

MACBETH



Minnesota
OPERA

OPERA BOX

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Dear Educator,

Thank you for using a Minnesota Opera Teacher's Guide, which includes Lesson Plans that have been aligned with State and National Standards. See the Unit Overview for a detailed explanation.

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 Final Dress Rehearsals and discounted group rate tickets to regular performances. It is hoped that the Teacher's Guide 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,



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Macbeth OPERA BOX

LESSON PLAN UNIT OVERVIEW WITH RELATED ACADEMIC STANDARDS

LESSON TITLE	MINNESOTA ACADEMIC STANDARDS: ARTS K-12	NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION
1 – 32-Second Opera	Music 9.1.1.3.1 Music 9.1.1.3.2 Theater 9.1.1.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	8, 9
2 – Character Bake-off	Music 9.1.1.3.1 Music 9.1.1.3.2 Theater 9.1.1.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	8, 9
3 –Comparing and Contrasting the Plot	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2	8, 9
4 – Political Background of <i>Macbeth</i>	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
5 – Witches	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2	8, 9
6 – <i>Macbeth: The Musical</i> Project	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	8, 9

LESSON TITLE	MINNESOTA ACADEMIC HIGH STANDARDS	NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION
7 – Preview Activity – Cross That Line	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	6, 7, 8, 9
8 – Post-opera Discussion Questions – Production	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	6, 7, 8, 9
9 – Post-opera Discussion Questions – <i>Macbeth</i>	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	6, 7, 8, 9



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.

Macbeth OPERA BOX

PRE-OPERA ACTIVITY
THE 32-SECOND *MACBETH*

PURPOSE

This activity can be used with students who are or are not familiar with Shakespeare's play.

OBJECTIVE(S)

- To acquaint (or re-acquaint) students with the main ideas, themes and issues dealt with in the play and in the opera.
- To give students the opportunity to physically interact with the original text.

WHAT TO DO

- (1) Make nine copies of the script included here. Highlight each script according to the numbers, e.g. Actor No. 1's script should have all their parts highlighted, Actor No. 2's script should have only the lines highlighted belonging to No. 2, *etc.*
- (2) Assign nine students to read the parts, assigning eight students to a number and one to read Macbeth's lines.
- (3) The students should stand in a circle.
- (4) The goal will be to go through the entire script in 32 seconds or less.
- (5) Rules:
 - No overlapping, i.e. a student can't begin their line until the student speaking ahead is done.
 - The audience has to be able to understand the words.
 - If a student's character dies, the student must fall to the floor (carefully).
- (6) Appoint a timekeeper.
- (7) Allow students to read the script around once to hear it before they begin to attempt to "beat the clock."

NOTE

This can be done as a contest between teams of nine to see who can do it the fastest. If you have more than one class working with *Macbeth*, they can compete against each other.

FOLLOW-UP

If students have studied the play, have them identify the speakers and discuss the relevance of the quotations to the plot and the themes. If they are new to the play, have them attempt to construct a plot and identify possible themes.

Adapted from the Folger Shakespeare Library.

THE 32-SECOND MACBETH

ACTORS ONE, TWO AND THREE: Fair is foul and foul is fair.

ACTOR FOUR: What bloody man is that?

ACTOR TWO: A drum, a drum! Macbeth doth come.

MACBETH: So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

ACTOR THREE: All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

MACBETH: If chance will have me king, then chance will crown me.

ACTOR FIVE: Unsex me here.

MACBETH: If it were done when 'tis done ...

ACTOR FIVE: Screw your courage to the sticking place.

MACBETH: Is this a dagger that I see before me? (*ACTOR FOUR dies*)

ACTOR FIVE: A little water clears us of this deed.

ACTOR SIX: Fly, good Fleance, fly! (*dies*)

MACBETH: Blood will have blood.

ACTORS ONE, TWO AND THREE: Double, double, toil and trouble.

ACTOR SEVEN: He has kill'd me, mother! (*dies*)

ACTOR EIGHT: Bleed, bleed, poor country!

ACTOR FIVE: Out damn'd spot! (*dies*)

MACBETH: Out, out, brief candle!

ACTOR EIGHT: Turn, hell-hound, turn!

MACBETH: Lay on Macduff! (*dies*)

ACTOR EIGHT: Hail, king of Scotland!

Macbeth OPERA BOX

RECIPE FOR POST-OPERA DINING

MATERIALS

One recipe card for each student or group if combining chefs. This can be done as an individual or group activity.

PREPARATION

- (1) Select a main character from *Macbeth* (Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Witches).
- (2) List at least five personality traits or descriptions.
- (3) Determine and list at least three events or forces that you believe helped shape your character.

WRITING THE RECIPE

Create a recipe that combines the character traits/descriptions and bakes them into your character. The list of ingredients should include your character traits, and preparation instructions should show how the plot events helped shape your character. Must use at least five vivid, concrete verbs in preparation instructions.

(Note to teacher: You may wish to brainstorm cooking vocabulary with students before they begin.)

REVISING

Check to make sure preparation instructions are clear and in logical order. Check appropriateness of verbs in baking instructions. Also proofread recipe for spelling errors. If you finish before time is up, feel free to decorate your recipe card with illustrations appropriate to the character's role in the opera.

PUBLICATION

Bring completed recipe to the kitchen for publication in our "Classroom Cookbook."

SAMPLE RECIPE (TRAGIC ROMEO ROLLS (FROM *ROMEO AND JULIET*))

1 cup passion	2 pints confusion
½ cup anger	3 pinches family feuding
5 tablespoons love	¼ cup revenge
1 teaspoon regret	4 drops red food coloring

DIRECTIONS

Gather all ingredients. Start with passion and love and mix family feuding deep into the middle of the batter. Beat until well blended. Heat the ½ cup of anger until it comes to a boil. Pour into the mixture. Next add the ¼ cup of revenge and stir until clumpy. Then stir confusion throughout. Pour into baking tins. Set oven at searing 450 degrees. Bake overnight. After baking, top with seasoned regret, stained red with food coloring.

MATERIALS

Two wretched families who eventually learn to eat Tragic Romeo Rolls and Passionate Juliet Cobbler peacefully together.

ACT I

PLAY

SCENE ONE

- Witches: “When shall we three meet again?”
- “Fair is foul and foul is fair.”

SCENE TWO

- *Duncan’s camp.* Absent Macbeth proclaimed new Thane of Cawdor.

SCENE THREE

- Macbeth and Banquo with witches who give their prophecies.
- Messengers inform Macbeth he is Thane of Cawdor, and he begins to imagine being king.

SCENE FOUR

- *Duncan’s camp.* Duncan observes how he had trusted the former Thane of Cawdor but there’s no way of knowing a man’s true thoughts by looking at him.
- Macbeth and Banquo arrive.
- Duncan announces his successor will be his son Malcolm.
- Macbeth plots murder.

SCENE FIVE

- *Macbeth’s castle.* Lady Macbeth reads letter and vows to help Macbeth become king; calls on evil spirits to aid her; greets husband; urges murder of Duncan.

SCENE SIX

- Duncan arrives and is warmly greeted by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

SCENE SEVEN

- Macbeth wavers but Lady urges him on. He resolves to hide his intentions: “False face must hide what the false heart doth know.”

OPERA

SCENE ONE

- Witches meet, but their conversation is not taken from original scene one, but instead is a condensed version from I.iii.1–38.
- Macbeth and Banquo enter initiating the equivocation theme with Macbeth’s “I have never seen a day so wild and fine.”
- Witches give their prophecies.
- Messengers reach Macbeth, greeting him as Cawdor.
- Macbeth vows to never “raise a hand to the crown that Fate offers me,” as Banquo warns about believing the “spirit of hell” who “speaks true and afterwards abandons us.”

SCENE TWO

- Lady Macbeth reads letter, vowing to give her husband the courage to grasp the throne: “Accept the gift, arise to reign.”
- Greets husband, urges murder.
- Duncan arrives.
- Macbeth alone: “Is this a dagger,” murders Duncan.
- Lady witnesses guilty Macbeth now anxious and cowardly: “His soul is in torment, it struggles, it raves.” Says a little water will wash off their crime from their hands.
- Macduff and Banquo enter, discover the body.
- Lady Macbeth, Macbeth, Malcolm enter.
- Chorus vows revenge: “Jaws of Hell, open wide ... upon the unknown and accursed assassin throw down your flames of wrath.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note to the teacher: If you have the libretto of the opera, let the students hear the actual words referred to before answering the questions.

- (1) How do the two sets of opening lines appear to set the tone for the respective first acts? For the piece as a whole? Why might the librettist have chosen to omit Shakespeare’s entire first scene and instead substitute it with the witches’ discussion of their trivial activities like killing a boar or tormenting the husband of a sailor’s wife because she wouldn’t give up her chestnuts?

- (2) Who is missing from the opera's act? What elements of the play's plot appear to be dispensed with? What might be the reason for the librettists' choice here?
- (3) Why might have Verdi included both Shakespeare's Acts I and II in his first act?
- (4) In opera the addition of the music increases the time it takes a singer to deliver the same lines that an actor can on stage in a traditional play. This is one reason that Verdi eliminated or shortened scenes and speeches and even characters themselves. However, the music helps us understand the emotions behind the words.

The teacher can choose a scene of Act I from both the opera and the play and let the students compare and contrast them using a DVD of each. A suggestion would be Lady Macbeth's reading the letter (OPERA – scene two; PLAY – scene five). (Recommended play DVD: Roman Polanski's *Macbeth*.)

In the opera, Verdi drastically shortens the Lady's invocation to the evil spirits. Her Shakespearean speech of 15 lines is condensed to two sentences. (No "unsexing," *etc.*) What effect does this have on our understanding of her personality?

What advantages does each of the presentations have? Which do the students think is most powerful? Why?

- (5) Given these synopses, what preliminary conclusions might one draw re: the opera's plot, character development, tone and ending? What similarities and differences might be expected between the opera and Shakespeare's play?

ACT II

PLAY

SCENE ONE

- *Macbeth's castle*. Banquo and Fleance remark on the darkness.
- Macbeth: "Is this a dagger..." murder.

SCENE TWO

- Macbeth and Lady consult after the murder. He is upset he couldn't say "Amen," says he has "murdered sleep." She takes the daggers back to Duncan's bedroom.
- They leave to clean up. He says his hands will never be clean. She responds, "A little water clears us of the deed."

SCENE THREE

- Drunken porter scene re: theme of equivocation.
- Macduff and Banquo enter, discover the murder.
- Castle is awakened. Macbeth kills the chamberlains.
- Malcolm and Donalbain decide to flee.

SCENE FOUR

- Ross, Old Man, and Macduff discuss the unruliness of the night.
- Macduff says he won't attend Macbeth's coronation.

OPERA

SCENE ONE

- *Macbeth's castle*. Macbeth and Lady plot to kill Banquo and Fleance.

SCENE TWO

- *Forest*. Death of Banquo, escape of Fleance.

SCENE THREE

- *Banquet hall*. Lady Macbeth sings a drinking song to toast guests.
- Murderer tells Macbeth of Banquo's death.
- Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost.
- Lady scolds and sings reprise of song to cheer guests up.
- Macbeth sees ghost again.
- Macduff and other guests leave suspecting "guilty secrets."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- (1) Since the opera collapsed the play's Acts I and II into the first act, its Act II comprises much of what Shakespeare included in Act III: the murder of Banquo and the appearance of his ghost at the feast. One significant difference between the opera and the play is Lady Macbeth's participation in the planning of Banquo's murder. In the play, Macbeth plans it on his own, saying to his wife, "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck." However, in the opera, the Lady urges Macbeth on and gloats over her own power: "O ecstasy of royal glory! O scepter, at last you are mine ... he who was predicted king shall fall lifeless." Why would Verdi keep her involved with the murders of Banquo and Fleance?
- (2) Verdi also gives her a truncated version of Macbeth's speech in the play about the coming of darkness. In Shakespeare's play he says that the night will bring "a deed of dreadful note," and he extolls the darkness to "scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day." In the opera, she sings, "The light wanes as the dying lamp of heaven sinks This longed-for night provides a veil for the guilty hand about to wound." Why would Verdi put these thoughts in her lines rather than in Macbeth's?
- (3) In scene three, Lady Macbeth sings a *brindisi*, a drinking song: "Let us drive away the dull cares of the soul; let pleasure be born and sorrows die." Again, she takes a major role in the action of the scene. And when Macbeth is terrified by the appearance of the ghost, she doesn't make elaborate excuses for him, as she does in Shakespeare's play, but tries to distract the guests with another verse of the song. Further, in the opera, she doesn't dismiss the guests, but they leave on their own accord, singing, "Guilty secrets! Alarmed by phantoms, he has spoken! This country has become a den of criminals." How do her actions and the reactions of the members of the court shape the probable direction of the plot?
- (4) At the end of the act, Macduff (who is not at the feast in the play) says, "Guilty secrets ... I will quit this land: now that it is ruled by a cursed hand only the guilty can live in it." What function does this change from the original have in foreshadowing the end of the opera?

