living there? Find the two references to grapes. What is the tone of the lyrics?

1.7: ROUTE 66 – DAY (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 12)

(1) What specific observations about the Okies are made by the anonymous cop, pump guys, trucker, motel owners, waitress and cook, and Cadillac couple? From their comments, what do we learn about how many people along Route 66 view the Okies? In the final stanza on P. 34, what do they all want the government to do about the migrants? Relate this to the jail theme.

(2) Read the italicized stage directions in this section carefully. Picture how the entire auditorium will be used during this scene. How does the staging and the use of the choruses widen the story beyond that of the Joads themselves?

(3) What is the irony between the words on the billboards and the Okies' lyrics v. the words of the locals?

(NOTE: Chapter 12 is another of the novel's intercalary chapters, and here Korie uses the scene in a true "panoramic" sense with the Joads becoming members of the Okie chorus.)

1.8: TENT GROUNDS – EARLY EVENING (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 16)

(1) Read the lyrics of "Handbills." Why do you think this is sung to the same theme as "Good Machine" in scene 1.5? What is the irony of the migrants singing this instead of the owners who sent out the handbills?

(2) What is the Ragged Man's story? Explain the sentence on P. 38 in "I Can't Tell You" which begins, "I can't tell you the odor of death by degrees …" What does he mean by "a fence human beings cain't breach"? Where have we heard the reference to a fence before?

(3) Explain the irony of the Ragged Man's reference to "Dead of heart failure" on P. 39.

(4) How do the men react to the man's story? Why? How does Pa rationalize the Ragged Man's words?

1.9: HIGHWAY OVERPASS – NIGHT (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapters 13 and 16)

(1) In "The Zephyr," Rosaharn and Connie see a Lincoln Zephyr (which would have been like one of today's Lincoln Continentals) "flash" by, and it triggers their conversation about their dreams for California. Explain their two points of view.

(2) In "One Star," they begin with differing interpretations of the meaning of a single star. Identify their individual points of view and then explain their resolution. *(NOTE: The conversation upon which these two musical interludes are based can be found toward the beginning of Chapter 16 presenting another opportunity for students reading the novel to compare and contrast the original text with the libretto.)*

(3) As the scene moves in time to UNDER THE OVERPASS – DAWN, we find that Grampa has died along the way and is being buried in an old quilt with other tent families as witnesses. Casy is asked for a prayer. Summarize "A Word for the Old Man."

(4) There is significant foreshadowing in this scene. Who seems most upset by the death? Why do you think he reacts so strongly? What does Tom do to calm him down?

(5) The end of this scene is also the end of Act One. Read "Reprise: 'Us'" and then go back to the first time we heard this refrain in 1.6. How is the meaning of "us" the same? How has it changed? Note Tom's stage directions. How does his character appear to be changing?

(NOTE: The scene of Grampa's death is much different in the libretto than it appears in the novel. Students reading the original will note when contrasting the two many dissimilarities, including the total omission of the Wilsons. We would encourage a discussion of those changes and of why, given the challenges of moving the work from the page to the stage, the librettist made the revisions he did. As a further note to the educator, Korie assigns Noah as chief mourner as a means of foreshadowing his own death, and the dirt in his pocket will take the form of rocks in a bucket later in the opera.)

ACT TWO

2.1: "EAT" DINER (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 15)

(1) In this scene, what kind of people are truck drivers portrayed to be? How does this extend the impression we got in 1.1? Why might Steinbeck have been sympathetic to a person in this line of work?

(2) And how about the cook and ultimately the waitress at the diner? What do they have in common with the truck drivers? Why might the truckers and the diner workers have more sympathy for the Okies than some of the other people along Route 66? Why did the truckers give Mae such a large tip at the end of the scene? Give a possible meaning of her lines at the top of P. 50: "I tell you, when I can't sleep/ worryin' my head off if the eggs'll keep,/ who knows better the strain it is/ to haul your heavy load?"

(3) What is the dramatic purpose of having the opera chorus represent many truckers and waitresses along Route 66? *(NOTE: This part of the scene is another instance of Korie moving the focus from "scenic" to "panoramic." The original chapter is an intercalary one, and the man asking for the loaf of bread is an anonymous Okie. Notice that with the entrance of Pa, the focus returns to "scenic" and the narrative returns to the journey of the Joads.)*

2.2: MOHAVE DESERT – NIGHT (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 18)

(1) In "Dry Blue Night" (P. 52), John tells his story. What has happened to him and how does he feel about it? Pick out specific words and phrases that help to identify his emotional state.

(2) As the truck pivots on the stage, we see in back and pick up the conversation between Rosasharn and her husband Connie in "We Can Be Quiet." What seems to be the state of their relationship in this scene?

(3) As the truck again pivots, we see Ma holding the now-dead Granma. In Ma's "Rest peaceful, Mama," she seems to weave parts of "Dry Blue Night" and "We Can Be Quiet" together. What are her thoughts about crossing the desert?

(4) In the septet, "Dry Blue Night," which ends the scene, all the musical themes are woven together. The stage directions say that this final septet is a "soaring reflection on the three stages of life: youth, flushed with ardor; the middle-aged, wondering where you went; and the old; passing on." How does the Joad family become "every-family" at this point in the opera? How does their story reach beyond the migrant workers' situation in the Depression of the 1930s?

2.3 INSPECTION STATION – APPROACHING DAWN (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 18)

(1) In "Keep Right and Pull Over," how does Ma get the family through the inspection check point?

(2) Read the stage directions for THE TEHACHAPI VALLEY – DAWN. How are we to envision this valley? The musical sequence is entitled, "Like They Promised," and the reference is not only to what the Joads had been told California was like. There is a Biblical allusion operating here too. What is it? Which lines make that connection? Who were "them Chosen Folk of yore"? Why did they cross the Sinai? Where were they going?

2.4 ENDICOTT FARM CIRCA 1849 (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapters 19 and 21)

(NOTE: Chapters 19 and 21 are intercalary narrations on the history of land ownership in California. Korie has invented a family, the Endicotts, to represent in microcosm this history. Note that they grow plums.)

(1) George J. Endicott represents in microcosm the history of land ownership in California. Summarize this history in general and his story in particular. What is his favorite pronoun? What does this indicate about his attitude toward his property?

(2) In HIGHWAY BARRICADE, THE PRESENT, the scene shifts forward to the migrant croppers' search for work. What are they told by the growers?

(3) In ENDICOTT PLUM GROVES, CIRCA 1924, the time shifts back again to around six years before the Okies and the other migrants arrive on the scene. Through the words of Endicott III, we can see how farming has changed. What have these changes been? What has happened to the relationship between the farm owner and his land? What might be the significance of "the plum tree my Grandpa planted died"? What is Endicott III's plum tree?

(4) In TENT MEET, THE PRESENT, the time shifts forward again into the 1930s. What is the issue here? Which people now are in conflict?

(5) In ENDICOTT CANNERIES, THE PRESENT, we meet Endicott IV. What changes has he made to the plum industry he owns? Why? What is his economic motivation? What is his plum tree? How has each Endicott shown a further separation between the land and its owner? What does this Endicott do with his time?

(6) In PLUM ORCHARD, THE PRESENT, the scene begins with workers setting fire to surplus plums. Why does Tom say the fire was set? What are the results for the land owner? For the croppers? Read carefully the croppers' lines on the right of P. 63. What is their attitude? How does the fire become a metaphor here? What word leaps out at us since it's the first time we've heard it in the text? What kinds of actions on the part of the croppers might these lines foreshadow?

(7) In Chapter 14 of the novel, Steinbeck has an anonymous narrator say to the growers,

> Here is the node, you who hate change and fear revolution. Keep these two squatting men apart; make them hate, fear, suspect each other…. For here 'I lost my land' is changed; a cell is split and from its splitting grows the thing you hate – 'We lost our land.' The danger is here, for two men are not as lonely and perplexed as one…. This is the beginning—from 'I' to 'we." If you who own the things people must have could understand this, you might preserve yourself…. For the quality of owning freezes you forever into 'I,' and cuts you off forever from the 'we.'

Relate this passage to what is happening in this scene, in the opera so far.

(8) In "The Fire in the Orchard," a chorus of croppers describes the migrants as "ants on the highway." In what ways might the migrants resemble ants? *(NOTE: In the novel, the migrants are referred to numerous times as ants and other insects. It's an image that weaves its way through the entire text and one which students find it interesting to track. If you choose to pursue this, have the students also pay attention to the verbs which are used in conjunction with the insect references, e.g. words like "crawled," "scuttled," "scurrying," "swarming." Steinbeck also uses animal imagery throughout including references to buzzards, toads, coyotes, dogs, snakes, pigs, hermit crabs and work horses. And, of course, there's the famous turtle first appearing in Chapter 3 representing the entire migrant population in its determination to reach California.)*

2.5: HOOVERVILLE (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 20)

(1) *(NOTE: Hopefully, the educator will have given the students background information on the Depression, Dust Bowl, etc. including the concept of "Hooverville.")* Read the italicized stage directions carefully. Relate them to the words of the croppers' first lines. Now read through to the end of "Beg Your Pardon, Ma'am." What observations do the Joads make about the Hooverville which reinforce the stage directions?

(2) In "Hooverville's Anywhere" (P. 66), Al and Connie make even more observations about what life is like in a Hooverville. What are these observations? At the end of the stanza they both sing (bottom of 66), they conclude that one dies "A slow death in Hooverville,/ locked up in a jail with no bars." How does this extend the jail metaphor we have been tracing?

(3) We've just seen how irritated Al is about living in a Hooverville. Following his duet with Connie, he has a conversation with Noah, the Joads' "slow" son. Noah has tangled up the tent ropes, and Al is at the end of his patience. On the left side of P. 67, what words does Al use to describe his older brother? What is ballast? How is that a metaphor for Noah? *(NOTE: This is an important conversation because it builds in both the reason for and the means used to accomplish Noah's future suicide, an event which does not occur in the novel but which Korie uses for dramatic effect in order to show the literal breakdown of the family.)*

(4) Ma breaks into the conversation with her "No One is Goin'" order. What is her point about the importance of keeping the family together? Who is she referring to when she says, "My strength is in my people"? (NOTE: *Here she means her family, and this will change, as the opera progresses, to mean all people.)*

(5) What does Uncle John want from Ma? Why?

(6) How does Connie feel about the current situation? How does he respond to Rosasharn's attempt to comfort him? What might his outburst at the end of P. 69 foreshadow?

(7) What is Rosasharn's reaction to Connie's anger? Which images we've already explored do her lines bring together? She says she will name her child Moses if he's a boy. What do you know about the baby Moses? *(NOTE: In a departure from the original text, Korie here once again makes a change in order to set up a later point. It's important that the students know the story of Moses in the bulrushes as it will set up the infant's fate at the end of the opera.)*

(8) In HOOVERVILLE – THE NEXT MORNING, a contractor arrives with a deputy. Why is he there? What is the response of the squatters? What does the contractor threaten? What is Tom's reaction? Which of Ma's themes is reprised, now within a different context? When the squatters refuse, what happens through the end of this part of the scene? *(NOTE: In the original, a man named Floyd challenges the contractor. Korie has Al take on this role.)*

(9) In TENT AND TRUCK, the Joad family hurries to leave the Hooverville. What do we find out about Connie? What does Ma tell Noah to do? Why?

2.6: **THE CREEK – NIGHT** (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 18)

(NOTE: Students need to know the story of Noah and the flood before dealing with this scene {and we as educators can usually assume their range of Biblical knowledge is limited; this writer has even had students who didn't know who Adam and Eve were}.)

(1) Relate Noah's aria to the story of Noah in the Bible. What did God want Noah to be? What did Noah do? (What word of Al's does Noah repeat here? Recall what it means.) Why does Noah say he is going to do what he does?

(2) Read the rest of the scene carefully. How does the flashback work into the plot? What is the significance of Ma's lullaby, "Simple Child"? What is the irony of the way Noah dies given his name? What is the irony of what is happening at the Hooverville while Noah is drowning?

(3) In the novel, Noah leaves the family earlier. The Joads are getting ready to cross the desert and they have stopped by a river to rest before their long trek. Noah likes the water and says to Tom, "Tom, I ain't a-gonna leave this here water. I'm a-gonna walk on down this here river." When Tom objects, Noah responds, "You know how it is, Tom. You know how the folks are nice to me. But they don't really care for me…. I know how I am. I know they're sorry. But – Well, I ain't a-goin…. I was in that there water. An' I ain't a-gonna leave her. I'm a-gonna go now, Tom – down the river." And Tom watches as Noah walks down the river and out of sight.

Why do you think Korie changed the narrative to have Noah commit suicide? What difference does Noah's disappearance in this dramatic way make on the Joad story as a whole? On the theme of family?

ACT THREE

3.1: GOVERNMENT CAMP, SANITARY UNIT 4 (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 22)

(1) What is the thematic significance of this scene (PP. 76–77)? Find one sentence spoken by Ma which sums up what being in the government camp is all about. *(NOTE: "I feel like people again" will be reprised throughout. Its source is a speech Ma makes in Chapter 22 in which she states, "These folks is our folks—is our folks…. Why, I feel like people again.")*

(2) In MEN'S SHOWER ROOM, the men of the camp and the Joad men talk as they shower about the upcoming dance. What are they going to be on the lookout for? Find the line which reprises Ma's.

3.2: LAUNDRY LINE (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapters 22 and 28)

(1) In this scene, we meet the women of the government camp. Find their reprisal of the theme we've been tracing. How do the actions of the men and the women mirror each other? *(NOTE: The focus here is on being clean – clean bodies, clean clothes – and on fellowship.)*

(2) What is Rosasharn unhappy about? What is Ma's reaction? How do the two women's losses juxtaposed with the community scenes in the shower and at the laundry line represent the shift the Joads are making in their definition of family?

(3) In "People Again," Ma makes some observations about how men and women see things differently. Summarize her point of view. Do you agree or disagree? Explain. *(NOTE: This section is taken from a conversation Ma has with Pa and Uncle John in Chapter 28. The two men are arguing that it seems like "our life's over an' done," and Ma responds, "No, it ain't…. It ain't, Pa. An' that's one more thing a woman knows. I noticed that. Man, he lives in jerk – baby born an' a man dies, an' that's a jerk – gets a farm an' loses his farm, an' that's a jerk. Woman, it's all one flow, like a stream, little eddies, little waterfalls, but the river, it goes right on. Woman looks at it like that. We ain't gonna die out. People is goin' on—changin' a little, maybe, but goin' right on.")*

3.3: HOEDOWN—SUNSET (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapters 24 and 26)

(1) In "Square Dance," what is the mood? How does the mood shift with "You Got No Warrant" up through the left side of P. 85? How does it shift again with Pa's arrival with the handbill? Why is he willing to believe the handbill's promise this time? How does the rest of the crowd and the Joad family react to his news?

(2) In "Fried Dough," Ma laments the diminishing health of Winfield and Rosasharn. What does she reveal about her own pregnancy with Noah and foreshadow about the fate of Rosasharn's baby? Why is their diet increasingly made up of fried dough? In addition, what does she say about Winfield's state of mind and how it relates to Tom?

(3) On the left side of P. 87, there is a reprise of Ma's lullaby at the end of Act Two, "Simple Child." What significance does it have here?

(4) At the end of 3.3, the croppers depart "under the stars." Link the thematic significance of that stage direction to their song, "Plenty Road/People Again," which reprises two earlier songs.

3.4: HOOPER RANCH (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 26)

(1) Read the strikers' song, "Join the Line." What are they trying to do and why do they think they have a chance of winning? How does their situation speak to the themes of community and family?

(2) In the stage directions for "Riot at Hooper Ranch," what are we told about the scabs' awareness of their situation? About the treatment of the strikers? Here we have yet another fence. What is its function?

(3) In "Them Peaches Took an Hour," what do we learn about the standards of the peach ranch? How much are the Joads getting paid?

(4) What is the irony inherent in the song "A Step up the Ladder"? What are the family members' differing points of view regarding the value of "five cents a box"? What happens outside the fence at the end of that part of the scene? What is the reaction of the scabs? Why?

(5) In AROUND THE CAMP and TABLE, what do we learn about the real value of "five cents a box"? Explain Uncle John's closing statement in metaphoric terms.

3.5: LATER THAT NIGHT (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 26)

(1) On P. 52, we first heard "Dry Blue Night." Go back and reread the entire page, and then look at how it is situated at the beginning of 3.5 (P. 93). Why do you think it is brought back at this point in the story?

(2) What does Tom say on P. 93 that we've heard before? Why won't the guard let him leave?

(3) In OUTSIDE THE FENCE, Tom re-encounters Jim Casy. What does Casy tell him about the strike and his role in it? In "Things Turn Around," Casy discusses his reversal in thinking. Explain the right side of P. 95 and the left side of P. 96. Where did Casy find God? What has he discovered? How does he use the "naked tree" metaphor in his explanation? Whose quest does he liken his own to? *(NOTE: Casy likening himself to Jesus in the wilderness will become an important thematic point which will be picked up later in the scene.)*

(4) Beginning on the right side of P. 96, Casy further explains his insight into why people land in jail and what it all means within the context of the strike. What is his point? How does Tom counter that point on P. 97?

(5) Explain Casy's words in terms of the metaphors we have been exploring (jail and the naked tree):

> I done found my Faith
> in this fight of ours,
> when the light of Daniel led me from my prison bars
> to that naked tree
> in the bakin'sun,
> only now it had a million leaves an' I was one!

What does he mean here by "things turn around"?
(NOTE: The educator might have to refresh the students' memories on who Daniel was.)

(6) Explain the end of the scene. Whose words is Casy echoing with "You don' know what you're doin'"? How is Casy's death analogous to the death of Christ? How were their lives analogous? What is the effect of Casy's death on Tom? As Tom kneels beside Casy, what does he do? What might this foreshadow? What has Tom done literally that he has vowed figuratively throughout the narrative not to do?

3.6: BEAN FIELD – LATE AFTERNOON (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 28)

(1) Read the stage directions on P. 99 carefully. In "Dios Te Salve," we are told that the women are singing a "prayer for the dead praising the Madonna and life." Who are the dead? Who is the Madonna of the story? Korie added this to the text. There is no scene like this in the novel. As we explore the rest of Act Three, try to figure out why he chose to insert this song at this point.

(2) In VINEYARD – SUNSET, Ma talks to Tom for the last time. What is the situation? Why is Tom hiding? What is ironic about him hiding in a vineyard? Relate this to the opera's title and to the original references to grapes in Act One.

(3) In "I'll Be There" on P. 102, Tom pulls together some images we have encountered earlier in the opera. What are they? What picture do they paint of the migrant experience? (Be sure to look at the entire page.)

(4) What theme that we recognize do he and Ma rehearse at the end of P. 102? On P. 103, they pledge their continual "presence" to each other with more images we recognize. Find them. Why does Tom say he won't be afraid? How do his words complete the jail theme? What do we find out through Tom's words (and going back to Casy's) about where and what a jail really is? How does Tom's song expand the notion of family to the larger community? In the novel, Ma says to him, "You got a bad scar, Tom. An' your nose is all crooked." Relate this metaphorically to Tom's stance at the beginning of the story. How has he changed?

(5) Notice that the scene ends with a "distant rumble of thunder." What crop are they going to start picking the next day? What might the thunder portend and what effect might that have on the family's future economic situation?

3.7: **COTTON FIELD** (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapters 29 and 30)

(1) Go back to the very beginning of the libretto. What is happening in regards to the weather? The opera begins with the rain stopping and ends with the rain beginning. Ironically, both the drought and the rain have the same result. What is that result? *(NOTE: Chapter 29 in the novel is an intercalary chapter. Students might be interested to explore how Korie has translated Steinbeck's prose into the song "The Day the Rain Began" and contrast it also with the opera's opening, "The Last Time There Was Rain.")*

(2) What happens during the storm? In BOXCAR what do we learn about Rosasharn's baby? What does Ma give to Uncle John to put the baby in? What does she want Uncle John to do?

(3) In RIVERBANK, what does Uncle John do? Recall that on P. 70, Rosasharn said what she wanted to name her baby if it were a boy. Uncle John, unaware of her wish, christens the baby Moses for an entirely different reason. Explain what Uncle John's message is in "Little Dead Moses." What is the irony of this little Moses floating "far and wide across't this nation" in an Endicott plum crate? What is John's wish? *(NOTE: The students will need to be aware of the story of Moses and the role he played in the freeing of the Israelites from Egypt. Again, the novel never mentions that Rosasharn wanted to name him Moses or that John referred to him as such. Students may wish to discuss why Korie made this choice.)*

(4) Read the stage directions on P. 108. What is the librettist trying to get across to the audience through this handling of the plum crate? Why is Uncle John joined by the ensemble at this point? Why is the "fruits of their blindness" an ironic phrase?

3.8: **BARN ROAD** – NIGHT (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter 30)

(1) What tone does the reprise of "Ants on the Highway" set for this scene?

(2) Why have the Joads left the boxcar? What has happened to Al and John? Neither one disappears in the novel. What might Korie be trying to say by their disappearances in regards to the theme of family? (*NOTE: In the original text, Al stays in the boxcar with the Wainwrights to watch over the Joads' possessions and Uncle John goes with the rest to the barn. Korie is trying to strip the nuclear family as bare as possible to enhance the final action which reinforces the idea of the family of humankind.)*

(3) What do the Joads encounter in INSIDE THE BAR? What is happening in this scene? Why does Rosasharn say, "I help you … You help me"? What is the significance of her words, "You got to. In trouble, hurt or need, go to poor people. We're the only ones who help"? How do her words underscore the thematic movement from "us" as family to "we the people"? How does she take on the role of the Madonna the bean-pickers sang about at the beginning of 3.6 in "Dios Te Salve"?

(4) In her final aria, "One Star," Rosasharn returns to the theme of "One Star" that she introduced in Act One. What had her first reference to "one star" meant in 1.9? Looked at within the context of the entire opera, what does her song now mean? How is her message reinforced by the stage directions which end the scene?

FINAL THOUGHTS: A WRAP-UP OF THEMES AND IMAGES

(1) One of the libretto's main themes, the importance of the community, is dealt with in the second Lisca essay (Appendix B), "The Dynamics of Community in *The Grapes of Wrath.*" Although Lisca is referring to the novel itself, many of his points are implicit motifs which run through the opera. Among them are:

A. the idea of "Manself"

B. the historical reference to the colonization of the new world

C. the Biblical reference to "we are the people" and its extension of the Joad story to that of the twelve tribes of Israel in their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land.

Read Lisca's essay and make the connections between these three examples of the building of community. Relate your observations to Ma's speech in Chapter 20 of the novel: "… us people will go on livin' when all them people is gone. Why, Tom, we're the people that live. They ain't gonna wipe us out. Why, we're the people – we go on."

(2) Another idea of Lisca's, which he discusses in both his essays, is the dynamic between the negative and positive influences on the Joads as the story progresses. He explains them as follows:

NEGATIVE INFLUENCES

A. the economic decline paralleling the decline in the family's morale (a "gradual deterioration of the family and human dignity" which results in their becoming "spiritually bankrupt").

B. the break-up of the family unit as they lose (in the opera) the following people: Grampa, Granma, Noah, Connie, Casy, Al, Uncle John, Rosasharn's baby.

POSITIVE INFLUENCES

A. the family break-down leads to the sense of communal unity (the "I" to the "we" of, for example, the government camp).

B. the "education" and "conversion" of Jim Casy and Tom (with Tom's attitude changing from an individualistic stance of "I keep my nose clean" to his "I'll be there" speech).

Discuss or write about how the negative influences actually form the foundation for the positive ones, and how the final scene in the barn sums up Steinbeck's conclusion about the idea of community and what needs to be done for the good of the entire human family. Think about the connections we made between the Madonna of the bean-pickers' song and Rosasharn. See if you can draw in the references we traced of "us," "fam'bly," and "people again" to this broader discussion. Relate these ideas to the concept of the star that we traced through the libretto and how the meaning of that star changed during the opera.

(3) In both essays, Lisca also traces the evolution of Jim Casy, a character who, like Rosasharn, parallels a figure from the New Testament. Lisca says Casy (whose initials are the same as Jesus Christ's) moves from being a representative of "Bible-belt evangelism" to one of "social prophecy." He references Casy's sojourn in the wilderness to his embracing of the poorest as the real salt of the earth to his actual death in which his final words, "You don't know what you're a-doin'" mirror Christ's last words on the cross. He also discusses how Tom in effect becomes Casy's disciple, carrying on his ideas after Casy dies.

In understanding Casy's philosophy, it is important to have a working knowledge of the Transcendentalist view of the Oversoul. Ralph Waldo Emerson stated that there is a universal soul (an "Oversoul") of which all individual souls are a part: "… within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related" and "Every particular in nature, a leaf, a drop, a crystal, a moment of time is related to the whole, and partakes of the perfection of the whole. Each particle is a microcosm, and faithfully renders the likeness of the world."

In the novel, Tom says to Ma that Casy "went out in the wilderness to find his own soul, an' he foun' he jus' got a little piece of a great big soul. Says a wilderness ain't no good, 'cause his little piece of soul wasn't no good 'less it was with the rest, an' was whole."

What relationship can you now make between the themes Casy represented and the images through which Korie manifested these themes: the naked tree, the references to jails and fences, and the idea of "things turn around"?

(4) Other themes which Steinbeck and Korie explore are:

- Humans' inhumanity to each other
- Selfishness v. altruism
- Love of the earth
- Human dignity
- Dignity of wrath (personal anger becoming righteous indignation)
- Rebirth
- Life force (instinctive and persistent)

Find evidence of these themes in the opera. How are they supported by the action and the lyrics as well as by the music?

(5) Now let's go back to the title of the novel and the opera, *The Grapes of Wrath.* What were the first references we found to grapes (PP. 27, 28, 31, 32)? What did the grapes represent at the beginning of the opera? How did we relate this ironically to Tom hiding in a vineyard in Act Three?

In the novel, Steinbeck says, both metaphorically and in reference to the actual grapes which the small farmers can't afford to have picked because the large growers are keeping the prices up by destroying their "surplus" crops: "… and in the eyes of the people there is the failure; and in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage."

The title, of course, comes from "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" which, in turn, references Biblical books such as Deuteronomy ("grapes of gall") and Revelation ("the winepress of the wrath of God").

Keeping in mind all the themes and images we have looked at, what is Steinbeck's message to his readers? What does he see as the problem? What is the solution? *(NOTE: The educator might want to have the students hypothesize why Korie changed the dominant fruits of the novel – oranges, peaches – to plums in the case of the Endicott family. There might be no symbolic reason, but for this writer, who lives a good deal of the time in Metaphorland, a plum looks like a big grape and so carries the image of the grapes even further. Besides, making the Endicotts raise grapes would be a little too blatant. Just a thought.)*

(6) Immediately after its publication in 1938, *The Grapes of Wrath* was banned in Kern County, where much of the action takes place, as well as in other counties in California, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. Who do you think was upset? Look up "*Grapes of Wrath* Banned in Kern County": http://home.pacific.net.au/~greg.hub/banned.html. Are you surprised by any of the information in this article? Why do you think it has been one of the most banned books in American literature? What has all the excitement been about? How do you think this story speaks to us today? How do you think the opera will be received?

title of lesson

Lesson 4: Studs Terkel, the Theme of Community and Today's Okies

objective(s)

Students will understand the historical "Okies" and the theme of "community" found in *The Grapes of Wrath.*

material(s)

- libretto *The Grapes of Wrath*
- *The Grapes of Wrath* (Appendix c) (one copy per student)

procedures and assessments

In his 1988 introduction to the 50th anniversary edition of *The Grapes of Wrath* (Appendix c), Studs Terkel examines how the plight of the working poor of the Depression era resonated with small Midwestern farmers in the late 20th century who were being pushed off their land by large agricultural conglomerates, losing both their property and their self-respect. In his discussion, Terkel makes the following connection between the "music" of the novel and its themes:

> There are constant variations on this theme {community} throughout *The Grapes of Wrath,* as in a symphony. The novel is constructed more like a piece of music rather than mere prose…. John Steinbeck was listening to the lushness of Tchaikovsky and the dissonance of Stravinsky, while he traveled with the Joads and their fellow tribesmen…. In the musical architecture of the book are point and counterpoint. Each chapter, recounting the adventures of the individual family, the Joads, is followed by a brief contrapuntal sequence: the tribe, the thousands of Okie families on the move. The one, the many, all heading in the same direction. The singular flows into the plural, the 'I' into the 'We.' (vii-viii)

Terkel later states that the novel "is an anthem in praise of human community. And thus survival" (ix), and he criticizes the decade of the 1980s as a time of "mean-spiritedness," "an ethic of every man for himself" and a "disdain for those up against it" (x). And he makes the observation that "The Joads would indubitably have fallen into that dark recess; as millions of our dispossessed fall today" (x).

activity #1

After their work with the libretto, students should be asked to read the Terkel introduction and then to use the following as a basis for discussion and/or for a writing assignment:

(1) What were the denotation (actual meaning) and connotation (extended/emotional meaning) of the word "Okie" to the people along Route 66? To the California growers? What did the word mean to the people who were labeled by it, i.e. how did it make them feel about themselves?

(2) Who are today's "Okies"? In other words, what group(s) of people today might be thought of in the same way the Okies were regarded during the Depression? Explain:

- How does the new Okies' social situation resemble that of the Joads and other migrants?
- What segment of the American population would react to the new Okies in the same way the growers and others reacted to them during the 30s and WHY the reaction would be similar?
- What is your understanding of how the new Okies are handling their marginalized status in terms of their self-respect and their cohesiveness as a group?
- What is this new group of Okies doing or might/should do in order to become "legitimate" members of the society?
- What you believe is society's responsibility to these new Okies?
- Who might be the new Okies of 2025? Who might their antagonists be? What might happen to them?
- John Steinbeck said, "Hatred of the stranger occurs in the whole range of human history," and his message was that therefore we must reach out. How was this message reflected in the final scene of both the novel and the libretto? How does the theme of the "human community" play itself out in our culture today? Is there an increasing or decreasing sense of the "common good"? Think of specific examples to support both sides of this issue.

  (NOTE: Students might also be interested in exploring other examples of the marginalized poor such as the Minnesotans of the Iron Range and/or the work of other socially conscious authors or song-writers who have written about their plight, e.g. Woody Guthrie's "on the road" songs or the ballads of Bruce Springsteen.)

ACTIVITY #2

Students who are focusing on the music as well as the libretto could be asked to relate Terkel's comments on the musicality of the novel's prose style to Rickey Ian Gordon's structuring of the opera itself in terms of, for example,

- "lushness" v. "dissonance"
- contrapuntal sequencing
- the singular flowing into the plural
- the variations between the musicality of the Okies and the forces operating against them (growers, deputies, et al.)

