



Teatro Lirico D'Europa

Puccini's

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

**Cutler Majestic Theatre
Emerson College
October 29, 30 and 31, 2010**

“WHO CANNOT LIVE WITH
HONOR MUST DIE WITH
HONOR.”



Teatro Lirico D'Europa
Madama Butterfly

by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa

based on John Luther Long's story and David Belasco's play

Artistic Director/Stage DirectorGiorgio Lalov
ConductorKrassimir Topolov
Sets/CostumesGiorgio Lalov
LightsGiorgio Bajukliev
SupertitlesMaestro Internationale

∞ DISTRIBUTION ∞

CIO-CIO-SANElena Razgylaeva
A geishaMelliangee Perez

B. F. PINKERTONOrin Goranov
Lieutenant, U.S. NavyMichael Hayes

SHARPLESSWilliam Powers
American Consul at NagasakiPlamen Dimitrov

SUZUKIViara Zhelezova
Maid to Cio-Cio-San

GOROGueorgui Dinev
A marriage broker

THE BONZEVladimir Hristov
Buddhist priest and the uncle of Cio-Sio-San

SORROW
Child of Cio-Cio-San and Pinkerton.....En-Hua C. Holtz

PRINCE YAMADORI.....Hristo Sarafov
Suitor of Cio-Co-San

KATE PINKERTONVeselina Ponorska
American wife of Pinkerton

Chorus of relatives and companion of Cio-Cio-San, servants

MEET THE ARTISTS

ELENA RAZGYLYAEVA (Cio-Cio-San)

The young Russian soprano is a principal soloist of Opera Rostov-na Dom, Russia, where she performs leading soprano roles in the lyric and spinto fach. Ms. Razgyliaeva has also performed many principal soprano roles with other opera houses in central Europe, Eastern Europe and the United Kingdom. She made her U.S. debut in winter 2006 with Teatro Lirico D'Europa as Mimi in LA BOHEME to outstanding critical acclaim and returned to the United States in following seasons as Mimi in LA BOHEME, Michaela in CARMEN, Cio-Cio-San in MADAMA BUTTERFLY, Liu in TURANDOT, Nedda in I PAGLIACCI and Donna Elvira in DON GIOVANNI. On the 2011-12 U.S. tour the beautiful soprano, an audience favorite, will perform the roles of Liu in TURANDOT, and the titles roles in TOSCA and MADAMA BUTTERFLY.

MELLIANGEE PEREZ (Cio-Cio-San)

Ms. Perez graduated summa cum laude with a degree in voice performance, from the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music, where she studied with the famous Puerto Rican bass-baritone Justino Diaz. Perez won the Puerto Rico District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions while still in college. In 2005 and 2008, Ms. Perez finished as a semifinalist at the International Singing Contest in Barcelona, Spain. In addition, she has taken master classes with highly acknowledged singing teachers and coaches such as Mme. Renata Scotto, Anna Moffo, Jennifer Larmore, Benton Hess, Sherill Milnes, Joan Dornemann, Diana Soviero, Charles Riecker, Ruth Falcon, Teresa Berganza and Frank Corsaro.

Ms. Perez's experiences as a soloist include many concerts, galas and recitals in Puerto Rico, the United States, Mexico, Spain, Italy, The Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Venezuela. She has performed operatic roles such as Donna Elvira in DON GIOVANNI, the Countess in LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, Lauretta in GIANNI SCHICCHI and Euridice in ORFEO ED EURIDICE. She has also performed in zarzuelas, and she is an active concert singer. In 2008, Ms. Perez received a UNESCO Award as "Soprano of the Year." On the 2009-2010 Teatro Lirico D'Europa tour, she will performed the roles of the Countess in LE NOZZE DI FIGARO, Donna Elvira in DON GIOVANNI, Mimi in LA BOHEME and Micaela in CARMEN. Ms. Perez will sing the roles of Cio-Cio-San in MADAMA BUTTERFLY and Liu in TURANDOT for Teatro Lirico during its 2010-11 season.

ORLIN GORANOV (B.F. Pinkerton)

A two-time Golden Orpheus first-place winner of the International festival in Bulgaria, Mr. Goranov is a laureate of several international opera festivals, including the Dresden Festival in Germany (1981) BRATISLAVA LYRE International Slovakia Vocal Festival (1982) and the Intertalent festival in Prague (1983). He has been a principal soloist of the State Opera House in Plovdiv, Bulgaria since 1999, and has been a regular participant of both the Christmas and New Year's Berliner Symphoniker concerts since 1991. Mr. Goranov has made numerous recordings for both the Bulgarian National Radio and Bulgarian National Television. He made his debut with Teatro Lirico on its fall 2006 U.S. tour as B.F. Pinkerton in Puccini's MADAMA BUTTERFLY and Rodolfo in Puccini's LA BOHEME and has subsequently performed the roles of Cavaradossi in TOSCA and Danilo in THE MERRY WIDOW with Teatro Lirico in its U.S. tours.

MICHAEL HAYES: (B. F. Pinkerton)

American tenor, Michael Hayes has earned a reputation as one of the world's most versatile and charismatic tenors. His wide-ranging repertory includes roles as varied as the Duke in RIGOLETTO (with Cleveland Opera) and Danilo in Lehar's THE MERRY WIDOW (in a PBS national broadcast of New York City Opera's LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER) to the title role in Verdi's OTELLO with RIA Opera in Amsterdam, Opera de Nantes, France and Summer Opera of Washington.