ACT III

PLAY

SCENE ONE

- *Macbeth's castle*. Macbeth and Lady as King and Queen with Lords.
- Banquo announces his leave.
- Macbeth consults with murderers to kill Banquo.

SCENE TWO

- Lady consoles guilty Macbeth and tells him to be jovial with their guests.

SCENE THREE

- Murder of Banquo, escape of Fleance.

SCENE FOUR

- Feast. Appearance of Banquo's ghost.

SCENE FIVE

- Hecate and the witches.

SCENE SIX

- Lennox and Lord discuss Macduff's flight to England and Macbeth's probable culpability in the deaths of Duncan and Banquo.

OPERA

ONLY ONE SCENE

- Witches cave, caldron in middle. Macbeth and the apparitions.
- Lady arrives at the cave and Macbeth tells her what he has seen.
- They discuss the future deaths of Macduff's family and Fleance. Macbeth: "We'll spill the blood of all our enemies."
- Lady: "Now you have recovered your old courage."
- Both sing: "Now haste apace the hour of death!... Another crime must fulfill our undertaking since it was launched in blood. Vengeance!"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- (1) Again, the opera is ahead of the play in regards to the action. Act III begins in the witches' cave as does Act IV in Shakespeare's original. The recipe for their brew is basically the same as Shakespeare's witches' – toad, thorn, viper's tongue, bat skin, ape blood, dog tooth, finger of strangled baby, Tartar's lip, *etc.* – but the “double, double, toil and trouble” is replaced by “Boil ... boil./ Now you spirits,/black and white,/red and blue [*what??*]/stir, stir!” The apparitions and vision of Banquo's future line of kings are also the same. Macbeth faints too. It would be interesting to show students this scene from the respective DVDs of play and opera, and to have them do some comparing and contrasting. What are the advantages of both genres in creating mood and meaning?
- (2) Also again, in the opera the Lady appears to take a more participatory role in the crimes. In the play, she isn't seen at all after the banquet until her sleepwalking scene in Act V, but in the opera she pops up again *right in the witches' cave* (we don't know how she got there), and she and her husband plot the murders of Fleance and Macduff's wife and children. Why would Verdi involve her one more time so actively? (Note: at the end of the act, the line reads, “Another crime must fulfill *our* undertaking.” They are still operating as a team.)

ACTS IV–V (PLAY)

ACT IV (OPERA)

PLAY

ACT IV, SCENE ONE

- Witches and Hecate in cave. Macbeth sees the apparitions.
- Lennox finds him to reveal that Macduff has fled to England. Macbeth decides to kill Macduff's family.

ACT IV, SCENE TWO

- Lady Macduff and children murdered.

ACT IV, SCENE THREE

- Border between England and Scotland. Macduff and Malcolm discuss the sad situation in Scotland due to “black” Macbeth's rule. Ross announces the death of Macduff's family, and Macduff vows to kill Macbeth.

ACT V, SCENE ONE

- Sleepwalking scene: “Out, damned spot.”

ACT V, SCENES TWO – FOUR

- Battle scenes.

ACT V, SCENE FIVE

- Announcement of Lady's death.
- Macbeth's “tomorrow” speech.

ACT V, SCENES SIX–SEVEN

- Battle scenes.

ACT V, SCENE EIGHT

- Macbeth and Macduff fight. Macbeth dies. Macduff exhibits Macbeth's head. All celebrate Macbeth's death and the deliverance of Scotland.

OPERA

SCENE ONE

- Border between England and Scotland. Macduff, with the Scottish exiles. He laments his family's death and vows to kill Macbeth.
- Malcolm enters with troops, instructing them to “pluck a branch” of Birnam wood to disguise themselves.

SCENE TWO

- Macbeth's castle. Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene: “Begone, I say, cursed spot!”

SCENE THREE

- Macbeth's castle. Macbeth rails against his opposing thanes. Macbeth valiant but thoughtful: “Curses alone will be [my] epitaph.”
- Announcement of Lady's death.
- Battlefield. Forces enter and throw down their boughs.
- Macbeth and Macduff fight. Macbeth dies.
- Malcolm enters with more forces. All celebrate Macbeth's death and Macduff's deliverance of Scotland.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- (1) In scene one of the opera's Act IV, a chorus of Scottish refugees sings a lament for their "oppressed homeland" which Verdi takes from Ross's speech in IV.iii.165–173. What is the affect of these observations coming from an entire chorus rather than from the lips of one man? How does the chorus influence the feelings of the audience?
- (2) Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene is handled much the same in both the play and opera; however, given the Lady's more active role in the opera's murders, how might the audience's reaction to her reliving the crimes change? (Note: in both pieces, she is presented as in a white gown, barefoot, carrying a taper – signals to the Renaissance audience anyway that she was a repentant witch.)
- (3) Compare/contrast Macbeth's two speeches describing his emotional state at the end of each work:
 - OPERA: top of scene three, beginning with "And yet I feel my life grow dry within my frame" v. PLAY: V.iii.23–29.
 - OPERA: scene three, "Life!... what does it matter? It is the tale of a poor idiot, wind and sound that mean nothing" v. PLAY: V.v.17–29.

Read through the two versions and then listen to the DVD of the opera version. Which version best captures for you Macbeth's emotional state at the end of the story? How does it contrast with what you observed about him at the beginning of the play/ the opera?

- (4) If you have read the play, what did you identify as its main themes? What would you guess are the main themes of the opera?

(Note to the teacher: choral dvd notations refer to the Deutsche Grammophon DVD by track.)

POLITICAL/HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After the fall of Napoleon, in 1815 the Italian peninsula was divided by the Congress of Vienna into a number of small kingdoms and duchies – lands controlled by Austria, and lands controlled by the Catholic Church which was supported by France. The common people resented being controlled by other countries, and much of the 19th century saw the rise of enthusiasm for the *Risorgimento* (Resurgence) – a movement to throw off foreign dominance and to create a single, unified Italy. The most influential revolutionary group was the *Carbonari* (coalmongers), a secret organization inspired by the principles of the French Revolution, which spread its influence throughout Italy.

Verdi's first version of *Macbeth* was written in 1847, during this period of great civil unrest. By the time the revised *Macbeth* premiered in Paris in 1865, Italy was a parliamentary kingdom, somewhat like today's Great Britain. The Kingdom of Italy was declared in 1861, but more insurrections followed until finally, after half a century of conflict involving the governments of France, Austria, Britain and Prussia, as well as Swiss mercenaries, the Papal army and factions within Italy itself, Rome was integrated as the capital in 1871.

THE PEOPLE'S CHORUS

As stated, the premiere of Verdi's revised *Macbeth* occurred right in the middle of the final turbulent decade of the Risorgimento, and the political climate of the times will be reflected in the composer's use of the "people's chorus." One interesting difference between Shakespeare's play and Verdi's opera is the composer's use of a standard operatic device – the chorus. The chorus can be used as an active "character" in an opera or it can function more like a Greek chorus representing the townspeople, for example and commenting on the action. In *Macbeth*, Verdi uses two choruses – one for each of the two choral functions. The witch chorus acts as an actual character in the opera embodying the forces of evil; however, the "people's chorus" represents the Scots – at times the lesser nobility but most importantly the common people whose country is laid low under the yoke of Macbeth's tyrannical rule.

At the end of Act I, Verdi's chorus responds to the murder to Duncan. Representing all the people of Scotland (not just the nobility), they call heaven and hell down upon the murderer of their king:

Jaws of Hell, open wide ... upon the unknown and accursed assassin
throw down your flames of wrath, O heaven! O God, who peerest into
every heart, give us Thy aid. In Thee alone we trust Let your tre-
mendous wrath be prompt to strike the guilty one

(DVD 1, track 12, "Schiudi, inferno, la bocca")

Significantly they address their plea to God, not to their earthly superiors, and their prayer is full of both vengeance and grief. Shakespeare writes the scene differently. In II.iii.160–176, we find Duncan's two sons with Banquo, and it is Banquo (a member of the ruling class) who mentions God, not to seek His aid but to swear himself to bring the murderer to justice. The other nobles agree, and then Duncan's sons, in fear for their own lives, decide to flee. There is no sign of the Scottish commoners here.

At the end of Verdi's Act II, we have the banquet scene during which Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost. While the guests are not the common people of Scotland, they react as one to the behavior of their king, observing with horror that "this country has become a den of criminals." Earlier Macduff has declared his intention to depart with "Guilty secrets!... I will quit this land: now that it is ruled by a cursed hand only the guilty can live in it."

Notice that while his complaint is only with Macbeth, the chorus is upset that their country as a whole has become a community of evil. The people as one have declared their loss of faith in their country's ruling class as a whole.

(DVD 1, track 21, "Sangue a me quell' ombra chiede")

Act IV of the opera begins with another people's chorus, this time of Scottish refugees who have fled Macbeth's tyranny and mourn the loss of their country's peace: "Oppressed homeland! No, the dear name of mother we can no longer give you now that, for all your children, you are changed into a tomb of death!..." It is a long choral lament, and our attention is drawn to the suffering of an entire nation. In Shakespeare's play, these words appear in private conversation – involving Malcolm, Macduff and Ross. Verdi's chorus uses the same words, but their impact coming from a group of common Scots takes on a different dimension than when they are spoken by three members of the ruling class.

(Note to teacher: You may wish to brainstorm cooking vocabulary with students before they begin.)

(DVD 2, track 6, "Patria oppressa")

At the opera's end, when Macduff announces the death of Macbeth, the chorus of "countrymen" sings, "Struck down by a bolt of thunder, by a blow from the god of victory. (*to Macduff*) He is the valiant hero who requited the traitor!" and the women of Scotland join them with "Our grateful prayers arise/To Thee, O God of retribution." In Shakespeare's original, the nobles rejoice; the commoners are nowhere in sight.

(DVD 2, track 13, "Vittoria! Vittoria!... Macbeth, Macbeth, ov'e?")

Government looked one way to Shakespeare, another to Verdi. The writer of the *Macbeth* study guide for the Metropolitan Opera observes:

For Shakespeare, the question of who ruled England was one of pure power, duplicity, and cunning. By Verdi's time, the idea had emerged that a government should at least represent, if not be chosen by, its people. Verdi's *Macbeth* is not only a musical version of Shakespeare. It's a statement in support of Italian unification, a process in full bloom, but not yet complete, in 1865. The future was unknown. Shakespeare, from his position outside the governing class, wrote a commentary on power as he understood it. Verdi, a member of a people seizing its own destiny, was writing, in part, a call to arms.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If Verdi's opera was a "call to arms" against foreign oppressors, how might that purpose have influenced his handling of the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth? Would he make them more or less sympathetic to the audience? Why? How might he accomplish his purpose?

Macbeth OPERA BOX

POST-OPERA GROUP ACTIVITY YOUR VERY OWN MACBETH: THE MUSICAL

Depending on how *Macbeth* was handled in your class, by this time you have become familiar with the opera and perhaps also Shakespeare's play and film variations of the play. And having seen the opera, you are aware of how important music can be in portraying characters' emotions and in setting the tone or mood of a scene.

Now it's your turn to stage the story of *Macbeth* yourself – as a musical. You can set your version anywhere you like, in any time you choose. (Think Hip-hop *Macbeth*, Sci-fi *Macbeth*, Country-western *Macbeth*, Techno *Macbeth*, Hollywood *Macbeth*, Political *Macbeth* [MacBachmann?], Hobbit *Macbeth*, whatever. Your only limit is your imagination.) You can change the ages, genders or even species of the characters, as long as you retain the basic plot and characterization. (Recall that the opera eliminated characters like Ross, the drunken porter, Lady Macduff, et al. yet retained the main gist of the story. Just don't forget the witches, which, of course, can be morphed into any "wicked" group of people you choose – administrators, the science department, a rival school's football team, the writers of the AP tests.) Your group will act as the directors, set and costume designers, scriptwriters, song writers, and actors to produce this new version of the story of *Macbeth*.

THE PLAYBILL (100 POINTS)

- Design a poster to advertise your musical. This will be the cover of your playbill. (See the *Minnesota Opera poster*, the cover of this study guide, for an example.) (10 PTS.)
- A director's page where you explain your vision and describe the challenges you faced in changing the play/opera. Where have you set your *Macbeth*? When? How have you changed the text? Walk the audience through any major changes you are making. (20 PTS.)
- A sketch or computer drawing of the stage and your backdrop. (10 PTS.)
- An interview with the set designer discussing how the stage is laid out, what props or special effect are used, and how the set will change over the course of the play. (10 PTS.)
- Photos or sketches of at least two characters' costumes, with a note to the audience from the wardrobe designer explaining their "vision." (10 PTS.)
- A cast list with photographs. For each photograph, there should be a bio for the actor (the cast members can be the people in your group, established actors, students or teachers at your school, prominent political leaders or anyone else of your choosing) as well as a brief description of the character they play. You need only provide actor photos of the major players. (See *opera program for examples*.) (10 PTS.) →



- A clean copy of the script for the scene you perform, with stage directions. (15 PTS.)
- A complete set of lyrics for two of the songs which will appear in the show. These songs may be original creations or songs that already exist which fit the character/action. (For example, think about the applicability of such pre-existing titles as “I Couldn’t Sleep at All Last Night,” “I Can’t Get No Satisfaction,” “Witchy Woman” or “That Old Black Magic.”) (15 PTS.)