(NOTE: In the journal he kept while writing the novel, Steinbeck says he wanted to compose the work "in a musical technique," trying to "use the forms and the mathematics of music rather than those of prose." It would be "symphonic" in "composition, in movement, in tone and in scope." Students working with the music might wish to discuss how the structure of the libretto fits Steinbeck's original intentions.)

title of lesson

Lesson 5: Steinbeck's Naturalism

objective(s)

Students will understand Steinbeck's use of naturalism in the novel *The Grapes of Wrath* and how it is present in the opera's libretto.

material(s)

- libretto *The Grapes of Wrath* (one per student)
- book *The Grapes of Wrath* (one per student) – optional

procedures and assessments

The opera preserves Steinbeck's naturalism in its own way. Have the students read the definition of naturalism and the elements which fit the novel and then see how they can relate these elements to the libretto itself. *(note: There will be some differences between the libretto and the novel. For example, in the libretto we are taken inside the head of a character like Noah during his suicide scene. The novel offers us no such interior psychological glimpses.)*

Naturalism: a theory of fiction which approaches life with a detached, objective, almost scientific outlook. Human beings are portrayed as insignificant and helpless creatures who act according to their instincts in response to the conditions of their environment. They do not exercise their individual intelligence and free will to any great extent. They are like puppets at the mercy of the physical/political/economic conditions which surround them. Nature itself is perceived as being indifferent. It is simply the environment and the physical forces which surround human beings.

Elements of Steinbeck's naturalism as seen in the novel:

- Human beings as helpless creatures who are at the mercy of the physical/political/economic forces which surround them.
- Emphasis on the animal nature of humans (reinforced by his imagery).
- Idea of economic determinism.
- Struggle for survival.
- Humans as victims of their environment (which itself is indifferent, neutral, "other").
- Humans portrayed by their words and actions, not their interior thoughts.

activities

(1) In groups (perhaps one group for each bulleted item), have students explore Steinbeck's naturalism as it has moved from the "page to the stage." What has remained the same? What has changed? How does the genre of opera lend itself to a modified presentation of these naturalistic elements? How does the author's naturalistic stance fit his subject matter? Why do you think Steinbeck didn't want to overly romanticize the plight of the migrant workers?

(2) Students can be asked to present their findings by means of a group presentation with as elaborate a set of criteria as the educator chooses. *(See the assignment for group work on the lenses for a possible model.)*

(3) Students can also be asked to write on this topic using specific examples from the libretto to illustrate their conclusions.

TITLE OF LESSON

Lesson 6: From novel to opera: "I'll be there …"

OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will learn how the main themes of *The Grapes of Wrath* are present in the "I'll be there …" scene.

MATERIAL(S)

- LIBRETTO *The Grapes of Wrath* (one copy per student)
- BOOK *The Grapes of Wrath* (one copy per student)
- DVD *The Grapes of Wrath* movie

PROCEDURES

(1) Students should read the original text of the "I'll be there" scene (libretto 3.6; novel, chapter 28) between Tom and Ma first:

> "I been thinkin' a hell of a lot, thinkin' about our people livin' like pigs, an' the good rich lan' layin' fallow, or maybe one fella with a million acres, while a hundred thousan' good farmers is starvin'. An' I been wonderin' if all our folks got together an' yelled…. I been thinkin', long as I'm a outlaw anyways, maybe I could…. Well, maybe like Casy says, a fella ain't got a soul of his own, but on'y a piece of a big one – an' then – "
>
> "Then what, Tom?"
>
> "Then it don't matter. Then I'll be aroun' in the dark. I'll be ever'where – wherever you look. Wherever they's a fight so hungry people can eat. I'll be there. Wherever they's a cop beatin' up a guy, I'll be there. If Casy knowed, why, I'll be in the way guys yell when they're mad an' – I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're hungry an' they know supper's ready. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build – why, I'll be there. See?"

(2) Secondly, the students should be shown this scene from the John Ford film and observe how Henry Fonda interprets this speech. How close are his words to the original? How has the scene changed from the novel to the film? Observe the camera angle. To whom could he be talking besides Ma? *(NOTE: Ford changes the scene because he radically changes the ending. Students might want to discuss why Ford may have made the changes he did, recalling that the film came out shortly after the novel was published. The Depression wasn't over yet.)*

(3) Third, students should look at scene 3.6 in the libretto and the answers to the questions they worked on while examining the speech at that time. Recall that Michael Korie employs the speech to bring in themes and images he has previously woven into his text, using them to reinforce Tom's emotional departure from the family.

(4) How do the three interpretations differ? How are they the same? How does Tom assert his spiritual unity with all the people in his situation? How has he moved from his original materialistic orientation and personal resentment to a sense of ethical indignation on a global scale, from particulars to principles?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

If the students have done the Studs Terkel activity, have them, individually or in small groups, write their own aria for a member of one of the groups they identified as "Today's Okies."

title of lesson

Lesson 7: Character Analysis through Song

objective(s)

Students will learn Guthrie's interpretation of the Tom Joad character in *The Grapes of Wrath* and create their own interpretation of a character in the novel.

material(s)

- lyrics for "Tom Joad" (one copy per student)
- various musical instruments – optional
- video recording equipment for final performances – optional

procedures and assessments

Woody Guthrie was so taken with the novel *The Grapes of Wrath* that he wrote a song entitled "Tom Joad" which narrates Tom's story and defines the arc of his character.
(See www.ac.wwu.edu/~stephan/Steinbeck/grapes.song.tomjoad.html.)

activity

(1) Students should read the lyrics. *(note: The music itself can also be downloaded from a variety of websites.)*

(2) Either in pairs or individually, students should choose one of the opera's main characters or choose to become the voice of an anonymous migrant (or grower or waitress, etc.) and make up their own song about that person's experience during this time of immigration during the 1930s. (They can use the tune of a song they already know or make up their own.) We suggest "extra credit" for an in-class performance.

title of lesson

Lesson 8: Working with the Libretto Using Literary Lenses

objective(s)

Students will understand *The Grapes of Wrath* through various literary lenses.

material(s)

- libretto *The Grapes of Wrath* (one copy per student
- **Working with the Libretto Using Literary Lenses Worksheet** (one copy per student)

procedures and assessments

One very productive and insightful way to look at both the novel and the libretto is through the use of literary lenses. For those unfamiliar with lens work, we suggest Deborah Appleman's book, *Critical Encounters in High School English: Teaching Literary Theory to Adolescents*; however, it isn't necessary for either educators or students to be scholars of literary theory in order to examine a text through these different perspectives.

The theories which lend themselves most appropriately to *The Grapes of Wrath* are the following (definitions from Appleman):

Archetypal Criticism: In criticism "archetype" signifies narrative designs, character types or images which are said to be identifiable in a wide variety of works of literature, as well as in myths, dreams and even ritualized modes of social behavior. The archetypal similarities within these diverse phenomena are held to reflect a set of universal, primitive and elemental patterns, whose effective embodiment in a literary work evokes a profound response from the reader. The death-rebirth theme is often said to be the archetype of archetypes. Other archetypal themes are the journey underground, the heavenly ascent, the search for the father, the paradise-Hades image, the Promethean rebel-hero, the scapegoat, the earth goddess and the fatal woman.

Marxist Criticism: A Marxist Critic grounds his [sic] theory and practice on the economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles, especially on the following claims:

(1) The evolving history of humanity, its institutions and its ways of thinking are determined by the changing mode of its "material production" – that is, of its basic economic organization.

(2) Historical changes in the fundamental mode of production effect essential changes both in the constitution and power relations of social classes, which carry on a conflict for economic, political and social advantage.

(3) Human consciousness in any era is constituted by an ideology – that is a set of concepts, beliefs, values and ways of thinking and feeling through which human beings perceive, and by which they explain what they take to be reality. A Marxist Critic typically undertakes to "explain" the literature in any era by revealing the economic, class and ideological determinants of the way an author writes, and to examine the relation of the text to the social reality of that time and place.

This school of critical theory focuses on power and money in works of literature. Who has the power/money? Who does not? What happens as a result?

Historical Criticism: Using this theory requires that you apply to a text specific historical information about the time during which an author wrote. History, in this case, refers to the social, political, economic, cultural and/or intellectual climate of the time.

ACTIVITY #1

Students could be divided into three groups, one for each lens, (or, e.g., nine groups, one for each lens for each act of the libretto) to explore how each of the above lenses could be applied to the text. Criteria for the assignment could include the following (adapted according to group size and the number of pages each group is assigned):

(1) Examine your part of the text according to the lens with which you are working.

(2) Find 2–3 themes or observations the opera is exploring which relate to your lens.

(3) Find 6 specific quotations which express the text's views on these themes/observations. *(NOTE: If students used the secondary source essays, they could also be asked to provide documentation from one or more of those to support their stance.)*

(4) Prepare an oral presentation in which your group shares its findings with the class including:

   A. An explanation of how your lens relates to the text.

   B. An explanation of the themes highlighted in your section of the text.

   C. Your six quotations, which have been put on a transparency, which you will incorporate into your presentation.

EXAMPLES

Students assigned the Archetypal lens may focus on the Joads as examples of the Biblical journey from bondage to the Promised Land, on Casy or Tom as a Promethean rebel-hero, the death-rebirth theme on a social scale, etc.

Students who are assigned the Marxist lens might decide, for example, that there are two main themes that are illustrated by their section of the text:

   (1) poverty v. wealth/greed

   (2) The necessity of social unity for survival

They might cite the struggle between the growers and the migrant workers, the development of the theme of community through the experience at the government camp, etc.

Students assigned the Historical lens would of course focus on how the Joad journey becomes a microcosm for the entire migrant experience during the Depression.

ACTIVITY #2

Activity #1 would lend itself well to a student essay based on the lens work. The educator could have the student deal either with their part of the libretto (if it has been divided) or with the entire opera (an incentive to take good notes on their classmates' presentations). Educators who are also focusing on the music could incorporate into the assignment how the melodies themselves amplify the meaning of the text.

Working with the Libretto using Literary Lenses Worksheet

LESSON 8 NAME _____

ACTIVITY #1

Divide into three groups, one for each lens, (or, e.g., nine groups, one for each lens for each act of the libretto) to explore how each of the above lenses could be applied to the text. Criteria for the assignment could include the following (adapted according to group size and the number of pages each group is assigned):

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title of lesson

Lesson 9: Symposium Assignment

objective(s)

Students will understand the large concepts that make up *The Grapes of Wrath.*

material(s)

- libretto *The Grapes of Wrath* (one per student)
- book *The Grapes of Wrath* (one per student)
- **Symposium Assignment Worksheet** (one copy per student)
- Teacher's Guide – Appendix a and b (one copy per student)
- Large sheet of paper (at least 4 x 4)
- Various other items to illustrate presentation (see final symposium step for details)

procedures and assessments

Depending on the amount of time you plan to spend with the opera in class, this assignment pulls together several of the previous smaller assignments into one activity which puts the onus of reading and interpretation on the students themselves. We suggest this would be appropriate for older and more advanced students who are capable of this kind of independent work. They could use the libretto study questions as a guide to their analysis. They should also be directed to other activities within this study guide which will guide their research.

The Grapes of Wrath: Symposium Assignment

The symposium will include:

- A large time line/map of the Joad family's progress through your scenes labeled with significant details and events. The map should include AT LEAST FIVE quotations from the text to illustrate the events chosen. The map should be large enough to be seen from the back of the room. (Bonus points for illustrations.)
- An oral explanation of your scenes including a scene-by-scene recounting of the events of the narrative, including detailed references to the following:
  - Events
  - Character development
  - Symbols (including names, images, Biblical references, etc.)
  - Three or more quotations from the libretto to illustrate your points (in addition to the 5 on the map)
  - Important themes being developed
  - Two relevant examples of naturalism seen in your scenes

The symposium will also include three cuttings from the libretto (acted out – sung or spoken) of no more than two minutes each. These should represent key moments which reinforce main themes or character development, not just events alone.

The symposium should be planned for 20–25 minutes with the last 5 minutes reserved for a discussion. Plan 3–4 discussion questions to share with the class at the end of your presentation.

Note to students: Bonus points for the addition of appropriate music and costumes.

John Steinbeck: An American Writer Worksheet

LESSON 9 NAME _____

DIRECTIONS

You will be working with a group of 3–4 other students to prepare a symposium presentation of selected scenes from the libretto of the opera, *The Grapes of Wrath.* You will receive two grades for this assignment: an individual grade and a group grade. Each evaluation will be worth ____ points. All group members MUST be equally involved in the presentation itself. *(NOTE: Before you begin, all group members should reread your assigned scenes and should read the Lisca essays, Appendix A and Appendix B.)*

The symposium will include:

- A large time line/map of the Joad family's progress through your scenes labeled with significant details and events. The map should include AT LEAST FIVE quotations from the text to illustrate the events chosen. The map should be large enough to be seen from the back of the room. (Bonus points for illustrations.)
- An oral explanation of your scenes including a scene-by-scene recounting of the events of the narrative, including detailed references to the following:
  - Events
  - Character development
  - Symbols (including names, images, Biblical references, etc.)
  - Three or more quotations from the libretto to illustrate your points (in addition to the 5 on the map)
  - Important themes being developed
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The symposium will also include three cuttings from the libretto (acted out – sung or spoken) of no more than two minutes each. These should represent key moments which reinforce main themes or character development, not just events alone.

The symposium should be planned for 20–25 minutes with the last 5 minutes reserved for a discussion. Plan 3–4 discussion questions to share with the class at the end of your presentation.

Note to students: Bonus points for the addition of appropriate music and costumes.

Appendix A

"The Grapes of Wrath" by Peter Lisca

Steinbeck's trek from Oklahoma to the cotton fields of California in the fall of 1937 was not the first of such forays made to observe his materials at first hand. He had made several trips into the agricultural areas of California in preparation for his strike novel, and immediately after completing *Of Mice and Men* in September of 1936 he had gone to observe the squatters' camps near Salinas and Bakersfield. There he gathered materials for "Dubious Battle in California" (*Nation,* Sept. 12, 1936) and a series of seven other articles called "The Harvest Gypsies," which appeared in the *San Francisco News,* October 5–12, 1936. [1] On his return from this trip he wrote to Ben Abramson, "California is not very far from civil war. I hope it can be averted." (JS-BA, 10/?/36) He expressed the same concern to his agents: "I just returned yesterday from the strike area of Salinas and from my migrants in Bakersfield. This thing is dangerous. Maybe it will be patched up for a while, but I look for the lid to blow off in a few weeks. Issues are very sharp here now.... My material drawer is chock full." (Steinbeck to Mclntosh and Otis [hereafter MO], 10/7/36)

During one period that autumn Steinbeck lived in one of the federal migrant camps in central California and wrote to Lawrence Clark Powell, "I have to write this sitting in a ditch. I'm out working – may go south to pick a little cotton. Migrants are going south now and I'll probably go along." [2] After the publication of *The Grapes of Wrath* these migrants sent Steinbeck a patchwork dog sewn from pieces of shirttails and dresses and bearing around its neck a tag with the inscription "Migrant John."

The *San Francisco News* articles are straight-forward reports of living conditions among migrant workers, along with suggestions and appeals for a more enlightened treatment of these people. Although they contain several details which were later incorporated in *The Grapes of Wrath*, these articles are significant primarily as a record of Steinbeck's attitude toward the people and conditions which he was to use as the materials of his great novel. Actually, the extremes of poverty, injustice, and suffering depicted in these articles are nowhere equaled in *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Steinbeck was still trying to understand the total situation. He did not go into the field to substantiate a ready-made theory. When the editors of *Occident* asked him for an article of a political nature, he refused, saying, "Generalities seem to solidify so quickly into stupidities. A writer can only honestly say – 'This is the way it seems to me at this moment.' "He didn't think he knew enough about the situation and didn't wish to retire into some "terminology." Steinbeck did, however, allow the editors to print his letter of refusal, part of which follows:

> The changes go on so rapidly and it is so hard to see! Sad that it will be so easy in fifty years. Of course there is a larger picture one can feel. I suppose the appellations communist and fascist are adequate. I don't really think they are. I'm probably making a mistake in simply listening to men talk and watching them act, hoping that the projection of the microcosm will define the outlines of the macrocosm. There will come a time and that soon, I suppose, when such a position will be when we'll all put on blinders and put our heads down, and yelling some meaningless rallying cry, we'll do what men of every other time have done – tear the guts out of our own race.[3]

Unlike Doc in *In Dubious Battle*, however. Steinbeck's attempt to understand did not make him a dispassionate observer. In the autumn of that same year he was planning to accept a Hollywood contract of a thousand dollars a week for six weeks' work on *Of Mice and Men* so that he could give two dollars apiece to three thousand migrants. Pascal Covici flew out to the coast to talk him out of it. Early in 1938, in the midst of work on the new novel, he wrote his agents, "I must go over into the interior valleys. There are five thousand families starving to death over there, not just hungry, but actually starving.... In one tent there are twenty people quarantined for smallpox and two of the women are to have babies in that tent this week.... Talk about Spanish children. The death of children by starvation in our valleys is simply staggering.... I'll do what I can.... Funny how mean and how little books become in the face of such tragedies." [4] When *Life* offered to send him into the field with a photographer to write about the migrants, he informed his agents that he would accept no money other than expenses – "I'm sorry but I simply can't make money on these people.... The

suffering is too great for me to cash in on it." (JS-MO, 3/?/38) It is this great compassion which accounts for the difference in tone between *In Dubious Battle* and *The Grapes of Wrath.*

But this compassion, this honest indignation, did not carry Steinbeck into propagandism or blind him to his responsibilities as a novelist. "The subject is so large that it scares me," he wrote. "And I am not going to rush it. It must be worked out with care." (JS-MO, 1/?/37) By June of 1938 he finished a sixty-thousand-word novel called *L'Affaire Lettuceberg.* To his agents and publishers, who were expecting the book and had announced it variously as *Oklahoma* and *Lettuceberg*, he sent the following joint letter:

> This is going to be a hard letter to write. I feel badly about it. You see this book is finished and it is a bad book and I must get rid of it. It can't be printed. It is bad because it isn't honest. Oh! the incidents all happened but – I'm not telling as much of the truth about them as I know. In satire you have to restrict the picture and I just can't do satire.... I know that a great many people would think they liked this book. I, myself, have built up a hole-proof argument on how and why I liked it. I can't beat the argument, but I don't like the book. And I would be doing Pat a greater injury in letting him print it than I would by destroying it. Not once in the writing of it have I felt the curious warm pleasure that comes when work is going well. My whole work drive has been aimed at making people understand each other and then I deliberately write this book, the aim of which is to cause hatred through partial understanding. My father would have called it a smart-alec book. It was full of tricks to make people ridiculous. If I can't do better I have slipped badly. And that I won't admit – yet.... (JS-MO, 6/?/38)

Such a letter makes ridiculous any insinuation that Steinbeck's "social protest" was literary opportunism. It is Steinbeck's corollary to Hemingway's ideal of writing "truly," without "tricks," and without "cheating."

Steinbeck continued to work on his big novel all that summer, and by autumn it was in its final stages. "I am desperately tired," he wrote, "but I want to finish. And mean. I feel as though shrapnel were bursting about my head. I only hope the book is some good. Can't tell yet at all. And I can't tell whether it is balanced. It is a slow plodding book but I don't think that it is dull." [5] On September 16, 1938, he sent Pascal Covici the book's title – *The Grapes of Wrath* – saying, "I like the soft with the hard and the marching content and the American revolutionary content." Three months later he suggested to Covici that the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" be printed somewhere in the book, possibly as end pages. (Steinbeck to Pascal Covici [hereafter PC], 12/22/38)

The completion of *The Grapes of Wrath* late in 1938 left Steinbeck exhausted. He was confined to bed for some weeks and forbidden on doctor's orders to read or write. But he conscientiously saw the book through the press. As in the publication of *In Dubious Battle*, there arose the problem of printable language. Steinbeck's stand was again firm. He warned the publishers that no words must be changed; even "shit-heels" must remain. (JS-PC, 1/15/39) Also, he refused to have included in the book a page reproduced in his own handwriting. He insisted on keeping his personality out of it. The book was to stand on its own merits, even if it meant a loss in sales. He didn't want "that kind" of reader anyway. (JS-PC, 2/23/39) In April, 1939, The Viking Press brought out *The Grapes of Wrath.*

The Grapes of Wrath did not have a chance of being accepted and evaluated as a piece of fiction. From the very beginning it was taken as substantial fact and its merits debated as a document rather than a novel. This was to be expected in a decade which had produced such motion pictures as Pare Lorentz' *The River* and *The Plow That Broke the Plains*; such books as Dorothea Lange's and Paul S. Taylor's *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion,* Archibald MacLeish's *Land of the Free*, Erskine Caldwell's and Margaret Bourke-White's *You Have Seen Their Faces*, and the WPA collection of case histories called *These Are Our Lives*, to cite only a few. The line between social documentation and fiction has never been so hazy, and this lack of a definite line resulted in works like *Land of the Free*, which neither an illustrated text nor a book of pictures with captions, but a form in itself. Often what was intended as social documentation and reportage had a literary value achieved only rarely in proletarian fiction – Ruth McKenney's Industrial Valley being an example.

Even aside from the fact that *The Grapes of Wrath* came in such a period, Steinbeck's novel had the vulnerability of all social fiction – it was subject to attack on its facts. It is not within the scope of this study to present an exhaustive analysis either of the attack made on his facts and their defense or of the sociological and political consequences of the book, but a small sampling of the relevant literature may indicate the nature of that social-political-economic controversy which eclipsed *The Grapes of Wrath* as a novel.

Within two months after the publication of T*he Grapes of Wrath*, there appeared a slim volume called *Grapes of Gladness: California's Refreshing and Inspiring Answer to John Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath."* This title, a remnant from the age of pamphleteering, was affixed to the story of a family of migrants who came to California poverty-stricken and found that everyone, including the banks and growers, welcome them with open arms. They were given free land, loaned money, and lionized. In an "Addenda" to this soap opera, the author tries to break down some of Steinbeck's facts" [6]

Another book, *The Truth About John Steinbeck and the Migrants*, tells of its author's own experiences on a trip which he made, disguised as a migrant, just to see what conditions really were. This "migrant" found that he was able to average four dollars a day on wages and that almost all the growers begged him to stay with them and live in the ranch house all year round. In an essay which prefaces this sojourn in the land of Canaan, the author calls *The Grapes of Wrath* "a novel wherein naturalism has gone berserk. Where truth has run amuck drunken upon prejudice and exaggeration, where matters economic have been hurled beyond the pale of rational and realistic thinking." [7]

Defenses of the book's accuracy were no less vehement. Professors of sociology, ministers, and government officials put themselves on record that Steinbeck's information was accurate.[8] The subject was debated on radio programs such as "Town Meeting," and the book was publicly reviewed before mass audiences. Before making the motion picture, Zanuck sent private detectives to ascertain the accuracy of the novel and found conditions even worse than described by Steinbeck.[9] The author himself, accompanied by a photographer, visited hundreds of migrant camps, took notes and made a pictorial record which was later printed in *Life* as evidence that the motion picture had not exaggerated. The book itself was both banned and burned on both political and pornographic grounds from Buffalo, New York, to California, and Archbishop Spellman's denunciation of it appeared in all the Hearst papers. Not the least antagonism was fomented in Oklahoma, whose native sons found themselves degraded arid abused and whose bookstores found that the novel's circulation exceeded even that of *Gone With the Wind.* Oklahoma Congressman Lyle Boren denounced the book in Congress, maintaining that "the heart and brain and character of the average tenant farmer of Oklahoma cannot be surpassed and probably not equaled by any other group…." He called the book itself "a black, infernal creation of a twisted, distorted mind." The Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce tried to stop the filming of the picture.[10] No American novel since *Uncle Tom Cabin* has created such an immediate reaction on so many levels.

While the exploration of these frenzied reactions to the factual details of *The Grapes of Wrath* is more pertinent to sociology and perhaps even psychology than it is to either the history or criticism of literature, critical reactions to the novel's social philosophy do come within the scope of this study.

One extreme position is best stated by the author of *The Truth About John Steinbeck and the Migrants*, who "can think of no other novel which advances the idea of class war and promotes hatred of class against class … more than does *The Grapes of Wrath*." [11] It is directly opposed by Stanley Edgar Hyman: "Actually, as a careful reading makes clear, the central message of *The Grapes of Wrath* is an appeal to the owning class to behave, to become enlightened, rather than to the working class to change its own conditions." [12]

That it could not have been Steinbeck's intention to urge organized revolt is indicated not only in his letter retracting *L'Affaire Lettuceberg*, but also in the series of articles which he wrote for the *San Francisco News* in October of 1936. The first of these articles ends with the warning that "California… is gradually building up a human structure which will certainly change the State, and may, if handled with the inhumanity and stupidity that have characterized the past, destroy the present system of agricultural economics." [13] Steinbeck makes a similar point at the end of his article in *The Nation*: "It is fervently to be hoped that the great group of migrant workers so necessary to the harvesting of California's crops may be given the right to live decently, that they may not be so badgered, tormented, and hurt that in the end they become avengers of the hundreds of thousands who have been tormented and starved before them." [14] In his third article of the *News* series appears another warning that "a continuation of this approach [intimidation and repression] constitutes a criminal endangering of the peace of the State." [15] In the final article of this series, Steinbeck offers three suggestions: first, that migrant laborers be allotted small "subsistence" farms on which they can live and work when there is no call for migrant labor; second, that a Migratory Labor Board be created to help allot labor where needed and

to determine fair wages; third, that vigilante-ism and terrorism be punished. Steinbeck's proposed alternative to this solution has a keen logic: "If, on the other hand, as has been stated by a large grower, our agriculture requires the creation and maintenance of a peon class, then it is submitted that California agriculture is economically unsound under a democracy." [16] There is certainly no Marxian class war or Bolshevik revolutionary ardor here. Steinbeck's statement about an American "peon" milder even than that of Walt Whitman in "Notes Left Over." "If the United States," said Whitman, "like the countries of the Old World, are also to grow vast crops of poor, desperate, dissatisfied; nomadic, miserably-waged populations … then our republican "experiment, notwithstanding all its surface-success, is at heart an unhealthy failure."

Actually, as Frederick I. Carpenter has observed, Steinbeck's social philosophy had three roots: "For the first time in history, *The Grapes of Wrath* brings together and makes real three skeins of American thought. It begins with the transcendental oversold, Emerson's faith in the common man, and his Protestant self-reliance. To this it joins Whitman's religion of the love of all man and his mass democracy. And it combines these mystical and poetic ideas with the realistic philosophy of pragmatism and its emphasis on effective action." Jim Casy "translates American philosophy into words of one syllable, and the Joads translate it into action." [17]

Another critic, Chester E. Eisinger, taking note of Carpenter's observations, suggests that there must be added a fourth skein of American thought – the agrarianism of Jefferson: "Because he had faith in the common man and thus gave his thinking a broad popular basis, Steinbeck was closer to Jeffersonianism than were the Southern Agrarians, who sought to resurrect not only an agricultural way of life but also the traditional cultural values of Europe. Steinbeck was also concerned with democracy, and looked upon agrarianism as a way of life that would enable us to realize the full potentialities of the creed. Jefferson, of course, held the same." [18]

Steinbeck had dealt with this theme of man's relationship with this theme the land earlier – in *To a God Unknown* and *Of Mice and Men*. In these works the relationship is mystical, symbolic, and mythical. White values persist in *The Grapes of Wrath*, man's identification with the growth cycle is also seen as pragmatic, socially practical in Jeffersonian terms. The human erosion pictured in the book is as much the result of a separation from the land as it is of poverty. And because for the absentee growers their land has become a column of figures in a book, they too are suffering an erosion – a moral one. Jefferson would have had no difficulty understanding what Steinbeck was getting at in one of his *San Francisco News* articles – that the loss of land led to a loss of dignity, which he defined not as a sense of self-importance, but as "a register of man's responsibility to the community": "We regard this destruction of dignity, then, as one of the most regrettable results of the migrant's life since it does reduce his responsibility and does make him a sullen outcast who will strike at our government in any way that occurs to him." [19]

Although *The Grapes of Wrath* brings together these four important skeins of American thought, it can be considered one of our great American novels only to the extent that it succeeds in realizing these ideas in the concrete forms of art. As Alex Comfort has put it, "The critical importance of a writer's ideas is this: if their scope is insufficient to cover the material he deals with, and to cover it in a coherent manner, irrespective of their immediate truth, they may render him unable to write at that level which, by common agreement, we call major literature." [20]

The ideas and materials of *The Grapes of Wrath* presented Steinbeck with the most difficult problem of structure he had faced so far. Neither the variations on a single line of action and development that he had used in *Cup of Gold, To a God Unknown, In Dubious Battle*, and *Of Mice and Men* nor the episodic structure of *The Pastures of Heaven* and *Tortilla Flat* could handle the scope and diversity of *The Grapes of Wrath.* His position was not unlike that of Tolstoy in writing *War and Peace.* Tolstoy's materials were, roughly, the adventures of the Bezukhov, Rostov, and Bolkonski families on the one hand, and the Napoleonic wars on the other. And while these two blocks of material were brought together in the plot development, there was enough material about the Napoleonic wars left over so that the author had to incorporate it in separate, philosophic interchapters. Steinbeck's materials were similar. There were the adventures of the Joad family and there was also the Great Depression. And, like Tolstoy, he had enough material left over to write separate, philosophic interchapters.

In the light of this basic analogy, Percy Lubbock's comments on the structural role of these two elements in *War and Peace* become significant for an analysis of structure in *The Grapes of Wrath*: "I can discover no angle at which the two stories will appear to unite and merge in a single impression. Neither is subordinated to the other, and there is nothing above them … to which they are both related. Nor are they placed together to illustrate a contrast; nothing results from their juxtaposition. Only from time to time, upon no apparent principle and without a word of warning, one of them is dropped and the other resumed." [21]

In these few phrases Lubbock has defined the aesthetic conditions not only for *War and Peace*, but for any other piece of fiction whose strategies include an intercalary construction – *The Grapes of Wrath*, for example. The test is whether anything "results" from this kind of structure.

Counting the opening description of the drought and the penultimate chapter on the rains, pieces of straightforward description allowable even to strictly "scenic" novels (Lubbock's term for materials presented entirely from the objective point of view), there are in *The Grapes of Wrath* sixteen interchapters, making up a total of just under a hundred pages – almost one sixth of the book. In none of these chapters do the Joads, Wilsons, or Wainwrights appear.

These interchapters have two main functions. First, by presenting the social background they serve to amplify the pattern of action created by the Joad family. To this purpose, thirteen of the sixteen chapters are largely devoted. Chapter 1, for example, describe in panoramic terms the drought which forces the Joads off their land. Chapter 5 is mostly a dialogue between two generalized forces, the banks and the farmers, presenting in archetype the conflict in which the Joads are caught up. Chapters 7 and 9 depict, respectively, the buying of jalopies and the selling of household goods. Chapter 11 describes at length a decaying and deserted house which is the prototype of all the houses abandoned in the dust bowl. Other chapters explore, through the collage technique of chapters 7 and 9, the nature of that new, nomadic society which the Joads are helping to form (14, 17, 23). Almost every aspect of the Joads' adventures is enlarged in the interchapters and seen as part of the social climate.