Recent credits include Herodes in SALOME with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Canio in PAGLIACCI with Knoxville Opera, Don Jose in CARMEN with Opera Santa Barbara, Rodolfo in LA BOHEME with Fresno Grand Opera, Paul in DIE TOTE STADT with Washington Summer Opera, Turiddu in CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA and Canio in I PAGLIACCI with Boston's Chorus Pro Musica, Calaf in TURANDOT with Opera North, Pinkerton in MADAMA BUTTERFLY with Princeton Opera Festival, New York City Opera and Greensboro Opera, Cavaradossi in TOSCA with Virginia Opera, Opera Santa Barbara and Florida Grand Opera, Calaf in TURANDOT with Calgary Opera, Edmonton Opera, Knoxville Opera, Virginia Opera, The Opera Company of North Carolina and Opera Grand Rapids, FAUST with Cleveland Opera and Nashville Opera, the title role in TALES OF HOFFMAN with Cleveland Opera and Portland, Oregon, Opera, Radames in AIDA with Nashville Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Portland and Mississippi Operas, and the tenor in a fully-staged version of Mahler's DAS LIED VON DER ERDE with L'Opera de Rouen (also performed at the Theatre de la Ville in Paris).

WILLIAM POWERS (Sharpless)

Since making his New York City Opera debut in 1972, Chicagoan William Powers has performed over 100 operatic roles with the major opera companies in the United States, Europe, and South America. While the stylistic range of his portrayals spans the gamut from Renaissance (Monteverdi's ORFEO for San Francisco) to Contemporary (Pasetieri's SEAGULL for Washington, D.C.), Mr. Powers has earned an enviable reputation as a "heavy," due in large part to the dark, penetrating color of his voice; thus, the portrayal of rogues and villains has dominated his career. His teachers and mentors, George London and Norman Treigle, have also contributed to the dramatic intensity of his delivery, for which Mr. Powers has become well known.

Mr. Powers created many new roles through world premiers or important revivals, most recently singing the villain Meyer Wolfsheim for the premier of Harbison's THE GREAT GATSBY at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Other new creations have included Penderecki's PARADISE LOST for Chicago's Lyric Opera, Herrmann's WUTHERING HEIGHTS for Portland, Copeland's HOLY BLOOD AND CRESCENT MOON for Cleveland and Pettrassi's SESTINA D'AUTUNNO for Italy's Spoleto Festival. Of re-creations, Mr. Powers offered the role of Celio for the 50th anniversary production of Prokofiev's THE LOVE OF THREE ORANGES for Chicago, Donizetti's rarely heard BETLY for Strasbourg and the French version of Donizetti's LA FAVORITE for the Theatre des Champs-elysees and the Opera Comique in Paris. His creations also include the Italian version of THE LADY MACBETH OF THE MTZENSK DISTRICT for Spoleto and the American premiere of Handel's PORO, RE DI INDIE for The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Handel Festival.

Recent performances have included the Chicago premiere of DER KAISER VON ATLANTIS, and THE TALES OF HOFFMANN (in the controversial Ratner version) for the Chicago Opera Theater. Mr. Powers performed WERTHER of Massenet for the Klangbogen Festival of Vienna, as well as the Basque National Opera of Bilbao, DEAD MAN WALKING for Cincinnati, THE DAMNATION OF FAUST for Chicago's Grant Park Festival and the Pablo Casal's Festival of San Juan. He sang in the Opera Gala for the Festival of the Aegean in Athens and Styros, FAUST for Trieste, THE BARBER OF SEVILLE for Charlotte and Buenos Aires, THE MAGIC FLUTE for Bozeman, Maryland, FIDELIO for Cedar Rapids the national tour of Teatro Lirico d'Europa's production of Puccini's TOSCA and RIGOLETTO for Baltimore Opera Theatre. This season the popular Mr. Powers performs on tour with Teatro Lirico in TOSCA, MADAMA BUTTERFLY, LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR and TURANDOT.

PLAMEN DIMITROV (Sharpless)

Bulgarian baritone, Plamen Dimitrov, has performed various roles with Teatro Lirico on tour in the United States during the last five seasons, including Schanard in LA BOHEME, Morales in CARMEN and PING in TURANDOT, Sharpless in MADAMA BUTTERFLY, Giorgio Germont in LA TRAVIATA, The title role in RIGOLETTO and Escamillo in CARMEN. He also performs as a principal soloist in Bulgaria with Sofia National Opera and Opera Varna and has been a guest artist in other Eastern and Western European opera companies. Mr. Dimitrov studied at the National Academy of Music in Sofia, Bulgaria and is a laureate of several academic competitions. For five years, he worked in the Musical Theater-Sofia in the part of Charlie in CHARLIE'S AUNT and Cascada in DIE LUSTIGE WITWE.

VLADIMIR HRISTOV (The Bonze)

Bulgarian bass Vladimir Hristov graduated from the National Academy of Music in Sofia. He has been a soloist with Teatro Lirico D'Europa on its U.S. tours since winter 2003. Mr. Hristov is also a soloist with Sofia National Opera and is a frequent guest soloist with other regional opera companies throughout Bulgaria and Eastern Europe.

VIARA ZHELEZOVA (Suzuki)

The young Bulgarian mezzo-soprano graduated from the National Conservatory of Music in 1985 and joined the roster of the Bulgarian National Opera, where she has performed leading mezzo-soprano roles alongside such singers as Ghena Dimitrova, Nicolai Giuselev, Anna Tomova Sintova and others. She has appeared as a guest artist with opera companies throughout Eastern Europe and has been a principal soloist with Teatro Lirico D'Europa since 1992.

HRISTO SARAFOV (Yamadori)

Mr. Sarafov has been active on the stage for his entire adult life as a soloist in operetta, opera and as an actor. The talented baritone graduated from the National Academy of Music in Sofia and was immediately engaged by the Sofia National Opera for the role of Bartolo in Rossini's IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA. He has performed numerous roles for Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in Europe and the United States since 1990.

VESELINA PONORSKA (Kate Pinkerton)

The Bulgarian soprano who performs with opera companies throughout Bulgaria has performed various soprano roles with Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in Europe and the United States for the last 15 years and is a valued member of the repertory company.

