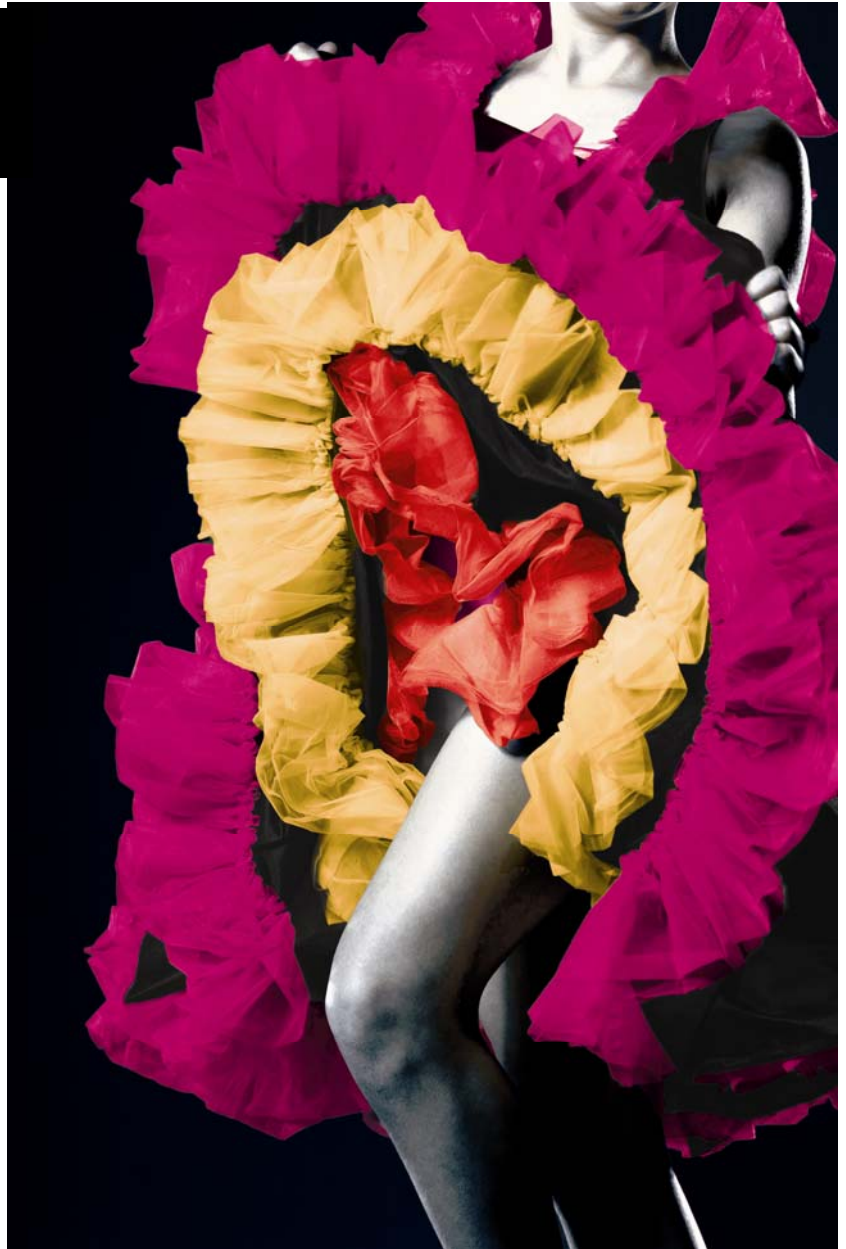


ORPHEUS IN THE UNDERWORLD ••• (ORPHÉE AUX ENFERS) •••

Music by Jacques Offenbach
Text by Halévy and Crémieux

Offenbach had perfected the short one-act operette bouffe (lighthearted operetta) as a favorite entertainment for Parisians of the 1850s. When theatre restrictions on the length of these works were lifted, he decided to write a full-length operetta, a satire of a much-beloved serious opera by Gluck called *Orpheus and Eurydice* (*Orfeo ed Euridice*). Where Gluck's opera is a faithful retelling of the Orpheus legend from Greek mythology, Offenbach's involves unfaithful spouses, jealous gods and the ever-looming Public Opinion, who insists that Orpheus must try to save Eurydice from the clutches of Pluto to appease moral expectations, even though, to get rid of her, he has just tricked her into Pluto's trap. Jupiter, also suspicious of Pluto's motives, takes all the gods to Hades and hilarious chaos ensues. Great music (including the original Can-can) makes this prototype for all the operettas that came after, one of the best ever.



THE CHARACTERS:

Orpheus, a violinist and music teacher, having an affair with a Nymph

Eurydice, wife of Orpheus, having an affair with a shepherd

Pluto, god of Hades, disguised as the shepherd Eurydice is seeing; wants to bring her to Hades as his consort

Public Opinion, the guardian of morality

Jupiter, king of the gods, ruler of Olympus; he's also interested in Eurydice

John Styx, servant of Pluto

Juno, Mars, Cupid, Mercury, Minerva, Diana, Morpheus, Venus, Bacchus – gods and goddesses

"Dear O.

Am dead. Gone to Hades. Sorry, no dinner.

Love, E."

CAST

Public Opinion: Joyce Campana
Eurydice: Joanna Mongiardo
Orpheus: Edward Mout

Pluto: Ryan MacPherson
Jupiter: Matthew Worth



Conductor: Martin André
Director: Marc Astafan

A new production performed in English.

PERFORMANCE DATES:

July 3, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, 28, 30
August 3, 8

Opera Notes - Free pre-performance preview in
Williams Stables at 1:50 and 7:15 pm.

Nina Odescalchi Kelly Family Matinee: August 3