THE PERFORMANCE (50 POINTS)

- Choose one section of *Macbeth* that you can edit/revise/reconstruct to be 8–10 minutes in length.
- Rewrite/reconstruct the scene to fit the concept of your re-staging of the story. The language you choose should fit the characters and context of your new play. Your scene should include one or both of your songs.
- You will present your new version of the story to the class. (1) Tell us your concept, what you have changed, *etc.* (2) Show us the playbill. (3) Act out the scene. The members of your group will act out the scene you reworked for the class, using whatever props and costumes you need to set the stage. You do not need to be off-book, but you need to be well-rehearsed. All group members must participate in the presentation. NOTE: The scene should include one (or both) of the songs you created for your musical. It can be performed “live” or, if it’s an existing song, the actor(s) singing it can “lip synch” to a recording.

“BY THE PRICKING OF MY THUMBS/SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES”
THE WITCHES OF SHAKESPEARE AND VERDI: A HISTORY

Verdi wrote, “Above all, bear in mind that there are three roles in this opera, and three is all there can be – Lady Macbeth, Macbeth, and the chorus of witches” (R99). The composer meant for there to be not just three witches, but three covens with six witches in each – an increase in cast size that most modern opera companies cannot afford. However, the role of the witches (whether three covens or three individuals) is central to the opera, and Verdi made sure that their importance was emphasized. And in order to keep the focus on Macbeth, his wife and the witches, he eliminated or minimized the roles of other characters who command more attention in Shakespeare’s play. For instance, Macduff plays a small part and his wife and children are completely absent, Duncan doesn’t sing a note (he just passes across the hall as he arrives at Macbeth’s castle) and the drunken porter is nowhere to be found.

Both Shakespeare’s play and the opera begin with the witches; however, Verdi uses a truncated version of their dialogue from the top of Act I, scene three to begin his work, omitting their ominous “Fair is foul and foul is fair” of Shakespeare’s scene one. Both works also have Macbeth engage in necromancy with them as he tries to learn his future – an activity which would have been forbidden by law in both the 17th and 19th centuries, although things diabolic were viewed differently by the audiences of the two time periods.

RENAISSANCE DIABOLISM

During the Renaissance, people believed in witches. Governments hanged them, scholars wrote books about them and churches devised tests and trials to determine whether a woman was one or wasn’t, one of the most well known being the water test: the suspected witch was thrown into a body of water; if she floated, she was a witch and then hanged or burned at the stake; if she sunk (and drowned), she was innocent. Catch 22.

In 1484, Pope Innocent VIII, wrote a Papal Bull lamenting the increase of witches throughout Christendom:

It has indeed lately come to Our ears, not without afflicting Us with bitter sorrow, that ... many persons of both sexes, unmindful of their own salvation and straying from the Catholic Faith, have abandoned themselves to devils, incubi and succubi, and by their incantations, spells, conjurations and other accursed charms and crafts [have engaged in] committing and perpetrating the foulest abominations and filthiest excesses to the deadly peril of their own souls

Two years later, Jacobus Sprenger and Henricus Institoris published *The Malleus Malificarum or Hammer of the Witches* in which they narrowed the focus of the witch hunts to women in particular:

Since women are feebler both in mind and body, it is not surprising that they are more likely to come under the spell of witchcraft And it should be noted that there was a defect in the formation of the first woman, since she was formed from a bent rib, that is, the rib of the breast, which is bent as it were in a contrary direction to a man. And since through this defect she is an imperfect animal, she always deceives Therefore, a wicked woman is by her nature quicker to waver in her faith, and consequently quicker to forsake the faith, which is the root of witchcraft In conclusion: All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which is insatiable in women.

The king of England, James I (who had been raised as a Calvinist Protestant – John Knox preached the sermon at the coronation of the 13 month old baby regent), had written his own treatise on witchcraft entitled *Daemonologie* in 1597 after interviewing several witches and their “victims,” coming to the following conclusion:

What can be the cause that there are 20 women given to that craft where there is one man?... The reason is easy, for as that sex is frailer than man is, so is it easier to be entrapped in these gross snares of the devil, as was over well proved to be true by the serpent’s deceiving of Eve at the beginning, which makes him the homlier [i.e. at home] with that sex since [then]

English Catholics had been associated with witchcraft since Henry VIII's separation from the Holy See, and his daughter, Elizabeth I, had persecuted them with good reason as they had instigated several plots against her life. After Elizabeth died in 1603, English Catholics had hoped her successor, James, whose mother had been a Catholic (and lost her head because of her plots against her cousin Elizabeth), would be more tolerant of their religion. Unfortunately for them, the new king was even more severe than his predecessor.

In 1605 a group of Catholics attempted to blow up Parliament (and James) in an attempt to re-establish the Catholic religion in England. The Gunpowder Plot, as it was called, was to have resulted in the blowing up of the Houses of Parliament on State Opening Day when the King, Lords and Commons would all be present in the Lords Chamber. The elimination of the entire government was to have thrown the country into turmoil out of which a new monarch, sympathetic to the Catholic cause, would arise and return England to its Catholic past. The plot was discovered shortly before the explosion was to have taken place. Guy Fawkes was found in the cellar of the Lords Chamber with the gunpowder, and the conspirators were rounded up and either killed on the spot or arrested, tortured and then hung or drawn and quartered (or both).

The Gunpowder Plot gave rise to a spate of "powder plays," pamphlets, and sermons – all involving forms of witchcraft supposedly used by the Jesuits who had planned the mass murder, and those who knew of the plot were accused of taking an oath to kill James while celebrating a Black Mass.

Shakespeare wrote the play to be performed before James (who, like Duncan, was the object of intended murder), and he astutely included characters embodying the king's hobby (witchcraft research) as well as representatives of James' assumed ancestors. (The play takes place in Scotland where James had come from, and the noble Banquo was supposedly a branch of James' family tree.)

When the chief conspirator of the Gunpowder Plot, Jesuit supervisor Henry Garnet, came to trial, the proceedings were focused on Garnet's treatise defending equivocation – the use of true statements to deceive, and Shakespeare makes this theme a dominant motif of the play where most everything "fair" obscures what's "foul." Banquo states that "the instruments of darkness tell us truths" (1.3.123) that will betray us inevitably, and at the end Macbeth realizes that he has been tricked by "th' equivocation of the fiend/That lies like truth" (5.5.42–43). The references to equivocation in the play, echoing to the Elizabethan audience Garnet's diabolical deceit, are myriad beginning with "fair is foul" and including references to a battle "lost and won" (1.1.4), news that "cannot be ill, cannot be good" (1.3.131), a dagger which is there and not there (2.1.35), words which are "welcome and unwelcome" (4.3.138), and Macduff's birth/non-birth (5.8.15–16). (The most extensive rendering of this theme is in the speech of the drunken porter, but since Verdi eliminated that character, we will too.)

In short, it was assumed by Shakespeare's audiences that witches were real and that they equivocated.

ROMANTIC DIABOLISM

Verdi's opera appeared some 250 years after Shakespeare's play, and while people still believed in witches, literature dealing with them was labeled as a subset of the Romantic gothic called "the devil story" (w47). Verdi himself referred to his opera as dealing with the "fantastical" (R5), and he wanted his witches to be a grotesque combination of "communication with their dead lords, the enemies of all mankind, and their mean, little maliciousnesses, like turning a cow's milk sour or quarreling with a peasant woman over chestnuts" (w48) and their impact to be felt throughout the opera. Musically, the composer's treatment of the witches combined "dread chords of doom in the orchestra, followed by cackling scampers of the witches, with crippled emphases on the offbeat" (w49). Wills observes, "The interplay of the menacing and the trivial is itself a form of equivocation— what seem to be two meanings are made one in the disfigured slyness of the witches, more dangerous than they seem" (w49).

NOTE

The scenes with the witches in the opera can be found on these DVDs as follows:

Act I: Deutsche Grammophon (DG) DVD 1, tracks 2, 3, 5 / EMI DVD 1, tracks 2, 3, 5

Act III: (DG) DVD 2, tracks 1–4 / EMI DVD 1, tracks 1–3

It might be interesting to see how the two productions handle the witches, and then to compare/contrast these artistic choices with that of the Minnesota Opera production. Students can also compare/contrast the operatic versions of the witches with that of a video of Shakespeare's play, e.g. Polanski's *Macbeth*.

MODERN DIABOLISM

Modern audiences have more of a problem with the witches, and presenting them as believable has provided contemporary directors with a formidable challenge which they've attempted to solve in different ways with varying degrees of success. Their representations fall into two main categories: (1) the prehistoric or primitive and (2) "parasites on the modern scene" (W52). In the former category, directors have cast the witches as naked cave women, voodoo priestesses, Druids, a drooling idiot girl with her two keepers and insane asylum inmates. In the latter, audiences have been accosted by groupies who follow Macbeth as they would a rock star, gang bangers, field nurses who kill their patients, *paparazzi*, bag ladies and begging gypsies in an airport.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Regardless of the representation of the witches, however, it is important to remember that they should be seen as having no power to compel belief even though they can appeal to pre-existing desires. They have no power over the human soul, and although they could persuade a person to commit evil acts, the victim always maintains freedom of choice. Otherwise, there is no lesson to be learned except "Evil crap happens and there's nothing to be done about it; humans have no control."

The witches appeal to what Macbeth wants to believe; they don't make him believe it and they don't tell him what to do. They work on him through equivocation, i.e. by ambiguous promises of the future which come true but not as the victim originally believed. Their prophecies don't come with an instruction manual. He is free to choose his actions.

Shakespeare meant for the witches to be reminders of the potential for evil within the human imagination – the evil which arises from a desire to violate our fellow human beings in order to shape the world to our own deep emotional needs.

Ian Johnson of Malaspina-University College in British Columbia writes,

I tend to see this play as insisting that the human community exists in a small arena of light surrounded by darkness and fog. In this darkness and fog, the witches endlessly circle the arena of light, waiting for someone like Macbeth to respond to his imaginative desires and perhaps natural curiosity about what lies beyond the circle. There will always be such people It is a reminder of just how fragile the basic moral assumptions we make about ourselves can be [Macbeth] does not reassure us that the forces of good will always prevail, rather that the powers of darkness are always present.

CODA

The evil witches are also the source of blame for the bad luck that has followed the play's productions since the first performance when (according to the legend) Hal Berridge, the young boy playing Lady Macbeth, died backstage on opening night, August 7, 1606. Other colorful stories include accidental (or near-miss) dismemberments, deaths and illnesses of actors, accidents happening to audience members, etc. Just a few examples include:

- Shakespeare's Globe Theatre burned down shortly after the initial production (which James didn't like anyway – he disliked seeing his ancestors murdered and actually banned the play's production for five years).
- In 1937, at London's Old Vic the dog (named Snoo) of Lillian Baylis, founder of the theater, died. The next day Lillian followed puppy to the grave. In addition, during the production, the director was nearly killed by a taxi, Laurence Olivier was nearly brained by a falling stage sandbag and that actor himself accidentally wounded various Macduffs in the final battle scene.
- During a single production in 1938, at the Stratford Festival in Ontario, an old man had both his legs broken when he was hit by his own car in the parking lot, Lady Macbeth ran her car into a store window and Macduff fell off his horse [!?!] and was confined to his bed for several days.
- In the late 1960s at a production by the Crawford Livingston Theatre here in Minneapolis, the actor playing Macbeth died during a performance.
- In the 1970s in Los Angeles, during one production run, the actor playing Donalbain died, Lady Macbeth got stuck on top of a 15-foot pillar (where she was invoking evil spirits) when the elevator mechanism malfunctioned. The play was stopped until she could be rescued, and later that same actress was murdered by her real life husband in their swimming pool.

And so it goes. Not surprisingly, actors do not pronounce the name of the play within a theater; it is referred to as “the Scottish play” and the leads are yclept “Mr. M” and “Mrs. M.” Oh, and if you want to break the curse for your own production, you are to turn around three times, spit and then quote something from *The Merchant of Venice*.

FYI: The only operatic tragedy this writer has uncovered occurred during a matinee broadcast of Verdi's *Macbeth* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. A member of the audience flung himself from the balconies after Act II. He was killed. The performance did not resume.