The remaining three intercalary chapters (19, 21, and 25) have the function of providing such historical information as trip development of land ownership in California, the consequent development of migrant labor, and certain economic aspects of the social lag, These three "informative" chapters make up only nineteen of the novel's six hundred odd pages. Scattered through the sixteen interchapters are occasional paragraphs whose purpose is to present, with choric effect, the philosophy or social message to which the current situation gives rise. For the most part, these paragraphs occur in four chapters – 9, 11, 14, and 19.

While all these various materials are obviously ideologically related to the longer, narrative section of the novel (five hundred pages), there remains the problem of their aesthetic integration with the book as a whole. Even a cursory reading will show that there is a general correspondence between the material of each intercalary chapter and that of the current narrative portion. The magnificent opening description of the drought sets forth the condition which gives rise to the novel's action. Chapter 5 deals with the banks' foreclosing of mortgages, which forces the sharecroppers to emigrate. Highway 66 is given a chapter as the Joads begin their trek on that historic route. The chapters dealing with migrant life on the highway appear interspersed with the narrative of the Joads' actual journey. The last intercalary chapter, 29, describes the rain and flood in which the action of the novel ends.

A more careful reading will make it evident that this integration of the interchapters into a total structure goes far beyond a merely complementary juxtaposition. There is in addition an intricate interweaving of specific details. The chapter about the banks, for example, comes immediately after Tom and Casy see the deserted Joad farmhouse and is itself followed by a narrative chapter particularizing many of that chapter's generalities: As with the anonymous house in the intercalary chapter (5), one corner of the Joad house has been knocked off its foundation by a tractor. The man who in the interchapter threatens the tractor driver with his rifle becomes Grampa Joad, except that where the anonymous tenant does not fire, Grampa shoots out both headlights. The tractor driver in the intercalary chapter, Joe Davis, is a family acquaintance of the anonymous tenant, as Willy is an acquaintance of the Joads in the narrative

chapter. The general dialogue between banks and tenants in the intercalary chapter is particularized by Muley in the narrative chapter: "Well, the guy that come aroun' talked nice as pie. "You got to get off. It ain't my fault.' 'Well,' I says, 'Whose fault is it? I'll go an' nut the fella.' 'It's the Shawnee Lan' an' Cattle Company. I jus' got orders.' 'Who's the Shaw-nee Lan' an' Cattle Company?' 'It ain't nobody. It's a company.' Got a fella crazy. There wasn't nobody you could lay for." The jalopy sitting in the Joads' front yard is the kind of jalopy described in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 ends with Al Joad driving off to sell a truckload of household goods. Chapter 9 is an intercalary chapter describing destitute farmers selling such goods, including many items which the Joads themselves are selling – pumps, farming tools, furniture, a team and wagon for ten dollars. In the following chapter the Joads' truck returns empty, the men having sold everything for eighteen dollars – including ten dollars they got for a team and wagon. Every chapter is locked into the book's narrative portion by this kind of specific cross reference, which amplifies the Joads' typical actions to the dimensions of a communal experience.

Often, this interlocking of details becomes thematic or symbolic. The dust which is mentioned twenty-seven times in three pages of chapter 1 comes to stand not only for the land itself, but also for the basic situation out of which the novel's action develops. Everything which moves on the ground, from insects to trucks, raises a proportionate amount of dust; "a walking man lifted a thin layer as high as his waist." When Tom returns home after four years in prison and gets out of the truck which has given him a lift, he steps off the highway, and performs the symbolic ritual of taking off his new, prison issue shoes and carefully working his bare feet into the dust. He then moves off across the land, "making a cloud that hung low to the ground behind him."

One of the novel's most important symbols, the turtle, is presented in what is actually the first intercalary chapter (3). And while this chapter is a masterpiece of realistic description (often included as such in Freshman English texts), it is also obvious that the turtle's symbolic and its adventures prophetic allegory. "Nobody can keep a turtle though," says Jim Casy. "They work at it and work at it, and at last one day they get out and away they go…." (P. 28) "The indomitable life force which drives the turtle drives the Joads, and in the same direction – southwest. As the turtle picks up seeds in its shell and drops them on the other side of the road, so the Joads pick up life and take it across the country to California. (As Grandfather in "The Leader of the People" puts it, "We carried life out here and set it down the way those ants carry eggs.") As the turtle survives the truck's attempt to smash it on the highway and as it crushes the red ant which runs into its shell, so the Joads endure the perils of their journey.

This symbolic value is retained and further defined when the turtle specifically enters the narrative. The incident with the red ant echoed two hundred and seventy pages later when another red ant runs over "the folds of loose skin" on Granma's neck and she reaches up with her "little wrinkled claws"; Ma Joad picks it off and crushes it. In chapter 3 the turtle is seen "dragging his high-domed shell across the grass." In the next chapter, Tom sees "the high-domed back of a land turtle" and, picking up the turtle, carries it with him. It is only when he is convinced that his family has left the land that he releases the turtle, which travels "southwest, as it had been from the first," a direction which is repeated in the next two sentences. The first thing which Tom does after releasing the turtle is to put on his shoes, which he took off when he left the highway. Thus, not only the turtle but also Tom's connection with it is symbolic, as symbolic as Lennie's appearance in *Of Mice and Men*, with a dead mouse in his pocket.

In addition to this constant knitting together of the two kinds of chapters, often the interchapters themselves are further assimilated into the narrative portion by incorporating in themselves the techniques of fiction. There are no more than a half-dozen paragraphs in the book which are aimed directly at the reader or delivered by the author. The general conflict between small farmers and the banks, for example, is presented as an imaginary dialogue, each speaker personifying the sentiments of his group. And although neither, speaker is a "real" person, they are dramatically differentiated and their arguments embody details particular to the specific social condition. Each speaker is like the chorus in a Greek tragedy.[22] This kind of dramatization is also evident in those chapters concerned with the buying of used cars, the selling of household goods, the police intimidation of migrants, and others.

These structural techniques for integrating the two parts of *The Grapes of Wrath* are greatly implemented by a masterful command of prose style. In his novels after *To a God Unknown*, Steinbeck had demonstrated the variety of prose styles that he could weld into the very meaning of a novel—prose styles as different as those of *Tortilla Flat* and *In Dubious Battle*. In *The Grapes of Wrath* there is such a number of strategically employed prose styles that the novel almost amounts to a tour de force. No Steinbeck novel begins so auspiciously:

> To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma, the last rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth. The plows crossed and recrossed the rivulet marks. The last rains lifted the corn quickly and scattered weed colonies and grass along the sides of the roads so that the gray country and the dark red country began to disappear under a green cover. In the last part of May the sky grew pale and the clouds that had hung in high puffs for so long in the spring were dissipated. The sun flared down on the growing corn day after day until a line of brown spread along the edge of each green bayonet. The clouds appeared, and went away, and in a while they did not try any more. The weeds grew darker green to protect themselves, and they did not spread any more. The surface of the earth crusted, a thin hard crust, and as the sky became pale, so the earth became pale, pink, in the red country and white in the gray country.

This opening paragraph is as carefully worked out as an overture to an opera. The themes of red, gray, green, and earth are announced and given parallel developments: red to pink, gray to white, green to brown, and ploughed earth to thin hard crust. The pervading structural rhythm of each sentence is echoed in the paragraph as a whole, a paragraph promising a story of epic sweep and dignity.

The extent to which this style is indebted to the Old Testament can be strikingly demonstrated by arranging a similar passage from the novel according to phrases, in the manner of the Bates Bible, leaving the punctuation intact:

> The tractors had lights shining,
> For there is no day and night for a tractor
> And the disks turn the earth in the darkness
> And they glitter in the daylight.
>
> And when a horse stops work and goes into the barn
> There is a life and a vitality left,
> There is a breathing and a warmth,
> And the feet shift on the straw,
> And the jaws chomp on the hay.
> And the ears and the eyes are alive.
> There is a warmth of life in the barn,
> And the heat and smell of life.
>
> But when the motor of a tractor stops,
> It is as dead as the ore it came from.
> The heat goes out of it
> Like the living heat that leaves a corpse.

The parallel grammatical structure of parallel meanings, the simplicity of diction, the balance, the concrete details, the summary sentences, the reiterations – all are here. Note also the organization: four phrases for the tractor, eight for the horse, four again for the tractor. Except for the terms of machinery, the passage might be one of the Psalms.

It is this echo – more, this pedal point – evident even in the most obviously "directed" passages of the interchapters, which supports their often simple philosophy, imbuing them with a dignity which their content alone could not sustain. The style gives them their authority:

> Burn coffee for fuel in the ships. Burn corn to keep warm, it makes a hot fire. Dump potatoes in the rivers and place guards along the banks to keep the hungry people from fishing them out. Slaughter the pigs and bury them, and let the putrescence drip down into the earth.
>
> There is a crime here that goes beyond denunciation. There is a sorrow here that weeping cannot symbolize. There is a failure here that topples all our success. The fertile earth, the straight tree rows, the sturdy trunks, and the ripe fruit. And children dying of pellagra must die because a profit cannot be taken from an orange.

These passages are not complex philosophy, but they may well be profound. The Biblical resonance which gives them power is used discreetly, is never employed on the trivial and particular, and its recurrence has a cumulative effect.

There are many other distinct prose styles in the interchapters of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and each is just as functional in its place. There is, for example, the harsh, staccato prose of chapter 7, which is devoted to the sale of used cars:

> Cadillacs, La Salles, Buicks, Plymouths, Packards, Chevies, Fords, Pontiacs. Row on row, headlights glinting in the afternoon sun. Good Used Cars.
>
> Soften 'em up, Joe. Jesus, I wisht I had a thousand jalopies! Get ' em ready to deal, an' I' ll close 'em.
>
> Goin' to California? Here's jus' what you need. Looks shot, but they' a thousan's of miles in her.
>
> Lined up side by side. Good Used Cars. Bargains. Clean, runs good.

A good contrast to this hectic prose is offered by Chapter 9, which presents the loss and despair of people forced to abandon their household goods. Here the style itself takes on a dazed resignation:

> The women sat among the doomed things, turning them over and looking past them and back. This book. My father had it. He liked a book. *Pilgrim's Progress*. Used to read it. Got his name on it. And his pipe — still smells rank. And this picture – an angel. I looked at that before the fust three come — didn't seem to do much good. Think we could get this china dog in? Aunt Sadie brought it from the St. Louis Fair. See? Wrote right on it. No, I guess not. Here's a letter my brother wrote the day before he died. Here's an old time hat. These feathers — never got to use them. No, there isn't room.

At times, as in the description of a folk dance in chapter 23, the prose style becomes a veritable chameleon:

> Look at that Texas boy, long legs loose, taps four times for ever' damn step. Never see a boy swing aroun' like that. Look at him swing that Cherokee girl, red in her cheeks and her toe points out. Look at her pant, look at her heave. Think she's tired? Think she's winded? Well, she ain't. Texas boy got his hair in his eyes, mouth's wide open, can't get air, but he pats four times for ever' darn step, an' he' ll keep a-goin' with the Cherokee girl.

No other American novel has succeeded in forging and making instrumental so many prose styles.

The number of such passages which could be cited is almost endless. Those cited thus far suggest a number of influences – the Bible, Dos Passes' "Newsreel" technique, folk idiom, Walt Whitman, Hemingway, and perhaps Carl Sandburg's *The People*. Yes, although the latter's diction is much more strident than that of *The Grapes of Wrath.* Another influence on this prose is certainly the narrative style of Pare Lorentz in his scripts for the motion pictures *The Plow that Broke the Plains* and *The River.* Steinbeck had met Lorentz and discussed this style with him, listening to recordings of Lorentz' radio drama *Ecce Homo!* [23] Lorentz too had made use of the Old Testament, but the influence on him of Whitman and Sandburg was perhaps stronger, as the following passage from The River makes clear:

> Down the Missouri three thousand miles from the Rockies;
> Down the Ohio a thousand miles from the Alleghenies;
> Down the Arkansas fifteen hundred miles from the Great Divide;
> Down the Red, a thousand miles from Texas;
> Down the great Valley, twenty five hundred miles from Minnesota,
> Carrying every rivulet and brook, creek and rill,
> Carrying all the rivers that run down two-thirds the continent —
> The Mississippi runs to the Gulf.[24]

The debt of Steinbeck's intercalary chapter on Highway 66 to this kind of writing is obvious: "Clarksville and Ozark and Van Buren and Fort Smith on 64, and there's an end of Arkansas. And all the roads into Oklahoma City, 66 down from Tulsa, 270 up from McAlester. 81 from Wichita Falls south, from Enid north. Edmond, McLoud, Purcell. 66 out of Oklahoma City; El Reno and Clinton, going west on 66. Hydro, Elk City…." But Steinbeck demonstrates a much greater range than Lorentz, and was capable of much greater variety; only in this chapter did he resort to the easy device of cataloguing America. And in this chapter the catalogue is functional, representing the more detailed progress the Joads are making.

The great variety of prose style and subject matter found in these interchapters not only has value as Americana, but creates a "realism" far beyond that of literal reporting. In addition, this variety is important because it tends to destroy any impression that these interchapters, as a group, constitute a separate entity. They are a group only in that they are not a direct part of the narrative. They have enough individuality of subject matter, prose style, and technique to keep the novel from falling into two parts, and to keep the reader from feeling that he is now reading "the other part."

Because Steinbeck's subject in *The Grapes of Wrath* is not the adventures of the Joad family so much as the social conditions which occasion them, these interchapters serve a vital purpose. As Percy Lubbock has pointed out, the purely "scenic" or objective technique "is out of the question … whenever the story is too big, too comprehensive, too widely ranging to be treated scenically, with no opportunity for general and panoramic survey…. These stories … call for some narrator, somebody who knows, to contemplate the facts and create an impression of them." [25]

Steinbeck's story certainly is "big," "comprehensive," and "wide ranking." As we have seen, however, he took pains to keep the novel from falling into two independent parts. The cross-reference of detail, the interweaving symbols, the dramatization, and the choric effects are techniques designed to make the necessary "panoramic" sections tend toward the "scenic." An examination of the narrative portion of *The Grapes of Wrath* will reveal, conversely, that its techniques make the "scenic" or narrative sections tend toward the "panoramic." Steinbeck worked from both sides to make the two kinds of chapters approach each other and fuse into a single impression.

This tendency of the narrative or dramatic portion of *The Grapes of Wrath* toward the pictorial can be seen readily by comparing the book with another of Steinbeck's group-man novels, *In Dubious Battle*, which has a straightforward plot development and an involving action. Of course, things happen in *The Grapes of Wrath*, and what happens not only grows out of what has gone before but grows into what will happen in the future. But while critics have perceived that plot is not the organizational principle of the novel, they have not attempted to relate this fact to the novel's materials as they are revealed through other techniques, assuming instead that this lack of plot constitutes one of the novel's major flaws.[28]

Actually, this lack of an involving action is effective in at least two ways. It could reasonably be expected that the greatest threat to the novel's unity would come from the interchapters' constant breaking up of the narrative's line of action. However, the very fact that *The Grapes of Wrath* is not organized by a unifying plot works for absorbing these intercalary chapters smoothly into its texture. A second way in which this tendency of the "scenic" towards the "panoramic" is germane to the novel's materials becomes evident when it is considered that Steinbeck's subject is not an action so much as a situation. Description, therefore, must often substitute for narrator.[26]

This substitution of the static for the dynamic also gives us an insight into the nature and function of the novel's characters, especially the Joads, who have been called "essentially symbolic marionettes" [27] and "puppets with differentiating traits," [28] but seldom people. While there are scant objective grounds for determining whether a novel's characters are "real," one fruitful approach is to consider fictional characters not only in relation to life, but in relation to the rest of the fiction of which they are a part.

In his Preface to *The Forgotten Village*, which immediately followed *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck comments on just these relationships:

> A great many documentary films have used the generalized method, that is, the showing of a condition or an event as it affects a group of people. The audience can then have a personalized reaction from imagining one member of that group. I have felt that this is the more difficult observation from the audience's viewpoint. It means very little to know that a million Chinese are starving unless you know one Chinese who is starving. In *The Forgotten Village* we reversed the usual process. Our story centered on one family in one small village. We wished our audience to know this family very well, and incidentally to like it, as we did. Then, from association with this little personalized group, the larger conclusion concerning the racial group could be drawn with something like participation.[30]

This is precisely the strategy in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Whatever value the Joads have as individuals is "incidental" to their primary function as a "personalized group." Kenneth Burke has pointed out that "… most of the characters derive their role, which is to say their personality, purely from their relationship to the basic situation." [31] What he takes to be a serious weakness is actually one of the book's greatest accomplishments. The characters are so absorbed into the novel's materials that the reader's response goes beyond sympathy for the individuals to moral indignation at their social condition. This is, of course, precisely Steinbeck's intention. And certainly the Joads are adequate for this purpose. This conception of character is a parallel to the fusing of the "scenic" and "panoramic" techniques in the narrative and interchapters.

Although the diverse materials of *The Grapes of Wrath* made organization by a unifying plot difficult, nevertheless the novel does have structural form. The action progresses through three successive movements, and its significance is revealed by an intricate system of themes and symbols.

The Grapes of Wrath is divided into thirty consecutive chapters with no larger grouping, but even a cursory reading reveals that the novel is made up of three major parts: the drought, the journey, and California. The first section ends with chapter 10. It is separated from the second section, the journey, by two interchapters. The first of these chapters presents a picture of the deserted land – "The houses were left vacant on the land, and the land was vacant because of this." The second interchapter is devoted to Highway 66 and is followed by chapter 13, which begins the Joads' journey – "The ancient overloaded Hudson creaked and grunted to the highway at Sallisaw and turned west, arid the sun was blinding." The journey section extends past the geographical California border, across the desert to Bakersfield. This section ends with chapter 18, "And the truck rolled down the mountain into the great valley," and the next chapter begins the California section by introducing the reader to labor conditions in that state. Steinbeck had this tripartite division in mind as early as September of 1937, when he told Joseph Henry Jackson that he was working on "the first of three related longer novels." [32]

Like the prose style of the philosophical passages in the interchapters, this structure has its roots in the Old Testament. The novel's three sections correspond to the oppression in Egypt, the exodus, and the sojourn in the land of Canaan, which in both accounts is first viewed from the mountains. This parallel is not worked out in detail, but the grand design is there: the plagues (erosion), the Egyptians (banks), the exodus (journey), and the hostile tribes of Canaan (Californians).

This Biblical structure is supported by a continuum of symbols and symbolic actions. The most pervasive symbolism is that of grapes. The novel's title, taken from "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," ("He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored") is itself a reference to Revelation: "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God." (14:19) Similarly, in Deuteronomy: "Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the poison of serpents…." (32:32); in Jeremiah: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge.' (31:29) Sometimes this meaning of the symbol is stated in the novel's interchapters: "In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, heavy for the vintage."

Steinbeck also uses grapes for symbols of plenty, as the one huge cluster of grapes which Joshua and Oshea bring back from their first excursion into tie rich land of Canaan is a symbol of plenty, a cluster so huge that "they bare it between two on a staff." (Numbers, 18:23) It is this meaning of grapes that is frequently alluded to by Grampa Joad: "Gonna get me a whole big bunch a grapes off a bush, or whatever, an' I'm gonna squash 'em on my face an' let 'em run often my chin." Although Grampa dies long before the Joads get to California, he is symbolically present through the anonymous old man in the barn (stable), who is saved from starvation by Rosasharn's breasts: "This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes." [33] (Canticles, 7:7) Rosasharn's giving of new life to the old man is another reference to the orthodox interpretation of Canticles "I [Christ] am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys" (2:1); and to the Gospels: "take, eat; this is my body." Still another important Biblical symbol is Jim Casy (Jesus Christ), who will be discussed in another connection.

Closely associated with this latter symbolic meaning of grapes and the land of Canaan is Ma Joad's frequent assertion that "We are the people." She has not been reading Carl Sandburg; she has been reading her Bible. As she tells Tom when he is looking for a suitable verse to bury with Grampa, "Turn to Psalms, over further. You kin always get somepin outa Psalms." And it is from Psalms that she gets her phrase: "For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." (95:7) They are the people who pick up life in Oklahoma (Egypt) and carry it to California (Canaan) as the turtle picks up seeds and as the ants pick up their eggs in "The Leader of the People." These parallels to the Israelites of Exodus are all brought into focus when, near the end of the novel, Uncle John sets Rose of Sharon's stillborn child in an old apple crate (like Moses in the basket), sets the box in a stream "among the willow stems," and floats it toward the town saying, "Go down an' tell "em."

As the Israelites received the new Law in their exodus, so the migrants develop new laws: "The families learned what rights must be observed – the right of privacy in the tent; the right to keep the past black hidden in the heart; the right to refuse help or accept it, to offer help or to decline it; the right of a son to court and the daughter to be courted; the right of the hungry to be fed; the rights of the pregnant and the sick to transcend all other rights." Chapter 17 can be seen as the Deuteronomy of *The Grapes of Wrath*. It is this context which makes of the Joads' journey "out west" an archetype of mass migration.[34]

Through this supporting Biblical structure and context there a interwoven two opposing themes which make up the book's "plot." One of these, the "negative" one, concerns itself with the increasingly straitened circumstances of the Joads. At the beginning of their journey they have $154, their household goods, two barrels of pork, a serviceable truck, and their good health. As the novel progresses they become more and more impoverished, until at the end they are destitute without food, sick, their truck and goods abandoned in the mud, without shelter, and without hope of work. This economic decline is paralleled by a similar decline in the family's morale. In his *San Francisco News* articles Steinbeck had described the gradual deterioration family and of human dignity which accompanies impoverished circumstances. This is illustrated by the Joads, who start off as a cheer group full of hope and will power and by the end of the novel spiritually bankrupt. As Steinbeck had noted about the migrants around Bakersfield three years earlier, they "feel that paralyzed dullness with which the mind protects itself against too much sorrow and too much pain." [36] When the Joads enter their first Hooverville they catch a glimpse of the deterioration which lies ahead of them. They see filthy tin and rug shacks littered with trash, the children dirty; diseased, the heads of families "bull-simple" from being roughed too often, all spirit gone and in its place a whining, passive resistance to authority. Although the novel ends before the Joads come to this point, in the last chapter they are well on their way.

And as the family declines morally and economically, so the family unit itself breaks up. Grampa dies before they before they are out of Oklahoma and lies in a nameless grave; Granma is buried a pauper, Noah desert the family; Connie deserts Rosasharn; the baby is born dead; Tom comes a fugitive; Al is planning to leave as soon as possible; Casy is killed; and they have had to abandon the Wilsons.

These two "negative" or downward movements are balanced by two "positive" or upward movements. Although the primitive family unit is breaking up, the fragments are going to make up a larger group. The sense of a communal unit grows steadily through the narrative – the Wilsons, the Wainwrights – and is pointed to again and again in the interchapters: "One man, one family driven from the land; this rusty car creaking along the highway to the west. I lost my land, a single tractor took my land. I am alone and I am bewildered. And in the night one family camps in a ditch and another family pulls in and the tents come out. The two men squat on their hams and the women and children listen.… For here 'I lost my land' is changed; a cell is split and from its splitting grows the thing you [owners] hate – 'We lost our land!' "Oppression and intimidation only serve to strengthen the social group; the relief offered by a federal migrant camp only gives them a vision of the democratic life they can attain by cooperation, which is why the local citizens are opposed to these camps.

Another of the techniques by which Steinbeck develops this theme of unity can be illustrated by the Joads' relationship with the Wilson family of Kansas, which they meet just before crossing the Oklahoma border. This relationship is

developed not so much by explicit statements, as in the interchapters, as by symbols. Grampa Joad, for example, dies in the Wilsons' tent and he is buried in one of the Wilson's blankets. Furthermore, the epitaph which is buried with Grampa (in Oklahoma soil) is written on a page torn from the Wilsons' Bible – that page usually reserved for family records of births, marriages, and deaths. In burying this page with Grampa, the Wilsons symbolize not only their adoption of the Joads, but their renouncing of hope for continuing their own family line. Also, note that it is the more destitute Wilson family which embraces the Joads. Steinbeck makes of the two families' relationship a microcosm of the migration's total picture, its human significance.

This growing awareness on the part of the people en masse is paralleled by the "education" and "conversion" of Tom and Casy. At the beginning of the book, Tom's attitude is individualistic. He is looking out for himself. As he puts it, "I'm still laying my dogs down one at a time," and "I climb fences when I got fences to climb." His first real lesson comes when Casy strikes out against the trooper to save his friend and then gives himself up in his place. The section immediately following is that of the family's stay at a federal migrant camp, and here Tom's education is advanced still further. By the time Casy is killed, Tom is ready for his conversion, which he seals by revenging his mentor. While Tom is hiding out in the cave, after having struck down the vigilante, he has time to think of Casy and his message, so that in his last meeting with his mother, in which he asserts his spiritual unity with all men, it is evident that he has moved from material and personal resentment to ethical indignation, from particulars to principles.

This last meeting between mother and son takes place under conditions reminiscent of the prenatal state. The entrance to the cave is covered with black vines, and the interior is damp and completely dark, so that the contact of mother and son is actually physical rather than visual; she gives him food. When Tom comes out of the cave after announcing his conversion, it is as though he were reborn. When Tom says, "An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build – why I'll be there," he is paraphrasing Isaiah: "And they shall build houses and inhabit them, they shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat." (65:21–22)

The development of Jim Casy is similar to that of Tom. He moves from Bible-belt evangelism to social prophecy. At the beginning of the book he has already left preaching and has returned from his sojourn "in the hills, thinkin', almost you might say like Jesus went into the wilderness to think His way out of a mess of troubles." But although Casy is already approaching his revelation of the Oversold, it is only through his experiences with the Joads that he is able to complete his vision. As Tom moves from material resentment to ethical indignation, from action to thought to action again, so Casy moves from the purely speculative to the pragmatic. Both move from stasis to action. Casy's Christ-like development is complete when, pointed out as "that shiny bastard" and struck on the head with a pick handle, he dies saying, "You don't know what you're a-doin'." [36]

Those critics are reading superficially who think that Steinbeck "expects us to admire Casy, an itinerant preacher, who, over-excellent his evangelistic revivals, is in the habit of taking one or another of his girls of his audience to lie in the grass." [37] Actually, Casy himself perceives the incongruity of this behavior, which is why he goes "into the wilderness" and renounces his Bible-belt evangelism for a species or social humanism, and his congregation for the human race. His development, like that of Tom, is symbolic of the changing social conditions which is the novel's essential theme, paralleling the development of the Joad family as a whole, which is, again, but a "personalized group." Casy resembles Emerson more than he does Sinclair Lewis' Elmer Gantry or Erskine Caldwell's Semon Dye. For like Emerson, Casy discovers the Oversoul through intuition and rejects his congregation in order to preach to the world.

Because these themes of "education" and "conversion" are not the central, involving action of the novel, but grow slowly out of a rich and solid context, the development of Tom and Casy achieves an authority lacking in most proletarian fiction. The novel's thematic organization also makes it possible for Steinbeck successfully to incorporate the widest variety of materials, and, with the exception of romantic love, to present the full scale of human emotions. This accomplishment is a great one when it is considered that the point of view in the narrative sections is absolutely objective. At no point are we told what the characters feel or think, only what they do or say.

The ability of this thematic structure to absorb incidents is illustrated by the early morning "breakfast" scene. One version of this little scene, a first-person narrative, had appeared as a short sketch in *The Long Valley*. This earlier version is a well-written piece of description – the girl and her baby, the three men, the smell of early morning breakfast, the hospitality extended a stranger. But somehow the emotion apparently felt by the author is not conveyed to the reader. Steinbeck concludes the piece lamely: "That's all. I know, of course, some of the reasons why it was pleasant. But there was some element of great beauty there that makes the rush of warmth when I think of it." (LV, 92) Although this incident was completely rewritten for *The Grapes of Wrath*, what makes it effective there is its context. This bit of normal human activity, warmth, and tenderness is Tom's first experience in the refuge of the federal migrant camp, immediately following a night of vigilante horror and cringing flight. It constitutes for him a renewal of faith in his fellow man. In this connection, it is significant that whereas both Dos Passos' *U.S.A.* and Manhattan Transfer end with the protagonist hitchhiking away from home, the group, Steinbeck's novel begins with Tom coming home, joining the group.[38]

This ability of Steinbeck's thematic organization to absorb incidents organically into its context is also important for an understanding of the last scene, of which there has been much criticism. Typical of this criticism is Bernard De Veto's contention that the ending of the novel is "symbolism gone sentimental." [39] The novel's materials do make a climactic ending difficult. Steinbeck had faced the same problem in *In Dubious Battle*, where he had solved it by "stopping on a high point." (JS-MO, 2/4/35) By this same solution in *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck avoids three pitfalls: a deus ex machina ending; a summing-up, moral essay; and a new level of horror. The novel's thematic treatment makes it possible for him to avoid these choices by bringing his novel to a "symbolic" climax without doing violence to credulity, structure, or theme.[40]

This climax is prepared for by the last interchapter, which parallels in terms of rain the opening description of drought. The last paragraphs of these chapters are strikingly similar:

> The women studied the men's faces secretly... After a while the faces of the watching men lost the bemused perplexity and hard and angry and resistant. Then the women knew that they were safe and that there was no break.
>
> The women watched the men, watched to see whether the break had come at last.... And where a number of men gathered Whether, the fear went from their faces, and anger took its place. And the Women sighed with relief, for they knew it was all right – the bred It had not come ...

With this latter paragraph the novel is brought full circle. The last chapter compactly re-enacts the whole drama of the Joads' journey. In one uninterrupted continuity of suspense. The rain continues to fall; the truck and household goods must be abandoned; the little mud levee collapses; Rosasharn's baby is born dead; the boxcar abandoned; they take to the highway in search of food and find instead a starving man. Then the miracle happens. As Rose of Sharon offers her breast to the old man (this is my body and my blood)! The novel's two counterthemes are brought together in a symbolic paradox. Out of her own need she gives life; out of the profoundest depth of despair comes the greatest assertion of faith.

Steinbeck's great achievement in *The Grapes of Wrath* is that while minimizing what seem to be the most essential elements of fiction – plot and character – he was able to create a "well-made" and emotionally compelling novel out of materials which in most other hands have resulted in sentimental propaganda.[41]

[1] This series of articles is more widely known as "Their Blood Is Strong," the title given them when, with an epilogue, they were reprinted in pamphlet form under the auspices of the Simon J. Lubin Society of California in the spring of 1938.

[2] Lawrence Clark Powell, "Toward a Bibliography of John Steinbeck," *Colophon*, 3 (Autumn, 1938), pp. 562–563.

[3] *Occident* (Fall, 1936), p. 5.

[4] Lewis Gannett, "Introduction," *The Portable Steinbeck* (New York, 1946), pp. xx-xxi.

[5] Ibid., p. xxi.

[6] Marshal V. Hartranft, *Grapes of Gladness: California's Refreshing and Inspiring Answer to John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath"* (Los Angeles, 1939).

[7] George Thomas Miron, *The Truth About John Steinbeck and the Migrants* (Los Angeles, 1939), p. 5.