Meet Jacques Offenbach

COMPOSER OF
ORPHEUS IN THE UNDERWORLD

Did you know Jacques Offenbach is a very important figure in European musical theatre? He is credited as the first composer of the form called "Operetta," designed for the Parisian public of the 1850s and 60s. In fact ***Orpheus in the Underworld (Orphée aux Enfers)*** is the very **first** full-length operetta ever composed. The most famous composer

living in France at the time was Giacchino Rossini who gave Offenbach the title "The Mozart of the Champs Elysées," quite an accolade since Mozart was acknowledged by all to be a genius who had changed the style of composing operas in the 1780s. Offenbach's fame was built on his genius for creating light entertainments that were the rage in Paris, London, New York, Berlin and Vienna.

1819 – Jacob Eberst is born to Jewish parents from Offenbach-am-Main, Germany. When the family moves to Cologne, his father changes their name to Offenbach.

1833 – Jacob (later Jacques) is admitted to the Paris Conservatoire to study cello. Although a talented cellist, he is enamored of the stage. He begins composing dance music and songs for balls and salons.

mid-1830s – He leaves the Conservatoire to play in the orchestra at the Paris Opéra-Comique.

1844 – Tours to London as a cello virtuoso and upon his return, marries Herminie d'Alcain. Four daughters and a son are eventually born to the couple.

1848 – Not yet a French citizen, Offenbach moves his family to Cologne, Germany during the revolutionary disturbances in Paris.

1850 – Returns to Paris and is appointed conductor at the Comédie-Française.

1855 – Becomes manager of his own theatre – Bouffes Parisiens. Begins presenting his own one-act operettas. The Bouffes Parisiens becomes one of Paris' favorite Boulevard theatres.

1856 – An Offenbach one-act operetta, **Les Deux Aveugles** (Two Blind Beggars) is produced for the first time outside France – in London.

1857 – Bouffes-Parisiens troupes tour France, London and Vienna. This has a momentous effect – composers in London (Sullivan) and Vienna (Suppé) begin using the short operetta form.