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Macbeth OPERA BOX

PRE-OPERA ACTIVITY CROSS THAT LINE, MACBETH!

PURPOSE

This activity is specifically designed for students who have not had previous in-depth exposure to Shakespeare's play, although any students can benefit from the content explored. As an introduction to the opera, it is designed to get students thinking about the text in ways that relate to their own lives and values, accessing prior knowledge of the themes and issues they will be seeing in the production. It asks students to voice opinions and move around the room to depict those opinions physically.

WHAT TO DO

- (1) Unroll a big piece of tape (e.g. duct tape) across the floor, so you divide the classroom into two equal spaces. Move all desks to the edges of the room.
- (2) Tell the class that today you're going to play a "game" called "Cross that Line." You will read a statement, and the students will need to choose to stand on one side of the line depending on whether they agree or disagree with the statement. After each statement, ask two or three students on each side why they have chosen to stand where they are. You may choose to let students stand on the line if they are undecided.
- (3) Ask students to react to the following statements in the course of the game. Have those who agree with the statement stand on one side of the line and those who disagree on the other.
 - Human beings have free will.
 - Some things that occur are "fated."
 - Behind every successful man is an ambitious woman.
 - Songs can convey feelings better than words alone.
 - People without children are naturally more selfish.
 - Killing is always wrong.
 - Wives should always support their husbands.
 - Ambition is a good quality.
 - You can't ever trust people in power.
 - Revenge is appropriate when one has been wronged.
 - Witches are real.
 - It's important to always follow your conscience.
 - Crime doesn't pay.
 - Crimes will eventually be found out.
 - Criminals suffer psychologically from their crimes.
 - The ends justify the means.
 - Human nature is basically good.
 - Human nature is basically evil.
- (4) After sharing opinions on these statements, have students return to their desks. Tell them that all of these issues appear in the opera *Macbeth*. Tell them that you might play the game again once they've finished seeing the production to determine whether their opinions have changed.

(Adapted from the Folger Library website)

Macbeth OPERA BOX

PRE-OPERA ACTIVITY VERDI'S "UGLY" SINGERS

BACKGROUND

The operatic style most popular during the early 19th century in Italy was known as *bel canto* (beautiful singing). In composing *Macbeth*, Verdi wanted to break away from this tradition, i.e. from “the tyranny of good singing” (w30) to create a sound “grittier, closer to the dark and even grotesque tale Shakespeare had given him” (w31). According to Garry Wills,

He wanted human beings whom the witches have literally infected with evil. He went so far as to say not only that the characters' singing should be ugly but that they should themselves look ugly, like medieval symbols of vice. (w31)

When Verdi was presented with a beautiful soprano to sing the role of Lady Macbeth, he refused to employ her, saying “I would like Lady Macbeth to be ugly and evil To have a harsh, stifled, and hollow (*cupa*) voice ... [with a] diabolical quality” (r66–67).

His first Lady Macbeth, Marianna Barbieri-Nini had “striking bad looks” (w31), and the appearance of his Macbeth, Felice Varesi, whom the conductor described as “ugly” (r7), gave the “suggestion of a distorted soul” (w33). To continue his rebellion against the *bel canto*, Verdi told both singers that they were to talk the lines more than sing them: “I want the performer to serve the poet better than they serve the composer” (r29–30). He wanted the words “to leap out at the audience, unfiltered by *bel canto* filigrees” (w33). In short, Verdi was creating a new kind of opera by pushing for realism of speech, stripping the gloss of beautiful singing away from the brutality of the opera's action.

He also strove for verisimilitude in acting. For example, he had Barbieri actually observe a sleepwalker so she could provide a realistic portrayal, and he was exacting during their rehearsals. The soprano later wrote,

I tried to imitate those who talk in their sleep, uttering words (as Verdi would say to me) while hardly moving their lips, leaving the rest of the face immobile, including the eyes. It was enough to drive me crazy. (r51)

Ultimately the composer wanted his singers not only to not sing, but to sound like the animals their evil natures had reduced them to, and he knew he could count on the “ugly” Barbieri and Varesi to produce “almost feral sounds” (w35).

ACTIVITY

Verdi thought the duet between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth immediately following Duncan's murder was one of the most important scenes in the opera, and he made his principals rehearse it 150 times! View that scene in DVD version (DG – DVD 1, tracks 6–8) and/or (EMI – DVD 1, tracks 8–10) and consider the following questions:

- (1) Are the singers physically “ugly?”
- (2) Are their voices “ugly?”
- (3) Are they talking as well as singing their lines?
- (4) If any of your answers to 1–3 are negative, why do you think the modern director(s) went against Verdi's original intentions?
- (5) Verdi wanted this duet sung *sotto voce* (in whispers) “with baffled insistence on their separate concerns” (w66). What is Macbeth's concern in this scene? What is Lady Macbeth's concern? How are these concerns reflected in the actual sounds of the music?

- (6) How is the relationship between husband and wife portrayed in this scene? Who is stronger? Explain.
- (7) Do you see any foreshadowing of what their future psychological states might be here? Explain.
- (8) How might Verdi's insistence on the ugliness of his singers have predisposed his audiences toward them? Would this have added to or detracted from the "roundness" of his characters? If it made them less round, what might

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(noted in the text as "W")

(1) Shakespeare had to rely solely on words to paint the scenery, alert his audience to the weather conditions and time of day, convey emotions, *etc.* Opera, with singing and orchestration, is able to communicate atmosphere and emotions, i.e. meaning itself through music. How did the music of the opera *Macbeth* inform:

- the tone of individual scenes
- the overall atmosphere/mood of the opera
- the characters' emotions and their reactions to their situations

Give specific examples. How did the choral and orchestral performances affect your understanding of the story?

(2) In Shakespeare's play, lines are stated one at a time; the actors take turns so the audience can understand each word. In opera, however, there are scenes in which some characters sing their own words at the same time as others are singing theirs, with the purpose of creating an emotional texture that words alone simply cannot. Identify moments in *Macbeth* when this occurred. What effect did this have on your understanding of the emotional relationships between the characters?

(3) Other than the witches' initial "fair is foul and foul is fair" at the play's beginning and their "double, double, toil and trouble" scene at the top of Act IV, there are no instances when characters are voicing their lines simultaneously. Verdi not only has the witches sing in unison, but includes moments for the "people's chorus" to represent the countrymen and women of Scotland. How effective was e.g. the choral denunciation of Duncan's murder (Act I) or the Scottish people's lamentation over the dismal state of their country (Act IV) as opposed to having two or three actors saying the same lines? How might the reaction of the audience to these situations differ?

(4) Did the opera's witches sound like witches? How did their music differ from the music of the "people's chorus?" What might have been Verdi's intention in making the changes he did between the sounds of the two groups?

(5) Describe the set, props and special effects. How effectively did they enable you to engage in the plot and in the characters' states of mind? Shakespeare's play takes place almost entirely at night. Did the opera's lighting set that mood for you?

(6) In the play, the dominant colors are red and black – red for blood and black for the pervasive darkness and also for evil. (In Renaissance drama, darkness and evil were always equated.) Did the opera production represent Shakespeare's color scheme? Explain. What other colors were part of the visual design? What might they have been meant to represent?

(7) Describe the costumes of Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, and the witches. How did the clothes help define their characters? Why do you think the Lady appears at the end in a white dress? What might that indicate about her frame of mind just before her suicide?

(8) How does the experience of watching a play differ from seeing it performed as an opera? Illustrate your answer with specific references to your own experience with Shakespeare's and Verdi's works. Overall, how did the opera's production values affect your engagement in the story?

- (1) List as many similarities and differences as you can between Shakespeare's play and Verdi's opera. Consider the inclusion/omission/shortening of plot events, characters, speeches, *etc.* Why might Verdi have "stream-lined" the opera to the extent he did? What effect did this "stream-lining" have on the portrayals of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth?
- (2) How did the events of Shakespeare's play relate to the political situation in Jacobean England? How did the events of Verdi's opera relate to the political situation in 19th century Italy? How did Verdi reinterpret the plot and characters of Shakespeare's play to fit his purpose of the opera being a "call to arms?"
- (3) How do the supernatural elements in *Macbeth* set the mood and enhance the themes of the play/opera? The witches' equivocal words mask hidden meanings that Macbeth cannot or will not see. Do the witches foretell or do they have power to influence events in the future? What exactly did they prophesy and what did Macbeth do on his own? Does Macbeth determine his fate or do the Weird Sisters?
- (4) "Verdi has Lady Macbeth plot with Macbeth not only to kill Duncan but also to eliminate Banquo, Fleance and Macduff's family. Does her involvement alter Macbeth's culpability in these murders? Why do you think Verdi gave Lady Macbeth a bigger role in the opera than she had in the play? Which Lady Macbeth was more sympathetic by the end of the work?
- (5) At the beginning of both the play and the opera, Macbeth is ambitious but reluctant to seize power through murdering the king; however, as the play/opera continues, he becomes more hardened until at the end, he is numb to his feelings as well as to his actions. Lady Macbeth's character arc appears to follow the opposite trajectory, beginning as a hardened evil spirit of sorts and ending as a repentant "witch," tortured by the memory of the crimes. In essence she and her husband exchange places. How did the music of the opera reflect their separate character developments?
- (6) Discuss the values and aspirations apparent in the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth as they relate to your own values and aspirations and to those apparent in our current society.
- (7) What is Macbeth's tragic flaw? Aristotle said that a tragic flaw must be a good quality taken to excess. Does that fit here? If so, what is the quality? Is his flaw ambition? Lack of leadership? Does he have a sensitive moral imagination, a conscience? Was the Macbeth of the opera different in any way from Shakespeare's protagonist? Explain. If so, how did that difference affect your emotional attitude toward the character?
- (8) Aristotle also said that the audience should leave the theater feeling *catharsis*, a mixture of pity and fear for the tragic hero – pity that his punishment is greater than he deserves for his lack of judgment, fear that a similar fate could befall the audience member if s/he committed a similar lack of judgment. Does Macbeth elicit those emotions from you at the end of the play? The opera? Explain.
- (9) Some of the main themes of Shakespeare's play have been identified variously as:
 - An anatomy of evil
 - Ambition
 - Appearance v. reality
 - Honor and loyalty
 - Fate and destiny
 - Which of these themes surface most strongly in Verdi's opera? Explain.

(10) The key question asked by Shakespeare's play seems to be: Is human society fundamentally amoral, i.e. dog-eat-dog? If so, then Macbeth is right at the end of the play when he observes that human life itself is meaningless and tiresome. Or do the hints of a better life which emerge in the play (e.g. King Edward's ministry, Malcolm's clean living, the dignified death of the contrite traitor [original Thane of Cawdor] and the doctor's prescription of pastoral care) display Shakespeare's humanism and/or Christianity? It has been argued both ways. In brief, is the message of the work one of despair or one of hope? Answer this question for the play and then turn to the opera, keeping in mind Verdi's changes. Now answer the following:

- What would you say is the opera's message?
- How might this relate to the political context within which it was written?
- What might have been Verdi's message to the Italian people about rulers?
- What might have been Verdi's opinion as to what the Italians had to do to claim their independence?
- What might have been his warning to the Italians?
- What might have been his thoughts on what "being" the Italians could look to for aid?

(11) How does the experience of seeing or reading this play differ from that of watching the opera? Explain. What are the strengths/weaknesses of each genre?

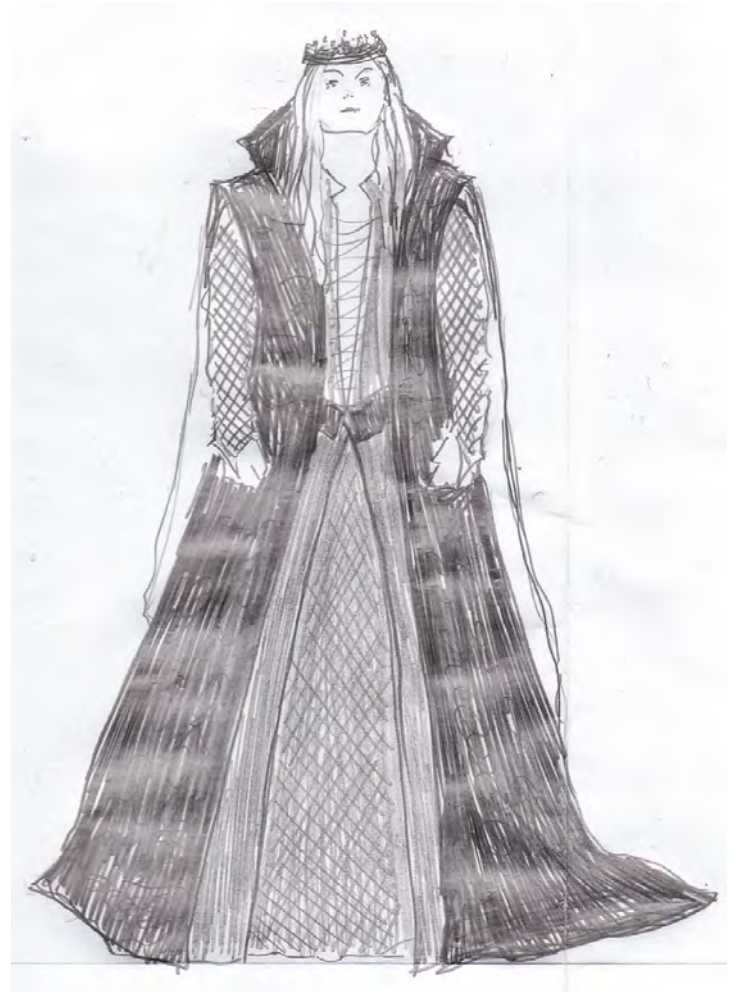
SYNOPSIS

ACT I

Scene one – A forest Returning from battle Macbeth and Banquo happen upon a coven of witches that makes three rather unsettling predictions: they promise Macbeth his noble rank shall rise from Thane of Glamis to Thane of Cawdor, and then he shall be king; to Banquo they foretell that kings shall number among his descendants. The witches vanish, leaving the bewildered Macbeth and Banquo to consider what they've witnessed. Messengers inform them of the treasonous Thane of Cawdor's recent execution – Macbeth has been named his successor. Already dark thoughts of ambition begin to cloud his judgment.