[8] For details, see Martin Staples Shockley, "The Reception of *The Grapes of Wrath* in Oklahoma," *American Literature,* 15 (January, 1954), 351-361.

[9] Margaret Marshall, "Writers in the Wilderness," *The Nation*, 149 (November 25, 1989), p. 579.

[10] Shockley, "The Reception of *The Grapes of Wrath* in Oklahoma;" p. 357. The reader interested in pursuing this topic further may find useful, in addition to items already cited, the following: Carey McWilliams, "California Pastoral," *Antioch Review,* 2 (March, 1942), 103–121; *The La Follette Committee Transcript*, vol. 51; *Wilson Library Bulletin*, 14 (October, 1939). pp. 102, 165, and vol. 13 (May, 1939) p. 640; Carey McWilliams, "What's Being Done About the Joads?" *The New Republic*, 100 (September 20, 1939), pp. 178–180; Frank J. Taylor, "California's 'Grapes of Wrath,' " *Forum and Century*, 102 (November, 1939), pp. 232–238 (January 16, 1940); Leon Whipple, "Novels on Social Themes," *Survey Graphic*, 28 (June, 1939), p. 401; Richard Neuberger, "Who Are the Associated Framers?" *Survey Graphic*, 28 (September, 1939), 517–521, 555–557; the Nazi Bund's *Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter*, edited by Fritz Kuhn; Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field* (Boston, 1939). Others are listed by Shockley.

[11] Miron, *The Truth About John Steinbeck and the Migrants*, p. 7. See also Elizabeth N. Monroe, *The Novel and Society* (Chapel Hill, 1941), p. 272 and Earle Birney, review of *The Grapes of Wrath* in *The Canadian Forum*, 19 (June, 1939), p. 94.

[12] "Some Notes on John Steinbeck," *Antioch Review*, 2 (Summer, 1942), p. 195.

[13] "The Harvest Gypsies," *San Francisco News*, October 5, 1936, p. 3.

[14] "Dubious Rattle in California," *The Nation*, 143 (September 12, 1936), p. 304

[15] "The Harvest Gypsies," *Sun Francisco News*, October 7, 1936, p. 6.

[16] "The Harvest Gypsies," *San Francisco News*, October 12, 1936, p. 8.

[17] "The Philosophical Joads," *Collage English*, 2 (January, 1941), pp. 324–325. The resemblance of Casy to Emerson is also noted by Floyd Stovall in his *American Idealism* (Norman. Oklahoma. 10.43), p. 164.

[18] "Jeffersonian Agrarianism in *The Grapes of Wrath*," *University of Kansas City Review*, 14 (Winter, 1947), p. 150.

[19] "The Harvest Gypsies," *Sun Francisco News*, October 8, 1936, p. 16.

[20] "The Novel and Our Time (Letchworth. Hertfordshire, England, 1948), p. 8.

[21] *The Craft of Fiction* (New York, 1945), p. 33.

[22] For an excellent discussion of this point, see Joseph Warren Beach, *American Fiction*, 1930–1940 (New York, 1942), pp. 337-338.

[23] Joseph Henry Jackson, "Introduction," Limited Edition of *The Grapes of Wrath* (New York. 1940), pp. viii-ix.

[24] *The River* (New York. 1938), unpaginated. According to the "Preface," the text for this book was taken verbatim from the motion picture of the same name.

[25] *The Craft of Fiction*, p. 40.

[26] Harry Thornton Moore, for example, refers to Steinbeck's failure to provide *The Grapes of Wrath* with "a proportioned and intensified drama," a "vital conflict," or a "continuity of suspense." *The Novels of John Steinbeck* (Chicago, 1939), pp. 59, 69.

[27] For an excellent discussion of this point, see Claude-Edmonde Magny, *L'âge du roman americain* (Paris, 1948), p. 187.

[28] Alfred Kazin, *On Native Grounds* (New York, 1942), p. 397.

[29] George F. Whither, "Proletarian Leanings," *The Literature of the American People*, ed. by A. H. Quinn (New York, 1951), p. 960.

[30] "Preface," *The Forgotten Village* (New York, May, 1941).

[31] *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (Baton Rouge, 1941), p. 91.

[32] "John Steinbeck, A Portrait," *Saturday Review of Literature*, 16 (September 25, 1937). p. 18.

[33] I cannot resist quoting Harry Slochower's interpretation of this scene: "The reincarnation of Grampa is also suggested by the theme of grapes. Grampa had been looking forward to squashing the grapes of California on his face, 'a-nibblin' off it all the time.' The man in the barn is reduced to such baby acts, 'practicing' them as he drinks Rose of Sharon's milk. The grapes have turned to 'wrath,' indicated by the fact that the first milk of the mother is said to be bitter." *No Voice Is Wholly Lost* (New York. 1945), footnote p. 304.

[34] Bernard Bowron persistently ignores this wider frame of reference. He calls *The Grapes of Wrath* "a triumph of literary engineering" because of the "artfulness – I do not say great art" with which the book utilises the "romance-formula" of such covered wagon stories as The Way West. *The Grapes of Wrath*, says Mr. Bowron, "derives from the 'Westward' novel both the structure and the values that give it its emotional horsepower." See "*The Grapes of Wrath*: A 'Wagons West' Romance," *Colorado Quarterly*, 3 (Summer, 1954), pp. 84–91.

[35] "The Harvest Gypsies," *San Francisco News*, October 6, 1936, p. 3.

[36] Further parallels between Casy and Christ have been pointed out in Martin Shockley's "Christian Symbolism in *The Grapes of Wrath*," *College English*, 18 (November), pp. 87–90.

[37] Elizabeth N. Monroe, *The Novel and Society* (Chapel Hill, 1941), p. 18.

[38] For an excellent contrast of Steinbeck and Dos Passos, see Harry Slochower, "John Dos Passos and John Steinbeck, Contrasting Notions of the Communal Personality," in *Byrdcliffe Afternoons* (Woodstock, New York, January, 1940), pp. 11-27.

[39] "American Novels: 1939," *Atlantic Monthly*, 165 (January, 1941), p. 68.

[40] For parallels to this scene, see Maupassant's "Idylle"; Byron's *Childe Harold*, Canto iv, Stanzas cxlviii-cli; Rubens' painting of old Cimon drawing milk from the breast of Pero; and an eighteenth-century play called *The Grecian's Daughter*, which is discussed in Maurice W. Disher's *Blood and Thunder* (London, 1949), p. 23. See also Celeste T. Wright, "Ancient Analogues of an Incident in John Steinbeck," *Western Folklore*, 14 (January, 1955), pp. 50–51.

[41] "George Bluestone, *Novels into Film* (Baltimore, 1957) appeared too late to be included in the present discussion. Mr. Bluestone's chapter on *The Grapes of Wrath* illuminates several aspects of that novel, particularly the function of animal imagery.

Appendix B

"The Dynamics of Community in *The Grapes of Wrath*" by Peter Lisca

The Grapes of Wrath, more than Steinbeck's other novels, remains viable not just in drugstore racks of Bantam paperbacks or in college survey courses but in the world of great literature, because in that novel he created a community whose experience, although rooted firmly in the particulars of the American Depression, continues to have relevance. Certainly one aspect of that community experience which contributes to its viability is its dimension of social change. It is not coincidence that in the last decade, full of violent social action in so many aspects of American life, we have found ourselves turning with new interest toward the 1930s, recognizing there an immediate political and emotional relevance. *The Grapes of Wrath* moves not only along Route 66, east to west, like some delayed Wagon Wheels adventure, but along the unmapped roads of social change, from an old concept of community based on sociological conditions breaking up under an economic upheaval, to a new and very different sense of community formulating itself gradually on the new social realities.

Various facets of the old community concept are solidly developed in the first quarter of the book. The novel opens with a panoramic description of the land itself, impoverished, turning to dust and quite literally blowing away. It can no longer sustain its people in the old way, one small plot for each family, and it is lost to the banks and holding companies – impersonal, absentee landlords – which can utilize the land with a margin of profit by the ruthless mechanical exploitation of large tracts. But for the old community the land was something more than a quick-money crop or columns of profit and loss in a financial ledger, more even than the actual physical sustenance of potatoes, carrots, melons, pigs and chickens. Nor is it fear of the unknown that keeps the community attached to the now useless land. For these are a people with pioneer blood in their veins. The old community is further tied to the land by memories of family history. It is Muley who speaks this most convincingly:

> I'm just wanderin' aroun' like a damn oF graveyard ghos'....I been goin' aroun' the places where stuff happened. Like there's a place over by our forty; in a gulley there's a bush. Fust time I ever laid with a girl was there. Me fourteen an' stampin' an' snortin' like a buck deer, randy as a billygoat. So I went there an' I laid down on the groun', an' I seen it all happen again. An' there's the place down by the barn where Pa got gored to death by a bull. An' his blood is right in the groun', right now ... An' I put my han' on that groun' where my own Pa's blood is part of it.... An' I seen my Pa with a hole through his ches', an' I felt him shiver up against me like he done.... An' me a little kid settin' there.... An' I went into the room where Joe was born. Bed wasn't there, but it was the room. An' all them things is true, an' they're right in the place they happened. Joe came to life right there.

Muley rambles, but his selection is not arbitrary – copulation, birth, death. And these are not just vague memories or abstractions. In the presence of the actual bush, the actual barnyard, the same room, this essential past is relived in the present. Muley asks, "What'd they take when they tractored the folks off the lan'? What'd they get so their 'margin a profit' was safe? They got Pa dyin' on the groun', an' Joe yellin' his first breath, an' me jerkin' like a billygoat under a bush in the night. What'd they get? God knows the lan' ain't no good.… They jus' chopped folks in two. Place where folks live is them folks."

Here Muley speaks not only for himself, but for an entire community, the people in whose deserted houses at night he can still sense the "parties an' dancin'," the "meetin's an' shoutin' glory. They was weddin's, all in them houses." So strong is his attachment that he chooses to stay with the land and its empty houses rather than move away with the rest of his family. Grandpa Joad, too, despite his eagerness at the beginning, was not able to leave the land and had to be given an overdose of pain-killer and carried off. When he dies, just before crossing the Oklahoma border, Casy assures the folks that "Grampa didn't die tonight. He died the minute you took "im off the place.… Oh, he was breathin', but he was dead. He was that place, an' he knowed it.… He's jus' stayin' with the lan'. He couldn't leave it." This is amplified to the level of community experience in one of the interchapters, when the choric voices intone: "This land, this red land is us; and the flood years and the dust years and the drought years are us."

As the land itself and its houses are imbued with a traditional experience, so are the farm tools, horses, wagons, the household goods whose value cannot be measured in money: the beaded headband for the bay gelding, " 'Member how he lifted his feet when he trotted?" And the little girl who liked to plait red ribbons in this mane. "This book. My father had it.... *Pilgrim's Progress.* Used to read it.... This china dog ... Aunt Sadie brought it from the Saint Louis fair. See? Wrote right on it." It is a community experience which is imaginatively voiced to the buyers of these goods: "You are not buying only junk, you're buying junked lives.... How can we live without our lives? How will we know it's us without our past?"

In addition to the identity invested in the land, the houses and personal possessions, all of which must be left behind, the community is also defined in terms of social customs and mores. That it is patriarchal, for example, is clear from the deference of the women to male decision and authority. When the decision is made to include Casy in the group, Ma Joad is consulted about whether there would be food enough and space, but once that decision is made, Casy, who "knew the government of families," takes his place among the planning men. "Indeed, his position was eminent, for Uncle John moved sideways, leaving space between Pa and himself for the preacher. Casy squatted down like the others, facing Grampa enthroned on the running board. Ma went to the house again." It does not matter that Grampa is senile and utterly useless. Formally, his titular headship must be acknowledged, and, at this point in the novel, Ma must leave men to men's business. Again, when the family is seating itself in their truck, ready to leave, Uncle John would have liked his pregnant niece, Rosasharn, instead of himself, to sit up front in the comfortable seat next to the driver. But he knows "this was impossible, because she was young and a woman." The traditional distinction in social role is also evident in Ma's embarrassment at Casy's offer to salt down the pork. "I can do it," he says; "there's other stuff for you to do." Ma "stopped her work then and inspected him oddly, as though he suggested a curious thing.... 'It's women's work,' she said finally." The preacher's reply is significant of many changes to come in the community's sense of identity and the individual's sense of his total role: "It's all work," he replies. "They's too much of it to split it up to men's or women's work."

It is fitting that this break from domestic traditions should be announced by Casy, who is the first person from his community whom Tom meets on the way-home from prison, and who announces at that meeting that he, the preacher, the spiritual source and authority of that community, has already abandoned the old dispensation and is seeking a new and better one. And after hearing his short, two-sentence, unorthodox testament of belief in an oversoul, a human spirit "ever'body's a part of," Tom says, "You can't hold no church with idears like that. People would drive you out of the country with idears like that. Jumpin' an' yellin'. That's what folks like. Makes you feel swell. When Granma got to talkin' in tongues, you couldn't tie her down. She could knock over a full-growed deacon with her fist." Later in the novel other details of this old-time religion are given, such as the mass total immersions; Pa, full of the spirit, jumping over a high bush and breaking his leg; and Casy going to lie in the grass with young girls of his congregation whose religious fervor he had excited. But Casy is through with all that now, and these particular aspects of community, like those inherent in the land, the houses and personal goods, the domestic codes – all must be left behind.

This is not to say, however, that the sense and need of community is lost or has been destroyed. Steinbeck presents this sense and need on several levels from the biological to the mythical and religious. The novel's first interchapter is that masterful description of the turtle crossing the road, surviving both natural hazards and the attempts of man to frustrate its efforts. The turtle is clearly a symbol of the unthinking yet persistent life force. "Nobody can't keep a turtle though," says Casy. "They work at it and work at it, and at last one day they get out and away they go...." The fact that this turtle has been going southwest, that Tom picks it up as a present to the family, and that it continues southwest when released, clearly identifies this turtle and its symbolic attributes with the Joads and the migrants. In them, too, there exists the instinct for survival and the necessity for movement which form, on the most elemental level, the basis of community.

The last interchapter of the novel's first part (before the Joads actually start their trip) also presents a biological argument. The abandoned houses are only temporarily without life. Soon they are part of a whole new ecology:

> When the folks first left, and the evening of the first day came, the hunting cats slouched in from the fields and mewed on the porch. And when no one came out, the cats crept through the open doors and walked mewing through the empty rooms. And then they went back to the fields and were wild cats from then on, hunting gophers and field mice, and sleeping in ditches in the daytime. When the night came, the bats, which had stopped at the doors for fear of light, swooped into the houses and sailed about through the empty rooms, and in a little while they stayed in dark room corners during the day, folded their wings high, and hung headdown among the rafters, and the smell of their droppings was in the empty houses.
>
> And the mice moved in and stored weed seeds in corners, in boxes, in the backs of drawers in the kitchens. And weasels came in to hunt the mice, and the brown owls flew shrieking in and out again.
>
> Now there came a little shower. The weeds sprang up in front of the doorstep, where they had not been allowed, and grass grew up through the porch boards.... The wild cats crept in from the fields at night, but did not mew at the doorstep any more. They moved like shadows of a cloud across the moon, into the rooms to hunt the mice.

This life force, which manifests itself in getting the turtle across the road and in creating a new biological community around the abandoned houses, lies also in the nature of man. And because man can abstract and conceptualize, that force is present in him not only in his instinct for physical survival, but also as projected in his gregariousness and social constructs. Thus, despite the fact that the anonymous truck driver in chapter two, a not particularly likable person, is forbidden to carry riders and may lose his very valuable job for doing so, it is his need for human contact as well as his need of being a "good guy" that prompts him to give Tom Joad a ride: "Fella says once that truck skinners eats all the time.... Sure they stop, but it ain't to eat. They ain't hardly every hungry. They're just goddamn sick of goin' – get sick of it. Joints is the only place you can pull up, an' when you stop you got to buy somepin' so you can sling the bull with the broad behind the counter."

Even Tom Joad, who comes into the novel aggressively independent, not only recollects how a fellow inmate at prison who had been paroled came back to prison because it made him feel "lonesome out there," but admits to the same desire for human community in himself." The guy's right too,' he said. 'Las' night, thinkin' where I'm gonna sleep, I got scared. An' I got thinkin' about my bunk, an' I wonder what the stir-bug I got for a cell mate is doin'. Me an' some guys had a strang band goin'. Good one. Guy said we ought to go on the radio. An' this mornin' I didn' know what time to get up. Jus' laid there waitin' for the bell to go off.' Casy understands this need of man for community. When he tells Tom "They's an army of us without no harness.... All along I seen it.... Everplace we stopped I seen it. Folks hungry for sidemeat. an' when they get it they ain't fed," he is saying in his own words that man cannot live by bread alone, that it takes more than a full stomach to make man happy. In one of the interchapters the choric voice defines in communal terms this "harness" which man needs:

> The last clear definite function of man – muscles aching to work, minds aching to create beyond the single need – this is man. To build a wall, to build a house, a dam, and in the wall and house and dam to put something of Manself [note he does not say himself], and to Manself take back something of the wall, the house, the dam.... For man, unlike any other thing organic or inorganic in the universe, grows beyond his work, walks up the stairs of his accomplishments.... Fear the time when Manself will not suffer and die for a concept, for this one quality is the foundation of Manself, and this one quality is man, distinctive in the universe.

It is this inherent feeling of "Manself," to use Steinbeck's term, which forges the link of community, making out of all the scattered, lonely individuals a huge and irresistible "WE."

Further, in *The Grapes of Wrath* these seemingly inherent biological drives toward community are supported and given authority through a continuum of historical and religious reference. The Joads trace their ancestry back to the colonization of the new world: "We're Joads." says Ma. "We don't look up to nobody. Grampa's grampa, he fit in the Revolution." Looking into the terrible desert which they are about to cross, Al exclaims, "Jesus, what a place. How'd you like to walk across her?" "People done it," says Tom. "Lots a people done it; an' if they could, we could." "Lots must a died," says Al. "Well," replies Tom, "we ain't come out exactly clean." As she consoles Tom for the necessity of suffering insults meekly (when they are stopped by vigilantes at the roadblock), Ma Joad repeats again this sense of being supported by participation in a historical community: "You got to have patience. Why, Tom – us people will go on living when all them people is gone. Why, we're the people – we go on." And one of these phrases, "We're the

people," strikes echoes answered in Psalm 95: "For He is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand," thus giving the Joads community with the "chosen people."

The details which further this association are so numerous and have been pointed out by scholars so frequently as to need little discussion here. Briefly, the twelve Joads are the twelve tribes of Judea; they suffer oppression in Oklahoma (Egypt) under the banks (Pharaohs); undertake an exodus; and arrive in California (Canaan, the land of milk and honey) to be received with hostility by the native peoples. The novel's title, through "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," alludes to Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Revelation, as for example "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God." In some of the interchapters the strong echoes of the King James Old Testament poetically identify the evils of the present with those decried and lamented by the Prophets:

> Burn coffee for fuel in the ships. Burn corn to keep warm, it makes a hot fire. Dump potatoes in the river and place guards along the banks to keep the hungry people from fishing them out. Slaughter the pigs and bury them, and let the putrescence drip down into the earth.
>
> There is a crime here that goes beyond denunciation. There is a sorrow here that weeping cannot symbolize. There is a failure here that topples all our success. The fertile earth, the straight tree rows, the sturdy trunks, and the ripe fruit. And children dying of pellagra must die because a profit cannot be taken from an orange.

As the numerous allusions and parallels to the Old Testament establish a historical community between the oppressed migrants and the Israelites, the even more numerous allusions and parallels to the New Testament establish a religious community in Christianity. Again, the evidence is so extensive and has been so thoroughly analyzed elsewhere that little discussion is needed here. The most important of these elements is the itinerant preacher, who has lately left off preaching. Beginning with his initials, J. C.; his rebellion against the old religion; his time of meditation in the wilderness; his announcement of the new religion; his taking on his head the sins of others; to his persecution and death crying out, "You don' know what you're doin' "; Jim Casy is clearly a modern Christ figure. The new messiah arrives in a rich context of traditional Christian symbology, and his message, like that of Christ, is one that considerably broadens man's sense of spiritual community.

It rejects theological notions of sin ("There ain't no sin and there ain't no virtue. There's just stuff people do."); it defines the religious impulse as human love ("What's this call, this sperit? … It's love."); and it identifies the Holy Spirit as all men, the human spirit ("Maybe all men got one big soul ever'body's a part of."). Later in the novel, Casy becomes bolder and extends this community beyond man – "All that lives is holy" – and finally embraces even the inorganic world – "There was the hills, an' there was men, an' we wasn't separate no more. We was one thing. An' that one thing was holy." His disciple, Tom Joad, repeats Casy's notion of an Oversoul, and immediately quotes from Ecclesiastes to further support the notion of community: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall the one will lif' up his fellow, but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up." When his mother expresses fear that they may kill him, he replies, "Then it don' matter. Then I'll be ever'where – wherever you look. Wherever there's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there.… I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're hungry an' they know supper's ready." As another said before him, "Behold, I am always with you."

These forces for community which Steinbeck presents in the novel – biological, social, historical, religious – are impressive for their strength and variety, manifesting themselves in a range from the physical functions of unthinking organisms to the efflux of divine spirit. But in *The Grapes of Wrath* we do not see the realization of Utopian community, for there are anticommunity forces as well; and these, too, are strong and manifest themselves in a wide range. Even the religious impulse, which in Casy and Tom is a positive force, can be a negative one, a perversion of its real purpose. Thus Uncle John's sense of personal sin isolates him from his fellowman and drives him to debauchery and a further sense of sin and isolation. Religion is seen as an isolating force also in the fanatic Mrs. Sandry, who frightens Rosasharn with her description of the horrible penalties God visits on pregnant women who see plays, or does "clutch-an'-hug dancin'," seeing these as the causes of miscarriage and malformation, rather than disease and malnutrition, as Satan, in the guise

of the camp manager, claims. The greatest practical realization of community in the novel is the government camp at Weedpatch, especially the dance. Despite the strong forces against them the people foil attempts to instigate a fight which will give the corrupt police the power to break up the camp. It is important, therefore, that during the dance the religious fanatics are seen as separate: "In front of their tents the Jesus-lovers sat and watched, their faces hard and contemptuous. They did not speak to one another, they watched for sin, and their faces condemned the whole proceeding."

Back at the other end of the scale, we see anticommunity forces at work also on the biological level of sheer survival. It is not greed or hatred or even ignorance that makes Willy drive one of the destroying tractors: "I got two little kids," he says. "I got a wife an' my wife's mother. Them people got to eat. Fust an' on'y thing I got to think about is my own folks." But Muley notes what is behind the bluster: "Seems like he's shamed, so he gets mad." Mr. Thomas, the owner of a small orchard who is pressured by the Farmers Association to lower his wages, is also doing what he is ashamed of in order to survive, and he too speaks "irritably" and becomes gruff. Near the end of the novel, Ma Joad sees through the glib gibes of the pathetic little clerk in the expensive company store: "Doin' a dirty thing like this. Shames ya, don't it? Got to act flip, hugh?" Whether or not the used-car salesmen overcharging for their jalopies also feel shame we do not learn. But clearly these people, as well as many others in the novel, are working against community because of the need for individual survival. Perhaps that is one of the significances of those calm little descriptions of predatory activity in nature which are found throughout the novel. Immediately preceding the car salesmen, for example, we have this: "gradually the skittering life of the ground, of holes and burrows, of the brush, began again; the gophers moved, and the rabbits crept to green things, the mice scampered over clods, and the winged hunters moved soundlessly overhead."

Sometimes the instinct of mere survival shades into selfishness and greed, as when the large owners squeeze out the little people and pay far lower wages than they can afford. It is interesting of Steinbeck's method that selfishness as an anticommunity drive, absolutely apart from any necessity for survival, receives its barest treatment in an episode involving the Joads themselves, the children. At the government camp, Ruthie breaks into a peaceful, established croquet game, unwilling to wait her turn. Insisting, "I wanta play now," she wrestles a mallet from a player. The actions of the other children are interesting. Under the guidance of the supervisor, they simply abandon the game to her, refusing community so to speak, leaving her alone and ridiculous on the court until she runs away in tears.

A third anticommunity force is the result of still another step beyond mere survival – the creation of a system, a machine, a monster, Which seems to have a life of its own. Steinbeck presents it in a hypothetical choric dialogue:

> We're sorry. It's not us. It's the monster. The bank isn't like a man.
>
> Yes, but the bank is only made of men.
>
> No, you're wrong there – quite wrong there. The bank is something else than men. It happens that every man in the bank hates what the bank does, and yet the bank does it. The bank is something more than men, I tell you. It's the monster. Men made it, but they can't control it.

But a monster need not be a bank. It may be "an owner wit!" "fifty-thousand acres," or it may be the entire economic structure itself which works against community: "Men who can graft the trees and made the seed fertile and big can find no way to let the hungry people eat their produce. Men who have created new fruits in the world cannot create a system whereby their fruits may be eaten… the works of the roots of the vines, of the trees must be destroyed to keep up the price.… Arid coroners must fill in the certificates – died of malnutrition – because the food must rot, must be forced to rot."

In the light of certain cliches about the social message in Steinbeck's supposedly "revolutionary" novel, it is interesting that these concepts of the "monster" and of a backward religion are only two of several anticommunity forces, and that the rest lie not in social structures but in man's own nature or individuality, as with the forces toward survival and selfishness discussed above and the forces of suspicion and ignorance. It is distrust that makes the transport company place a "No Riders" sign on the windshield of its trucks. It is a suspiciousness learned in jail that makes Tom, before

his conversion, say for the second time, "I'm just puttin' one foot in front a the other," and again in a few pages, "I ruther jus' lay one foot down in front a the other." He doesn't trust people enough to extend himself. So deeply engrained is this suspicion that even at the government camp he is immediately suspicious of the "committee" which he is told will visit them tomorrow, and Pa Joad is openly hostile toward the camp manager's visit, although both occasions are friendly and helpful. Casy tells the story of the organizer who got a union started to help the workers: "And know what? Them very folks he been tryin' to help tossed him out, Wouldn' have nothin' to do with 'im. Scared they'd get say in his company. Says, 'Git out. You're a danger on us.' "

Along with suspicion and distrust is ignorance. There is the simple ignorance of the hired tractor driver who perhaps lives twenty miles away in town and needs not come back to his tractor for weeks or months:

> And this is easy and efficient. So easy that the wonder goes out of work, so efficient that the wonder goes out of land and the working of it, and with the wonder the deep understanding and the relation. And in the tractor man there grows the contempt that comes only to a stranger who has little understanding and no relation. For nitrates are not the land, nor phosphates; and the length of fiber in the cotton is not the land. Carbon is not a man, nor salt nor water nor calcium. He is all of these, but he is much more, much more; and the land is so much more than its analysis. The man who is more than his chemistry, walking on the earth, turning his plow point for a stone, dropping his handles to slide over an outcropping, kneeling in the earth to eat his lunch; that man who is more than his elements knows the land that is more than its analysis. But the machine man driving a dead tractor on land that he does not know and love, understands only chemistry; and he is contemptuous of the land and of himself. When the corrugated iron doors are shut, he goes home, and his home is not the land.

A more complex aspect of ignorance as a force against community appears in the interchapters, most clearly in that chapter wherein migrants are forced to sell their household goods to profiteers who take advantage of their need in order to pay very little for honest goods, and who are addressed by the choric voice: "you're buying bitterness. Buying a plow to plow your own children under, buying the arms and spirits that might have saved you. Five dollars, not four. I can't haul them back – well, take 'em for four. But I warn you, you're buying what will plow your own children under. And you won't see. You can't see … But watch it, mister. There's a premium goes with this pile of junk and the bay horses – so beautiful – a packet of bitterness to grow in your house and to flower some day. We could have saved you, but you cut us down, and soon you will be cut down and there'll be none of us to save you." Perhaps no other passage in the novel carries so convincingly this great truth of human community, that no man is an island, that what you do unto the least of these you do unto me. The tenor of all these forces of ignorance against community is, of course, in Casy's dying words, an echo of Christ's own words – "You don't know what you're doin'."

Because it is not theological or sociological determinism, but ignorance breeding selfishness and distrust, that is so largely responsible for the forces against community, it follows that the establishment of the new community will come out of true knowledge, out of which in turn will come love and sharing. It is Casy, the spiritual leader, who first abandons the old ways and becomes a seeker for new truth. When he first appears he has already abandoned his conventional notions of sin, hellfire, and the salvation of individual souls for the doctrine of universal love and the transcendental Oversoul. He asks to go along with the Joads because he wants to learn more: "I'm gonna work in the fiel's, in the green fiel's, an' I'm gonna try to learn. Gonna learn why the folks walks in the glass, gonna hear 'em talk, gonna hear 'em sing. Gonna listen to kids eatin' mush. Gonna hear husban' an' wife poundin' the mattress in the night. Gonna eat with 'em an' learn." What he finally learns, in jail after giving himself up to save Tom and Floyd, is that man's spiritual unit must express itself in a social unity, which is why he becomes an organizer. The grace which he reluctantly gives over his first breakfast with the Joads is already groping in this direction: "I got to thinkin' how we was holy when we was one thing, an' makin' was holy when it was one thing. An' it on'y got unholy when one mis'able little fella got the bit in his teeth an' run Off his own way, kickin' an' draggin' an' fightin'. Fella like that bust the holiness. But when they're all workin' together, not one fella for another fella, but one fella kind of harnessed to the whole shebang – that's right, that's holy!'

It is this growing knowledge of the necessity of sharing with strangers far beyond the usual circle of family and friends that becomes the most powerful force for establishing the new community. The novel's action opens with a series of acts of sharing. The truck driver shares a ride, Tom offers to share his whiskey with him and does share it with Casy. Muley

not only shares his rabbits, but makes the first statement of this new principle: " 'I ain't got no choice in the matter.' He stopped on the ungracious sound of his words. 'That ain't like I mean it. That ain't. I mean' – he stumbled – 'what I mean, if a fella's got somepin' to eat an' another fella's hungry – why, the first fella ain't got no choice. I mean, s'pose I pick up my rabbits an' go off somewhere's an' eat 'em. See?' " To this is added Mrs. Wilson's answer to Ma Joad's thanks for help: "People needs – to help." Just a few pages later Ma Joad in replying to Mrs. Wilson's thanks for help, gives the concept a further turn: "you can't let help go unwanted." It is significant that the first example of spontaneous sharing with strangers on the journey is a symbolic merging of two families: Grampa's death in the Wilson's tent, his burial in one of the Wilson's blankets with a page torn from the Wilson's Bible, and Ma Toad's promise to care for Mrs. Wilson. As Pa Joad expresses it later. "We almost got a kin bond." And Ma Joad, who starts off with a ferocious defense of her family against all comers – "All we got is the fambly" – four hundred pages later says, "Use' ta be the fambly was fust. It ain't so now. It's anybody. Worse off we get, the more we got to do." Her progress is charted by the numerous occasions for sharing which are described in the novel – their past, their knowledge, their food and hunger, gasoline, transportation, shelter, work, talent, joy and sorrow.