1858 – Offenbach composes and presents his first two-act operetta, **Orphée aux Enfers** (Orpheus in the Underworld). This becomes the model for all future operettas and, incidentally, includes one of Offenbach's most familiar melodies – the Can-can.

1861 – Now a French citizen, he is awarded the Légion d'Honneur by the French government.

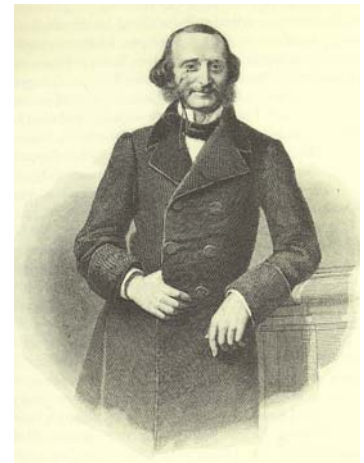
1864 – **La Belle Hélène** premieres at the prestigious Variétés and becomes as popular as **Orphée aux Enfers**. **Hélène** is followed by mega-hits **Barbe-Bleu**, **La Vie Parisienne**, **La Grand-Duchesse de Gérolstein** and **La Perichole** - all still performed today.

1876 – Offenbach tours to America where he conducts two of his operettas and 40 additional concerts in New York and Philadelphia.

1878 – Begins composing **Les Contes d'Hoffmann (The Tales of Hoffmann)** for the Opéra-Comique, having made the decision to attempt a successful opera for large orchestra with a strong libretto.

1880 – Dies before completing the orchestration for **Hoffmann**. Orchestration completed by Ernest Guiraud.

1881 – **Les Contes d'Hoffmann** premieres in Paris and Vienna with great success.



Character Spotlight:

ORPHEUS IN THE UNDERWORLD'S PUBLIC OPINION

Joyce Campana

Although it has been a few years since you performed in Central City, you have done a nice variety of roles here: the title role in *Carmen*, Prince Orlovsky in *Die Fledermaus*, a nosy neighbor in *Street Scene*, Buttercup in *H.M.S. Pinafore* in a Colorado Symphony/Central City Opera collaboration, among others. We're so glad you are returning! As a mezzo soprano you get to play lots of different types of characters. What's your favorite role and why?



My favorite role is always the role that I'm playing at the moment! - I really mean this! I fall in love with the music as I am learning it and throughout the rehearsal period I feel so deeply for my character and for the others on stage with me. When the production is over, I actually have a tiny bit of mourning. But I think all performers must be like this. If I had to pick a favorite, I guess I could narrow it down to three: First off – CARMEN – for obvious reasons – the music is exhilarating and the character allows you a freedom you may never feel in your real life – as if you were riding the wind through the mountains! Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* – again, for the painfully beautiful Richard Strauss score that I get to sing, but also for the changes in character – the opportunity for great comedy, and at the same time exist in the center of so much pathos. Charlotte in *Werther* – the tension between Werther and Charlotte throughout the whole opera is, to me, spellbinding and, in the end, intoxicating! The Massenet score embodies every emotion for me.

The character “Public Opinion” in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, while not really a villain, is something of a killjoy. How does a nice person like you get inside a character who is judgmental and absolutely certain that she knows best?

As an actress, in any scene you have to know your character's “wants and needs”. To make the scene real, you have to put these needs in “high gear”. For me, it is sometimes easier to get into the mind of a person who is very unlike me. I may know someone who is similar to the character I'm playing and imagine the thoughts that go on in that person's head. It's a lot of fun and a very creative adventure for me to put these kinds of imaginings into a role.