Scene two – A hall in the castle Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband detailing his unusual experiences and the swift fulfillment of the first prophesy. She draws the conclusion that their next step must be to usurp the throne. A servant informs his mistress that King Duncan plans to spend the night as their guest.

Late into the night, the Macbeths hash out their deadly scheme. After his wife gives the signal that all have retired to bed, Macbeth murders the sleeping Duncan. His remorse is pronounced, but Lady Macbeth holds strong, returning to the scene of the crime and planting the bloodstained dagger among the king's sleeping bodyguards to implicate them. As dawn breaks Macduff and Banquo discover the king has been assassinated.



ACT II

Scene one – A room in the castle Duncan's son, Malcolm, has fled Scotland. As a result he is now suspected of the regicide. Macbeth, now crowned king, is still unsettled by the witches' third prediction – that Banquo's offspring shall one day rule. He and his wife concur more blood must flow.

Scene two – The castle park Assassins descend on Banquo and his young son, Fleance. Banquo is killed, but Fleance manages to escape.

Scene three – A magnificent banquet hall A celebration is held in Macbeth's honor, and Lady Macbeth leads the toast. An assassin quietly confirms that Banquo has been killed, but Fleance remains at large. To his guests, Macbeth notes Banquo's absence and makes the noble gesture to seat himself at his place. He is visibly horrified to find Banquo's ghost already seated there. The guests are shocked by the strange behavior, and Lady Macbeth demands he control himself. To divert everyone's attention she strikes up the drinking song again, but the ghost returns, and Macbeth loses his composure. Macduff grows suspicious.



ACT III

A dark cave Regrouped for the sabbath, the witches prepare an unearthly brew. Macbeth returns in search of more answers. The powers of darkness yield an apparition warning him to beware Macduff. The second spirit, a child, advises him not to fear any man born of a woman. A final apparition assures him not to worry until Birnam Wood moves against him. Macbeth is reassured but insists on knowing the fate of Banquo's son. The witches refuse to answer, but Banquo's progeny is displayed in a parade of specters, followed by the reappearance of Banquo's ghost. The witches vanish.

Macbeth confides the strange happenings to his wife. Recognizing Macduff as the most serious threat, they agree his castle should be destroyed and Lady Macduff and her children must die.

ACT IV

Scene one – A deserted place on the Scottish border A chorus of Scottish refugees bewail the plight of their oppressed country under Macbeth's tyrannous rule. Macduff agonizes over the slaughter of his wife and children. Malcolm arrives with English soldiers. He instructs the army to camouflage themselves with branches from the forest.

Scene two – A room in the castle The queen's lady-in-waiting confers with a doctor. Together they observe the strange nocturnal activities of Lady Macbeth. She enters as if in a trance, and while trying to wash imagined blood from her hands, she exposes the hideous details of her crimes.

Scene three – A room in the castle Macbeth has been informed of the uprising against him. In light of the witches' promises, he is certain the battle will be won. He receives news of his wife's suicide but is barely moved. Yet his confidence is shaken by reports of Birnam Wood advancing on the castle.

Macduff confronts Macbeth. The king's belief in the final prophecy is crushed when Macduff reveals that he was not born of a woman the usual way but "... from his mother's womb untimely ripped." Malcolm enters with soldiers and women of the castle. Macduff informs them that Macbeth has been slain. All hail Malcolm as their new king.



b Roncole, October 9/10, 1813; *d* Milan, January 27, 1901

Giuseppe Verdi was born in Le Roncole, a small village in the Duchy of Parma. Contrary to the composer's claim that he was of illiterate peasants, Carlo and Luigia Verdi both came from families of landowners and traders – together they ran a tavern and grocery store. As a youth Verdi's natural fascination with music was enhanced by his father's purchase of an old spinet piano. By the age of nine he was substituting as organist at the town church, a position he would later assume and hold for a number of years. Carlo Verdi's contact with Antonio Barezzi, a wealthy merchant and music enthusiast from nearby Busseto, led to Giuseppe's move to the larger town and to a more formalized music education. Lodging in his benefactor's home, Verdi gave singing and piano lessons to Barezzi's daughter, Margherita, who later became the composer's first wife.



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

Encouraged by his benefactor, Verdi applied to the Milan Conservatory, his tuition to be funded in part by a scholarship for poor children and the balance to be paid by Barezzi. The Conservatory rejected his application because of his age and uneven piano technique, but Verdi remained in Milan under the tutorship of Vincenzo Livigna, a *maestro concertatore* at La



A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2012 production of Nabucco

Scala. After making a few useful contacts in Milan, writing a number of small compositions and some last-minute conducting substitutions, Verdi was offered a contract by La Scala for an opera, *Roccester*. It was never performed, nor does the score appear to exist. It is commonly believed that much of the music was incorporated into his first staged opera, *Oberto*. The score also may have been destroyed with the composer's other juvenilia as Verdi had requested in his will.

Oberto achieved modest success and Verdi was offered another commission from La Scala for a comedy. Unfortunately, by this time the composer had suffered great personal loss – in the space of two years his wife and two small children had all died. Verdi asked to be released from his contract, but La Scala's impresario, Bartolomeo Merelli (probably with good intentions) insisted that he complete the score. Written under a dark cloud, *Il regno di giorno* failed in the theater, and Verdi withdrew from any further engagements. It was due to a chance meeting with Merelli (with a new libretto in tow) that led to his return to the stage. *Nabucco* was a huge success and catapulted Verdi's career forward.

Italian theaters at this time were in constant need of new works. As a result, competent composers were in demand and expected to compose at an astonishing rate. Both Rossini and Donizetti had set the standard and Verdi was required to adapt to their pace. These became his "anni di galera" (years as a "galley slave") – between 1842 and 1853 he composed

eleven new operas, often while experiencing regular bouts of ill-health. His style progressed from treating grandiose historical subjects (as was the custom of the day) to those involving more intimate, personal relationships. This transition is crowned by three of his most popular works: *Rigoletto*, *Il trovatore* and *La traviata*.

Toward the end of the 1840s Verdi considered an early retirement, as his predecessor Rossini had done. He purchased land near Busseto once belonging to his ancestors and soon began to convert the farmhouse into a villa (Sant'Agata) for himself and his new companion, Giuseppina Strepponi, a retired soprano who had championed his early works (including *Nabucco*, for which she had sung the leading female role). Verdi had renewed their friendship a few years before; when Verdi and Strepponi were in Paris they openly lived together as a couple. After their return to Italy, however, this arrangement scandalized the denizens of Busseto, necessitating a move to the country.

As Verdi became more interested in farming and less involved in the frustrating politics of the theater, his pace slowed – only six new works were composed over the next 18 years. His style began to change as well, from the traditional “numbers opera” to a more free-flowing, dramatically truthful style. Some of his greatest pieces belong to this era (*Simon Boccanegra*, *Un ballo in maschera*, *La forza del destino*, *Don Carlos*), which concluded with what most thought was his swan song, the spectacular grand opera *Aida*.

Following *Aida*, Verdi firmly stated he had retired for good. He was now devoted to Sant'Agata, and to revising and remounting several earlier works, pausing briefly to write a powerful *Requiem* (1874) to commemorate the passing of Italian poet and patriot Alessandro Manzoni. Coaxed out of his retreat by a lifelong love of Shakespeare, the septuagenarian composer produced *Otello* and *Falstaff* to great acclaim.



A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2007 production of *Un ballo in maschera*



A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2008 production of *Il trovatore*

Verdi's final years were focused on two philanthropic projects, a hospital in the neighboring town of Villanova, and a rest home for aged and indigent musicians in Milan, the Casa di Riposo. Giuseppina (who Verdi had legally married in 1859) died in 1897, and Verdi's own passing several years later was an occasion of national mourning. One month after a small private funeral at the municipal cemetery, his remains were transferred to Milan and interred at the Casa di Riposo. Two hundred thousand people lined the streets as the “Va, pensiero” chorus from *Nabucco* was sung by an eight-hundred-person choir led by conductor Arturo Toscanini.

GIUSEPPE VERDI – CATALOGUE OF OPERAS

TITLE	PREMIERE
<i>Oberto, conte di San Bonifacio</i> (Oberto, Count of San Bonifacio)	Milan, Teatro alla Scala, November 17, 1839 <i>dramma</i> ; libretto by Temistocle Solera, from Antonio Piazza's libretto <i>Rocester</i>
<i>Un giorno di regno</i> (King for a Day)	Milan, Teatro alla Scala, September 5, 1840 <i>melodramma</i> ; libretto by Felice Romani, after Alexandre Vincent Pineu-Duval's <i>Le faux Stanislas</i>
<i>Nabucco</i>	Milan, Teatro alla Scala, March 9, 1842 <i>dramma lirico</i> ; libretto by Temistocle Solera, after Auguste Anicet-Bourgeois and Francis Cornu's <i>Nabuchodonosor</i> and Antonio Cortesi's <i>Nabuchodonosor</i>
<i>I Lombardi alla prima crociata</i> (The Lombards)	Milan, Teatro alla Scala, February 11, 1843 <i>dramma lirico</i> ; libretto by Temistocle Solera, after Tommaso Grossi
<i>Ernani</i>	Venice, Teatro La Fenice, March 9, 1844 <i>dramma lirico</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Victor Hugo's <i>Hernani</i>
<i>I due Foscari</i> (The Two Foscari)	Rome, Teatro Argentina, November 3, 1844 <i>tragedia lirica</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Byron's <i>The Two Foscari</i>
<i>Giovanna d'Arco</i> (Joan of Arc)	Milan, Teatro alla Scala, February 15, 1845 <i>dramma lirico</i> ; libretto by Temistocle Solera, in part after Friedrich von Schiller's <i>Die Jungfrau von Orleans</i>
<i>Alzira</i>	Naples, Teatro di San Carlo, August 12, 1845 <i>tragedia lirica</i> ; libretto by Salvatore Cammarano, after Voltaire's <i>Alzire, ou Les Américains</i>
<i>Attila</i>	Venice, Teatro La Fenice, March 17, 1846 <i>dramma lirico</i> ; libretto by Temistocle Solera [and Francesco Maria Piave], after Zacharias Werner's <i>Attila, König der Hunnen</i>
<i>Macbeth</i>	Florence, Teatro della Pergola, March 14, 1847 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave and Andrea Maffei, after William Shakespeare
<i>I masnadieri</i> (The Thieves)	London, Her Majesty's Theatre, July 22, 1847 <i>melodramma</i> ; libretto by Andrea Maffei, after Friedrich von Schiller's <i>Die Räuber</i>
<i>Jérusalem</i>	Paris, Opéra, November 26, 1847 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Alphonse Royer and Gustave Vaëz, from Temistocle Solera's 1843 libretto <i>I Lombardi alla prima crociata</i>
<i>Il corsaro</i> (The Corsair)	Trieste, Teatro Grande, October 25, 1848 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Byron's <i>The Corsair</i>