The narrative is saturated with the particulars of this sharing, and it is in the choric voice of the interchapters: "And because they were lonely and perplexed … they huddled together; they talked together; they shared their lives, their food, and the things they hoped for in the new country.… In the evening twenty families became one family, the children were the children of all. The loss of home became one loss, and the golden time in the west was one dream." It is this sharing that creates the unity, the change from "I" to "We," the new sense of community through which the people survive. And those who do not share, who continue selfish and distrustful, "the companies, the banks worked at their own doom and they did not know it."

The more one reads *The Grapes of Wrath*, the more thoroughly one knows the many ramifications of its informing theme, the more perfect and moving seems the novel's ending. Here, in this one real and symbolic act everything is brought together. Rosasharn gives her milk out of biological necessity to do so; she feeds not her own baby but an old man, a stranger. The Rose of Sharon, Christ, offers his body in communion. Biology, sociology, history, and religion become one expression of the community of mankind.

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Appendix C

"We Still See Their Faces" by Studs Terkel

It is 1988. We could see the face on the Six O'clock News. It could be a Walker Evans or Dorothea Lange shot, but that's fifty years off. It is a face of despair, of an Iowa farmer, fourth generation, facing foreclosure. I've seen this face before. It is the face of Pa Joad, Muley Graves, and all their lost neighbors, tractored out by the cats.

In the eyes of Carroll Nearmyer, the farmer, is more than despair; there is a hardly concealed wrath: as there was in the eyes of his Okie antecedents.

> Sure, cried the tenant farmers, but it's our land. We were born on it, and got killed on it, and we died on it. Even if it's no good, it's still ours. That's what makes it ours – being born on it, working on it, dying on it. That makes ownership, not a paper with numbers on it. (*The Grapes of Wrath,* Chapter Five)

Listen to Carroll Nearmyer. I had visited his farm, twenty-four miles southeast of Des Moines. It was a soft, easy twilight in May 1987: "There was several times I had the gun to my head and she didn't know it. And then I got damn mad. I got to thinkin' about it and I got madder. These people don't have the right to do this to me! I have worked, I have sweated, and I have bled. I have tried out there to keep this place goin'. And then they tried to take it away from me!"

During a trip in 1987 through Iowa and Minnesota, I saw too many small towns with too many deserted streets that evoked too many images of too many rural hamlets of the Great Depression. I could not escape the furrowed faces and stooped frames of John Steinbeck's people. It was a classic case of life recapitulating art. The work of art, in this instance, caught more than people; it was their "super-essence" (Steinbeck's word).

It was a flash forward fifty years. The boarded-up stores and houses. The abandoned jalopies. The stray dog. The pervasive silence. "It's both a silence of protest and a silence of acceptance," observed my companion, who was doing the driving.

> The men were silent and they did not move often. And the women came out of their house to stand beside their men — to feel whether this nine the men would break. The women studied the men's faces secretly, because the corn could go, as long as something else remained. (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter One)

What was that something else? It had something to do with respect for Self; sought from those dear to him and at least a semblance of it demanded from the Others. It was something he had to husband and preserve by himself, alone. Therein lay the fatal flaw; a fault he had to discover the hard way.

A half century later, Carolyn Nearmyer, Carroll's wife, recognized it. "The women arE apt to talk to other farm wives about their problems, rather than sit down with their husbands. If I was to come up with a suggestion, he'd get very upset. It was not that I did not know as much as he did. It was just he was keeping it inside himself."

Ma Joad knew it, too. Though in her good-bye to Tom, she says, "I don' un'erstan', I don' really know," she does know. Her generous heart gives the lie to her words. In Tom's reply, Preacher Casy's transcendental vision comes shining through:

> Maybe like Casy says, a fella ain't got a soul of his own, but on'y a piece of a big one – and then ... then I'll be all around in the dark. I'll be ever'where – wherever you look. Wherever they's a right so hungry people can eat, I'll be there. Wherever they's a cop beatin'up on a guy, I'll be there. Why, I'll be in the way guys yell when they're mad an' – I'll be in the way kids laugh when they' re hungry an' they know supper's ready. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build – why, I'll be there. (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter Twenty-eight)

There arE constant variations on this theme throughout *The Grapes of Wrath*, as in a symphony. The novel is constructed more like a piece of music rather than mere prose. It is not unlike Frank Lloyd Wrighr's approach to architecture. As Bach and Beethoven were ever with the architect as he conceived buildings, as he reflected on the vision of his *lieber meister*, Louis Sullivan, so as we learn from the journal he kept during the book's composition, John Steinbeck was listening to the lushness of Tchaikovsky and the dissonance of Stravinsky, while he traveled with the Joads and their fellow tribesmen.

And when there was a pause in the recorded music, there was still a sort of rhythm: the incessant bup-bup-bup of the washing machine. Always, there was the beat, as though it were the beat of a throbbing heart, caught and held by these uprooted people whom he had come to know so well. "I grew to love and admire the people who are so much stronger and braver and purer than I am." [1]

In the musical architecture of the book are point and counterpoint. Each chapter, recounting the adventures of the individual family, the Joads, is followed by a brief contrapuntal sequence: the tribe, the thousands of Okie families on the move. The one, the many, all heading in the same direction The singular flows into the plural, the "I" into the "We." It is an organic whole.

Organic was Wright's favorite word. The work had to flow naturally, whether it were a building or a book. Everything was of one piece, as the fingers on a hand, the limbs on a tree. It was not accidental that Wright's Imperial Hotel withstood the Tokyo earthquake of 1924. It was not accidental that *The Grapes of Wrath* has withstood another earthquake.

Preacher Casy's vision, as revealed to Tom Joad, was presaged by earlier variations on the theme. During the journey to California, twenty or so Okie families rested at a near a spring:

> In the evening a strange thing happened; the twenty families became one family, the children were the children of all. The loss of a home became one loss, and the golden time in the West was one dream. And it might be that a sick child threw despair into the hearts of twenty families, of a hundred people; that a birth there in a tent kept a hundred people quiet and awestruck through the night and filled a hundred people with the birth-joy in the morning. (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter Seventeen)

And, finally, at saga's end, comes the heart-stopping incident in the barn. Outside, are the torrential rains and floods. Inside, Rose of Sharon, having lost her baby, offers her mother's milk to the starving stranger. It is much like an olden Childe ballad – the stunning last verse. And yet so natural.

There were doubts expressed by friends who had read the manuscript. Why a stranger? Steinbeck knew why intuitively. The impulse was right, organically so. It fit like – well, the fingers on a hand, the limbs on a tree.

This book is more than a novel about an epic journey in an overcrowded, heavy-laden old Dodge jalopy across Highway 66, across hot desert sands, on toward Canaanland, the land of milk and honey; and further on toward disillusion and revelation. It is an anthem in praise of human community. And thus survival.

This anniversary edition is more than a golden anniversary celebration of an enduring book. It is as contemporary as the 1988 drought, astonishingly so.

During my Minnesota farmland trip in 1987, my companion points toward a barren field that appears endless. There are vast spaces that offer the odd appearance of crowds of bald-heads. The color – the pallor – is a sickly, sandy gray.

"All those acres," she says, "not a tree, not a blade of grass. Nothin' to stop the wind from blowin' across. When you lose the farm, they bulldoze the grove down. Our land is very vulnerable. It's now dry and wide open to Mother Nature to do with as she pleases. There's six inches of topsoil left. It used to be six feet. Multiply this – these white tops – by hundreds of thousands of acres, all of a sudden, with a dry spell and drought and a wind, you've got a dust storm. Will it happen again? People are beginning to talk about it." Simultaneously, we mumble: "*The Grapes of Wrath.*" The drought of 1988 has underscored our mutual apprehension of the year before and the aching relevance of Steinbeck's book.

When asked, "What is the best novel you read in 1988?", the reply comes easy: *The Grapes of Wrath*. The third time around merely adds to its dimension. Dorothy Parker, at the time of its publication in 1939, called it "the greatest American novel I have ever read." She'll get no argument in these quarters.

The eighties, we have been informed, are distinguished by a mean-spiritness that has trickled down from high places, by an ethic of every man for himself, by a disdain for those up against it. It reveals itself even in our idiomatic language: Victims are defined as "losers." The word, with its new meaning, has become as common-and as popular – as "bottom line." Since there is obviously no room for "losers" at the top, there is no bottom for them either. The Joads would indubitably have fallen into that dark recess; as millions of our dispossessed fall today.

An Appalachian woman of my acquaintance puts it more succinctly: "People are made to feel ashamed now if they don't have anything. Back then, I'm not sure how the rich felt. I think the rich were as contemptuous of the poor then as they are now. But among the people that I knew during the Depression, we all had an understanding that it wasn't our fault. It was something that had happened to the machinery."

It isn't that the thirties lacked for meanness of spirit. God knows, the Joads and their uprooted fellows encountered it all the way. And then some. Aside from the clubs of the vigilantes, the maledictions of the big growers, and the stony cold of the banks, there were people like Joe Davis's boy.

> As the caterpillar tractors rolled on and smashed down the homely shacks of the tenant farmers, they were driven by the sons of neighbors.
>
> The man sitting in the iron seat did not look like a man; gloved, goggled, rubber dust mask over nose and mouth, he was part of the monster, a robot in the seat....
>
> After a while, the tenant who could not leave the place came out and squatted in the shade beside the tractor.
>
> " Why, you' re Joe Davis's boy! "
>
> " Sure. "
>
> " Well, what you doing this kind of work for – against your own people? "
>
> ' Three dollars a day.... I got a wife and kids. We got to cat. Three dollars a day, and it comes every day. "
>
> " That's right", the tenant said. " But for your three dollars a day, fifteen or twenty families can't eat at all. Nearly a hundred people have to go out and wander on the roads for your three dollars a day. Is that right? "
>
> And the driver said, " Can't think of that. Got to think of my own kids....Times are changing, mister, don't you know? "
>
> (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter Five)

Fifty years later, the wife of the Iowa farmer tells this story. It had happened to her a month or so before our encounter: "When the deputy came out to take our stuff away from us, I asked him, 'How can you go home and face your family?' I happen to know he has an eight-year-old girl too. 'How can you sleep tonight knowing that someday this could be you?' He said, 'If I didn't do it, somebody else would be here. To me, it's just a job.' To me, that's heartless people. I wouldn't do that to somebody just because I needed the money."

Joe Davis's boy has always been around. From his point of view, it's quite understandable. It's every man for himself, buddy. In the eighties, there is considerably less onus attached to his job. Who wants to be a "loser"?

Yet, the Joads, for all their trials, found something else en route to California; and even before the trek began. We first meet Tom, just paroled from MacAlcster pen.

> The hitchhiker, stood up and looked across through the windows. " Could ya give me a lift, mister? "
>
> The driver looked quickly back at the restaurant for a second. " Didn' you see the No Riders sticker on the win' shield? "
>
> " Sure – I seen it. But sometimes a guy'll be a good guy even if some rich bastard makes him carry a sticker. "
>
> The driver, getting slowly into the truck, considered the parts of this answer. If he refused now, not only was he not a good guy, but he was forced to carry a sticker, was not allowed to have company. If he took in the hitchhiker, he was automatically a good guy and also he was not one whom any rich bastard could kick around. He knew he was trapped, but he couldn't see a way out. And he wanted to be a good guy. (*The Grapes of Wrath*, Chapter Two)

I ran into Sam Talbert, a trucker out of West Virginia, a few months before writing this introduction. "It scares me sometimes thinkin' people are never goin' to learn. I sometimes get to thinkin' people's gettin' too hard-hearted. There's no trust in anybody. Used to be, hitchhiking, you'd get a rule. Now they're afraid they'll be robbed, but people has always been robbed all their life. So it's hard for me to pass up a hitchhiker."

Sam may be on to something. It's not so much not learning as it is tribal memory that's lost. A past, a history has been erased as effortlessly as chalk on a blackboard is erased. It's easy to decry the young clod who says, "A Depression to me is when I can't sit down on my chaise lounge and have a beer and this boob tube in my face." Too easy, perhaps.

The young Atlanta woman bites closer to the core of the apple. "Depression tales were almost like fairy tales to me. The things they teach you about the Depression in school are quite different from how it was. You were told people worked hard and somehow things got better. You never hear about the rough times. I feel angry, as though I were protected from my own history."

When World War Two ended the Great Depression and postwar prosperity, as well as God, blessed America, millions who had all their lives lived on the razor's edge suddenly experienced a security they had never before enjoyed. It was much easier then to suffer amnesia than to remember the dark times of the thirties. It was so even for the sons and daughters of Okies.

The exquisite irony has not been lost on Jessie de la Cruz. Her family of farm workers has been at it since the thirties. Her hunger has always been Okie hunger. "We worked the land all our lives, so if we ever owned a piece of land, we felt we could make it." Perhaps that's why Muley Graves, stubbornly, mulishly stayed on even though nothing remained but dusty old dust.

Perhaps that's why Jessie was so stunned by the forgettery of those who may have shared her experience, or whose mothers and fathers certainly did. "There's a radio announcer here in Fresno. He always points out, 'I was an Okie. I came out here and I made it. Why can't these Chicanos make it?' "The nun at the mike could be little Winn'eld, the ten-year-old kid of Ma and Pa Joad, Tom's baby brother.

An elderly seamstress, who has seen hard times all her life, thinks this may be more than wild conjecture. "People fergits. I've know'd people lost someone in the war, they gits a little money an' they fergits. I've know'd Depression people, they fergits so easy."

It wasn't by chance that organizers of Cesar Chavez's farm workers union, during the Delano grape strike of the sixties) often cited *The Grapes of Wrath* to "revive old passions for a new battle." [2]

"Finished this day – and I hope to God it's good." That's how John Steinbeck ended his day's work on October 26, 1938. The longhand manuscript was in the hands of others now. He had begun this job some five months before; but with constant interruptions – guests, all sorts of noise, pleas from hard-up strangers, urgings to help the abused farm workers – he had put in no more than a hundred working days.

There is no evidence of any written outline; it was all all his head. In his mind's eye, he envisioned the novel *in toto*, even to the final startling scene. Incongruous though it seems a couple of other creative artists worked in this manner: Mozart and Fats Waller.

Though he was already a success, self-doubt had him on the hip. *Of Mice and Men* had been acclaimed as a novel and was on its way to becoming a smash hit as a play. If anything, tills added to his burden. His doing so well in the midst of so much misery and injustice was the hound gnashing at Steinbeck's social conscience. He had been in the fields, he had worked them in preparation for this book; he had seen their faces. "The success will ruin me sure as hell." Guilt was his unrelenting companion during those hundred feverish days.

His diary is replete with self-denigration. "Funny how mean and little books become in face of such tragedies." "I've reached a point of weariness where it seems lousy to me." "I'm not a writer. I wish I were." Yet an almost messianic urgency drove him on.

Self-doubt be damned, he was part of that caravan; he was as much a pilgrim on the Joad hegira as Preacher Casy or Uncle John. Consider this entry in his journal, July 15, 1938: "It is the 35th day. In sixteen more days, I'll be half through. I must get my people to California before then." And there's that damn desert ahead. "Get it done, by God, and they still aren't across." My people.

There is nothing Pirandellian about this writing, nothing detached and ironic. His characters were not on the loose, searching out the author. They were on the loose, of course, but the author was their constant companion. He had become a member of their tribe.

John Steinbeck had witnessed vigilantes and the town's respectables bust a grape strike in the town of Delano in 1936. And bust more than a few heads. It was his home turf. He had seen the pinched features of the five thousand migrant families flooded out of Visalia. He knew, first hand, what was happening all along Imperial Valley. He was on his way to becoming an expert witness: working the fields, doing stoop labor. It was a job he sought.

Fortunately, there was an administration in Washington that understood. President Franklin Roosevelt was surrounded by a circle of men who had something of a sense of history, something the blacks call a "feeling tone." They knew that ways, yet untried, had to be found to meet the need: the restoration of a people's shattered faith in themselves. They called on the skills of creative people to reveal the landscape, to touch the hearts and challenge the minds of America. Government agencies, new to the American experience, came into being.

The Farm Security Administration (FSA) was one. Some of the most indelibly remembered photographs of the thirties were the work of artists, commissioned by the FSA: among them, Walker Evans, Margaret Bourke-White, Dorothea Lange, and Ben Shahn. The durable documentaries, *The Plow That Broke the Plains* and *The River* were produced by the FSA. The writer-director was the gifted film maker, Pare Lorentz, a friend and colleague of John Steinbeck.

It was in fact one of these New Deal agencies, the Resettlement Administration (RA), that collaborated with the author in the work that subsequently became The Grapes of Wrath.

Let C. B. (Beanie) Baldwin tell it. He was deputy director of the Resettlement Administration: "I got a call from John Steinbeck. He wanted some help. He was planning to write this book on migrant workers. Will Alexander and I were delighted.[3] He said, 'I'm writing about people and I have to live as they live.' He planned to go to work for seven, eight weeks as a pea picker or whatever. He asked us to assign someone to go along with him, a migrant worker. We chose a little guy named Collins, out of Virginia.

"I paid Collins' salary, which was perhaps illegal. He and Steinbeck worked in the fields together. Steinbeck did a very nice thing. He insisted Collins be technical director of the film [of *The Grapes of Wrath*], this little migrant worker. And he got screen credit."

John Ford's classic film is remarkably faithful to Steinbeck's vision. Aside from Nunnally Johnson's superb adaptation, it may have been the presence of Tom Collins on the set that assured such detailed accuracy. Woody Guthrie's Dustbowl ballads, a collection of eight memorable songs, were inspired not only by his own hard traveling but by the film, which he had seen before he read the book.

Tom Collins became Steinbeck's valued guide and companion, during all those workdays. It was he who offered folk wisdom; the inside and outside of the ways, customs, and reflections of these people. "Detail, detail, detail," Steinbeck writes in his journal, "looks, clothes, gestures. I need this stuff. It is exact and just the stuff that will be used against me if I am wrong. Tom is so good." Collins became the model for Jim Rawley, the migrant camp director in the book. He had himself managed one such camp. The second half of the book's dedication is "To Tom, who lived it."

The hard truth captured in *The Grapes of Wrath* was corroborated several months later with the publication of *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Labor in California.* It was the work of Carey McWilliams, the state's Commissioner of Immigration and Housing: a rare public servant.

Steinbeck had to have it just right; there was to be not even the slightest error. He knew that the powerful growers, represented by the Associated Farmers, would be infuriated by the book. They were. "The Associated Farmers have begun an hysterical personal attack on me both in the papers and a whispering campaign. I'm a Jew, a pervert, a drunk, a dope fiend."

In his journal, he tells of a friendly sheriff warning him against staying in hotel rooms alone. "The boys got a rape case set for you. A dame will come in, tear off her clothes, scratch her face and scream and you try to talk yourself out of that one. They won't touch your book but there's easier ways."

They did touch his book. They did more than that, on a couple of occasions, they burned it in his home town. Today, Salinas has named a library after him and the Chamber of Commerce takes pride in being "Steinbeck Country."

The battle is not quite over. Today, *The Grapes of Wrath*), the master work of a Nobel Laureate, is the second most banned book in our school and public libraries.

It isn't the language. The colloquial profanities are mild indeed, certainly by today's standards. It must be something else. What? Perhaps the author has offered the reason: "I am completely partisan on the idea of working people to the end that they may eat what they raise, wear what they weave, Use what they produce, and share in the work of their hands and heads." Tom Joad's vision was John Steinbeck's vision; a subversive impulse in some quarters.

If you were to choose the one episode that most disturbed the powerful, it may be the one that appears in the government camp sequence. After the Joads had left the wretched Hooverville, about to be burned down by the vigilantes, they came upon this place. As Tom checks in for the family, he is informed:

> " Folks here elect their own cops.... There's five sanitary units. Each one elects a Central Committee man. Now that committee makes the laws. What they say goes. "
> " S'pose they get tough ", Tom said.
> " Well, you can vote 'em out jus' as quick as you vote 'em in. " " ...Then there' s the ladies. They keep care of the kids an' look after the sanitary units. If your ma isn't working, she'll look after the kids for the ones that are working, an' when she gets a job – why, there'll be others...."
> " Well, for Christ's sake! Why ain't there more places like this? "
> " You'll have to find that out for yourself. " (*The Grapes of Wrath,* Chapter Twenty-one)

That Steinbeck captured the "feeling tone," as well as the literal truth, of a resettlement camp has since been underscored by the testimony of John Heccher, the southern poet. He himself managed such a camp for black sharecroppers in the Florida Everglades:

"When the day came to open, we just opened the gate and let anybody in that wanted to come in. No references or anything like that. It was enough for us that a family wanted to live there. We didn't hire guards either and nobody carried a club or a pistol in all that camp that held a thousand people.

"We just got them altogether and told them it was their camp. And there wouldn't be any laws, except the ones they made for themselves through their elected Council. The Council said a man couldn't beat his wife up in camp. And when a man came in drunk, he was out by morning. They had to pay their rent and out of it came money for the nursery school. And they started a co-op, without a dollar in it that the people didn't put up.

"Some of the men and women on that Council couldn't so much as write their names. Remember these were just country people off sharecrop farms in Georgia and Alabama. Just ordinary cotton pickers, the kind planters say would ruin the country if they had the vote. All I know is: My eyes have seen democracy work."

Let that serve as a brief resume of Chapter Twenty-one of *The Grapes of Wrath.*

No wonder the Associated Farmers and their friends in Congress were so furious. (For the record: Of all the New Deal agencies, the Resettlement Administration, responsible for these camps, was the most bitterly attacked in Congress and in the press.) No wonder Peggy Terry felt otherwise.

Peggy had come out of western Kentucky. She had barely finished fifth grade. The Great Depression was her teacher. She had hard-traveled the highways and dirt roads, worked in the fields, slept in barns, her skinny young husband by her side, and, like Rose of Sharon, was big with child.

She remembers the day somebody handed her a well-thumbed paperback. "… And when I read *Grapes of Wrath*, that was like reliving my whole life. I was never so proud of poor people before as I was after I read this book."

I imagine John Steinbeck would have valued that critique as much as the Nobel Prize for Literature he won in 1962.

Robert J. DeMott has said all that needs to be said. He writes in his introduction to *Working Days* "… of a man whose fiercely concentrated will and driven imagination enriched the literature of his time and redeemed the tag end of a terrifying decade … of his willingness to risk everything to write the best he could with what gifts he had, and in doing so to reveal, unblinking, the harsh shape of paradise."

Reprinted from *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck; introduction by Studs Terkel (New York: Viking Press, 1989).

[1] Robert J. DeMott, *Working Days: The Grapes of Wrath Journal* (New York: Viking, 1989)

[2] Jackson J. Benson, *The True Adventures of John Steinbeck, Writer: A Biography* (New York: Viking, 1984)

[3] *Alexander had succeeded the maligned Rexford Tugwell as director of the Resettlement Administration. It was Tugwell, a member Of Roosevelt's Brains Trust, who had conceived the idea of migratory labor camps, run by the migrants themselves: a lesson in democracy.*

Appendix D

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

READING RESOURCES

Bloom, Harold, ed. *Modern Critical Interpretations of* The Grapes of Wrath. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.

French, Warren, ed. *A Companion to* The Grapes of Wrath. New York: The Viking Press, 1963.

Hayashi, Tetsumaro, ed. *Steinbeck's* The Grapes of Wrath: *Essays in Criticism.* Muncie, Indiana: Ball State University Steinbeck Research Institute, 1990.

Owens, Lewis. The Grapes of Wrath: *Trouble in the Promised Land.* Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989.

Steinbeck, John. *Working Days: The Journals of* The Grapes of Wrath, *1938–1941*. New York: The Viking Press, 1989.

Wyatt, David, ed. *New Essays on* The Grapes of Wrath. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

SELECTED ONLINE ARTICLES

"A Photo Essay on the Great Depression" from Modern American Poetry.
www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/depression/photoessay.htm

Gusmorino, Paul Alexander. "Main Causes of the Great Depression."
www.gusmorino.com/pag3/greatdepression/index.html

Marchand, Michele. "Steinbeck's Call to Action."
www.realchangenews.org/pastarticles/reviews/steinbecks_call_to_action.html

Palos, Elise. "*Grapes of Wrath* Banned in Kern County."
home.pacific.net.au/~greg.hub/banned.html

Terkel, Studs. "Conversations with America"
www.studsterkel.org/introduction.php

The Grapes of Wrath

Based on the novel by John Steinbeck
Music by Ricky Ian Gordon
Libretto by Michael Korie
Original stage direction and dramaturgy by Eric Simonson
Orchestrations by Ricky Ian Gordon and Bruce Coughlin
Co-commissioned by The Minnesota Opera and Utah Symphony & Opera

World premiere

February 10, 13, 15, 17 and 18, 2007
Ordway Center for the Performing Arts

Sung in English

Tom Joad, a released prisoner ..... baritone
Ma Joad, *family matriarch* ..... mezzo-soprano
Rosasharn, *Tom's pregnant sister* ..... soprano
Jim Casy, *a lapsed preacher* ..... tenor
Pa Joad, *a tenant farmer* ..... baritone
Uncle John, *Pa's brother* ..... baritone
Granma, *Pa and John's mother* ..... mezzo-soprano
Grampa, *her husband* ..... tenor
Connie Rivers, *Rosasharn's husband* ..... baritone
Noah, *Tom's slow-witted brother* ..... baritone
Al, *his younger brother* ..... tenor
Ruthie, *their younger sister* ..... treble
Winfield, *their youngest brother* ..... treble

Setting: Southern and Western United States, 1930s

Featured Roles

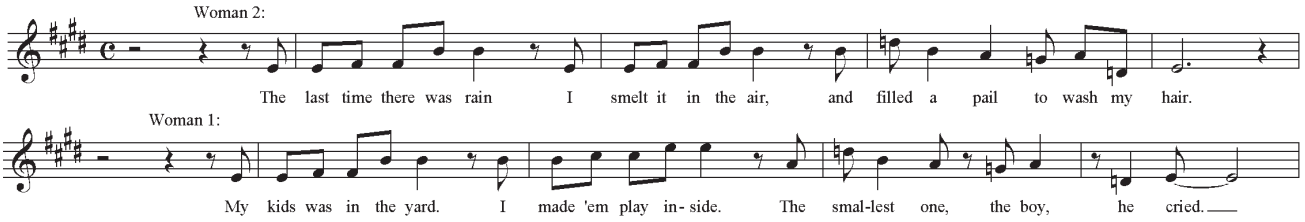
most of which are performed by 3 men (tenor, baritone, bass) and 2 women (soprano, mezzo) in multiple roles; others are smaller chorus roles

OKLAHOMA CROPPERS, *farm women and men*
PRISON GUARD, *McAlester Penitentiary*
TRUCK DRIVER, *Oklahoma Oil Transport*
MULEY GRAVES, *evicted farmer*
MULEY'S WIFE, *evicted farmer woman*
PETE FOWLER, *tractor operator*
LOAN OFFICER *of the Oklahoma bank*
POWERBROKER, *Chicago plutocrat*
SECRETARY *to the Powerbroker*
SENATOR, *Oklahoma politician*
MAN IN SUIT, *repossesses farms*
CONSTABLE, *enforces evictions*
TRAFFIC COP *on Route 66*
THREE PUMP GUYS *on Route 66*
WAITRESS *on Route 66*
COOK *on Route 66*
MOTEL OWNER AND WIFE *on Route 66*
CADILLAC COUPLE *on Route 66*
RAGGED MAN, *a cropper*
MAE, *waitress*
VAL, *cook*
DINER GIRLS, *other waitresses*
BILL, trucker
JOE, trucker
TWO INSPECTORS, *agricultural officers*
GEORGE J. ENDICOTT I, *1849 homesteader*
GEORGE J. ENDICOTT III, *a grower*
GEORGE J. ENDICOTT IV, *cannery owner*
CROPPER WOMAN, *Hooverville squatter*
CONTRACTOR *of migrant workers*
DEPUTY, *vigilante*
MAN, *cropper woman's husband*
HUSTON, *cropper*
BLACK HAT, *cropper*
TWO DEPUTIES, *local law enforcement*
GATE GUARD *of government camp*
PEACH CHECKER, *counts peaches*
COMMISSARY CLERK *of Hooper Ranch store*
CABIN MISTRESS *of Hooper cabins*
WASHROOM GUARD *at Hooper Ranch*
PATROL GUARD *by fence*
LOU, TIM AND JAKE, *strikers*
GEORGE, *vigilante*
BILL, *vigilante*
STATE TROOPER *outside vineyard*
FARMER *of a small cotton farm*
BOY *in barn*
STARVING MAN, boy's father

PROLOGUE

The cropper men and women recall the devastation of their native Oklahoma lands, brought about by drought and economic depression.

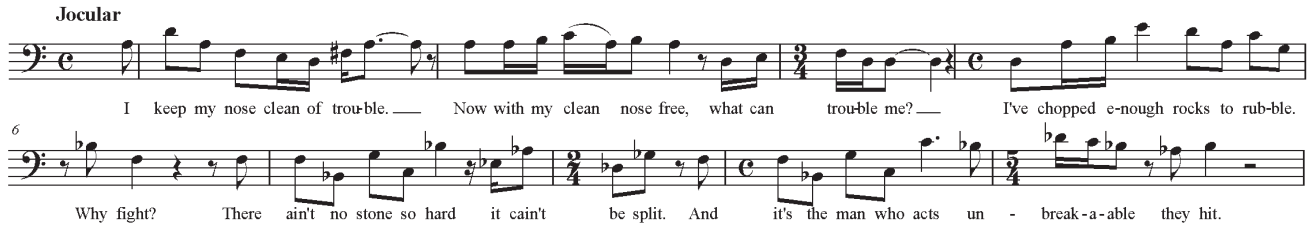
(1) THE LAST TIME THERE WAS RAIN (CHORUS)



ACT I

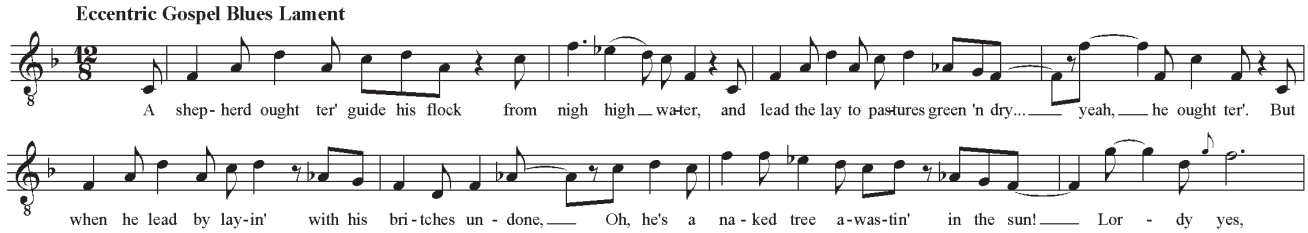
Tom Joad is paroled from McAlester Prison after serving four years for killing a man in a fight.