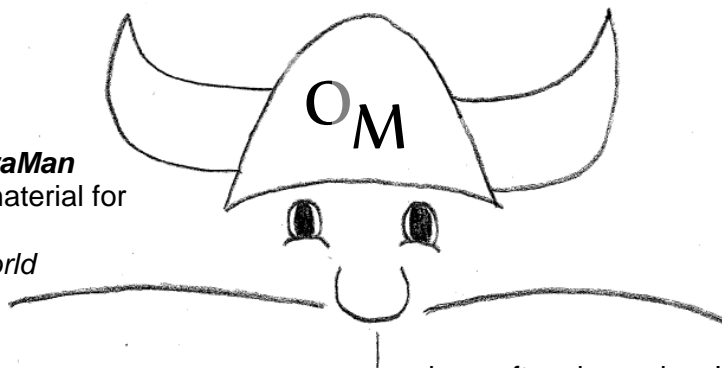
We sometimes hear that it is harder as an actor to do comedy than drama. Is that true for you, and if so, why?

It is only hard for me if I don't think the material is funny! OH! That is so painful! But, for the most part, I can find humor in almost anything. Comedy has always been something that comes naturally to me and therefore, I try not to analyze it or take it apart too much. It is important for me though, to always be as real in comedy as I would in a drama.

Please comment on the differences between performing an opera in a repertory company vs. a standard company where operas are performed one at a time.

Performing in repertory is such a wonderful opportunity for any opera singer. In a standard company a singer may get 3 to 5 performances and stay in a town for 3-4 weeks at best. We are thankful for **all** opportunities to sing, but to me it is more enjoyable and educational to sing with a repertory company. As a singer, I get to view and listen to my colleagues' work night after night in different shows and witness how their characters may evolve after many performances. We're all in town together for a nice period of time and therefore get to know each other very well. It begins to become like one big family and I love that very much!

This issue of **Dear OperaMan** focuses on the source material for *Madama Butterfly* and *Orpheus in the Underworld*



Dear OperaMan,
How did Puccini – an Italian composer – come to write an opera about an English play about a Japanese geisha? Was there a real Madama Butterfly?- Inquiringmind from Denver, CO

Dear Inquiringmind,
Giacomo Puccini can be considered the last master composer of the Italian opera tradition, coming on the heels of Giuseppe Verdi. Puccini reveled in the themes of simple ordinary people entangled in emotion and passion. He identified himself with *verismo* or Realism and was a constant seeker of librettos dealing with elevated passions and extreme emotions, and many of them included beautiful and strong women. In 1900 he discovered the Belasco-Long play *Madame Butterfly* when the play was performed in London. Even though he did not fully understand English, Puccini was enthralled by the dramatic story and the dilemma of the female heroine. Puccini begged Belasco for the rights to turn the play into an opera and 4 years later it premiered at La Scala in Milan.

But where did Belasco discover the story and was there a real Madame Butterfly? In 1543, two Portuguese men sailed off course and landed on an island in Japan. The lord of the island offered his daughter to them in exchange for their technical assistance in copying their swords with which he was impressed. This first trip by European travelers to the exotic and thrilling land of Japan set in place trading posts in East Asia and continued the practice of Japanese girls being purchased, or acquired by European traders for a temporary time, only to be sent back to their families later. However, in 1639, the Shogun of Japan closed the country to all outsiders and it remained closed for over 200 years. After Commodore Matthew Perry reopened relations with Japan in 1854, all of Europe became fascinated by the unfamiliar Japanese culture. In 1885, the French author Pierre Loti documented his marriage to a young Japanese girl of “The Garden of the Flowers” named “Madame Chrysantheme” whom he left on the

shore after six weeks. In 1898, John Luther Long published a short story, “Madame Butterfly,” supposedly recounting a particular marriage event in Japan as told to him by his missionary sister. His sister’s story would be amplified by Long and the playwright Belasco, becoming the play Puccini saw in London. Whether or not the story is factual is still debated, but the events taking place in Japan in 1543 and again in the 1880s, would suggest the possibility of a real story about Cio-Cio-San or Madama Butterfly.