GUEORGUI DINEV (Goro)

The Bulgarian actor has worked professionally in his native country for more than 20 years, onstage as an actor, in film, and as a soloist in opera and operetta performances. He has performed secondary roles with Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in the United States since the winter 2000 in almost every single production.

EN-HUA C. HOLTZ (Sorrow)

Seven-year-old En-Hua C. Holtz is in third grade at Flanders School in East Lyme, Connecticut. She is bilingual in Mandarin and English and enjoys reading, art and playing the piano.

KRASSIMIR TOPOLOV (Conductor)

The young Bulgarian maestro was educated in Vienna. In addition to conducting hundreds of performances for Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in central

Europe and the United States since 1995, he is a guest conductor with opera companies in Bulgaria and other Eastern European countries.

ABOUT GIORGIO LALOV (Artistic Director/Stage Director/Set, Costumes) and TEATRO LIRICO D'EUROPA

After making his debut at La Scala at age 26, the young Bulgarian impresario met Yves Josse, a former ballet dancer turned impresario who was just beginning to book opera and ballet tours in Europe. They became business partners. Mr. Lalov had many resources: he spoke several languages, was able to organize the creation of sets and costumes in Bulgaria and put together an excellent orchestra and chorus. He also knew many fine opera singers in Bulgaria, central Europe and the United States.

By 1988, Messrs. Josse and Lalov were collaborating on what was to become the most successful opera touring company in Europe. At the time of Mr. Josse's death in 1995, Teatro Lirico had presented over 250 performances a season throughout Europe at 180 different venues. In addition to the many soloists from Russia, Bulgaria, Italy and Germany and South America that Teatro engaged for these performances, the company also engaged hundreds of American soloists for its performances in Europe. These included performances for Opera Dijon and at other major European theatres, such as Palais des Festivals (Biarritz), Theatre Alexandre Dumas and Pavillon Baltard, (Region Paris), Theatre de Grenoble, Theatre Moliere, (Sete), Theatre Municipal, (St. Maur des Fosses), Theatre de Cognac, Theatre Municipal Armand, (Salon de Provence), Salle Pleyel, (Paris), Scene Nationale, (Cherbourg), Odysseus, (Blagnac), La Scene Municipale (Lyon) and Quartz, (Brest) in France.

Teatro Lirico performance also include those presented at l'Atrium Theatre in Martinique, Theatre du Grand Casino (Geneve), Congresshaus, (Zurich) and Theatre de BeauLiee (Lausanne) in Switzerland, Theatre Municipal (Hasselt) and Le Cirque Royale (Brussels) in Belgium. City Hall (Gotingen) and Theatre Carre (Amsterdam) in Holland hosted other performances. Teatro also performed at Theatre Margharita, (Trapani) in Sicily, at Italian Summer Festivals such as Festival Busetto, Festival San Giovanne Valdarn, and open-air festival in such cities in Italy as Spello, Montecatini Terme, Siena, Chianciano Terme, Cortona, Aenzzo, Padova and Aimini.

Shows were also presented for Okinawa Performing Arts Center in Japan, Tivoli Gardens (Copenhagen), in Denmark, Forum Cultural Do Seixal, (Lisboa) Academia Almadense, (Lisboa), and Theatre Trinite, (Lisboa) in Portugal, Kuppelsaal, (Hanover), Gurzenith, (Koln), CCH-I, (Hamburg), MUK, (Lubeck), Liederhalle, (Stuttgart), Schwarzwaldhalle (Karlsruhe), and Rosengarten, (Mannheim) in Germany.

In Spain, the venerable opera company also performed at Teatro Principal, (Alicante) Teatro Municipal Cervantes (Alicante), Teatro Del Carmen, (Malaga) Palacio de Congresos. (Granada), Teatro Municipal Enrique de la Cueva, (Seville), Teatro Atlantida VIC, (Barcelona) Salida de La Compania, (Madrid) Auditorio Ferai de Muestras (Valladolid), Gran Teatro de Burgos, Teatro Juan Bravo (Segovia), Auditorio Municipal Maestro Padillain (Almeria) Gran Teatro Galla (Cadiz), Teatro Monumental (Barcelona) Teatro Principal (Zaragoza) Teatro Cervantes, (Madrid), Teatro Victoria Eugeniain, (San Sebastian), Teatro Vicente Espinel, (Malaga), Teatro Bueno Vallejo (Madrid) Teatro Cervantes (Malaga) and Teatro "Lope de Vega" (Sevilla).

Winter 2000 marked Teatro's first major American tour. The popular company has completed 11 major U.S. tours covering over 500 performances at 107 different theatres as well as co-productions with a dozen different regional opera companies. Teatro Lirico is now in its twelfth consecutive season of U.S. tours. Despite the difficult economy, the company will have over 65 performances of four different full-scale opera productions in the United States this season. Teatro Lirico D'Europa will tour France and Spain again in season 2011-12 in addition to its U.S. touring and has recently performed in South American and the Island of Martinique.