(2) I KEEP MY NOSE CLEAN (TOM JOAD)



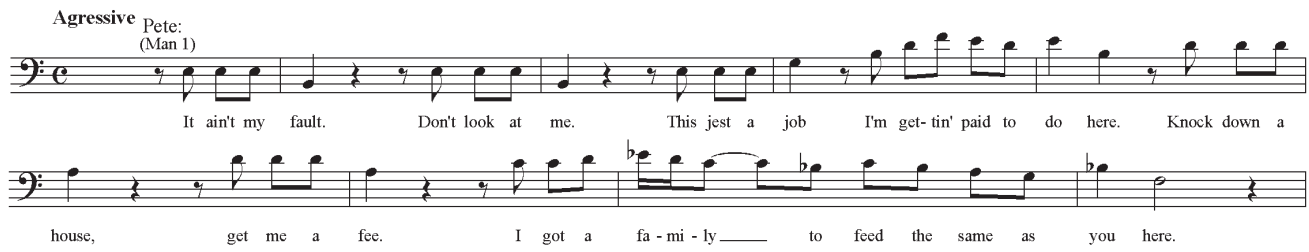
After hitching a ride, he runs into Jim Casy, an ex-preacher.

(3) NAKED TREE (CASY)



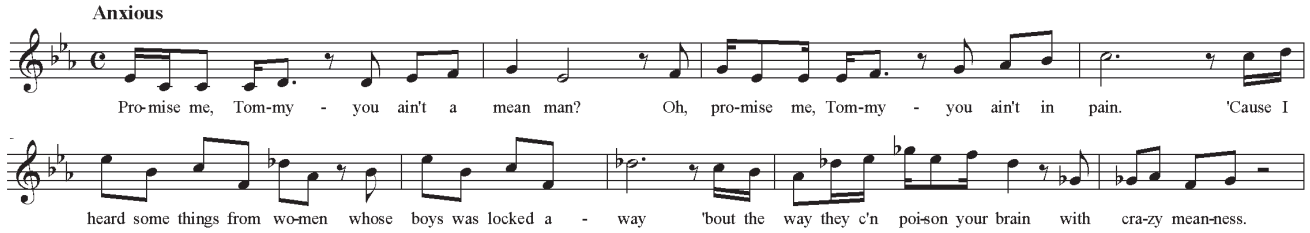
Together they happen upon the nearly deserted Joad farm. The Dust Bowl has ravaged the Depression-era country, and the family is gone; only Muley Graves, a neighbor, remains. He has taken refuge there as his own home was taken by the bank and trampled by a tractor. In a flashback, Muley relives the experience that also cost him his wife and child.

(4) NOT MY FAULT (PETE, MULEY, ET. AL.)



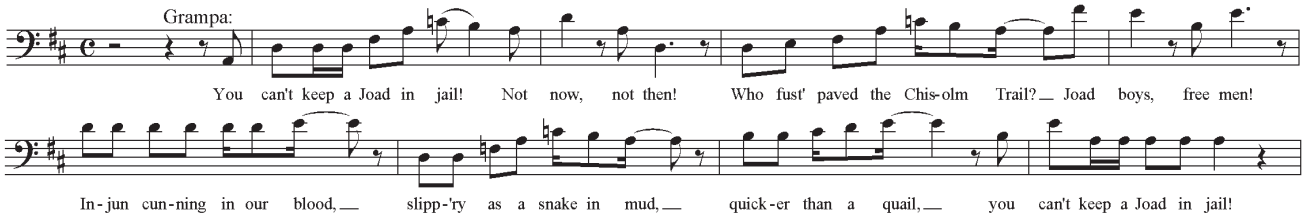
Tom learns his family is up at Uncle John's – but not for long, as he too has been evicted. They are all surprised to see Tom out of jail, and he agrees to relocate with them in California where it is rumored that there is work, even if it means he must break his parole. Ma Joad worries prison may have changed her son.

(5) PROMISE ME TOMMY (MA JOAD)



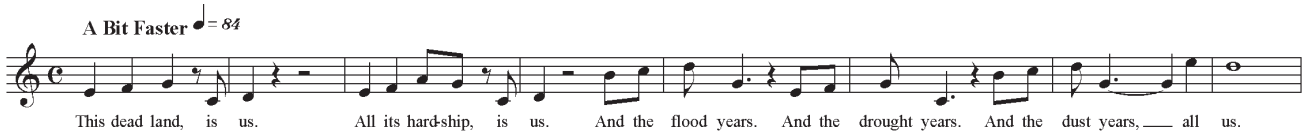
Tom greets his siblings and learns that his sister, Rosasharn, has married and is pregnant. Everyone spins wild stories of how he must have broken out of jail.

(6) YOU CAN'T KEEP A JOAD IN JAIL (GRAMPA, THEN OTHER JOADS)



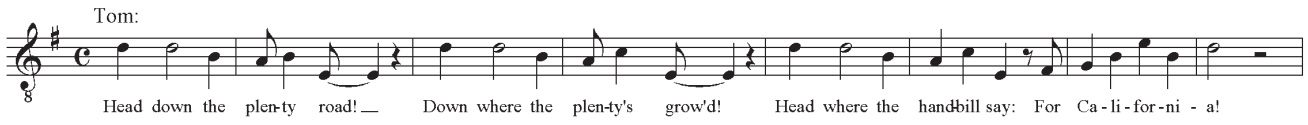
At the same time, Tom's 16-year-old brother Al is buying the truck that will make the 2,000-mile trek. Hucksters try to sell him a wreck, but the mechanically inclined teen feels he's made a good deal. The family isn't quite so sure. Nonetheless, Granma and Grampa are thrilled by their prospects out west, while Ma laments the loss of the land and belongings that have meant so much to them.

(7) US (MA JOAD)



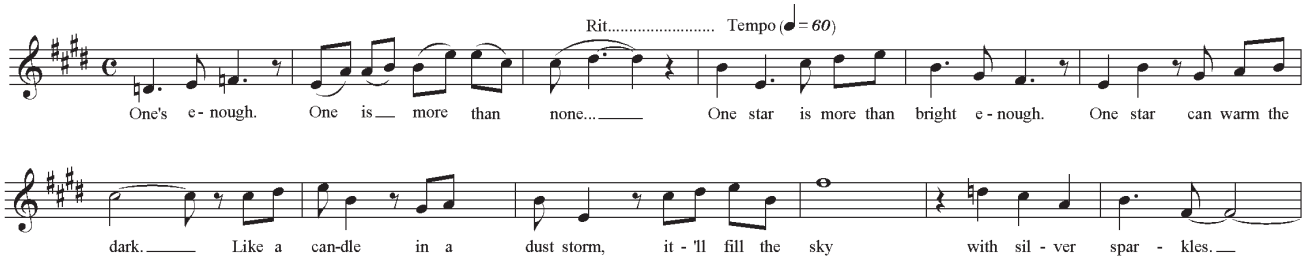
The next day, Grampa is a little less exuberant, but the family loads him up into the truck along with their few remaining possessions and heads down the plenty road with Casy along for the ride. Though all remain optimistic, traveling along Route 66, Tom and the others experience their first disparaging remarks, now labeled as "Okies."

(8) THE PLENTY ROAD (TOM, THEN OTHER JOADS, ENSEMBLE)



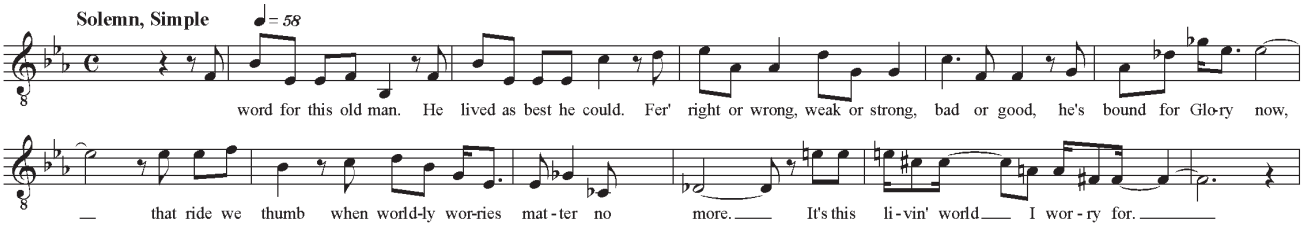
As the Joads set up camp for the night, they meet other travelers who have handbills identical to Pa's. One ragged man has already been to California and reports that there is no work left. In order to keep wages low, ranch owners print thousands of handbills when they only have a hundred jobs available. His entire family perished from famine. Pa remains confident that they will find work. Elsewhere, dangling their feet off a highway overpass, Connie and Rosasharn watch the passing traffic. Connie admires the Lincoln Zephyr, while Rosasharn dreams of a home for their baby.

(9) ONE STAR (ROSASHARN, THEN CONNIE)



The next day the Joads soberly bury Grampa, who has died during the night. Casy says a few words honoring the old man. The family then continues their journey down the road.

(10) A WORD FOR THIS OLD MAN (CASY)

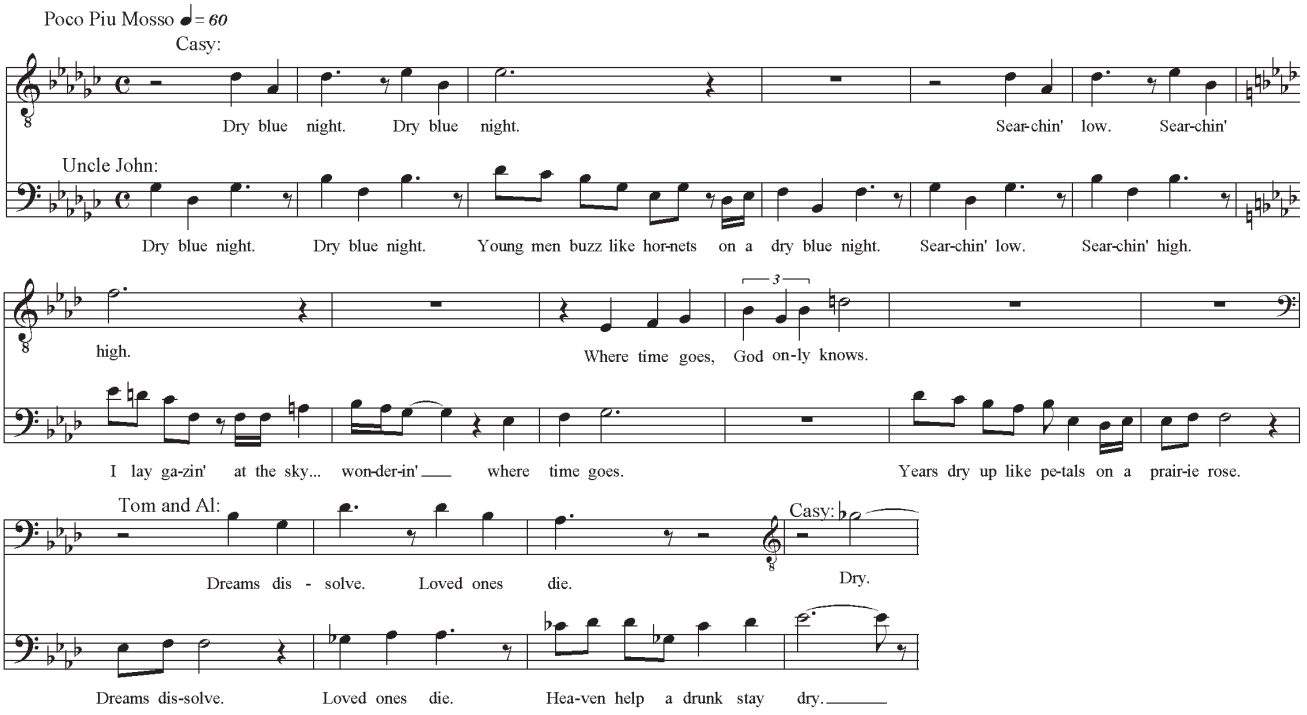


ACT II

At a diner, a waitress chats with truckers. Pa enters with Ruthie and Winfield in tow, and she looks at them with contempt. They try to buy a loaf of bread for Granma (who is now sick) as they prepare to cross the Mojave Desert, but they only have a dime. At the urging of her husband, the waitress gives them the loaf at a discount. Suddenly moved, she throws in two lollipops for the kids.

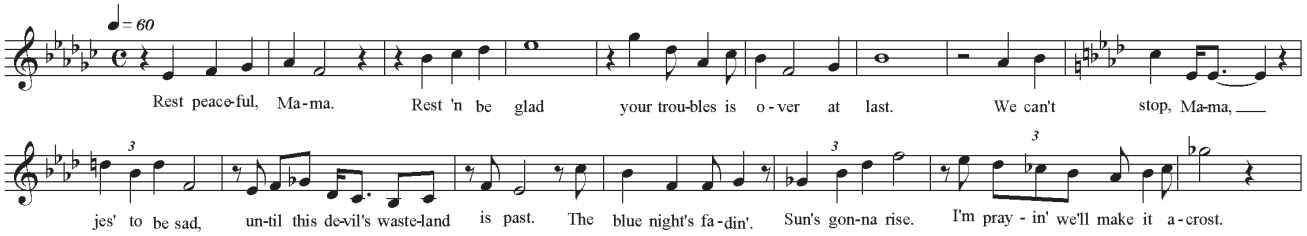
As the Joads cross the dry Mojave, the men drive the truck while Connie makes amorous overtures to a reluctant Rosasharn.

(11) DRY BLUE NIGHT (UNCLE JOHN, CASY, AL, TOM)



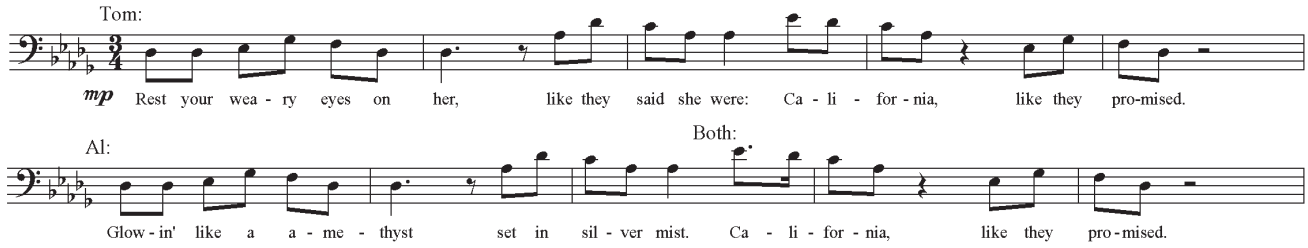
Ma rests with Granma. The old woman has died, but only Ma knows it.

(12) REST PEACEFUL, MAMA (MA JOAD)



The next morning, after passing through an inspection station and reaching the beautiful Tehachapi Valley, the awful truth is revealed. Ma had promised Granma she'd be buried in a green place.

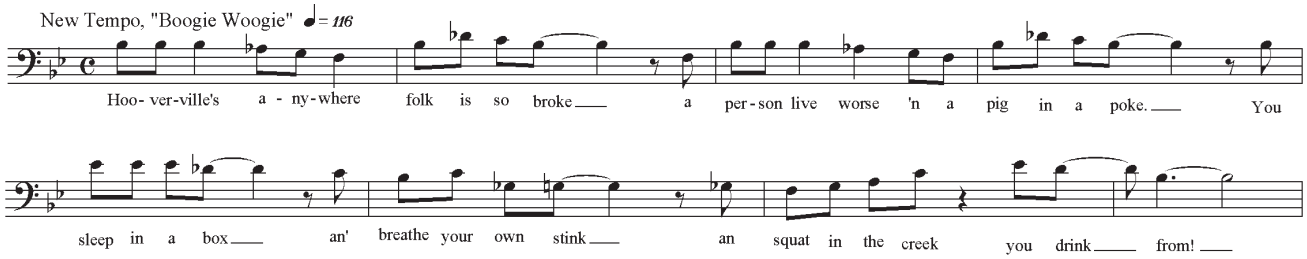
(13) LIKE THEY PROMISED (TOM, AL, THEN OTHERS)



At the Endicott Farm, the scene flashes back to 1849. California settler George Endicott plants his first plum tree. In the present time, growers inform the Joads that there's no work there – the crop already has been picked. Another flash to 1924: George Endicott the grandson has become a successful businessman. Back in the present, the locals rally – with the influx of Okie laborers, their wages have been slashed. Meanwhile, Endicott IV enjoys the finer things in life. Nearby, plums are being burned – the farm grew too many, and to drive up the price, they destroy the excess, rather than give them to the hungry croppers.

The Joads continue on, settling in Hooverville, a squalid shanty town by the railroad tracks. A cropper woman tries to trick Ma out of a few potatoes by pretending a bag of leaves is a starving child. The family is disgusted by their new surroundings but have little choice at the moment.

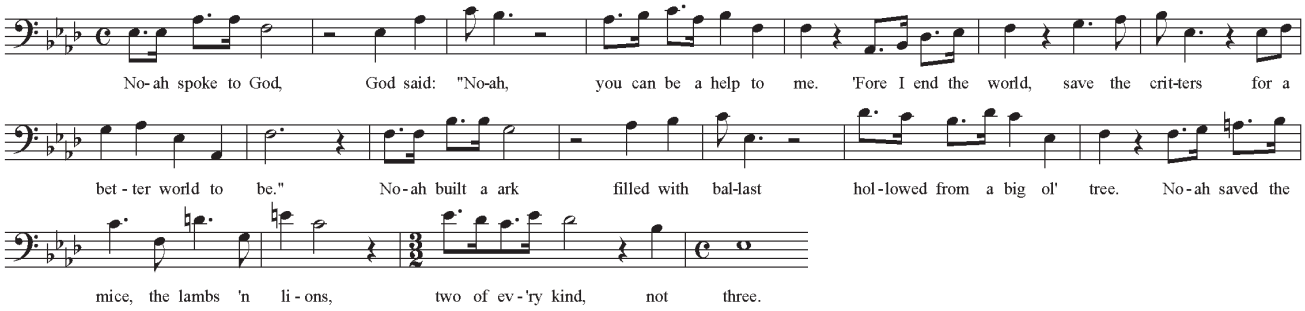
(14) HOOVERVILLE'S ANYWHERE (AL, THEN CONNIE)



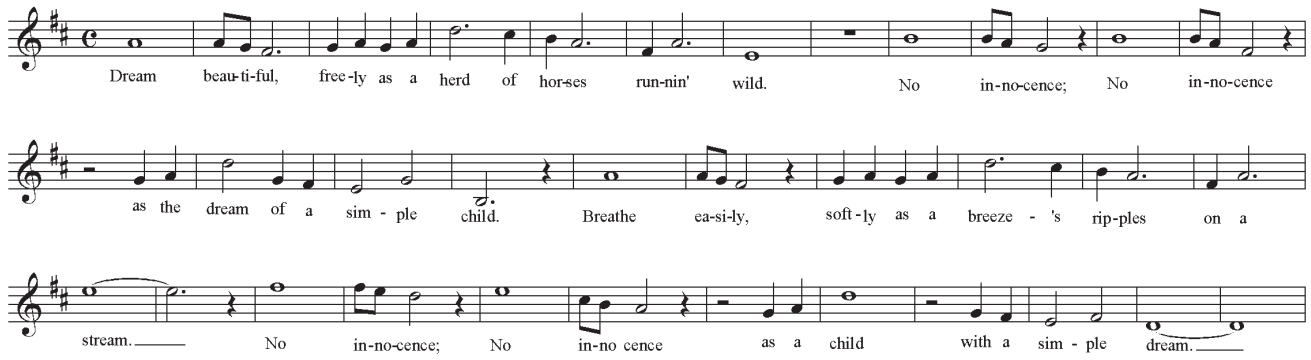
Al angrily reproaches his slow-witted brother Noah for being more of a burden than a help. He wants to break off on his own, but Ma takes charge, insisting the family stay together. Begging a dollar from Ma, Uncle John goes off on a bender. Connie regrets leaving what little he had in Oklahoma and derides Rosasharn's hopeless dreams of home and family. He storms off, never to return.

The next day a contractor and a deputy show up with more handbills offering work. Al is suspicious and Casy asks to see the contractor's license, causing a stir. When the squatters refuse to go, the situation becomes agitated. The deputy tries to cuff Tom, but he escapes, and the ensuing bullet meant for him hits a nearby woman, killing her instantly. In the growing scuffle, the deputy is knocked unconscious and the contractor runs for safety. As the deputy comes to, Casy chooses to take the blame, as the Joads make a beeline for the truck. Rosasharn is distraught, for Connie hasn't come back. Noah goes to the creek to fetch a bucket of water and instead submerges himself.

(15a) I CAN BE A HELP (NOAH)



(15b) SIMPLE CHILD (MA)



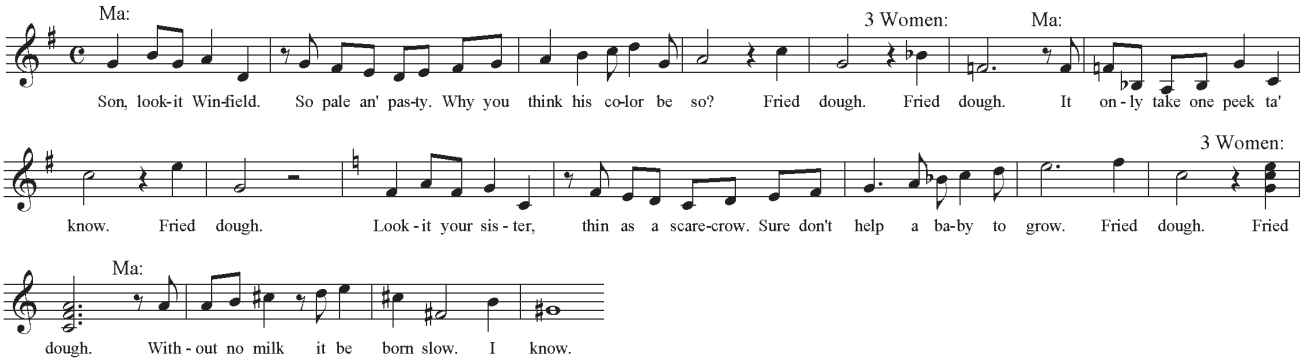
ACT III

Newly relocated at a government settlement camp, Ruthie and Winfield marvel at a flushing toilet, the first they have ever seen. Ma teaches them the merits of modern plumbing and hygiene. The camp makes them feel like people again, though Ma is startled to discover she accidentally has gone into the men's room. Inside the inner shower room, the Men's Committee meets. Outside, the women gather as they wash clothes, instructing Ma on the rules of the camp.

Rosasharn is now very pregnant and despondent over Connie's departure. Ma tries to comfort her with sage advice. Later, at the camp hoedown, the Joads joyfully take part in a square dance. Vigilantes try to cause a disturbance, but the crowd, aware of their plan to create a riot, makes the expulsion of the intruders part of the dance. When two deputies arrive to break up what they think will be a fight, they leave disappointed. The local farm owners are obviously unhappy with the camp's growing autonomy.

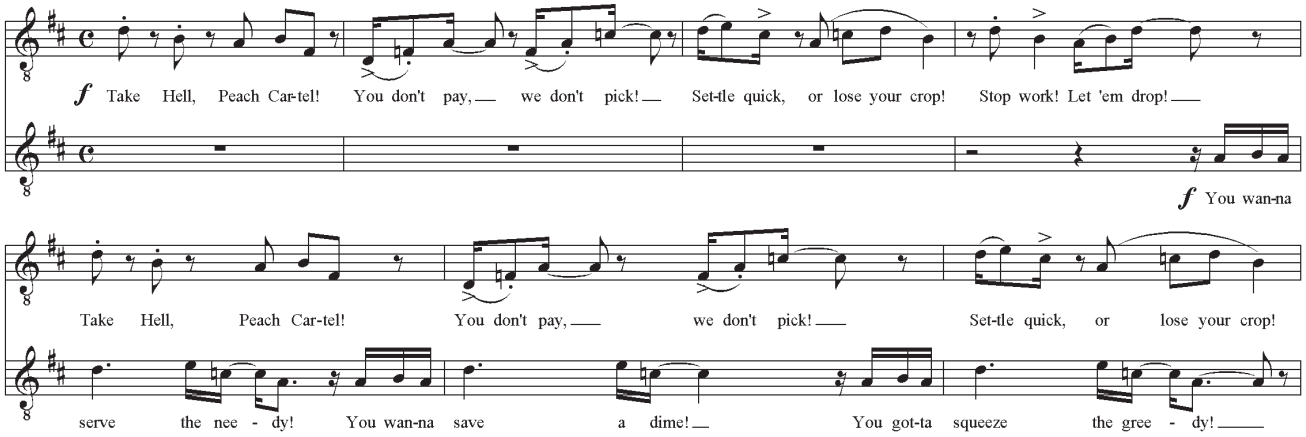
Pa shows everyone a new handbill with great enthusiasm, but the crowd responds dishearteningly. Nonetheless, they prepare to pack – as good as the camp may be, there is still no way to make money for food as long as they reside there. Ma fears for the future of her younger children.

(16) FRIED DOUGH (MA, THREE WOMEN)



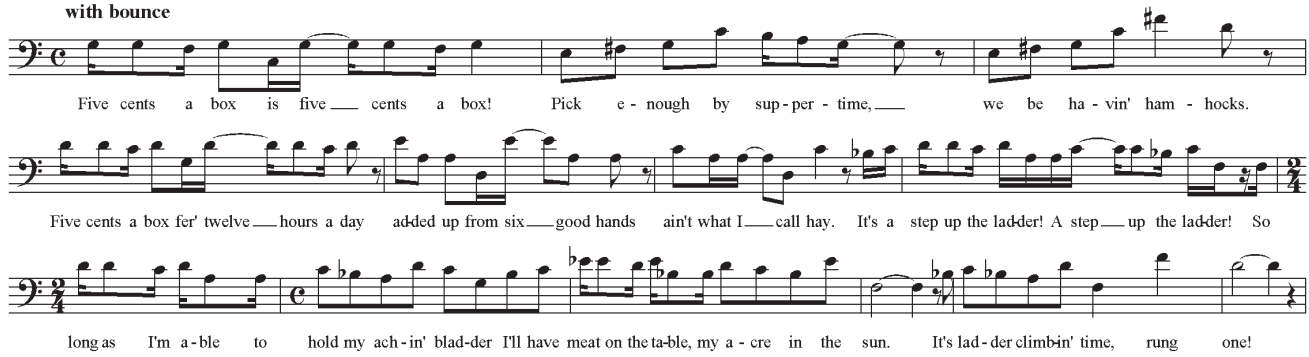
At Hooper Ranch a strike is in progress.

(17) JOIN THE LINE (STRIKERS)



The Joads and others are quickly ushered by the line, unaware they are scabs. As they pick the peaches, Tom questions what is happening beyond the fence, but is quickly silenced.

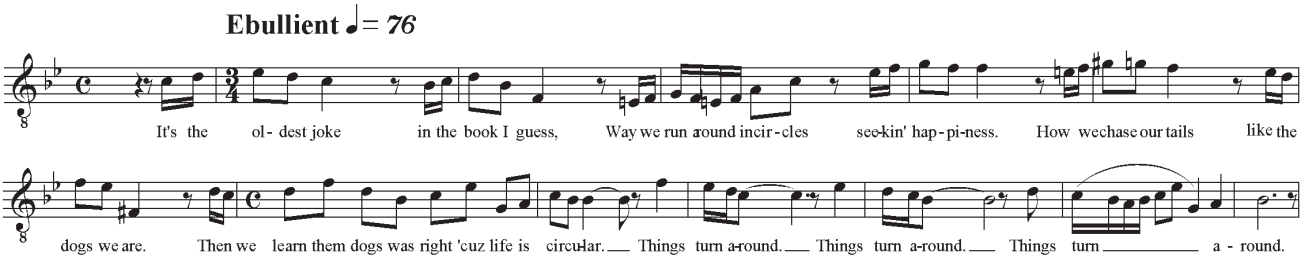
(18) A STEP UP THE LADDER (PA, THEN OTHERS)



Though thrilled to finally have some money, Ma soon discovers how inflated prices are at the local commissary. Other things – ladders, housing, showers – also prove to be expensive and the Joads are barely better off than they were before.

Later that night, Tom takes a closer look at what's going on outside the fence. He discovers a group of men, one of which is Casy, who leads the strike over poor wages.

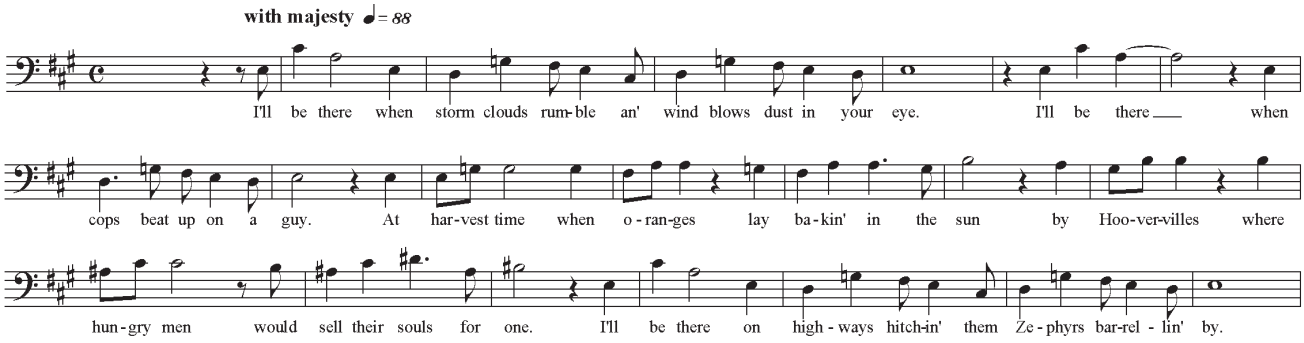
(19) THINGS TURN AROUND (CASY, THEN TOM)



Vigilantes soon arrive and bludgeon Casy to death. Tom interferes and is slashed on the face. He in turn bashes his assailant, killing him.

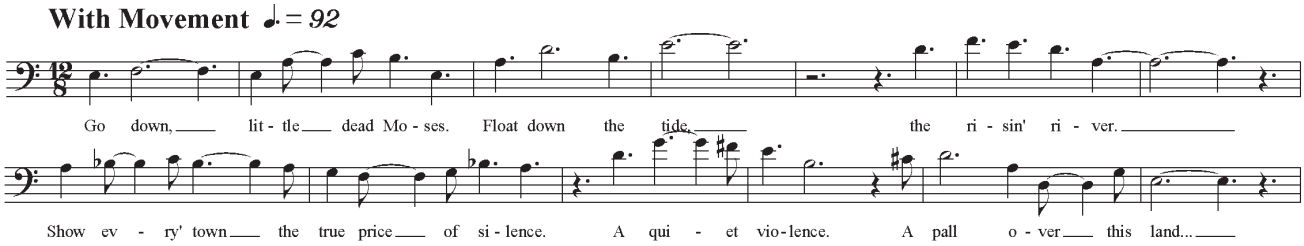
Now a marked man, Tom has gone into hiding and Ma smuggles him some food. He announces his plan to go off on his own, and they share a tender moment.