Dear OperaMan,
The story of Orpheus in the Underworld is not what I studied in my Greek mythology class; what are the similarities and differences between the myth and the opera?– musicgirl from Denver, CO

Dear musicgirl,
The Greek mythology supporting Offenbach’s operetta *Orpheus in the Underworld* centers on Orpheus, the beloved son of the god Apollo. Orpheus was given a golden lyre and taught to play by Apollo and to make verses for singing by his mother, the muse Calliope. Orpheus would become the greatest musician, charming all living things, even birds, beasts and trees. After traveling with the great adventurers Jason and the Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece, Orpheus fell in love with a beautiful woman named Eurydice. On the day of their wedding, Eurydice was walking in a field and was bitten by a poisonous snake and suddenly died. Orpheus, heartbroken, decided to go to Hades to plead for his wife even though no living mortals were allowed to enter the underworld. Orpheus stood at the gate of Hades playing his lyre and inspired the ferryman to give him a ride across the river Styx. Orpheus continued to play his music about his lost wife, thus calming the dead spirits, the three-headed dog guarding Hades, and even the black stallions of Pluto’s chariot. Once before Pluto, the King of Hades, Orpheus pleaded his case and Pluto agreed to let Orpheus have his wife back, but only if he could resist looking back at her

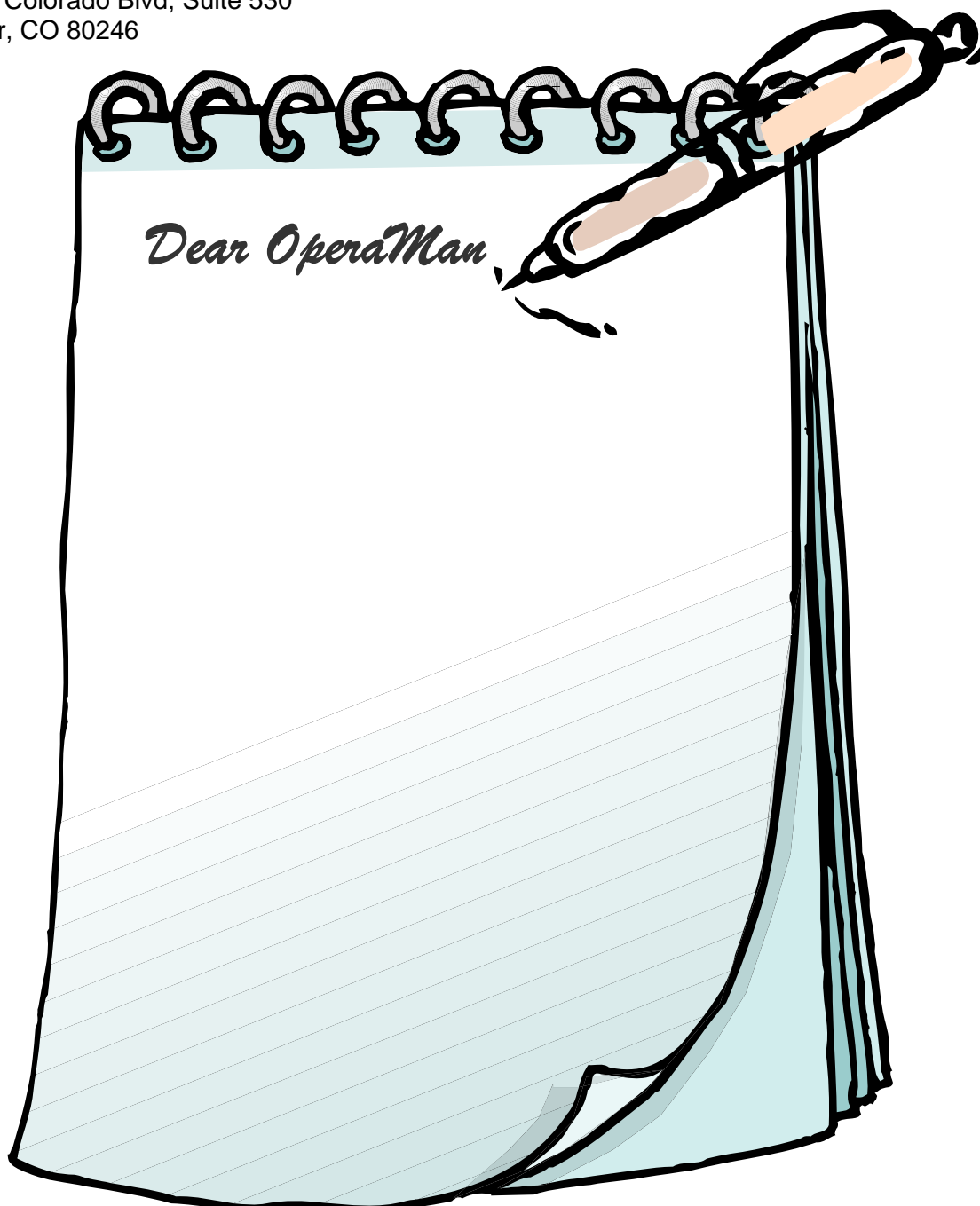
until they reached the land of the living, the Overworld. As Orpheus and Eurydice approached the opening to the Overworld, he turned and looked at his wife but as soon as he did, she began to fade. They would remain separated until his death when he would join her in the Underworld.