SYNOPSIS OF THE OPERA

ACT I

Japan, early twentieth century. On a flowering terrace above Nagasaki harbor, U.S. Navy Lieutenant B. F. Pinkerton inspects the house he has leased from a marriage broker, Goro, who has just procured him three servants and a geisha wife, Cio-Cio-San, known as Madama Butterfly. To the American consul, Sharpless, who arrives breathless from climbing the hill, Pinkerton describes the carefree philosophy of a sailor roaming the world in search of pleasure. At the moment, he is enchanted with the fragile Cio-Cio-San, but his 999-year marriage contract contains a monthly renewal option. When Sharpless warns that the girl may not take her vows so lightly, Pinkerton brushes aside such scruples, saying he will one day marry a "real" American wife. Cio-Cio-San is heard in the distance joyously singing of her wedding. Entering surrounded by friends, she tells Pinkerton how, when her family fell on hard times, she had to earn her living as a geisha. Her relatives bustle in, noisily expressing their opinions on the marriage. In a quiet moment, Cio-Cio-San shows her bridegroom her few earthly treasures and tells him of her intention to embrace his Christian faith. The Imperial Commissioner performs the wedding ceremony, and the guests toast the couple. Cio-Cio-San's uncle, a Buddhist priest, who bursts in cursing the girl for having renounced her ancestors' religion, interrupts the celebration. Pinkerton angrily sends the guests away. Alone with Cio-Cio-San in the moonlit garden, he dries her tears, and she joins him in singing of their love.

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Years later, Cio-Cio-San still waits for her husband's return. As Suzuki prays to her gods for aid, her mistress stands by the doorway with her eyes fixed on the harbor. When the maid shows her how little money is left, Cio-Cio-San urges her to have faith: one fine day Pinkerton's ship will appear on the

horizon. Sharpless brings a letter from the lieutenant, but before he can read it to Cio-Cio-San, Goro comes with a suitor, the wealthy Prince Yamadori. The girl dismisses both marriage broker and prince, insisting her American husband has not deserted her. When they are alone, Sharpless again starts to read the letter and suggests Pinkerton may not return. Cio-Cio-San proudly carries forth her child, Sorrow, saying that as soon as Pinkerton knows he has a son he surely will come back; if he does not, she would rather die than return to her former life. Moved by her devotion, Sharpless leaves, without having revealed the full contents of the letter. Cio-Cio-San, on the point of despair, hears a cannon report; seizing a spyglass, she discovers Pinkerton's ship entering the harbor. Now delirious with joy, she orders Suzuki to help her fill the house with flowers. As night falls, Cio-Cio-San, Suzuki and the child begin their vigil.

ACT III

As dawn breaks, Suzuki insists that Cio-Cio-San rest. Humming a lullaby to her child, she carries him to another room. Before long, Sharpless enters with Pinkerton, followed by Kate, his new wife. When Suzuki realizes who the American woman is, she collapses in despair but agrees to aid in breaking the news to her mistress. Pinkerton, seized with remorse, bids an anguished farewell to the scene of his former happiness, then rushes away. When Cio-Cio-San comes forth expecting to find him, she finds Kate instead. Guessing the truth, the shattered Cio-Cio-San agrees to give up her child if his father will return for him. Then, sending even Suzuki away, she takes out the dagger with which her father committed suicide and bows before a statue of Buddha, choosing to die with honor rather than live in disgrace. As she raises the blade, Suzuki pushes the child into the room. Sobbing farewell, Cio-Cio-San sends him into the garden to play, then stabs herself. As she dies, Pinkerton is heard calling her name.

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

Selected essays on opera by members of Revere High School Culture Club, as organized by Nancy Barile

Revere High School (RHS) is an urban public school located about five miles outside of Boston. Approximately seventy-two per cent of RHS's students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, which means they live at or below the poverty level. The school is very multicultural – about fifty-six per cent of the students are considered non-white, and there are 46 languages spoken. Revere High School is a close-knit community that celebrates its diversity, and its students perform very well academically. Students in the Culture Club, organized by Nancy Barile, have been attending the Teatro Lirico productions at Boston's Cutler Majestic Theatre for three years and have been enriched by the experience. Revere students will be eternally grateful to Jenny Kelly, producer of the Teatro Lirico performances at the Majestic, for graciously providing them with this amazing opportunity.

Nancy Barile has been an English teacher at Revere High School for 16 years. She teaches Advanced Placement Literature And Composition, Sophomore World Literature, Mysteries, Film and Literature and Introduction To Education. She is a national board-certified teacher and received her master's degree in Education from Emmanuel College and her certificate of advanced graduate study from Salem State College. Ms. Barile is currently enrolled in the Educational Leadership doctorate program at Northeastern University. She also teaches in the Graduate School of Education at Emmanuel College. Ms. Barile is a member of the National Commission on Writing, and she is the College Board regional council member from Massachusetts.

In 2009, Ms. Barile was one of five finalists for the Massachusetts Teacher of the Year award. In 2007, she was one of 20 teachers named to USA TODAY'S All-Teacher Team. She is a teacher advisor for Scholastic.com. At Revere High School, she is the advisor for the school's Culture Club, Future Teachers Club, and CROSSROADS, RHS's literary magazine.



Shannen Donovan, Grade 10

Everyone must wonder what an opera is like. After all, opera is everywhere: commercials; cartoons; newspapers; and even in the back of our minds. Somehow everyone knows the tune to "Figaro's Aria." The centuries old tune is likely to get stuck in our heads just as much as Lady Gaga's "Alejandro." In fact, popular new songs like "Alejandro" may not have been created if not for the musical spirits of Italians and Frenchmen so long ago. Also, without opera, there would definitely be no musicals, meaning no HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL! Not to mention that nothing would ever end, for the fat lady we have come to know so well would not be there to sing

For me, the opera is just like this, something that changed the world forever, no matter how unlikely it seems. I think of opera just as I do the ruins in Rome. It is old and hardly ever mentioned to me, but when it is, I want to go. I love to see for the first time what millions of people have come to see for ages and find it to be familiar in some way. Whether it is the music

or the story that I recognize, the feeling that I get is like coming to the end of an awfully frustrating puzzle and all at once seeing where every piece goes and swiftly putting the picture together. And the picture is beautiful, even if I can't understand a word they say.