(20) I'LL BE THERE (TOM, THEN MA)



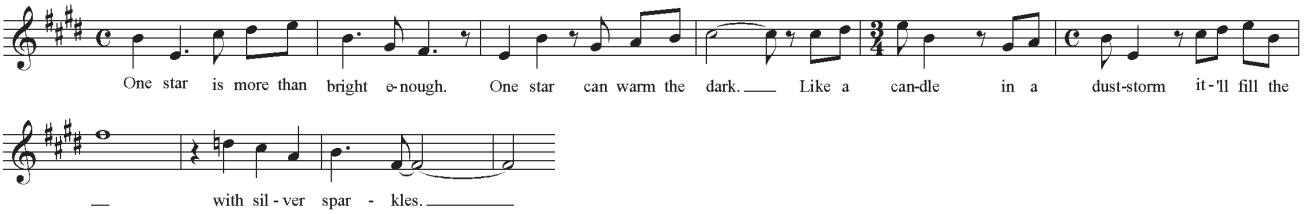
The remaining Joads find work picking cotton and shelter in a boxcar. Just as the rainy season begins, Rosasharn goes into labor, but delivers a stillborn child. Instead of burying him, Uncle John floats little dead Moses down the rising stream.

(21) LITTLE DEAD MOSES (UNCLE JOHN)



The raging river has now swallowed its banks and flooded the Joads out of their home. Only Ma, Pa, Ruthie, Winfield and a very weak Rosasharn remain and seek refuge inside a barn. There they find a boy and a starving, nearly dead man. Ma intuitively knows what Rosasharn must do, and ushers everyone else back outside. Rosasharn lowers her blouse and nourishes the man with her breast.

(22) ONE STAR – REPRISE (ROSASHARN)



Ricky Ian Gordon

b Oceanside (Long Island), New York, May 15, 1956

Referred to in *The New York Times* as "one of the leading younger composers of songs," Ricky Ian Gordon is a composer of unusual scope, equally at home writing for the concert hall, opera, dance, theater and film. When his opera, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead,* premiered in Houston, one critic said "… it revealed to Houstonians a composer with a facile but compelling gift for song. His opera was, to me, another exciting moment in the accelerating emergence of a collective American style of art music rooted equally in the country's vernacular and cultivated traditions."

Other credits for Mr. Gordon include *My Life With Albertine,* with Richard Nelson at Playwrights Horizons (cast recording, PS Classics), *Dream True,* with Tina Landau at The Vineyard Theater (recorded on PS Classics), *The Tibetan Book Of The Dead,* with Jean Claude Van Itallie at Houston Grand Opera and The American Music Theater Festival, *Only Heaven,* with Langston Hughes for Encompass Opera (recorded on PS Classics), *Stonewall/Night Variations,* with Tina Landau for En Garde Arts, *States Of Independence,* with Ms. Landau for The American Music Theater Festival, and *Autumn Valentine,* with Dorothy Parker for Opera Omaha's 1992 Fall Festival. As composer-in-residence at the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2001 and 2002, he wrote *Morning Star,* with William Hoffman. On March 13, 2001, at Lincoln Center, he was presented as part of the *American Songbook Series. The New York Times* said, "If the music of Ricky Ian Gordon had to be defined by a single quality, it would be the bursting effervescence infusing songs that blithely blur the lines between art song and the high-end Broadway music of Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim … It's caviar for a world gorging on pizza." Mr. Gordon's songs have been performed and recorded by many internationally known singers including Renée Fleming, Dawn Upshaw, Audra McDonald, Kristin Chenoweth, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, Deborah Voigt, Andrea Marcovicci, Harolyn Blackwell and Betty Buckley. Other recordings include two Nonesuch compact discs: Audra McDonald's *Way Back To Paradise* and *Bright Eyed Joy: The Songs Of Ricky Ian Gordon*, and *Water Music/A Two-Part Requiem* on *Of Eternal Light*, the Catalyst/BMG Classics CD with Musica Sacra conducted by Richard Westenberg. Harolyn Blackwell, on the compact disc entitled *Strange Hurt* for RCA Victor, recorded *Genius Child*, a cycle of ten Langston Hughes settings.

Current projects include this opera, *The Grapes of Wrath* with Michael Korie for The Minnesota Opera, which will be staged at the co-commissioning Utah Opera in May, and *For My Family*, for which Gordon is also the book writer and lyricist, has already had a developmental workshop at The Sundance Theater Lab. His orchestral song cycle *and flowers pick themselves…,* which uses five poems by e. e. cummings, premiered on October 29 in Michigan.

Mr. Gordon's collaboration with choreographer Seán Curran, *Art Song Dance*, premiered at The Joyce Theater in June 2005, and *Orpheus and Euridice* premiered as part of Lincoln Center's *New Visions Series American Songbook* and *Great Performers Series* on October 5, 2005, with Todd Palmer as the clarinetist, Elizabeth Futral, soprano, and Melvin Chin as the pianist. Doug Varone directed and choreographed. Peter G. Davis in *New York Magazine* wrote: "Both Gordon's text and music are couched in an accessible idiom of disarming lyrical directness, a cleverly disguised *faux naivete* that always resolves dissonant situations with grace and a sure sense of dramatic effect—the mark of a born theater composer."

Orpheus and Euridice won a 2006 OBIE Award. The citation read:

> A musician, a dead lover, an extraordinary journey; you might think this old tale has been told too many times, but one composer's personal passion, a choreographer's startling imagination, and the courage of a producer, created one of this year's most moving theatrical events in any genre. For their new-visionary retelling of the tale of Orpheus and Euridice, the judges have awarded an Obie to Ricky Ian Gordon, Doug Varone and The Lincoln Center New Visions program, Jon Nakagawa and Jane Moss producers.

Published and represented by Williamson Music, the publishing company of The Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization, Gordon's publications include four songbooks: *A Horse With Wings*, *Genius Child*, *Only Heaven* and *Finding Home.* Three publications herald a new relationship with publisher Carl Fischer Music as well: *The Piano Music of Ricky Ian Gordon*, *Songs For Our Time* and *Orpheus and Euridice.*

Awards include the National Institute for Music Theater Award, the Stephen Sondheim Award, The Gilman and Gonzalez-Falla Music Theater Foundation Award, the Jonathan Larson Foundation Award, the Constance Klinsky Award and a National Institute for Music Theater Award. *Dream True* won a Richard Rodgers Production Award, and *My Life With Albertine* won the 2002 AT&T Award. The vocal score is published by Williamson Music.

On April 28–29, 2002, there were two sold-out concerts of Mr. Gordon's music at the Guggenheim Museum as part of the *Works and Process* series, with Audra McDonald, Theresa McCarthy, Lewis Cleale and Darius DeHaas with Ted Sperling conducting. Stephen Holden wrote:

> As the singers performed more than 20 of Mr. Gordon's songs, the majority arranged by the composer for a 10-member ensemble conducted by Ted Sperling, the music bubbled and cascaded like a mountain brook after a spring rain. Over and over, one had the image of a boy skipping ecstatically through fields and woods on a crisp April morning.
>
> Mr. Gordon's love of poetry is evident from the clarity and ease of flow of settings that rarely allow a word to get lost. Whether giving musical voice to Hughes's urban angst or to Parker's cynicism, the composer instinctively looks for the silver lining. He turns despair into sadness and softens bitter into wry. Several of his settings of Hughes's poems are inflected with Jazz Age flavors that suggest the blues, but as played by a jazz band at a champagne reception on an ocean liner.
>
> — *The New York Times,* April 30, 2002

Michael Korie

b Elizabeth, New Jersey, April 1, 1955

Writing for both opera and musical theater, Michael Korie wrote the lyrics to the new musical *Grey Gardens* now playing on Broadway at The Walter Kerr Theatre following its premiere Off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons. Based on the Maysles documentary about the society recluses Edith Bouvier Beale and her daughter "Little Edie," with a book by Doug Wright, music by Scott Frankel, direction by Michael Greif and a heralded performance by Christine Ebersole, it was awarded The Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Musical of 2006 and was chosen as the *Time Magazine* number one show of the year. *New York Magazine* cited Korie's lyrics as "the sharpest in town," while *Rolling Stone* found it "an original score with the power to live in your head long after you leave the theater." Also with composer Frankel, Korie wrote both book and lyrics to *Doll*, presented at The Ravinia Festival in a production *The Chicago Tribune* called "an elegant show, fascinating and challenging," and the upcoming *Meet Mister Future*, set to premiere in Los Angeles in 2008. Following developmental productions at La Jolla Playhouse, his lyrics to composer Lucy Simon's music for the new musical *Zhivago* will premiere abroad next season in a full production directed by Des McAnuff on London's West End with book by Michael Weller based on Pasternak's novel.

Korie has previously enjoyed writing lyrics to composer Ricky Ian Gordon's songs performed live in concert and broadcast from Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and Los Angeles Disney Concert Hall conducted by Grant Gershon. *The Grapes of Wrath* is their first full-length collaboration. His libretti for operas with composer Stewart Wallace include *Hopper's Wife*,

which premiered at Long Beach Opera in a production Mark Swed in *The Los Angeles Times* called "brave, bold and important." The experimental dance-opera *Kabbalah* premiered at Brooklyn Academy's Next Wave Festival with direction and choreography by Ann Carlson, recorded on Koch Classics. His first opera libretto, *Where's Dick?,* brought together opera singers, musical comedy performers and new vaudevillians in a production directed by avant-garde pioneer Richard Foreman for Houston Grand Opera. His libretto for *Harvey Milk* blended fact with fiction in dramatizing the life and assassination of the slain San Francisco City Supervisor. The opera premiered at Houston Grand Opera followed by productions at New York City Opera and Dortmund Opera in Germany. Revised after its initial performances, it premiered the following season at San Francisco Opera, conducted by Donald Runnicles, directed by Christopher Alden and featuring Robert Orth in the title role (recorded on Teldec Classics). Writing of the libretto in *The San Francisco Chronicle,* Joshua Kosman called it "by turns haunting and hilarious, brassy and mystically poetic," while Edward Seckerson in *The London Independent* cited the libretto as "among the most accomplished I have encountered in contemporary opera." The text for the work's 40-minute concluding requiem, *Kaddish for Harvey Milk,* was based on testimonies which Korie collected in interviews with Milk's surviving political and personal associates. Though truncated for the opera, it was performed in full as a separate work in a live broadcast produced by The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Also for the concert stage, Korie created the libretto for the evening-length *A Gay Century Songbook* to music by composer Larry Grossman, premiered at Carnegie Hall by New York City Gay Men's Chorus and recorded on DRG. Other experimental concert works with Korie's text have been presented at The Knitting Factory, P.S. 122 and La Mama.

Korie's work has been awarded The Edward Kleban Award and Jonathan Larson Foundation Award. Two of his works have been presented as part of the Guggenheim Museum's Works & Process series, and he is a three-time recipient of The Richard Rodgers Production Award administered by The American Academy of Arts and Letters. He and Frankel were awarded this year's ASCAP Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award. He is a fellow of The MacDowell Colony, and lives in New York City with Ivan Sygoda.

Background Notes

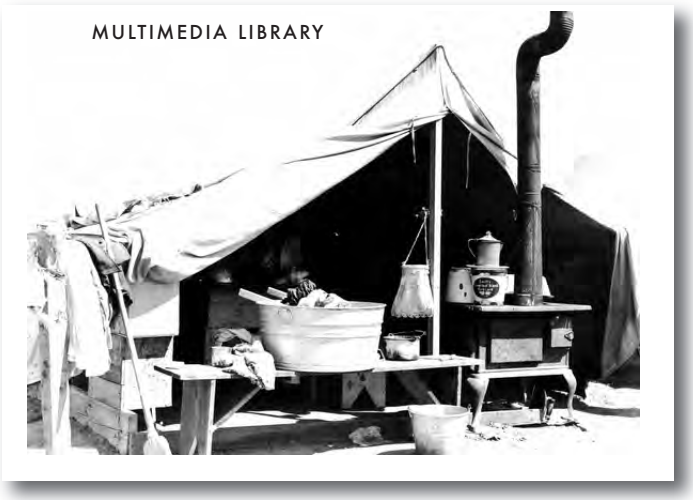
John Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Grapes of Wrath* was first published in 1939, and then quickly made into a major motion picture the following year. The reception was mixed – many found author's harsh critique of big business versus organized labor had a seditious whiff of Communism about it. Others found the book's startling ending vulgar and a bit too risque for the times (and it was discreetly omitted for the more pristine and considerably cheerier movie version). Nonetheless, the book held its place as a bestseller and the film earned an Academy Award nomination for best picture (but losing out to Alfred Hitchcock's *Rebecca*). Along with other famous works devoted to social change, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle,* the novel has earned its place in the pantheon of American literature and paved the way to a notable lifetime achievement award, the Nobel Prize, which the author received in 1962.

Steinbeck (1902 – 1968) was a resident of California during the 1930s and witnessed first hand the plight of migrant laborers and their clash with corporate agriculture as well as the rampant disease, abject filth and desperate poverty in which the workers were forced to live. During the 1930s, several hundred thousand "Okies" and "Arkies" descended upon the San Joaquin Valley, invited by the promise of the harvest, but were then exploited by greedy farmers and never really welcomed by the local citizens. The ill-timing of the Great Depression with the Dust Bowl had been calamitous for plains states residents. They were hardly experienced in a region not especially suited to farming, having only been living there for a couple generations. Unfamiliar with the periodic dry spells, crop rotation and the need for wind breaks, the voracious croppers cut down nearly every tree in favor of acquiring more arable land. When the drought finally came in 1934, there was nothing to keep the fatigued topsoil from blowing away. And blow it did.

The dust was pervasive. In a moment's notice it could blacken the sun and suffocate any living creature. Staying indoors didn't help much – the particles easily seeped through the cracks, and children in particular fell victim to "black pneumonia" as their lungs filled with dirt. Farmers already financially stricken by the Depression found little federal assistance, as the government had been bled dry by economic blight in all corners of the nation. As crops continually failed, banks foreclosed on life-sustaining loans. Horse-and-mule-replacing tractors overran houses, and families were displaced, many lured westward by the need of sheer survival.

As migrants soon discovered, there was far less labor needed than was advertised, thereby keeping wages extremely low, food in short supply and living conditions poor. Horrific disease-ridden, temporary settlements known as "Hoovervilles" (sardonically titled after the Depression-era president) and "Little Oklahomas" became the only place to eek out an

existence until cleaner sanitary government camps came into existence.


MULTIMEDIA LIBRARY

Ironically, only a handful of these relative oases were ever constructed. Though intended to raise social conscience, *The Grapes of Wrath* went into print just as the crisis was just about to end – with the dark cloud of world conflict nearing, many migrants found solid jobs in city-based shipyards and military supply or by conscription into the armed forces.

Steinbeck co-dedicated his novel to one of the first government camp managers, Tom Collins, to whom he owed much of his research for *The Grapes of Wrath,* including working side-by-side with migrant workers (as an homage Collins appears in the novel as the benevolent Jim Rawley). As a one-time investigative journalist for the *San Francisco News,* the author was commissioned to write a series of articles, published October 5–12, 1936, citing gastly conditions that *Grapes* barely grazes. Steinbeck's examination was compiled in a short work, *The Harvest Gypsies* (with photography by Dorothea Lange), observations he would later summarize: "During the migration of thousands of dispossessed families … I saw people starve to death. That's not just a resounding phrase. They starved to death. They dropped dead."[3] The articles were represented in a vaguely political pamphlet, *Their Blood Is Strong,* which included an additional epilogue with suggestions for change, including a resettling of the Okies on small family farms. Quite obviously, this concept ran contrary to California's large, commercial fields.

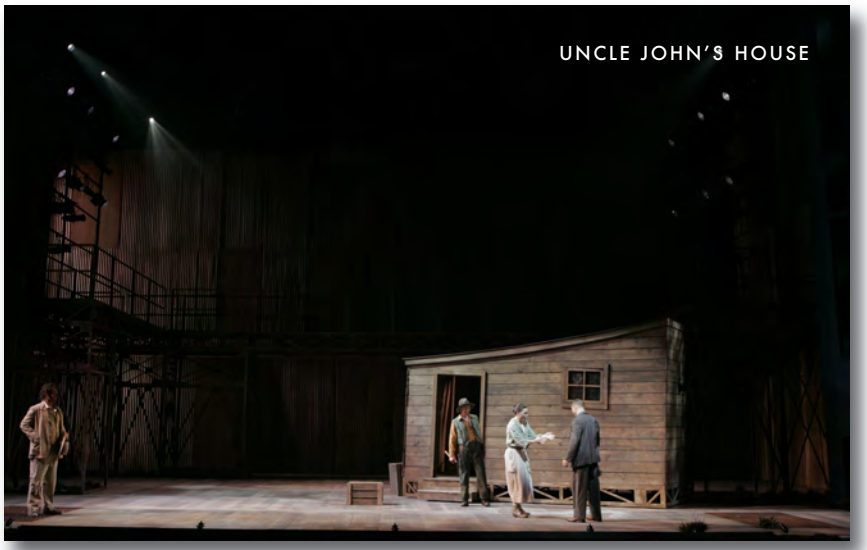

NOT MY FAULT

Steinbeck was predisposed toward the downtrodden [as two earlier works, *Tortilla Flats* (1935) and *In Dubious Battle* (1936) attest; another, *Cannery Row,* would follow in 1945], and his interest didn't end there. He began with an epic survey, *The Oklahomans* (no text is known to survive), then turned *L'Affaire Lettuceberg*, a bitter satire based on conflict between corporate agriculture and the field workers in his native Salinas. Though his publishers hotly anticipated the completion of the then-65,000+ word novel, the author soon became dissatisfied with the work, desiring something more true-to-life. To everyone's dismay, he burned the pages of his nearly complete manuscript.


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

But the seeds had been laid, and those three false starts yielded a unique milestone in literature. It took critics at least twenty years to unravel *The Grapes of Wrath*'s many layers, and the novel is still worthy of analysis even today. One remarkable feature is the alternation of intercalary chapters between the Joad narrative, described as "repositories of all the external information" by the author. In most cases they describe the migrants' journey in the greater context, but

also anticipate events to follow specific to the Joads (a great foreshadower, Steinbeck frequently buries nuggets, seemingly meaningless, to become relevant much later in the narrative). These interchapters have been described as a "Greek chorus" (and nicely translate as such in a few key moments during the opera) and offer detachment to ensure the audience doesn't get too close to the Joads, their hard times only exemplary of everyone's tragedy.


UNCLE JOHN'S HOUSE

Steinbeck's symbolism is also ingenious, if not at times overwhelming. Something as insignificant as the recurrent stalwart journey of an indefatigable, proto-postmodern land turtle (not addressed in the opera) whose southwestern pursuit cannot be stopped by attempted annihilation or capture becomes an ontological icon of persistence and survival. Also carrying its home on its back, the turtle's Joad-like existence isn't subtle but effective. There are frequent associations to the animal world in the traits and actions of the earthy Joads, who though sympathetic, are not free of sin – Tom's quick temper, Al's lusty libido, Uncle John's drunkenness, Rosasharn's self-centered nature, Pa's naivete, Ma's almost pathological need to keep the family together, Granma's religious fervor, Grampa's obstinance and thievery (far from innocent, he is guilty of stealing the Joad homestead from an absent neighbor and the 40 acres from the Native Americans, land to which he becomes inextricably linked and cannot bear to leave, or as his demise indicates, live without; in his own selfish attachment Grampa and his offspring are not unlike those who run the larger Hooper Ranch). Nor are they hesitant to express themselves freely, using authentic, often base language, which Steinbeck fought hard to include. There are frequent sexual references (perhaps the most lewd being Connie and Rosasharn's intercourse very possibly at the moment of Granma's death). Consequently, *The Grapes of Wrath,* with its foul banter, frank sexuality and shocking final scene, has at times found itself censored, subject to banning and even burning.

> "The attitude of the workers on the large ranch is much that of the employer, hatred and suspicion. The worker sees himself surrounded by force. He knows that he can be murdered without fear on the part of the employer, and he has little recourse to law.... A man herded about, surrounded by armed guards, starved and force to live in filth loses his dignity; that is, he loses his valid position in regard to society, and consequently his whole ethics toward society." [2]

THE DINER ON ROUTE 66

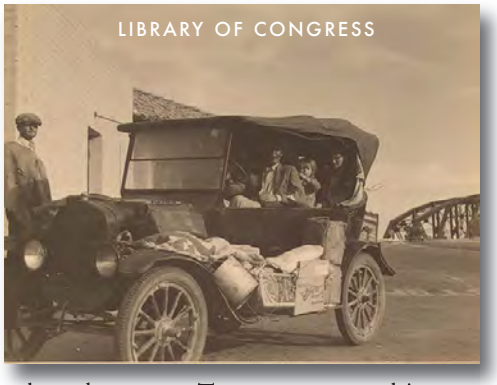
Another reason for the controversy may be the novel's quasi-religious elements. It's clear Steinbeck had no real faith as evidenced by Ma Joad's various encounters with frothing zealots, and by his ex-preacher, Jim Casy, who gives in to his natural impulses (and who is reluctant to pray when oft-called upon to do so). Yet Steinbeck uses the Old and New

Testaments unexpectedly, with deception and guile. There are the more straightforward examples, including the names of Noah, Rose of Sharon and the opera's baby Moses (and the more saintly Thomas, John and James), or the title of work itself drawn, from the spiritual *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* and from Revelation, with the suggestion that God's righteous fury could (and probably should) come at any time. (The title was the brain child of co-dedicatee Carol Steinbeck, who laboriously typed and edited the manuscript.) The parallels to Exodus are also evident – the Joads leave "plague-ridden" Oklahoma to cross the Mojave Desert and end up in the Promised Land, led by Tom Joad, recently returned after having been banished for killing a man. But in a strange twist, he who is named Moses, though journeying down the river in a "basket," is stillborn, and the Joad's Eden is far from paradise (serpentine imagery is also pervasive), filled with scarcity, skitters, distrust and death. Even the names Joad has been interpreted as a variant of "Judah," or by example of Okie-speak mispronunciation, the ever-suffering Job. An unwritten code of conduct becomes the Mosiac Law of the camps – the right of privacy within the tent, the right to feed the hungry or refuse help, the rights of the pregnant and the sick above all else. The great flood comes, but lacks a Noah – too simple to save the world anyway, he takes a wrong turn at the Colorado River and disappears forever. And paramount to the entire narrative, Rosasharn's powerful breast-feeding scene has the resurrective/restorative quality of the Eucharist as well as the traditional visual art composition of the Pietà.


HOOVERVILLE

"Wife of a family with three children. She is 38; her face is lined and thin and there is a hard glaze on her eyes. The three children who survive were born prior to 1929, when the family rented a farm in Utah. In 1930 this woman bore a child which lived for months and died of "colic." In 1938 her child was born dead because "a han' truck fulla boxes run inta me two days before the baby come." In 1932 there was a miscarriage. "I couldn't carry the baby 'cause I was sick." She is ashamed of this. In 1933 her baby lived a week. "Jus' died. I don't know what of." In 1934 she had no pregnancy. She is also a little ashamed of this. In 1935 her baby lived a long time, nine months. "Seemed for a long time like he was gonna live. Big strong fella it seemed like." She is pregnant again now. "If we could get milk for um I guess it'd be better." [2]

There are the twelve Joads, the twelve disciples (including one Judas, Connie Rivers, lying outside the family gene pool), who follow the "Christ" figure, Jim Casy. He shares his initials with the Messiah as well as a few other traits. The most introspective character, Casy has spent several years wandering the wilderness, a preacher who is eager to spread his new doctrine to anyone who will listen, including a sometimes impatient Tom. Casy sacrifices himself twice, once to take the place of Tom in prison and again by the blunt force of a bully who doesn't understand his teachings, his final words a minor modification of Christ's: "You don' know what you're a-doin'."[1] Developing a socialist agenda that gives way to strike and unionization, Casy imagines the new world as a brotherhood of equals rather than a hierarchy of oppressor and the oppressed. Tom, while isolated in his womblike cave, germinates on these ideals ("He talked a lot. Used ta bother me. But now I been thinkin' what he said, an I can remember – all of it."[1]) After Ruthie reveals his crime to her playmates, Tom goes out on his own to become Casy's successor in a mission to bring together a larger community (his role as the new saviour presaged by his prison nickname "Jesus Meek"), preaching socialism as an alternative to faith.


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS


THE ORCHARD

Contradicting its Biblical overtones, *The Grapes of Wrath* seems to recognize the futility of religion in favor of a greater collective organism. Ma Joad, the pagan earth mother, who views women as "all one flow, like a stream … [that] goes right on … [and] ain't gonna die out,"[1] experiences her own independent growth in this regard just as the patriarch Pa is pushed aside in the familial pecking order. At first, she is fiercely devoted to keeping their unity in tact, to the exclusion of any reason. But through exchanges with the Wilsons (absent in the opera, they help care for, then bury Grampa), then the Wainwrights (for simplicity's sake, also eliminated from the opera – boxcar neighbors, they help with Rosasharn's birthing and Al becomes affianced to their daughter Aggie) and others in between, she comes to realize that she has traversed from "fambly fust" to "ev'ryone." Ma passes her mantle to her daughter in a passage to womanhood – the piercing of ears. For her part, the previously whiney and selfish Rosaharn begins to transform on her own, looking beyond the needs of her diminished immediate family (does she intend to complete the task by inducing a miscarriage, picking cotton in her eighth month after learning of Aggie and Al's happy engagement?), culminating in her assistance to a starving man, with Madonna poise and a Mona Lisa smile. An unclimactic, enigmatic ending occurs after a long and suspenseful final chapter, with a cleansing flood leaving the remaining Joads at their most desperate, but also undefeated, with a promising future in the wider realm of a united human race.


SQUARE DANCE


FINAL SCENE

[1] *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck. New York: Viking Press, Inc., © 1939.

[2] *The Harvest Gypsies* by John Steinbeck. *San Francisco News,* © 1936.

[3] *Working Days: The Journals of The Grapes of Wrath* edited by Robert DeMott. New York: Viking, © 1989.

Minnesota OPERA

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1971 production of Monteverdi's L'incoronazione di Poppea

In the beginning …

JACOPO PERI 1561–1633
CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI 1567–1643

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

The circle was known as the CAMERATA and consisted of writers, theorists and composers, including GIULIO CACCINI, OTTAVIO RINUCCINI and VINCENZO GALILEI (father of the famed astronomer). Their efforts exacted musical compositions that took special care to accentuate the dramatic inflection of their chosen text, to evoke its precise emotional shading and to find the ideal marriage between words and music. JACOPO PERI, a rival of Caccini and a collaborator with Rinuccini, produced the first known (but no longer existing) opera, *Dafne*, in 1597.

The Camerata met at the home of the nobleman GIOVANNI DE' BARDI. Thus, no sooner had opera had 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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2008 production of Keiser's The Fortunes of King Croesus

Baroque Opera in France, England and Germany

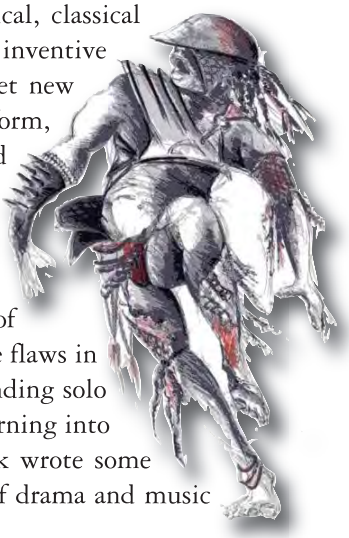
JEAN-BAPTISTE LULLY 1632–1687
HENRY PURCELL 1658/59–1695
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL 1685–1759
CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK 1714–1787

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 scene from The Minnesota Opera's 1994 production of Handel's Julius Caesar

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

Costume sketch for Minnesota Opera's 2010 production of Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2009 production of Argento's Casanova's Homcoming *{which included a scene from Metastasio's opera seria* Demofoonte *(1733)}*

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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1996 production of Mozart's Don Giovanni

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.

Artist rendering of Minnesota Opera's 2008 production of Mozart's The Abduction from the Seraglio

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-ESPRIT 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.

Paris Opéra – Palais Garnier (completed in 1875; still in use)
The old Opéra on the Salle de la Petelier, birthplace of French Grand Opera, burned down in 1873

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).

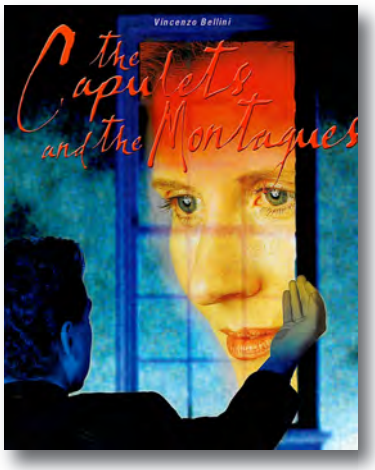
Today's Opéra National de Paris
at the Place de la Bastille (completed in 1989)

French grand opera came into its own through the efforts of two composers: DANIEL-FRANÇOIS-ESPRIT 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



Promotional material for Minnesota Opera's 2001 production of Bellini's The Capulets and the Montagues

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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2000 production of Rossini's Semiramide

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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2004 production of Donizetti's Lucrezia Borgia

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.

Set model for Minnesota Opera's 2010 production of Donizetti's Roberto Devereux

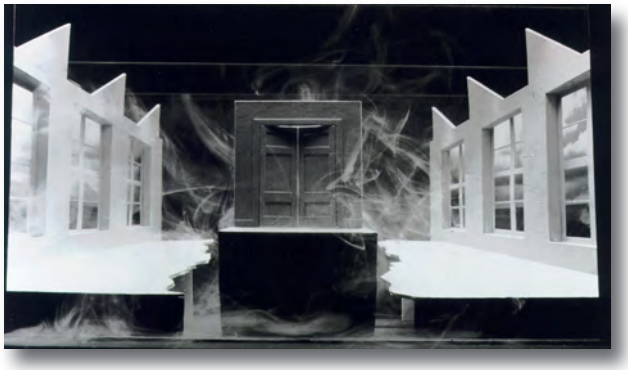
Three Masters of Opera

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

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1998 production of Verdi's Aida

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.



Set model for Minnesota Opera's 1992 production of Wagner's The Flying Dutchman

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.

Costume sketch for Minnesota Opera's 1994 production of Verdi's Il trovatore

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2004 production of Puccini's Madame Butterfly

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2002 production of Verdi's Don Carlos

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

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2009 production of Bizet's Les pêcheurs de perles

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).