The similarities between the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice and *Orpheus in the Underworld* include the names of the characters, Eurydice being bitten by a snake, Orpheus' descent to Hades to get

Eurydice back from Pluto, and Orpheus looking back at her as they try to go back to the Overworld. However, these are the only points of the myth that make up the loose structure for Offenbach's operetta. Instead of a tragic, heartfelt story of two lovers, it is a satirical, often funny story of a love-triangle between mortals and gods. While Offenbach's operetta may not be the story you heard in your Greek mythology class, you will be entertained throughout, especially by the joyous 'Can-can' at the end.

Do you have a question for OperaMan? Send him a letter!

Dear OperaMan
400 S. Colorado Blvd, Suite 530
Denver, CO 80246



Take advantage of the many

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

during the Summer Festival!

Opera Notes – Free previews before every performance at 1:50 p.m. or 7:15 p.m. in Williams Stables

Opera à la Carte – Staged scenes from beloved operas performed by members of the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation Artists Training Program. Select dates at 1:15 p.m. in Williams Stables, prior to matinees. Tickets \$12 (\$8 for season subscribers)

NEW!

Signor Deluso – Based on Moliere’s play *Sganarelle*, the comic opera *Signor Deluso* by Thomas Pasatieri follows two couples who suspect their true loves are having affairs. Directed by Central City Opera Artistic Director Emeritus, John Moriarty. Select dates at 1:15 p.m. Tickets \$12 (\$8 for subscribers)

The Face on the Barroom Floor – This 30-minute cabaret opera retells the legend of the famous painting on the Teller House Bar floor. Select dates at 1:15 p.m. Tickets \$12 (\$8 for subscribers)

Salon Recitals – An intimate performance by a young artist in the Teller House Salon. Select Saturdays and Sundays at 12:30 in the Teller House. Tickets \$20

The Nina Odescalchi Kelly Family Matinees – Opera lovers of all ages will enjoy these full-length productions with “what-to-listen-for” introductions and post-performance autograph sessions.

Madama Butterfly – Tuesday, July 27 at 2:30 p.m.

Orpheus in the Underworld – Tuesday, August 3 at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets \$15 for children ages 6-18, \$20 for adults

Take a Child to the Opera – Enhance your Family Matinee experience! Enjoy lunch with opera singers and activities surrounding each Family Matinee. Price includes ticket and picnic lunch. Sponsored by the Central City Opera House Association Guild. Tickets \$32 for children ages 6-18, \$37 for accompanying adults

Summer Performing Arts Intensive – July 10-24

In collaboration with Central City Opera, the Colorado Springs Conservatory offers a two-week intensive for students ages 14-19 that includes immersion studies in drama, opera and musical theater. Students ages 14-19 are in residence for 10 days in Colorado Springs and then move to Central City where they will attend Festival productions, participate in coachings and classes, and perform their own scenes program for a public audience in Williams Stables. For further information, call the Central City Opera Education & Community Programs Department at 303.331.7026 or Colorado Springs Conservatory at 719.577.4556.