<i>La battaglia di Legnano</i> (The Battle of Legnano)	Rome, Teatro Argentina, January 27, 1849 <i>tragedia lirica</i> ; libretto by Salvatore Cammarano, after Joseph Méry's <i>La bataille de Toulouse</i>
<i>Luisa Miller</i>	Naples, Teatro di San Carlo, December 8, 1849 <i>melodramma</i> ; libretto by Salvatore Cammarano, after Friedrich von Schiller's <i>Kabale und Liebe</i>
<i>Stiffelio</i>	Trieste, Teatro Grande, November 16, 1850 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Emile Souvestre and Eugène Bourgeois's <i>Le pasteur, ou L'évangile et le foyer</i>
<i>Rigoletto</i>	Venice, Teatro La Fenice, March 11, 1851 <i>melodramma</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Victor Hugo's <i>Le roi s'amuse</i>
<i>Il trovatore</i> (The Troubadour)	Rome, Teatro Apollo, January 19, 1853 <i>dramma</i> ; Salvatore Cammarano, after Antonio García Gutiérrez's <i>El trovador</i>
<i>La traviata</i> (The Fallen Woman)	Venice, Teatro La Fenice, March 6, 1853 <i>opera</i> ; Francesco Maria Piave, after Alexandre Dumas fils's <i>La dame aux camélias</i>
<i>Les vêpres siciliennes</i> (The Sicilian Vespers)	Paris, Opéra, June 13, 1855 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Eugène Scribe and Charles Duveyrier, after their libretto <i>Le duc d'Albe</i>
<i>Simon Boccanegra</i>	Venice, Teatro La Fenice, March 12, 1857 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Antonio García Gutiérrez's <i>Simón Bocanegra</i>
<i>Aroldo</i>	Rimini, Teatro Nuovo, August 16, 1857 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, from his libretto for <i>Stiffelio</i>
<i>Un ballo in maschera</i> (A Masked Ball)	Rome, Teatro Apollo, February 17, 1859 <i>melodramma</i> ; libretto by Antonio Somma, from Eugène Scribe's libretto for Daniel-François-Esprit Auber's <i>Gustave III, ou le bal masqué</i>
<i>La forza del destino</i> (The Force of Destiny)	St. Petersburg, Imperial Theatre, November 10, 1862 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, after Angel de Saavedra's <i>Don Alvaro, o La fuerza del sino</i>
<i>Don Carlos</i>	Paris, Opéra, March 11, 1867 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Joseph Méry and Camille du Locle, after Friedrich von Schiller
<i>Aïda</i>	Cairo, Cairo Opera House, December 24, 1871 <i>opera</i> ; libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni, from Auguste Mariette's scenario
<i>Otello</i>	Milan, Teatro alla Scala, February 5, 1887 <i>dramma lirico</i> ; libretto by Arrigo Boito, after William Shakespeare's <i>Othello, or the Moor of Venice</i>
<i>Falstaff</i>	Milan, Teatro alla Scala, February 9, 1893 <i>commedia lirica</i> ; libretto by Arrigo Boito, after William Shakespeare's <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i> and <i>King Henry IV</i>

Giuseppe Verdi was in the middle of his “galley years” when a commission came from the Florentine Teatro alla Pergola in early 1846. The stress of churning out operas had worn him down, but after a brief hiatus, he was back on track with three possible texts on the table: Schiller’s *Die Räuber*, Grillparzer’s *Die Abnfrau* and Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. The Pergola’s impresario, Alessandro Lanari, was specific on only one point – the opera had to be of the *genere fantastico*, a story with supernatural elements on the same par as two recently restaged popular works, Meyerbeer’s *Robert le diable* and Weber’s *Der Freischütz*. Verdi’s tendency toward *Macbeth* depended on the availability of two singers, Sophie Loewe and Felice Varesi, both “singer-actors” who he felt could best convey the emotional complexity of the two evil protagonists.

The composer took a big risk – at that time Shakespeare was not familiar in Italy, and *Macbeth* had yet to be staged in spoken form. Verdi’s confidence in the Bard grew out of a lifelong passion for his works. In time, he would consider several other plays: *King Lear*, *The Tempest*, *Cymbeline*, *Othello* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the latter two finally making it to the operatic stage toward the end of his career as *Otello* and *Falstaff*. The composer also was excited to work in Florence, a city with surprisingly liberal policies and few censoring impediments (something that would become an issue in later remountings in Parma, Rome and Naples). The Pergola already had staged six of Verdi’s nine operas (apparently to his satisfaction), usually less than a year following their premieres in other Italian cities.



PHOTOS FROM MINNESOTA OPERA’S 2000 PRODUCTION OF MACBETH



The onerous task of converting the play into a libretto was given to Francesco Maria Piave (who already had worked with Verdi on two operas, *Ermani* and *I due Foscari*). Here we see the composer at his worst. Having given the poet a scenario, much of which already was written in prose, Verdi constantly badgered for revisions and corrections: “Always keep in mind: use few words ... few words ... few but significant ... I repeat few words.” A dramatist as well as a musician, Verdi had a very specific vision of how the action should play. In the end, the merciless taskmaster dismissed Piave (who at least was paid for

Fair is foul, and foul is fair.
 Hover through the fog and filthy air.
 — witches, l.i.10-11



led his two principals to the foyer for one final run-through of the Act I duet, one of the scenes he found to be crucial to the success of the entire work. Varese complained they already had done it 150 times, to which the composer crustily retorted, “I would not say that if I were you, for within half an hour it will be a hundred and fifty-one.”

He was just as meticulous about the sets, fabrics and direction, researching the period of Scottish history upon which the tragedy was based. The witches’ sabbath of Act III was the crux of the phantasm, and Verdi tried his best to employ the most current special effects available for the appearance of the apparitions. His efforts paid off, for the opera was a tremendous success – three pieces were encored, and Verdi received over 30 curtain calls.

Following the premiere, Verdi wrote a touching letter to his former father-in-law and lifelong supporter, Antonio Barezzi, offering the score to him. “For a long time I have been thinking of dedicating an opera to you, who have been my father, benefactor and friend Now here is my *Macbeth*, which I love more than my other operas and thus believe it worthy of being presented to you.” Barezzi’s tearful yet “troubled” response might have gotten past the composer but in retrospect provides a curious insight – Barezzi may have known of Verdi and Giuseppina Strepponi’s newly established romantic liaison. She had come to Florence for the premiere from Paris (where she had recently relocated) and was rumored to have spent a few evenings at Verdi’s hotel. As a surrogate father figure, Barezzi was, of course, always looking after Verdi’s best interests, which included

his services) and entrusted the final amendments to his friend Andrea Maffei. Although Piave was still responsible for much of the text, his name did not appear on the title page of the completed book nor was his preface included (as was customary), much to his dismay. Ironically, the critics later found the most fault with Maffei’s revised passages. The composer managed to mend the relationship, and together they went on to produce six more operas, including two of Verdi’s most enduring works, *Rigoletto* and *La traviata*.

Once in the theater, Verdi was equally severe with the cast. Rehearsals were frequent and unending, and as Marianna Barbieri-Nini, the soprano who replaced the pregnant Sophie Loewe as Lady Macbeth, later recalled, “nary a word of encouragement escaped from the maestro’s lips.” On the day of the invited dress rehearsal, just before curtain, Verdi

Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
 To plague th’ inventor: this even-handed justice
 Commends th’ ingredients of our poisoned chalice
 To our own lips. He’s here in double trust:
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
 Strong both against the deed; then, as his host
 Who should against his murderer shut the door,
 Not bear the knife myself.

— *Macbeth* I.vii.9-16



Our fears in Banquo stick deep,
And in his royalty of nature reigns that
Which would be feared. 'Tis much he dares;
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor
To act in safety.

— Macbeth, III.i.49-54



the selection of a suitable second wife, and he disapproved of Strepponi, whose dubious past was marred by a trail of unwanted pregnancies. The situation would become full-blown a few years down the road when the couple set up house together, but Verdi would stand up to his father-in-law's slanderous innuendos, and Barezzi would come to embrace Strepponi as a daughter.

But the story of *Macbeth* was far from over. In 1864 the composer was approached by the Parisian Théâtre Lyrique. Verdi's French publisher, Léon Escudier, and the theater's impresario Léon Carvalho together had produced extremely successful French versions of *Rigoletto* and *Violetta (La traviata)* and had generously compensated the composer with a commission they were not obligated to pay. The two were convinced a third work would be another financial windfall for all parties involved.

Verdi took the bait, but upon re-examining the score after an 18-year gap he noticed a number of things he wished to change: revised arias for Lady Macbeth in Act II and Macbeth in Act III, a revised chorus for Act IV and a new finale, moving Macbeth's death offstage and ending with a victory hymn. In fact, once he dove into the score he changed quite a bit more, and it is this version that has become the standard for performance today. It is a curious blend of Verdi's style at two points in his career, a pastiche Verdi intentionally, even blatantly, left intact.

Of course this wasn't exactly the version that was performed in Paris. Carvalho was notorious for tinkering with his composers' operas and suggested fleshing out a greater role for the tenor, thereby practically guaranteeing greater box

MACBETH

I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

MACDUFF

Despair thy charm,
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripped.

— V.vii.12-16





Double, double, toil and trouble
Fire burn and caldron bubble.
— witches, IV.i.10-11

office receipts. Verdi flatly refused – the drama was too sharply focused on three main characters: Macbeth, Lady Macbeth and the witches. A major tenor role would be inappropriate and superfluous. Nevertheless, Carvalho and Escudier went ahead with their plan, expanding Macduff’s role in Act IV with some of Malcolm’s lines, extending his aria and giving him the reprise of the Act II drinking song. Further, without Verdi’s consent, they subdivided the acts from four to five – a traditional format of the Opéra – as they were in direct competition with the rival house’s staging of Meyerbeer’s *L’Africaine* (which, as it turns out, was tremendously popular).

In the end, Verdi may have regretted not traveling to Paris to oversee the

remounting of *Macbeth* himself. The lackluster reception must have been puzzling – indeed, his French cohorts tried to keep news of it from him but still received his angry admonishments. Examining all the facts, the composer alluded

that the failure was likely due to Carvalho’s practice of emphasizing stage machinery over the music. Verdi openly took the defensive when the Parisian critics claimed he didn’t know his Shakespeare. “It may be that I have not rendered *Macbeth* well, but [to say] I don’t know, don’t understand and don’t feel Shakespeare – no, by God, no. He is a favorite poet of mine, whom I have had in my hands from earliest youth, and whom I read and reread constantly.” The revised version of the opera quickly took hold in Italy and around Europe, but *Macbeth* was not revived in Paris until the 20th century.



Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* with a very specific purpose in mind – to flatter and pander to the tastes of the new English monarch, James I. James ascended the throne after the passing of his cousin, Elizabeth I, who died in 1603 without an heir, thus putting an end to the Tudor dynasty. As James VI he had been the ruler of Scotland since 1567 – his crowning as king of the English united the two nations.

James only had been in power for three years when *Macbeth* was performed before the royal court and the visiting king of Denmark, Christian IV. Shakespeare’s choice of a subject from Scottish history would have appealed to James’ desire to have a greater understanding of Scotland among the English people. The inclusion of Banquo in the story would have touched him personally – his family traced its lineage back to the unfortunate noble just as Shakespeare’s witches had predicted. The juxtaposition of a dark period of medieval Scotland to the relatively happy accord of the newly united kingdom had its political advantages as well.



James had also recently survived the Gunpowder Plot (1605), an act of treason determined to massacre the king and government officials by mining the hall with explosives to be detonated at the opening of Parliament. During the trials of the conspirators, equivocation (hiding the truth in language) was used in the defense. Such phrases (“**So foul and fair a day I have not seen.**”) populate the Bard’s text. The drunken porter scene (not included in the opera) directly addresses this theme.

Shakespeare drew the bulk of his material from Holinshed’s *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, the closest thing to real history one might find at the time. Predominantly it was the story of *Macbeth* that prompted his interest, but there the Bard immediately found a problem – Banquo had conspired in Duncan’s assassination. To sanitize his reputation, Shakespeare made Banquo a guiltless victim in his play and transferred the role of accessory to Macbeth’s wife, who only received casual mention in the *Chronicles*. Macduff’s role also is enhanced in the play – immediately after Macbeth’s coronation in Act II he makes his break with the new king, destined to become his chief adversary.

One important detail Shakespeare skirts over in his adaptation is that Macbeth had a legitimate claim to the throne. He and Duncan were first cousins, Malcolm II being their mutual grandfather (and Lady Macbeth was related as well – granddaughter to Kenneth III, all three descended from Malcolm I). Scotland at this point in history did not have a clear-cut system for ascension. It was a bloody struggle between chieftains of subsidiary clans who were ultimately branches of the same family. The family of the dead king’s predecessor inherited the right to rule. Curiously, the ten reigning monarchs preceding Duncan had been slain – it must have been of little surprise when the king turned up dead in Macbeth’s castle. The reality of Duncan’s ineffectual rule is also omitted from the play – Shakespeare transforms his physical makeup and demeanor to become a wise and capable old man in order to intensify the degree of Macbeth’s betrayal. The naming of Malcolm as Prince of Cumberland (thereby officially Duncan’s heir and defying the usual

communal tradition of nominating a related thane) spurs the usurper into motion as much as any witches' predictions. Lady Macbeth evolved to become a powerful player. Historically, she had an axe to grind with Duncan's family, for they had murdered her kinsman, Kenneth III, to ensure Duncan's eventual succession. To flesh out Lady Macbeth's character, Shakespeare freely adapted from an earlier *Chronicle*, the slaughter of King Duff by Donwald. "Donwald thus being the more kindled in wrath by the word of his wife, determined to follow hir advise in the execution of so heinous an act." By the end of the story, under suspicion Donwald flees without informing his wife. She and the children are taken into custody and put to the rack, where she confesses everything under duress. Further role models for Lady Macbeth included Elizabeth I's contemporary Catherine de' Medici, who as queen mother of France initiated a number of ruthless killings and was especially unpopular in the eyes of the English; Livia, Augustus Caesar's scheming wife who commonly poisoned her enemies for political purposes; and Medea, the mythological sorceress who murdered her own brother, children and husband's bride-to-be for love, spite and revenge. There's little love in Lady Macbeth – much of her steely mettle was born of Shakespeare's own imagination, making *King Lear's* Regan and Goneril pale by comparison.