Actually, during the few times I attended the operas of Teatro Lirico D'Europa at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston, I got so wrapped up in the pure vastness and decor around me that I almost totally neglected to read the English subtitles as they blinked in front of us. Maybe smaller than my high school's auditorium, the room filled with the booming voices of those on stage gave the feeling of being in the coliseum of Rome! Looking at the stage itself, the set always changing, with each step of the singers, scattered about like cartoons running ramped, never fails to make me feel as though I am watching television. Or maybe it is that television is so based off of operas such as those that I've seen, including LA BOHEME and IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA. These were the first two operas I ever saw, and although after only a few minutes of the performance everything else was obvious, the one thing that utterly caught me by surprise was none other than my good friend, comedy.

Never in all of my wonderings would I have imagined that the opera was capable of a joke! "What will an opera be like?" "Will I be bored to tears like I've been told?" "What if I fall asleep on the person next to me?" These are things I actually thought about as I waited for the curtains to draw on my first visit to an opera house. Surprised was I to find that the antics of the poor artists of LA BOHEME around their landlord in the first scene provided more humor than all of the TWILIGHT stories combined! Rather than falling asleep and crying tears of boredom, I found myself with a laughing red face, clutching my stomach as if listening to George Carlin! Everything I had wondered about opera and come to a conclusion about based on where I had seen it before was wrong.



William Truong, Grade 10

Teatro Lirico's production of Puccini's LA BOHEME at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston was the first opera that I have ever seen in my life, and I can say that I thoroughly enjoyed it. To be honest, I was a bit skeptical about the whole opera in general. While I was growing up, I had seen many TV shows, cartoons, commercials, etc. that portrayed operas as being very dull and boring. However, this was the exact opposite of what I witnessed at LA BOHEME. From start to finish, the opera kept me fully engaged in the story and always had a hold of my interest.

LA BOHEME is a romantic tragedy of four young men who must push their way through poverty with love as their driving force. Rodolfo, the main antagonist, and his three friends have barely any money to support themselves, but things start to turn around when Schaunard finds himself a job. Rodolfo soon falls in love with their neighbor, Mimi, who suffers from a severe illness, and everything starts to go downhill from there. I won't spoil it, but the way the story was told was truly beautiful and very easy to follow. It astounds me how the actors who played the characters could sing, act, and tell a magnificent story all at the same time. That's the thing about opera that leaves me awe-struck.

Not only were the actors amazing, but the supporting orchestra also played a significant role in the opera. Their beautiful music really accompanied the actors greatly throughout the opera and made the whole experience even better. The music itself was very pleasant and harmonious to hear and I loved it. The actors performed with so much feeling and energy that it leaves the audience fully engaged into the opera. With the help of the marvelous orchestra, the actors were able to convey even more emotion into their show. Although "La Boheme" was the first opera that I have ever seen, I can say that from what I witnessed from this show, I'll definitely be attending more operas in the future.

Xuyen Mai, Grade 12

A Majestic Experience

I had never been to an opera. All I knew about operas was that they consisted of people dressing up in tacky clothing, heavy make-ups and singing high range sopranos. If it weren't for that special experience to go see Teatro Lirico's THE BARBER OF SEVILLE at the Cutler's Majestic Theater, my skeptical perception about operas would have never changed.

Days before the actual date, I did some research to build up my knowledge about operas so that I could feel confident going to my first opera. The research, however, ended up building tremendous excitement in me. I was stoked to find out how the singers could sing without microphones, how the audience could keep up with the play when they had to constantly check on the English subtitles. I braided my hair and wore my favorite blue dress with fancy shoes. As my friends and I walked down the street of Boston to get to the theater, excitement became more palpable. The gleams of enthusiasm in their eyes were apparent. The tall and classic buildings with red bricks stood welcoming on both sides. I have seen this street a few times before, but that night everything looked so different. The street lights were bright, but the only thing that caught my eyes was the theater's billboard. The theater became more and more illuminated as I approached.

Inside, the theater gave off an atmosphere so elegant I felt foreign at first. But then I blended in through conversations with students from other high schools. The theater was revealed after staircase and staircase with golden handle bars and red carpet. It had the interior of an old castle from medieval movies. The balconies and the red curtains reminded me of the actual Elizabethan Rose theater in the movie SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE. When it was almost time for the opera to start, I sat neatly in my seat, biting my nails with anticipation.

The opera was absolutely engaging. Along with convincing acting, the cast possessed superb singing. The orchestra played in perfect harmony. I couldn't help but fall in love with witty Figaro, the barber of Seville. His energy, as he played double agent to help Count Almaviva and Rosina get married despite the protest of Bartolo, the villain of the opera, touched me. At one time, I had to grip onto my seat as he sung out a perfect solo, hitting every high and low note. I was also impressed with the actor who played Count Almaviva. He captivated me with the charisma of his character. He was love-sick, and he made it believable. He delivered the comical factor to the opera as he ran around disguising as a drunken soldier and a music teacher well. He and Figaro made the audience burst out in genuine laughter with their slapstick comedy. I also felt for Rosina's struggle as a woman. Although she acted sassy fooling Bartolo, on the surface, she was always oppressed by him. She reminded me of Hermia in Shakespeare's MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. "The course of true love" never did run smoothly for them. Although the characters in THE BARBER OF SEVILLE acted in exaggeration, their problems are similar to the ones in real life. Through lovely music and lively acting, the message that true love can really blossom with courage and persistence was well delivered.

I am still glad and thankful I went to see the opera that day. THE BARBER OF SEVILLE was a neat mixture of comedy and drama. It had the power to move the audience, make them laugh and contemplate. The experience was truly something valuable. It opened my eyes and made me realize what I have missed. All there is left to say is that I cannot wait to come back for another amazing production.



Amel Derras-Chouk, Grade 12

When my friend asked me to go to Teatro Lirico D'Europa's performance with her at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston, I laughed. The idea of

sitting in a theater listening to performers belch out Italian words was comical. But my friend was persistent in trying to convince me, so I gave into peer pressure.