Public performances July 23rd & 24th at 8:15 p.m.

Tickets \$5.



Students of the 2009 Performing Arts Intensive. Photo by Erin Joy Swank

For tickets to these events visit
www.centralcityopera.org
or call the Central City Opera
Box Office at 303.292.6700

RESOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

Bernstein, Richard. The East, the West, and Sex: A History of Erotic Encounters. New York: Knopf, 2009.

Loti, Pierre. Madame Chrysantheme. Project Gutenberg, 2009. 5 May. 2010.
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3995/3995-h/3995-h.htm>

Van Rij, Jan. Madame Butterfly: Japonisme, Puccini, and the Search for the Real Cho-Cho-San. Berkley: Stone Bridge Press, 2001.

ORPHEUS IN THE UNDERWORLD

<http://www.hipark.austin.isd.tenet.edu/mythology/orpheus.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Offenbach

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orpheus_in_the_Underworld

THREE DECEMBERS

<http://www.imagi-nation.com/moonstruck/clsc72.html>

<http://www.fanfaire.com/Heggie/interview.htm>

MISCELLANY

Music & Math - <http://cnx.org/content/m10945/latest/>

Special thanks to the following for their contributed materials, help and expertise in creating this season's Opera Insider:

Joyce Campana
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Jake Heggie

S. Kay Hoke
Alison M. Mizerski
Gene Scheer
Chad Shelton

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

Check out the Central City Opera Education and Community Programs available during the REST of the year!

Mozart & Company, for **elementary** students, introduces the basics of opera – song, story, costumes and props – in arias and short vignettes. Study guide provided in advance.



Opera Alive! for **3rd through 12th grades**, provides extended artist residencies for students to engage in performing and creating musical stories.



The Great Opera Mix-Up, also for **elementary** students, invites student participation in a mini-opera to provide a deeper acquaintance with story and character. Study guide provided in advance.



Music!Words!Opera!, a 5-day workshop for **K-12 teachers** intending to enroll their schools in *Opera Alive!*, prepares teachers for incorporating opera music and stories into curriculum. Free to teachers. Graduate or Continuing Education Credits available.



How the West Was Sung, for **upper elementary and middle school** students, establishes the historical contexts for opera as popular entertainment in the days before iPod and DVD and brings Colorado historical characters to life. Study guide provided in advance.



Performing Arts Intensive, a two-week summer program in collaboration with the Colorado Springs Conservatory. The Conservatory provides two weeks of instruction and preparation of opera and theatrical scenes for students **ages 14-19**. The group comes to Central City for an intensive four-day experience including attendance at festival operas, workshops and master classes taught by Festival artists and staff, tours and a culminating performance of the students' scenes program in Williams Stables.



En Mis Palabras (In My Own Words), for **middle and high school** students. A bilingual Spanish and English opera follows a 15-year-old girl trying to balance the conflicting influences of her Mexican family cultural traditions and her peer community. Bilingual study guides provided in advance.



Opera on the Go, for **all ages** features arias and scenes from operas and musical theater staged with costumes, props, and musical accompaniment.



Family Matinees, for children **ages 6 to 18** and their companion adults, are special performances of Festival repertoire operas (performed by participants in the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation Artist Training Program) with tickets at significantly discounted prices.



Opera in the Rockies, touring program, presents community performances and in-school programs in communities throughout the Rocky Mountain region.



Concerts for family audiences – **Smooth OPERA**tor and **Love Notes** are available for booking by area concert venues and recreation districts.



Visit www.centralcityopera.org/education for more information. To schedule an event or program contact the Education and Community Programs office: 303-331-7026 or education@centralcityopera.org