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2009 production of Gounod's Faust

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2008 production of Gounod's Roméo et Juliette

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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2001 production of Leoncavallo's Pagliacci

Opera in Russia

MIKHAIL IVANOVICH GLINKA 1804–1857
PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY 1840–1893
NIKOLAY ANDREYEVICH RIMSKY-KORSAKOV 1844–1908
MODEST PETROVICH MUSORGSKY 1839–1881
SERGEI PROKOFIEV 1891–1953
DMITRI SHOSTOKOVICH 1906–1975

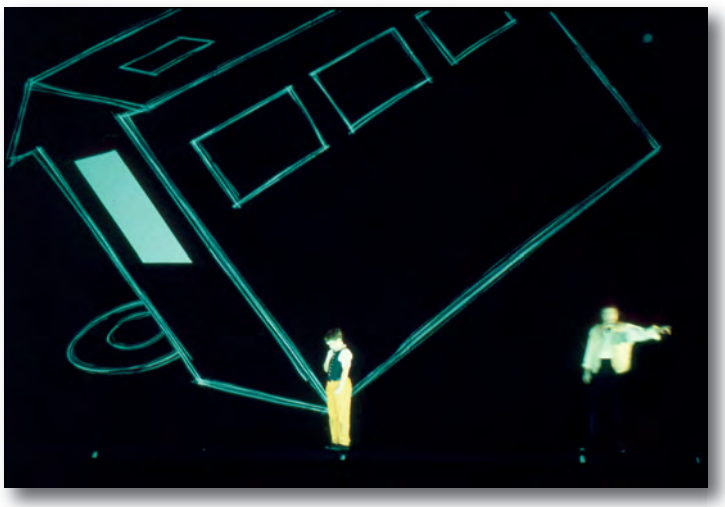
Opera was introduced in Russia during the succession of powerful czarinas that culminated in the reign of Catherine the Great (ruled 1762 – 1796). She employed a number of important Italian composers (see above) and established St. Petersburg as a major city for the production of new opera, later to 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 MUSORGSKY (*Boris Godunov*, 1874).

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1978 production of Prokofiev's The Love for Three Oranges

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 SHOSTOKOVICH'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



A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1996 production of Debussy's Pelléas et Mélisande

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2010 production of Strauss' Salome

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 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 Columbe* (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*).

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1999 production of Britten's The Turn of the Screw

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–

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1998 American premiere of Antheil's Transatlantic

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).

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1989 production of Glass' The Juniper Tree

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), *Postcards 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), *Ahknaten* (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

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2005 production of Adams' Nixon in China

Antoinette. JOHN ADAMS' focus on contemporary events lead him to compose *Nixon in China* (1987) and *The Death of Klinghoffer* (1991).

Opera continues to be a living and vital art form in the revival of many of these works as well as the commissioning of new pieces. Among world 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).

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2003 American premiere of Ruders' The Handmaid's Tale

A scene from Minnesota Opera's Pulitzer Prize-winning 2011 world premiere of Puts' Silent Night

Costume sketch for Minnesota Opera's 2009 American premiere of Dove's The Adventures of Pinocchio

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.

Set design for Minnesota Opera's 1971 production of Dominick Argento's Postcard from Morocco

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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 1984 *production of Peter Schickele's* The Abduction of Figaro

Minnesota OPERA

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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2000 production of Gioachino Rossini's Semiramide

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 Merrrick 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.

A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2001 production of Carl Orff's Carmina burana

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.

Minnesota OPERA

Minnesota Opera Repertoire – 1963–2014

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

2012–2013
50TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON
Nabucco (Verdi)
Anna Bolena (Donizetti)
§ † *Doubt* (Cuomo)
Hamlet (Thomas)
Turandot (Puccini)

2011–2012
Così fan tutte (Mozart)
§ † *Silent Night* (Puts)
Werther (Massenet)
Lucia di Lammermoor (Donizetti)
Madame Butterfly (Puccini)

2010–2011
Orfeo ed Euridice (Gluck)
La Cenerentola (Rossini)
Maria 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)
Faust (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)
§ † *The Grapes of Wrath* (Gordon)
Lakmé (Delibes)
Le nozze di Figaro (Mozart)

2005–2006
Tosca (Puccini)
Don Giovanni (Mozart)
* *Orazi e 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/Carmina burana (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)
§ † *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

Minnesota OPERA

1993–1994
Julius Caesar (Handel)
* *Diary of an African American* (Peterson)
Il trovatore (Verdi)
§ *The Merry Widow and The Hollywood Tycoon* (Lehár)
▲ *Don Giovanni* (Mozart)

1992–1993
Der fliegende Holländer (Wagner)
* *Armida* (Rossini)
Madama Butterfly (Puccini)
The Pirates of Penzance (Gilbert & Sullivan)

1991–1992
Tosca (Puccini)
Les pêcheurs de perles (Bizet)
Le nozze di Figaro (Mozart)
§ † *From the Towers of the Moon* (Moran & La Chiusa)
▲ *The Magic Flute* (Mozart)
Carousel (Rodgers & Hammerstein)

1990–1991
Norma (Bellini)
The Aspern Papers (Argento)
Carmen (Bizet)
Così fan tutte (Mozart)
▲ *Così fan tutte* (Mozart)
▲ *Swing on a Star* (Winkler)

1989–1990
La bohème (Puccini)
A Midsummer Night's Dream (Britten)
Roméo et Juliette (Gounod)
§ † *Frankenstein, The Modern Prometheus* (Larsen)
My Fair Lady (Lerner & Loewe)
• § *Snow Leopard* (Harper & Nieboer)
▲ *Madame Butterfly* (Puccini)
Where the Wild Things Are (Sendak/Knussen)

1988–1989
Don Giovanni (Mozart)
Salome (R. Strauss)
The Mikado (Gilbert & Sullivan)
The Juniper Tree (Glass & Moran)
Show Boat (Kern & Hammerstein)
§ † • *Without Colors* (Wellman & Shiflett)
§ † • *Red Tide* (Selig & Sherman)
§ † • *Newest Little Opera in the World* (ensemble)
▲ *Cinderella* (Rossini)
▲ *Tintypes* (Kyte, Marvin, Pearle)

1987–1988
Die Fledermaus (J. Strauss)
Rigoletto (Verdi)
Rusalka (Dvorak)
• *Cowboy Lips* (Greene & Madsen)
§ † • *Fly Away All* (Hutchinson & Shank)
• *Book of Days* (Monk)
Oklahoma! (Rodgers & Hammerstein)
▲ *Carmen* (Bizet)
▲ *Jargonauts, Ahoy!* (McKeel)

1986–1987
Les pêcheurs de perles (Bizet)
The Postman Always Rings Twice (Paulus)
Ariadne auf Naxos (R. Strauss)
South Pacific (Rodgers & Hammerstein)
▲ *Hansel and Gretel* (Humperdinck)
§ † ▲ *Jargonauts, Ahoy!* (McKeel)

1985–1986
* *Where the Wild Things Are/Higglety Pigglety Pop!* (Knussen/Sendak)
La traviata (Verdi)
L'elisir d'amore (Donizetti)
The King and I (Rodgers & Hammerstein)
§ † *Opera Tomorrow*
▲ *The Fantasticks* (Schmidt)
▲ *The Magic Flute* (Mozart)
§ † ▲ *The Music Shop* (Wargo)

1984–1985
* *Animalen* (Werle)
§ † *Casanova's Homecoming* (Argento)
The Magic Flute (Mozart)
▲ *La bohème* (Puccini)
▲ *Meanwhile, back at Cinderella's* (Arlan)

1983–1984
Hansel and Gretel (Humperdinck)
Madama Butterfly (Puccini)
La Cenerentola (Rossini)
§ *The Abduction of Figaro* (PDQ Bach)
▲ *The Boor* (Argento)
▲ *Chanticleer* (Barab)
▲ *Don Pasquale* (Donizetti)

1982–1983
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)
▲ *Zetabet* (Barnes)

1981–1982
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)

1980–1981
The Merry Widow (Lehar)
Black River (Susa)
Carmen (Bizet)
A Water Bird Talk (Argento)
§ *Miss Havisham's Wedding Night* (Argento)
▲ *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart)
▲ *The Threepenny Opera* (Weill)

1979–1980
The Abduction from the Seraglio (Mozart)
The Pirates of Penzance (Gilbert & Sullivan)
La bohème (Puccini)
§ † *Rosina* (Titus)
▲ *A Christmas Carol* (Sandow)

1978–1979
The Love for Three Oranges (Prokofiev)
§ *The Jealous Cellist* (Stokes)
The Passion According to St. Matthew (J.S. Bach)
La traviata (Verdi)
The Consul (Menotti)
▲ *Viva la Mamma* (Donizetti)

1977–1978
* *Christopher Columbus* (Offenbach)
The Mother of Us All (Thomson)
The Marriage of Figaro (Mozart)
§ *Claudia Legare* (Ward)

1976–1977
The Bartered Bride (Smetana)
The Passion According to St. Matthew (J.S. Bach)
Candide (Bernstein)
Mahagonny (Weill)

1975–1976
§ † *Black River* (Susa)
El Capitan (Sousa)
Così fan tutte (Mozart)
§ † *The Voyage of Edgar Allan Poe* (Argento)

1974–1975
§ † *Gallimaufry* (Minnesota Opera)
§ *Gulliver* (Blackwood, Kaplan, Lewin)
The Magic Flute (Mozart)
Albert Herring (Britten)

1973–1974
El Capitan (Sousa)
Transformations (Susa)
Don Giovanni (Mozart)
§ † *The Newest Opera in the World* (Minnesota Opera)

1972–1973
The Threepenny Opera (Weill)
Postcard from Morocco (Argento)
The Barber of Seville (Rossini)
§ † *Transformations* (Susa)

1971–1972
§ † *Postcard from Morocco* (Argento)
§ † *The Business of Good Government* (Marshall)
The Good Soldier Schweik (Kurka)
The Marriage of Figaro (Mozart)

1970–1971
§ † *Christmas Mummeries & Good Government* (Marshall)
§ † *Faust Counter Faust* (Gessner)
The Coronation of Poppea (Monteverdi)
The Mother of Us All (Thomson)

1969–1970
§ † *Oedipus and the Sphinx* (Marshall)
* *Punch and Judy* (Birtwistle)
* *17 Days and 4 Minutes* (Egk)
§ † *The Wanderer* (Paul and Martha Boesing)

1968–1969
Così fan tutte (Mozart)
§ † *Horspfal* (Stokes)
The Wise Woman and the King (Orff)

1967–1968
The Man in the Moon (Haydn)
A Midsummer Night's Dream (Britten)

1966–1967
The Mother of Us All (Thomson)
The Sorrows of Orpheus (Milhaud)
* *The Harpies* (Blitzstein)
Socraties (Satie)
Three Minute Operas (Milhaud)

1965–1966
The Abduction from the Seraglio (Mozart)
The Good Soldier Schweik (Kurka)

1964–1965
The Rape of Lucretia (Britten)
The Wise Woman and the King (Orff)

1963–1964
§ † *The Masque of Angels* (Argento)
The Masque of Venus and Adonis (Blow)
Albert Herring (Britten)

§ 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

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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

NINETEENTH CENTURY

Ludwig van Beethoven 1770–1827
- *Fidelio 1805*

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

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

Vincenzo Bellini 1801–1835
- *Norma 1831*

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

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

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

NINETEENTH CENTURY (CONTINUED)

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

Georges Bizet 1838–1875
- *Carmen 1875*

Modest 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 COMPRIMARIOS (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 COMPRIMARIOS (2) warm-up in their dressing rooms.

7:15 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).

7:25 PM — Places
The PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER (12) calls places. Two other STAGE MANAGERS (13) are posted stage left and stage right to cue the entrances of the singers and choristers.

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

7:30 PM — Curtain
The house lights goes 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 (14) 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.

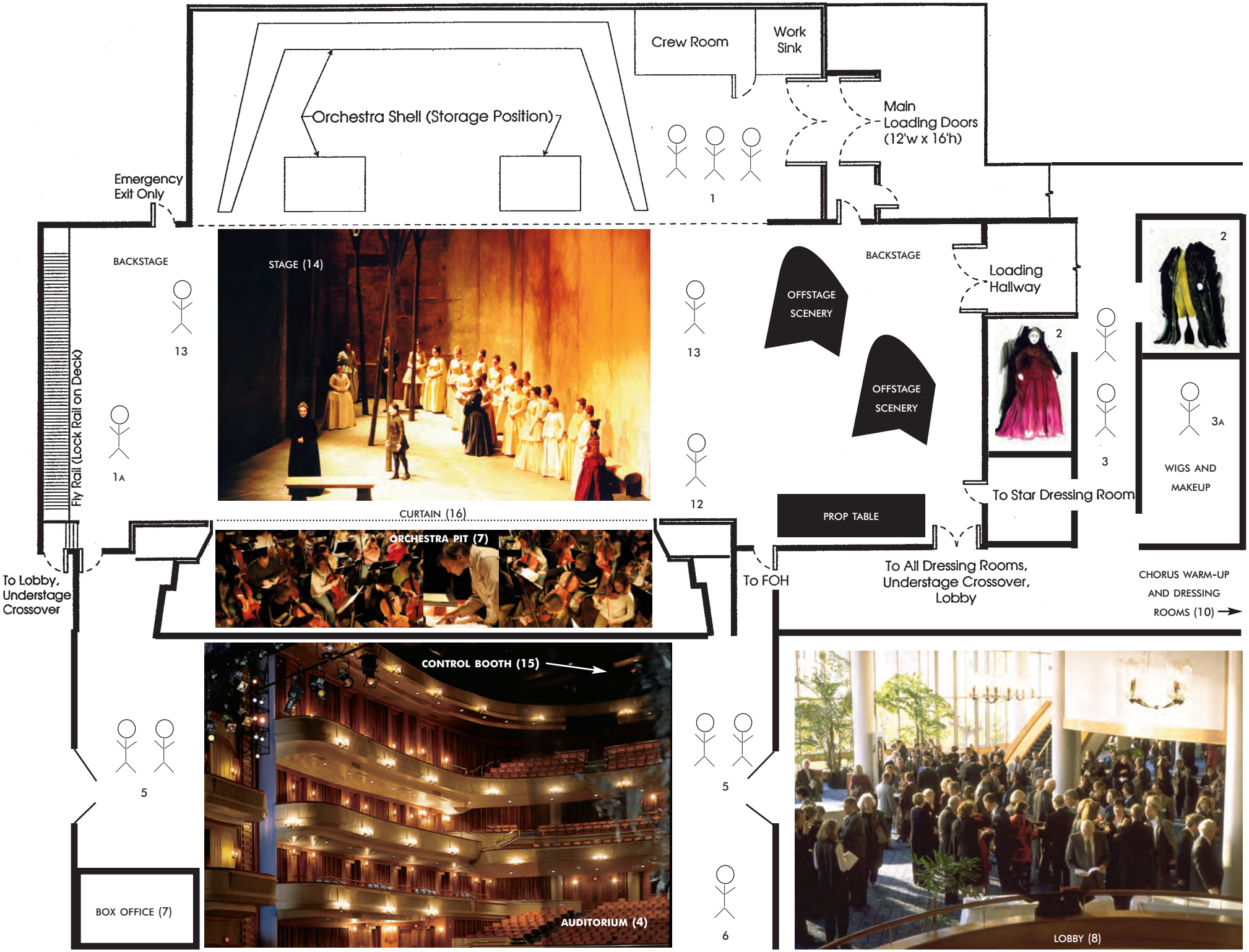
STAGEHANDS move scenery and props and handle lighting. DRESSERS help the cast into their often elaborate costumes.

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

The CONDUCTOR leads the orchestra. The STAGE DIRECTOR instructs the cast where to move onstage. He or she generally stays only for the PREMIERE.

The ORCHESTRA rehearses several times independently from the singers. The first rehearsal during which singers and orchestra perform together is called a SITZPROBE. The CONCERTMASTER is the first violin and is responsible for "bowing" the string parts so the performers all move their bows together.

The PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER "calls" the show, announcing entrance and lighting cues. Two other STAGE MANAGERS assist in getting the cast and chorus on and off the stage. The SURTITLE PROMPTER cues the English translations projected above the stage from the control booth.


Crew Room
Work Sink
Orchestra Shell (Storage Position)
Main Loading Doors (12'w x 16'h)
Emergency Exit Only
1
BACKSTAGE
STAGE (14)
13
13
Fly Rail (Lock Rail on Deck)
1A
12
CURTAIN (16)
ORCHESTRA PIT (7)
To Lobby, Understage Crossover
BACKSTAGE
OFFSTAGE SCENERY
OFFSTAGE SCENERY
Loading Hallway
2
2
3
3A
WIGS AND MAKEUP
To Star Dressing Room
PROP TABLE
To FOH
To All Dressing Rooms, Understage Crossover, Lobby
CHORUS WARM-UP AND DRESSING ROOMS (10)
CONTROL BOOTH (15)
AUDITORIUM (4)
5
5
BOX OFFICE (7)
6
LOBBY (8)

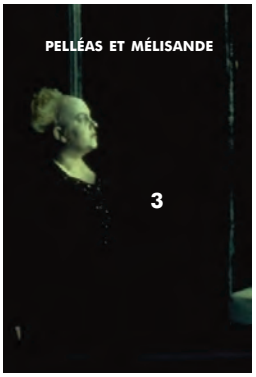
The most important part of the opera is the singers. They are categorized into six different voice types.

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.

CLOCKWISE, LEFT TO RIGHT: ÉLISABETH; EBOLI; GIULIETTA, ROMEO; MIMÌ, RODOLFO; EDGARDO, ENRICO; LUCIA; HANNA; PHILIPPE, GRAND INQUISITOR; GENEVIÈVE; SERVILIA, ANNIO

Minnesota OPERA

1 - SOPRANO; 2 - MEZZO; 3 - CONTRALTO; 4 - TENOR; 5 - BARITONE; 6 - BASS

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) (i)	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.

CABALETTA	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.
CADENCE	A resting place or close of a passage of music, clearly establishing tonality.
CADENZA	An elaborate passage near the end of an aria, which shows off the singer's vocal ability.
CAMERATA	A group of musicians, poets and scholars who met in Florence in 1600 and created opera.
CANTILENA	Originally a little song, but now generally referring to smooth cantabile (*It: 'singable,' or 'singing'*) passages.
CAVATINA	Originally an aria without a repeated section. Later used casually in place of aria.
CHORUS	A group of singers (called choristers) who portray townspeople, guests or other unnamed characters; also refers to the music written for these people.
CHORUS MASTER	Person who prepares the chorus musically (which includes rehearsing and directing them).
CLAQUE	A group attending performances in the larger opera houses and paid by leading singers to encourage and direct applause (a member of which is a claqueur).
COLORATURA	A voice that can sing music with many rapid notes, or the music written for such a voice.
COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE	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.
COMPRIMARIO	A small singing role, often a servant or other minor character.
CONDUCTOR	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).
CONTRALTO	The lowest female singing voice.
COUNTERTENOR	The highest natural male voice, not a castrato. True male altos may be heard in choirs. The term falsettist is sometimes used but disputed.
CYCLORAMA	A curved curtain or wall enclosing the playing area of the stage and hiding the work areas behind it.
DA CAPO	(*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.
DESIGNER	The person who creates the lighting, costumes or sets.
DIAPHRAGM	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.
DIRECTOR	The person who instructs the singer/actors in their movements on stage and in the interpretation of their roles.
DOWNSTAGE	The front of the stage nearest the audience.
DRAME LYRIQUE	(*It: dramma lirico*). Modern term for opera, not necessarily of a lyrical character. The English term "lyrical drama" is used in the same way.

DRAMMA PER MUSICA	A term that refers to text expressly written to be set by a composer and by extension also to the composition. The term was the one most commonly used for serious Italian opera in the eighteenth century (as opposed to the modern term opera seria, with which it is in effect interchangeable).
DUET	Music written for two people to play or sing together.
EMBELLISHMENT	Decoration or ornament. A grace-note addition to the vocal line (also instrumental) of any kind, a four-note turn, or a trill.
ENSEMBLE	Three or more people singing at the same time, or the music written for such a group.
FALSETTO	The falsetto voice is of high pitch and produced by the vibrations of only one part of the vocal folds. The normal male voice sounds strained and effeminate in falsetto, but a natural alto or high tenor can produce effective vocal sound by this method. It is a singing mannerism to produce high tenor notes in falsetto.
FESTA TEATRALE	(*It.: 'theatrical celebration'*). A title applied to a dramatic work. Feste teatrali fall into two quite distinct classes: opera and serenatas.
FINALE	The last musical number of an opera, or of an act of an opera.
FIORITURA	(*It: 'flowering', 'flourish'; plural fioriture*). When a composition for the voice contains decorative writing such as scales, arpeggios, trills and gruppetti (the groups of notes sometimes known in English as 'turns'), it is described as 'florid' and the decorations themselves will be described collectively as 'fioritura'. It is a more accurate term than 'coloratura', which is frequently used as an alternative.
FLATS	Stretched canvas and wood panels on which scenery is painted.
FLIES	The space above a stage where scenery is "flown" when not in use. A counterweight system simplifies raising and lowering flats, larger set pieces, and back drops.
FULL DRESS REHEARSAL	The final rehearsal before opening night with all singers present in full costume.
GRAND OPERA	Traditionally, a serious epic or historical work in four or five acts which makes extensive use of the chorus and also includes a ballet. Also contains magnificent special effects.
GRID	Gridiron. Framework from which lines are hung and battens attached for the "flying" of scenery. The grid is situated high in the flies just beneath the ceiling of the fly loft.
HANDLUNG FÜR MUSIK	(*Ger: 'action in music'*). Term used by Wagner to describe the libretto for *Lohengrin* and *Tristan und Isolde*; it has occasionally been used since.
INTERLUDE	A short piece of instrumental music played between scenes or acts to fill in delays brought about by scenery changes.
INTERMEZZO	An instrumental interlude played between acts, or short two-act comic opera played between the acts of an opera seria.
LEITMOTIV	A recurring musical figure used to identify a person, event or idea.
LEGATO	A smooth, flowing line. In vocal music it demands steadiness of emission and a sensitivity to phrasing.
LIBRETTO	The words of an opera.

MASKING — A scenic frame or device to prevent the audience from seeing into the wings of the stage. Door and window openings are usually masked, often with realistic backings.

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

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

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

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

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

MEZZO-SOPRANO — The middle female singing voice, lower than soprano but higher than contralto.

MOTIVE — A short musical idea on which a melody is based.

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

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

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

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

OPERA SERIA — Literally "serious opera." An opera form of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries which uses historical, biblical or mythological subjects with a focus on revenge, danger and death.

OPERETTA	A loosely used term, often used interchangeably with comic opera, opéra bouffe, and musical comedy. In Italian it originally meant "little opera," a short, light musical work. It has come to mean a full-length piece on a light subject, with musical numbers and spoken dialogue, and characterized by ingratiating tunes, decorative dances, colorful settings, social irresponsibility, a slender dramatic line, and the requirement of at least two well-trained voices.
ORATORIO	A musical-dramatic work originating in the twelfth century, now generally performed, in contradistinction to opera, without action, costumes, and scenery. They are invariably associated with sacred subjects.
ORCHESTRA PIT	The sunken area in front of the stage where the orchestra sits.
OVERTURE	An orchestral introduction to the opera, usually played before the acting begins.
PARLANDO	(*It: 'in speaking style'*). An informal and realistic technique occasionally used in Italian opera, bringing singing close to speaking.
PORTAMENTO	An Italian singing term, asking the voice to glide from one note to another at some distance. An authentic and effective device, to be distinguished from the mannerism of scooping.
PRINCIPAL	A major singing role, or the singer who performs such a role.
PROSCENIUM	The stage opening, resembling a three-sided picture frame. Immediately behind it and concealing the acting areas is the curtain. The proscenium arch was originally created in the 1700s to conceal the machinery used to create special stage effects.
QUARTET	Four singers, or the music written for that group.
RECITATIVE	Musical singing in the rhythm of speech.
RECITATIVO ACCOMPAGNATO	A sung passage with orchestral accompaniment, lacking the formality of an aria, yet more declamatory and agitated than recitativo secco.
RECITATIVO SECCO	Dry recitative. A sung passage so close to everyday speech that although the pitches and time values are respected, a conversational quality prevails. A keyboard instrument generally supplies the sketchy accompaniment. Commonly used in Italian opera seria and opera buffa.
REPERTORY	A system of stage production in which a number of works are played, virtually in rotation, by a resident company throughout a season.
RÉPÉTITION	French term for "rehearsal." A répétition générale is a dress rehearsal to which critics and guests are invited.
REVOLVE	Revolving stage. Turntable. A section of the stage floor (permanently established) or a circular construction on a central pivot which revolves, to change scenery or supply movement of objects as well as people.
RITORNELLO	A short instrumental piece, literally meaning repetition or refrain. In Monteverdi's works it usually consists of a few bars played between the verses of a strophic song.
ROCOCO	In art, associated with the late Baroque period and the late eighteenth century. In contrast to the dignity, heaviness, and occasional pomposity of Baroque, Rococo art is playful, lighter in tone and color, and adorned with scrolls, acorns, and shells.
ROLE	The character that a singer portrays.

ROMANTICISM	The movement strongly associated with nineteenth-century Germany, but felt through all Europe and responsible for far-reaching changes in all forms of art. Rebels against the establishment (which was founded on a deep respect for the classics), the romanticists opposed authority and advocated freedom from formal regulations. They encouraged a subjective, strongly emotional approach as an antidote to classical decorum.
SCORE	The music of an opera or other musical work in which the parts for different performers appear vertically above one another.
SCRIM	A thin curtain, often painted. When lit from behind, one can see through it.
SERENATA	A dramatic cantata, normally celebratory or eulogistic in intent, for two or more singers with orchestral accompaniment. In dramaturgical respects the serenata most closely resembles the Baroque oratorio.
SINFONIA	A symphonic work the precedes an opera (English: overture); a shorter version is referred to as a *prelude*.
SINGSPIEL	A German form of comic opera with spoken dialogue.
SITZPROBE	A sit-down rehearsal where the performers sing with the orchestra for the first time.
SOPRANO	The highest female singing voice.
SPRECHSTIMME	A form of declamation halfway between speech and song. Instead of exactly notated pitch an approximation is given. The time, however, is given exactly and the singer is not allowed absolute license. Notations up and down are also meant to be respected. This style of singing is found in the works of Schoenberg and Berg.
STAGE LEFT	The left side of the stage from the performer's perspective as s/he faces the audience.
STAGE RIGHT	The right side of the stage from the performer's perspective as s/he faces the audience.
STRETTA	An accelerated passage at the end of an aria, scene, or act.
TENOR	The highest male singing voice.
TESSITURA	Literally "texture." The approximate range of a role or an aria.
THROUGH-COMPOSED	Through-composed opera is a continuous music drama uninterrupted by spoken dialogue or obviously recognizable recitative.
TRAGÉDIE LYRIQUE	A French term associated mainly with Lully and Rameau. Tragédie lyrique comes somewhat closer to the spoken play in dramatic expressiveness than does the Italian opera seria of the same period, which may exceed it in vocal expressiveness.
TRILL	A musical ornament requiring the rapid alternation of two adjacent notes.
TROUSER ROLE	Also called "pants role." The part of a male character sung by a woman, usually a mezzo-soprano.
UNDERSTUDY	A replacement for a particular role in case of illness or emergency (also called a "cover").
VERISMO	A type of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Italian opera that emphasized realistic subjects.
WANDELPROBE	Musical rehearsal which allows the conductor to hear what the singers sound like when they perform on the set.
WINGS	The sides of the stage where the performers wait before making their entrances.

Sources: *Opera: Dead or Alive*, by Ronald E. Mitchell. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970.
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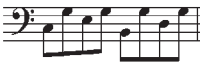
New York City Opera Education Department, Edmonton Opera

ADAGIO	Slowly and smoothly.
AD LIBITUM	As you please; freely.
AFFECTUOSO	Expressively; tenderly; lovingly.
AGITATO	Agitated.
ALBERTI BASS 	Stereotyped figures of accompaniment, consisting of broken chords.
ALLARGANDO	Slowing and broadening.
ALLEGRETTO	Fairly lively; not as fast as allegro.
ALLEGRO	Lively; fast.
A MEZZO VOCE	With half the voice.
ANDANTE	Going; moving; at a moderate rate.
ANDANTINO	Sightly faster than andante.
ANIMATO	With spirit; animated.
APPOGGIATURA	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.
ARPEGGIO	Producing the tones of a chord in succession but not simultaneously.
ASSAI	Very; very much.
A TEMPO	At the preceding rate of speed.
ATONAL	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.
AUGMENTATION	The presentation of a melody in doubled values so that, e.g. the quarter notes become half notes.
BAR	A vertical line across the stave that divides the music into units.
BUFFO, BUFFA	Comic.
CADENZA	A flourish or brilliant part of an aria commonly inserted just before a finale.
CANTABILE	Songlike; singingly.
CANTATA	A choral piece generally containing scriptural narrative texts.
CON BRIO	With spirit.
CONTINUO	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.
COUNTERPOINT	Music consisting of two or more lines that sound simultaneously.
CRESCENDO 	Gradually getting louder.
DIATONIC	Relating to a major or minor musical scale that comprises intervals of five whole steps and two half steps.
DIMINUENDO 	Gradually getting softer.
DIMINUTION	The presentation of a melody in halved values so that, e.g. the quarter notes become eighth notes.
DISSONANCE	A mingling of discordant sounds that do not harmonize within the diatonic scale.
DOLOROSAMENTE	Sadly; grievingly.

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.
FURIOSO	Furious; violent.
GIOCOSO	Playfully.
GIUSTO	Strict; exact.
GLISSANDO	A rapid sliding up or down the scale.
GRANDIOSO	With grandeur; majestically.
GRAVE	Slow; heavy; solemn.
GRAZIOSO	Elegantly; gracefully.
LAMENTOSO	Mournfully.
LARGHETTO	Somewhat less slowly than largo.
LARGO	Broadly and slowly.
LEGATO	Smoothly and connectedly.
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.
OBBLIGATO	An elaborate accompaniment to a solo or principal melody that is usually played by a single instrument.
OCTAVE	A musical interval embracing eight diatonic degrees: therefore, from C^1 to C^2 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.
SENZA	Without.
SERIAL MUSIC	Music based on a series of tones in a chosen pattern without regard for traditional tonality.
SFORZANDO *sf*	With accent.
SORDINO	Muted.
SOSTENUTO	Sustained.
SOTTO	Under; beneath.
STACCATO	Detached; separated.
STRINGENDO	Hurried; accelerated.
STROPHE	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.

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DISCOGRAPHY

NONESUCH 79626-2	*Bright Eyed Joy: The Songs of Ricky Ian Gordon*
RCA VICTOR 09026-61944-2	*Harolyn Blackwell: Strange Hurt* (includes *Genius Child,* a song series by Ricky Ian Gordon)

VIDEOGRAPHY

20TH CENTURY FOX	*The Grapes of Wrath* with Henry Fonda and Jane Darwell
A&E HOME VIDEO	*Biography: John Steinbeck: An American Writer*

Opera Box Teacher's Guide Evaluation

The Grapes of Wrath

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_____DVD *John Steinbeck: An American Writer* (Biography)

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

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