When we arrived in Boston, I was a little intimidated. I was not expecting such a grand theater. Someone passed me a ticket that read BARBER OF SEVILLE as I got off the bus, and I followed rest of the people heading to their seats. Before the play started, we were allowed to explore a little. The theater was amazing. It seemed as if everywhere I looked there was a hidden face in the design of the wall.

Soon, the show started. We waited impatiently as the lights went out and the music sounded. The crowd went silent and the first tune was sung. The play started out as a cute love story. I found myself wishing that I spoke Italian because the plot seemed more fitting to a romance language. One of the main characters, Almaviva, tries to lure out the woman he likes, Rosina. He sings to her outside her window, hoping that she will come outside. When she does not, his friend suggests that he pose as a drunken soldier. This begins Almaviva's attempts to speak to, and eventually marry, Rosina.

The scene where Almaviva stood outside Rosina's window reminded me of Romeo standing outside Juliet's window. Each one tried to catch a glimpse of his crush. Rosina is similar to Juliet because both of them play more passive roles in the play. They wait to be taken away, while the males scheme their way into the women's lives. It was easy to relate the play to books I've read and movies I've seen because it was such a timeless story. Many cultures probably have similar versions of the "boy meets girl" story.

The ending of THE BARBER OF SEVILLE was a little different from most stories I've heard because Rosina ends up with Almaviva. I was so used to seeing twists at the end of stories that cause lovers to split. This ending was refreshing. It brought me back to the book PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, except this time I wasn't taken back by the cheesiness. I used to think that happy endings were unrealistic, which is why I did not like the ending of the book. The opera had a much more tumultuous climax that led to a happy ending. It seemed more dramatic and engaging.

By the end of the performance, I questioned why I had ever doubted going to the opera. The show hugely exceeded all my expectations and had me looking forward to going back someday. It turned out to be an amazing experience that I will most definitely gladly take advantage of again.



Brian Monroy, Grade 10

Operas are theatrical forms of art that consist of actors who sing a dramatic work and a musical score orchestrated by a live orchestra. These types of theatrical performances have been around for hundreds of years and are still popular in cities throughout Europe and North America. These forms of art have had significant roles in the cultural societies of 16th century Europe especially in Italy. Almost all operas today are performed in Italian.

As part of the Culture Club, I have had the opportunity to visit two opera performances of Teatro Lirico D'Europa at the Cutler Majestic Theater in Boston. The first opera I had the opportunity of seeing was the highly acclaimed, LA BOHEME, at the opening night premiere performance. I found the emotional style of the performance to be superbly entertaining. The audience can easily relate to the characters found in LA BOHEME and to those found in many other operas. The stories and plots are not too different from those found in popular films and television shows. Characters have certain problems or dilemmas that must be resolved. Operas usually come in different genres such as comedy or drama, much like films. These similarities can make it easy for young people to understand and appreciate these unique performances.

Like most teenagers, I had never seen an opera performance, and I was skeptical about what I would think about it. After I entered the theater, I

was amazed by the beautiful architecture and design walls and stage. Once the first act began, I began to understand and relate to the characters and plot. In the end, I enjoyed the performance and had a great time. I think it is important for young people especially to take part in these types of cultural activities. As a high school student, I feel that it is important to see these performances and to learn about the rich history of the opera and similar types of shows.

As a student, I can say that my experience at the opera has made me more open minded both as a student and as a person. I feel as though these programs and clubs can benefit anyone wanting to learn more about their society's culture without having to look very far. I have come to enjoy the opera, and I think of it as just as entertaining as any Hollywood film. It is my hope that other students can also come to the same conclusion.



Tamar Bonaventure, Grade 12

Since the beginning of time, human beings have found ways to entertain themselves: observing nature, finding answers to unexplainable anomalies, and finding the beauty behind a picture. With art, we have found ways to enjoy painting, for example, and how with the right colors and texture makes a painting sing, move, and tell a story. In theater, the actors need to live up to the characters to make the play feel real. And the oldest but most extolled of all in the theater is the opera because of how it not only changes our way of life, but how it can change our way of thinking.

I was never one to be involved with looking at our culture or more specifically learning more classical views that have been around for quite some time. The only culture that I was exposed to was classical music and learning the mystery of the violin. For me, the opera was just like any other play or musical; I didn't quite grasp how much of an impact it truly has. Once I got more into classical music, I started focusing my views into shows, theaters, musicals, and then - of course - operas. I realized that the themes and the plots of operas are the same as a movie or television show. It is just accentuated more and allowed for a more intense feeling.

My very first opera was Teatro Lirico D'Europa's production of LA BOHEME and I didn't know what to expect. Everyone kept telling me that it was just something I'd always remember. This story is about an era where people were expressing themselves (it was the Renaissance all over again). But it was also an era where many people didn't have enough money to pay for rent or food or even heat. However, it was just the thing that brought two people together in a love that is so spellbinding, that I didn't see coming. The characters Rodolfo and Mimi fall madly in love but what Rodolfo doesn't know is that Mimi is suffering with an illness. Stricken with grief, Mimi wasn't sure if she could continue with the relationship, but Rodolfo convinces her to stay with him until the frigid winter ends. When spring comes, they go their separate ways, and months pass by until they meet again. Unfortunately their waited reunion becomes their last meeting, for that day Mimi dies with Rodolfo by her side calling her name. After watching this opera, I was speechless. It was something new and rich and unexplainable.