The witches are the final component in the mix. The inclusion of the three "weird" (a conflation of "wayward") sisters were no doubt intended to please not only James (he had a healthy interest in demonology) but to shock and entertain Jacobean audiences who wholeheartedly believed ghosts and evil spirits were just around the corner – encountering a coven of witches would not have been out of the realm of possibility. The power of the wicked sisters seems to extend beyond their domain, and their resemblance to the three fate-weaving Norns of Teutonic mythology is not without notice. Again, the *Chronicles* serve as inspiration, this time going back as far as Natholocus, King of Scotland from 242–280 AD. "The Witch consulting with hir spirits, declared in the end how it should come shortlie to passe, that the king shoulde bee murdered, not by his own enimies, but by the hands of one of his most familiar friendes, in whome he had reposed an especiall trust." Later *Chronicles* detail Macbeth and Banquo's encounter with the witches, found in the play almost verbatim.



The Witch consulting with hir spirits, declared in the end how it should come shortlie to passe, that the king shoulde bee murdered, not by his own enimies, but by the hands of one of his most familiar friendes, in whome he had reposed an especiall trust." Later *Chronicles* detail Macbeth and Banquo's encounter with the witches, found in the play almost verbatim.

It fortun'd as Makbeth and Banquho jounied towards Fores, where the King then laie. ... there met them three women in strange and wild apparell, resembling creatures of elder world, whome ewhen they attentivelie beheld, woondering much at the sight, the first of them spake and said; All haile Makbeth, thane of Glamis The second of them siad; Haile Makbeth thane of Cawder. But the third said; All haile Makbeth that heereafter shalt be king of Scotland. Then Banquho; What manner of women (saith he) are you, that seeme so little favorable unto me, whereas to my fellow heere, besides high offices, ye assigne also the kingdome, appointing foorth nothing for me at all? Yes (saith the first of them) we promise greater benefits unto thee...of thee those shall be borne which shall govern the Scottish kingdome by long order of continuall descent. Herewith the foresaid women vanished immediatlie out of their sight. This was reputed at the first but some vaine fantastical illusion by Mackbeth and Banquho, insomuch that Banquho would call Mackbeth in jest, king of Scotland; and Mackbeth againe would call him in sport likewise, the father of manie kings.

From the top of the drama the witches' declamation "Fair is foul and foul is fair" indicates the topsy-turvy world of Shakespeare and his dichotomy of the human psyche. The *Chronicles* dryly report the facts, but the Bard invests in his protagonists powerful emotions, both forceful and faltering. At first Macbeth is ambitious yet fearful, hesitant then remorseful when it comes down to the actual killing of Duncan. His wife strengthens his resolve, badgering him to complete the crime as planned, and indeed, finishes the messy task herself by disposing of the murder weapons.

MACBETH

Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep" – the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast—

LADY MACBETH

What do you mean?

MACBETH

Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
shall sleep no more: Macbeth shall sleep no more."

LADY MACBETH

Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH

I'll go no more.

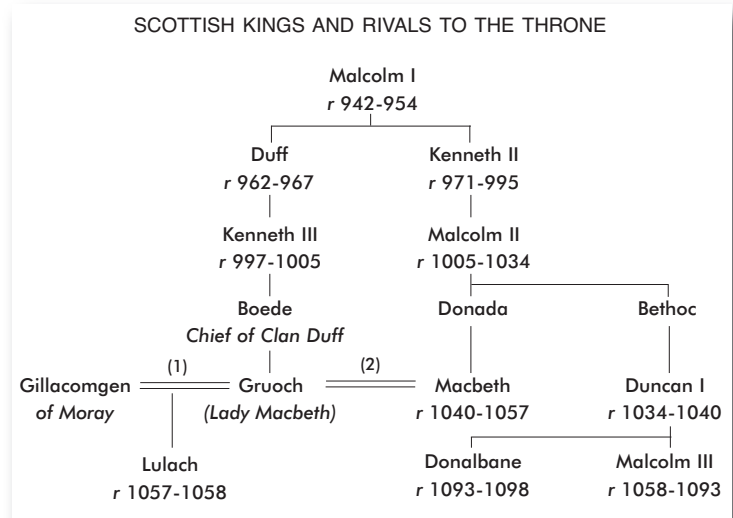
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH

Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures. 'Tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt.

– Act II.ii.34-56



Yet she is not completely devoid of sensitivity, albeit of an odd sort. "Had he [Duncan] not resembled my father as he slept, I had done't." On the other side, Macbeth is "too full o' th' milk o' human kindness" and is troubled by his treachery, though finds killing a little easier as time goes on – by the end of the play he is a confident and accomplished assassin (falsely comforted by the seemingly impossible second set of unearthly predictions). By Act V the situation has reversed – Lady Macbeth begins to falter, not during the light of day but at night, when repressed fears and a guilty conscience can take control. Where sleeping disorders earlier disturbed her husband, she now falls victim to somnambulism.

Out, damned spot! Out I say!

One: two: why, then 'til time to do't. Hell is murky.

Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afeard? What need
we fear who knows it, when none can call our pow'r
to accompt? Yet who would have thought the old man
to have had so much blood in him?

...

The Thane of Fife had a wife.

Where is she now? What, will these hands ne'er be
clean? No more o'that, my lord, no more o' that!
You will mar with this starting.

...

Wash your hands; put on your
nightgown; look not so pale! I tell you yet again,
Banquo's buried. He cannot come out on's grave.

...

To bed, to bed! There's knocking
at the gate, Come, come, come, come, give me your
hand! What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed,
to bed!

– Lady Macbeth, V.i.37-42; 44-49; 64-71

Like *Nabucco's* Abigaille, she is destroyed in the end by her own evil. The crux of the play is not the atrocity or frequency of the crimes (each one hangs on the last), but the fragile, tenuous human psychology that lies at its core.

In Verdi's hands, the drama acquired even more focus. His additional emphasis on Macbeth and his wife led to the removal of many characters – the thanes of Ross, Angus, Lennox, Menteith and Caithness are folded into the chorus, Malcolm's brother Donalbain disappears entirely as does the drunken porter and his famous scene of comic relief, and Siward and Young Siward, Malcolm's uncle and cousin who rally the troops on the English side of the border. Others are generalized – the three witches become a chorus of several (though still very important in Verdi's mind), as do the assassins and messengers. Banquo and Macduff are reduced to one aria each, Malcolm is demoted to a subsidiary role and Duncan never utters a word. Verdi saw the character of Lady Macbeth with even more contempt than did the playwright – at every suggestion of murder she is there to urge her husband forward (in the play decisions to slay Banquo and Macduff are made by Macbeth alone).

Fortunately for Verdi, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was written with comparative brevity (James had a short attention span), though it is believed some of it may be lost. Half the length of *Hamlet*, it possesses no subsidiary plot frequently found in Shakespeare, nor does it have the typical love interest. The play satisfied the composer's preference for taut action in a concise framework. Still, the important dramatic moments of the play remain intact (though sometimes rearranged and folded into fewer segments), and as a result, *Macbeth* remains one of Verdi's most significant achievements of his early period, enhanced with revision by the wise eyes of experience.



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.



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

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.

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



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

In 1646, Giovanni Battista Lully 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.

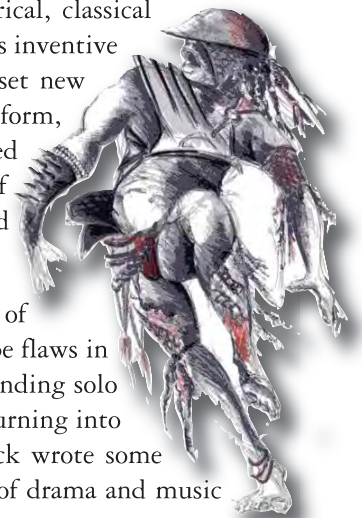
The Italian and French forms of opera were slow to catch on among the English, who preferred spoken theater. A compromise was reached in a form referred to as SEMI-OPERA, featuring spoken dialogue alternated with musical MASQUES (which often included dance). HENRY PURCELL'S *The Fairy Queen* (1692) is one popular example from this period.



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

Purcell's first opera, *Dido and Aeneas* (1689), is his only opera in the Italian style and continues to be occasionally revived in modern times.

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



Another German, CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK, arrived in England on the heels of Handel's last London operas, and later moving to Vienna, he began to see what he found to be flaws in the conventional Italian opera of the day. Singers had taken control of the productions, demanding solo arias and sometimes adding their own pieces to show off their vocal technique. Operas were turning into a collection of individual showpieces at the sacrifice of dramatic integrity. Although Gluck wrote some operas which shared these flaws, one work, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), reasserted the primacy of drama and music



A scene from Minnesota Opera's 2009 production of Argento's Casanova's Homcoming (which included a scene from Metastasio's opera seria Demofonte (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.

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



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

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

Lesser composers of this period include ANTONIO SALIERI (born in Legnago, settling later in Vienna), who served the court of Emperor Joseph II. Through the emperor's influence with his sister, Marie Antoinette, Salieri made headway in Paris as well, establishing himself as a worthy successor of Gluck in the serious vein of his tragédie lyriques. Returning to Vienna in 1784, Salieri found himself in strict



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

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.

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



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



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

ran the Théâtre Italien, a theater devoted to producing Italian works in their native language. Most popular among his repertoire were *La Vestale* (1807) and *Fernand Cortez* (1809).

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

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.



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

Opera, several of which show tendencies of the French grand opera style. *William Tell* was his last opera – Rossini retired at age 37 with 39 more years to live.

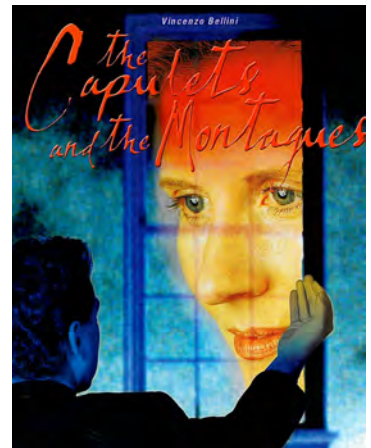
GAETANO DONIZETTI and VINCENZO BELLINI were two other Italian Bel Canto composers who premiered operas in both Paris and Italy. A tendency that began with Rossini and continued into their works was the practice of accompanied recitatives. Opera to this point had been organized in a very specific manner



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

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.

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



Traditionally, a bel canto aria begins with a slow, song-like CANTABILE section followed by an intermediate MEZZO section

with a slightly quicker tempo. It ends with a dazzling CABALETTA, the fastest section, where the singer shows off his or her talents. Often these were improvised upon, or replaced with “suitcase” arias of the singers’ own choosing, much to the consternation of the composer.

GIOACHINO ROSSINI was the first and perhaps best known of the three composers associated with this style. In his early years, between 1813 and 1820, Rossini composed rapidly, producing two or three operas a year. The pace slowed after he moved to France in 1824 – there he produced five works for the Paris



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

Three Masters of Opera

GIUSEPPE VERDI 1813–1901

RICHARD WAGNER 1813–1883

GIACOMO PUCCINI 1858–1924

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

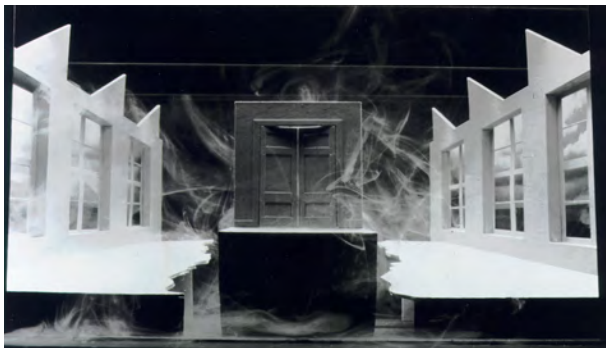
Verdi's contemporary, RICHARD WAGNER, is also considered one of the greats. Taking the idea of "fluidity" one step further, Wagner developed his operas into freely flowing MUSIC-DRAMAS united by melodic motifs that become associated with persons, places and things. Taking the grandeur of French opera one step further, he crafted his own libretti out of Nordic legends and created spectacular operatic moments. Wagner also greatly expanded the orchestra and developed his own particular brass instruments for greater impact. A Wagnerian singer

is one with great stamina – they must sing over a large orchestra in an opera that can be up to four hours long.