Before the opera began I read the synopsis of LA BOHEME, and I understood everything that was going to happen and what was suppose to happen, but once it began, every moment was a surprise, waiting for the next thing to happen. When it came to the final act, I was ready for it. I knew that Mimi was going to die, but once again, act four began, and I couldn't help myself but to cry and feel the pain that Rodolfo was feeling. Even though I knew what was supposed to happen, the actors made the characters come alive and made this opera feel real. For me, it was as if I was in Mimi's shoes or in Rodolfo's shoes. Such simple themes and characters would do fine in any normal movie - but in an opera, it is just grand. Take the saga that took the nation by storm, TWILIGHT. It is the same a boy and boy fall in love, but what makes these characters stick out and this se-

ries cherished is that their love is not like any other love. They are bound together for eternity. Whenever Bella feels pain, Edward already knows their love is strong, which is the same is for Mimi and Rodolfo.

Lovers, hunters, warriors, villains, they are all the same no matter if it's done in a film, a play, or an opera. What really matters is how the actors can portray their characters and make the audience feel as if they are there with them on that stage - that makes the audience feel alive. My views on life have changed because of the opera, and I have been enriched like never before.



Lindsay Chorlian, Grade 12

Last February, the Culture Club from my school had the amazing opportunity to see Teatro Lirico D'Europa's production of THE BARBER OF SEVILLE at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston. When we met to catch the bus, everyone was dressed nice and fancy and ready to be seen by the kind of people who go to the opera. We started off from a cold, dark high school parking lot and drove through the city streets, passing through Chinatown and the city center until we arrived at our destination. On the left of the street was a Subway restaurant squished in among the buildings, and on the right, were the glass doors of the Majestic Theatre. The lights from inside shined out onto the night and illuminated the dark street.

With one step inside the building, I was in awe. The ceiling, the walls, and even the floor were beautiful. The exquisite designs and giant mirrors grabbed my attention as I gazed around at the room - and this was just the lobby area. A set of stairs led to the hall where the opera was going to take place. It was unlike anything I had ever seen before. The seats lined the room from the very back to the very front, and sets of balcony seats came out along the side walls. They were the kind that I had only seen in movies,

where really important people sat during a play or an opera. Just the room alone gave off a feeling of extravagance, and as I stood on the balcony all dressed up and admiring every inch of the place, I, too, felt extravagant.

After snapping some pictures and taking in all that was going on around us, we took our seats, and the orchestra began to warm up. I had never scene an orchestra live, and being a musician, that was one of the most exciting parts of the night. During some scenes, all of the instruments were being played, filling the opera with music and melodies, and still during other scenes, just the simplest sound from one single instrument added so much to the emotion of the characters and of the story. The voices of the actors and actresses, regardless of being major or minor characters, rang out through the hall and sung directly to me. They had such emotion that it could be heard with every note that they sang. Just listening to the opera was an unbelievable experience in itself.

All of this music was accompanied by acting that brought the story out from behind the curtains and presented it in a way that captivated the audience and entertained us quite a bit. There were some serious scenes and other rather hilarious scenes, and every step and every dance brought life to a plot that told the tale of young love and complicated situations. The actors and actresses did a phenomenal job of fulfilling their roles in the opera and entertaining their audience.

The overall experience of the opera was wonderful, and when I got home, I couldn't help but talk about it. I described each scene with a persisting sense of amazement, and I could still do so now. Going to the opera gave me a chance to open the doors of a life much more grand than my own and to step inside of it from the city streets. It gave me a cultural experience that I will keep with me for the rest of my life, and I can only hope that I will have the chance to go again soon.

OPERA FOR A NEW GENERATION: A NEED FOR EDUCATION by Javier Fuentes

The arts are the greatest example of our potential as humans to be creative. Perhaps we do not give art the importance it was given in the past because we are so used to living in it that we have lost our ability to easily identify it. Almost everything around us was designed and made through a process of human creation. Everything that is man made has an artist or a group of artists behind it. The seat where you are sitting, the book you are reading, the pictures in the newspaper, the plate you eat from, the building where you live, the clothes and jewelry you wear, the cake you eat, the haircut you have, the makeup on people's faces, the design of an mp3 player and the music it plays. Even the design of the font used to print what you are reading right now has an artist behind it who visualized it and created it. An artist turns ideas into reality. Artists are creators!

That brings us to some interesting questions: What is art? Why is art made? Where is art made, shown or displayed? When is art made? How is art made? Who is art made for? Volumes could be written to answer all those questions, but there is no absolute answer. A good answer is that art is made for whoever wants to enjoy it. True that some forms of art can only be owned or enjoyed by whoever can pay for them, as artists need to be paid to earn a living, but great artists usually try to reach as wide an audience as possible with the belief that art is for everyone. Of all arts, opera is the one that embraces the most, so that is the art form this article is focused on.

Opera was conceived near the end of the sixteenth century by a group of Florentine humanists, an elite circle of literate men that called themselves the Camerata de' Bardi that included such illustrious men as Galileo Galilei's dad, Vincenzo Galilei. The cultural ideals of the Renaissance era focused on the reformation and wide spread of education based and

inspired by the great classics of antiquity. Since humanism was the great ideal of this era, this method was employed in study, which included grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry and moral philosophy to revive an idealized cultural legacy and morality that mirrored classical antiquity with great emphasis in literacy.

Greek society used theatre as an important and religious social gathering in which tragedy would lead the hero and the audience out of ignorance and into a state of awareness, using pity and fear as a resource to move the audience. The word tragedy is from the Greek words tragos (goat) and aeidein (to sing). The men in the Camerata group were convinced that these tragedies were sung prior to the sacrifice of a goat in a ritual dedicated to Dionysius, the god of wine and fertility. Their studies and convictions led to the idea of recreating tragedy by blending all the arts to serve the drama, a concept that, two centuries later, Richard Wagner called a Gesamtkunstwerk, (a total art work) meaning integrated work of art: music, drama, poetry, painting, sculpture, fashion design, graphic design and dance. Together all the arts would lend an audio and visual experience that would become the first multimedia art form in history.

For centuries, a composer's worth was measured by his ability to create an opera, as that art form was considered the highest and most important of all the arts. The peak point of the operatic repertoire was reached at the start of the twentieth century with Giacomo Puccini's work. After him the entire century was spent on wars one after the other, and all the arts suffered great losses because of it. Some composers like Richard Strauss, Igor Stravinsky, Benjamin Britten, Gian-Carlo Menotti, Samuel Barber and Francis Poulenc made efforts to continue the tradition of opera composition, but movies were

much more affordable than opera for audiences. New works became rare, as producing the classics was also less expensive.

Hollywood was the lucky inheritor of a tradition in composition that was brought to the movies after many composers crossed from Europe evading World Wars I and II. Max Steiner, Franz Waxman and Erich Korngold are some of the composers that gave movies in Hollywood some of the most beautiful and operatic music, for in the United States there was no tradition for opera composition.

A new generation is being exposed to very operatic themes at the movies, but they have no idea. Today's cinema brings us mammoth scores comparable to the operas of Richard Wagner such as the music for the STAR WARS SAGA, HARRY POTTER and THE LORD OF THE RINGS. The theme of the hero is very similar in STAR WARS and BATMAN as it is in LOHENGRIN AND TURANDOT. THE LORD OF THE RINGS is based on the same Nordic stories that Wagner used for his RING OF THE NIBELUNG. The vampire movies have huge similarities with the romantic gothic stories of DER VAMPYR, LA SONNAMBULA, RUSALKA, MEFISTOFELE, FAUST and LA DAMNATION DE FAUST.

THE TALES OF HOFFMANN feature an animated doll that pre-dates all the robot movies. Epics like TROY and ALEXANDER had their opera predecessors in LES TROYENS and ALESSANDRO NELL'INDIE. THE MUMMY movies had their Egyptian opera counterparts in AIDA, IL CROCIATO IN EGITTO, SEMIRAMIDE and SAMSON AND DELILAH. Now with CLASH OF THE TITANS, we would cover almost all the operas of the baroque with their gods and heroes.

Most young people have no idea of how exciting the experience of opera can be, but it is not entirely their fault. Millions of dollars are spent every year on advertisements for new pop artists and music, and the industry has convinced the consumer that what's new is the best and what's "in" and that the old is boring and out-of-date. Perhaps our political culture is more interested in votes and power than in educating people, because educated people usually make smart decisions. It would be a smart move to keep people uneducated if you want to easily convince them of what you want them to do.

The bottom line is that a culture of people who are highly educated should create better and more civilized citizens. As everything else that forms part of an education, opera is something that needs to be exposed to the younger generations in a way they can relate it to their own lives, while making connections with prior knowledge to be able to appreciate it. People in positions of power should not expect parents to have their children exposed to the arts, because in many cases even the parents are ignorant about it. New works are urgently needed. More performances for students should be offered during school time for schools to attend, maybe even using young artists and college students to give them opportunities to develop their skills. Casual exposure to this specific art should be planned so that the art form is seen as something familiar. Competitions for promotional art, librettos and compositions might be used to incorporate as many forms of expression as possible in order to reach a wider audience of young people who need to learn to appreciate an art form they will inherit.

Broadway has come up with dramatic pieces that have very complex musical structures and that now are sometimes presented in opera theatres, such as WEST SIDE STORY, SWEENEY TODD, EVITA and THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA. Some musicals like JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR, LES MISERABLES, RENT and IN THE HEIGHTS use very operatic structures with the use of rock, pop or contemporary music. Integrating the developments of cinematic music into traditional operatic structures with the inclusion of modern music styles might give us some hope in the creation of a new and successful operatic style that might capture the interest of a wider audience with the argument that even new generations enjoy the use of music to enhance drama. The best example to sustain this argument is the success of high-school musical series.

At the moment, we need to show the younger generation all the drama, excitement and beauty that make us so passionate about this art form. Once they learn how enjoyable it is and how similar it is in so many ways to the pop culture they follow, we will have given them a precious gift that will be treasured for a lifetime, one that we hope they embrace and want to share with the following generations. The keyword is *education*.

∞ ARTWORK FOR THIS PROGRAM ∞



Richard Trimarchi, a senior at Revere High School, designed the **cover** of our program. Richard would like to take this opportunity to thank his mother, who is, and always will be, the biggest part of his life. She has always stood behind him one hundred per cent, encouraging him to go for what he loves. Growing up without a father for most of his life has been tough for Richard, but this challenge only resulted in pushing his aspirations higher and higher and in motivating Richard to push forward even when things get tough. Richard hopes to continue to grow, and with support from his loving family, friends, and girlfriend, he believes he can achieve anything he puts his mind to. Richard owes the people in his life a great deal, and he hopes to express that sentiment through his art.



Jennifer Sao, a senior at Revere High School designed the **back cover** of our program. She moved to Revere, Massachusetts, from California at the age of seven and was inspired to explore art from a very young age because her cousins were very good artists. Jen works constantly to improve her drawings and especially enjoys illustrations. She hopes to study art in college after she graduates from Revere High School.



Katherine Rodman, a senior at Revere High School, designed the **front inside cover** for this program. Born in Miami, Florida, Katherine's family moved to Colombia when she was just one year old. She returned to the United States when she was five years old, and her family settled in Revere when Katherine was in fifth grade. Katherine has always had a passion for art and would possibly like to make a career in this field. Last year, she took two classes at The Massachusetts School of Fine Arts: Studio Art and Portfolio Development. Katherine would like to thank her art teachers, especially Ms. Allen, who has given her a great deal of support.

Teatro Lirico D'Europa would like to thank these three outstanding artists for contributing their time and talents to our program! We are deeply grateful!

Teatro Lirico D'Europa

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Teatro Lirico D'Europa

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