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



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



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



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

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 Périochole* (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 Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*



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 Scapiigliatura displayed their distaste for bourgeois society in works of gritty realism, often bordering on the morbid and the macabre. Nearly all the members of the group (lead by GIOVANNI VERGA) led tragic lives ending in early death by alcoholism and suicide.

Operas to come out of the resulting VERISMO school include PIETRO MASCAGNI's *Cavalleria rusticana* (1890), RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO's *Pagliacci* (1892) and UMBERTO GIORDANO's *Mala vita* (1892). Other works are attributed to this movement by nature of their rapid action with passionate tension and violence quickly alternating with moments of great sentimentality.

Opera in Russia

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



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

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



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

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).

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*

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*).

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).

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



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

20th- and 21st-century American Composers of Opera

VIRGIL THOMSON 1896–1989
GEORGE ANTHEIL 1900–1959
SAMUEL BARBER 1910–1981
GIAN CARLO MENOTTI 1911–2007
CARLISLE FLOYD 1926–
DOMINICK ARGENTO 1927–
CONRAD SUSA 1935–
PHILIP GLASS 1937–
JOHN CORIGLIANO 1938–
JOHN ADAMS 1947–

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

On *Vanessa*, Barber collaborated with another composer, GIAN CARLO MENOTTI, who wrote the libretto. Also the author of 25 libretti for his own operas, Menotti is best known for *The Medium* (1946), *The Consul* (1950), *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (1951) and *The Saint of Bleeker Street* (1954). Another American composing at about the same time was



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

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), *Postcard from Morocco* (1971), *The Voyage of Edgar Allen Poe* (1976), *Miss Havisham's Wedding Night* (1981) and *Casanova's Homecoming* (1985; revived in 2009). Other Argento works of merit include *Miss Havisham's Fire* (1979) and *The Aspern Papers* (1988).

Other composers currently at the fore include PHILIP GLASS, JOHN CORIGLIANO and JOHN ADAMS. The Minimalist music of Philip Glass has won popular acclaim among even non-opera-going audiences – his oeuvre includes *Einstein on the Beach* (1976), *Abnaten* (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*

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 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
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

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 s u c h n e w w o r k s



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



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.



THE CENTER OPERA COMPANY
of walker art center
Fifth Season in the Guthrie Theatre:
1967-68
Verdi/Goldoni
THE MAN IN THE MOON
Opens January 26, 1968
Six Performances Only
and
Britten/Shakespeare
**A MIDSUMMER
NIGHT'S DREAM**
Opens March 7, 1968
Four Performances Only
Tickets available at the
Guthrie Box Office,
Dayton's
and Field Schick.
**THE ABDUCTION
FROM THE SERAGLIO**
1966



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-foot 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 is also recognized for its progressive and far-reaching educational programs. Residencies in schools, opera education classes and pre-performance discussions are building an audience for tomorrow and enhancing the enjoyment of audiences today.

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



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

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 a third to be announced) and three commissions (*Silent Night* in 2012; *Doubt* in 2013 and a third to be announced).

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 Bonyng, 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 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 bobème (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 bobème (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 bobème (Puccini)
Don Giovanni (Mozart)
Pelléas et Mélisande (Debussy)
Les contes d'Hoffmann (Offenbach)
 ♣ *The Bobemians* (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

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, Aboy!* (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, Aboy!* (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)
 § † *Horspjal* (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

THE STANDARD REPERTORY

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
Lobengrin 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**, **COMPRI-MARIOS** (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.

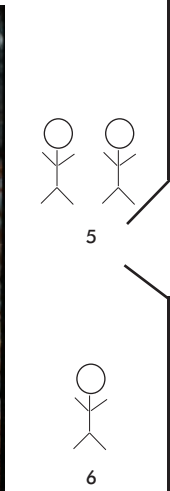
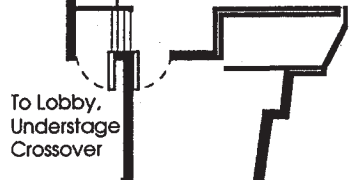
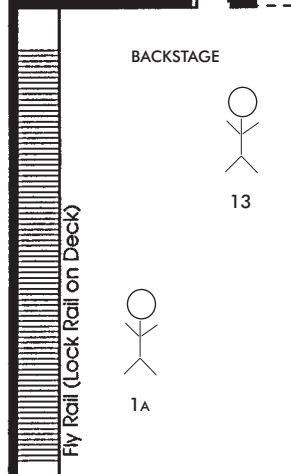
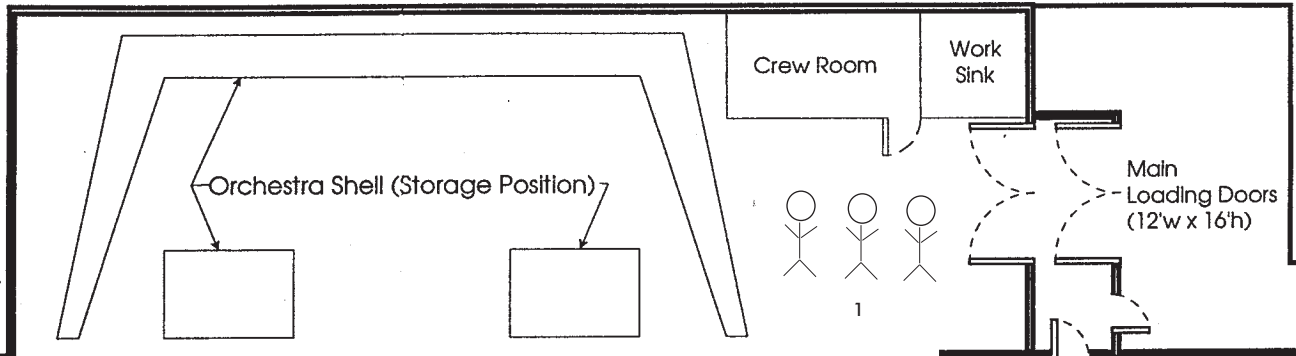
STAGEHANDS move scenery and props and handle lighting. DRESSERS help the cast into their often elaborate costumes.

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.



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

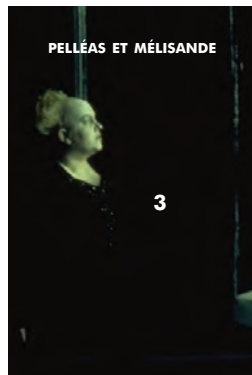
THE SOPRANO

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; MIMI, RODOLFO; EDGARDO, ENRICO; LUCIA; HANNA; PHILIPPE, GRAND INQUISITOR; GENEVIÈVE; SERVILIA, ANNIO

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

GLOSSARY OF OPERA TERMS

ACOUSTICS	The science of sound; qualities which determine hearing facilities in an auditorium, concert hall, opera house, theater, etc.
ACT	A section of the opera, play, etc. usually followed by an intermission.
AREA LIGHTS	Provide general illumination.
ARIA	(<i>air</i> , <i>English and French</i> ; <i>ariette</i> , <i>French</i>). A formal song sung by a single vocalist. It may be in two parts (binary form), or in three parts (see <i>da capo</i>) with the third part almost a repetition of the first. A short aria is an <i>arietta</i> in Italian, <i>ariette</i> or <i>petit air</i> in French.
ARIOSO	Adjectival description of a passage less formal and complete than a fully written aria, but sounding like one. Much recitative has <i>arioso</i> , or <i>songlike</i> , passages.
AZIONE TEATRALE	(<i>It.</i> : ' <i>theatrical action</i> ', ' <i>theatrical plot</i> '). A species of <i>Serenata</i> 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 <i>opera seria</i> , with comic <i>intermezzi</i> 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 (<i>bravura</i> singing, a <i>bravura</i> 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 <i>cantabile</i> , 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 (<i>It: 'singable,' or 'singing'</i>) 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	(<i>It: 'from the top, or back to the beginning'</i>). 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	(<i>It: dramma lirico</i>). 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 18th century (as opposed to the modern term <i>opera seria</i> , 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	(<i>It.: 'theatrical celebration'</i>). 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	(<i>It.: 'flowering', 'flourish'; plural fioritura</i>). 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	(<i>Ger.: 'action in music'</i>). Term used by Wagner to describe the libretto for <i>Lobengrin</i> and <i>Tristan und Isolde</i> ; 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 <i>opera seria</i> .
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 <i>Comus</i> , 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 indiscriminating 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, <i>messa di voce</i> , 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 <i>Show Boat</i> , 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 <i>Dramma per musica</i> or <i>Melodramma</i> .
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 (<i>Faust</i> , <i>Carmen</i> , and <i>Manon</i>) 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	(<i>It: ‘in speaking style’</i>). 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 <i>prelude</i> .
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.

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GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS

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

DOMINANT	The fifth tone of the diatonic scale: in the key of C, the dominant is G.	MOSSO	Moved; agitated; lively.
FERMATA 	Pause sign; prolonged time value of note so marked.	MOTO	Motion; movement.
FORTE <i>f</i>	Loud.	OBBLIGATO	An elaborate accompaniment to a solo or principal melody that is usually played by a single instrument.
FORTISSIMO <i>ff</i>	Very loud.	OCTAVE	A musical interval embracing eight diatonic degrees: therefore, from C ¹ to C ² is an octave.
FURIOSO	Furious; violent.	ORNAMENTATION	Extra embellishing notes – appoggiaturas, trills, roulades, or cadenzas – that enhance a melodic line.
GIOCOSO	Playfully.	OVERTURE	An orchestral introduction to an act or the whole opera. An overture can appear only at the beginning of an opera.
GIUSTO	Strict; exact.	OSSIA	Or; or else; an alternate reading.
GLISSANDO	A rapid sliding up or down the scale.	PENTATONIC	A five-note scale, like the black notes within an octave on the piano.
GRANDIOSO	With grandeur; majestically.	PIACERE	To please.
GRAVE	Slow; heavy; solemn.	PIANO <i>p</i>	Soft.
GRAZIOSO	Elegantly; gracefully.	PIANISSIMO <i>pp</i>	Very soft.
LAMENTOSO	Mournfully.	PITCH	The property of a musical tone that is determined by the frequency of the waves producing it.
LARGHETTO	Somewhat less slowly than largo.	PIÙ	More.
LARGO	Broadly and slowly.	PIZZICATO	For bowed stringed instruments, an indication that the string is to be plucked with a finger.
LEGATO	Smoothly and connectedly.	POCO	Little.
LEGGIERO	Light; airy; graceful.	POLYPHONY	Literally “many voices.” A style of musical composition in which two or more independent melodies are juxtaposed in harmony; counterpoint.
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.		

POLYTONAL	The use of several tonal schemes simultaneously.	SOSTENUTO	Sustained.
PORTAMENTO	A continuous gliding movement from one tone to another.	SOTTO	Under; beneath.
PRESTO	Very fast; lively; quick.	STACCATO	Detached; separated.
QUAVER	An eighth note.	STRINGENDO	Hurried; accelerated.
RALLENTANDO	Gradually slower.	STROPHE	Music repeated for each verse of an aria.
RITARDANDO	Gradually slower.	SYNCOPIATION	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.
RITENUTO	Held back; slower.	TACET	Silent.
RITORNELLO	A short recurrent instrumental passage between elements of a vocal composition.	TEMPO	Rate of speed.
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.	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).
ROULADE	A florid vocal embellishment sung to one syllable.	TRISTE	Sad.
RUBATO	A way of playing or singing with regulated rhythmic freedom.	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.
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.	VELOCE	Rapid.
SEMPLICE	Simply.	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.
SEMPRE	Always.	VIVACE	Brisk; lively.
SENZA	Without.		
SERIAL MUSIC	Music based on a series of tones in a chosen pattern without regard for traditional tonality.		
SFORZANDO <i>sf</i>	With accent.		
SORDINO	Muted.		

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Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus
- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON
49732 Verrett, Cappuccilli, Domingo, Ghiaurov; Abbado
Teatro alla Scala Orchestra and Chorus

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- OPUS ARTE Keenlyside, Aceto, Monastyrska, Cliffe, Ebel, Meister, Pittas
Pappano; Orchestra of the Royal Opera House
- DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON Nucci, Verrett, Ramey, Leysen
Chailly; Orchestra e Coro del Teatro Comunale di Bologna
- OPUS ARTE Alvarez, Guleghina, Scandiuzzi, Berti, Alberdi
Campanella, Chorus and Orchestra of the Teatre del Liceu
- EMI CLASSICS Lucic, Guleghina, Relyea, Pittas
Levine; Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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

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

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

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