



**ACCESS OPERA
EDUCATOR GUIDE**

OSVALDO GOLIJOV / LIBRETTO BY DAVID HENRY HWANG

AINADAMAR

The Met
ropolitan
Opera

THE WORK

**An opera in one act,
sung in Spanish**

Music by Osvaldo Golijov

**Libretto by David Henry
Hwang, translated by the
composer**

**First performed August 10,
2003, at Tanglewood**

Music Festival

PRODUCTION

Deborah Colker

Production

Jon Bausor

Set and Costume Designer

Paul Keogan

Lighting Designer

Tal Rosner

Projection Designer

Mark Grey

Sound Designer

Deborah Colker

Choreographer

Antonio Najarro

Flamenco Choreographer

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A dazzling combination of music and movement, Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* tells the story of Spanish poet and playwright Federico García Lorca through the memories of his friend and muse, Catalan actress Margarita Xirgu. *Ainadamar*—Arabic for “fountain of tears,” a fountain in the hills north of Granada where Lorca was ultimately executed by fascist forces—takes the form of a Passion play, reflecting the mythic status of Lorca and his enduring influence in Spanish culture. Touching upon themes of tradition, inheritance, love, and freedom, the libretto (penned by playwright David Henry Hwang and translated into Spanish by Golijov) expertly weaves together the lives of 19th-century Spanish political heroine Mariana Pineda; Lorca, whose 1927 play took her as its subject; and Xirgu, who portrayed her on stage. A haunting symmetry thus unites Pineda and Lorca, both executed by repressive political regimes and honored by Xirgu's devotion to their legacies in life and death.

Golijov's groundbreaking score is a rich sonic tapestry combining conventional operatic singing and orchestral music with Spanish flamenco, amplified instruments, prerecorded sounds, and electronic sampling, in addition to extended improvisational sections. This original soundscape enables the composer to bring together, and make distinctions among, the series of flashbacks that constitute the opera's plot. In so doing, Golijov constructs a musical world that straddles the boundaries of convention and innovation, bringing new genres and stories to the operatic stage. The lives and sacrifices of his subjects—Pineda, Xirgu, and Lorca—ultimately become intertwined as each passes the torch of political resistance to the next generation.

This guide is intended to help your students understand the historical context out of which *Ainadamar* emerges, focusing on the Spanish Civil War of the 20th century and the rich culture of Spanish flamenco. The information on the following pages is designed to provide context, deepen background knowledge, and enrich the overall experience of attending a final dress rehearsal at the Metropolitan Opera.



The Metropolitan Opera is a vibrant home for the most creative and talented singers, conductors, composers, musicians, stage directors, designers, visual artists, choreographers, and dancers from around the world. Founded in 1883, the Met first opened in a lavish opera house at Broadway and 39th Street that, while beautiful, had significant practical limitations. Almost from the beginning, it was clear that the stage facilities of the original theater could not meet the Met's technical needs. But it was not until the Met joined with other New York institutions in forming Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts that a new home became possible. The new Metropolitan Opera House, which opened at Lincoln Center in September 1966, was a technical marvel of its day, and has remained an architectural landmark ever since.

Each season, the Met stages more than 200 opera performances in New York, welcoming more than 800,000 attendees. In addition to presenting the indispensable masterpieces of history's great composers, performed by the world's finest singers and directed by visionaries from throughout the theatrical world, the Met is committed to ensuring that opera remains a living art form by commissioning and staging vital new works that tell modern stories and engage with the issues of today. The Met is also a leader in new media distribution initiatives, harnessing state-of-the-art technology to bring performances from the Met's iconic stage to millions of people worldwide.

This guide includes a variety of materials on Golijov's *Ainadamar*.

The Source, The Story, and Who's Who in *Ainadamar*

A Timeline: The historical context of the opera's story and composition

Closer Looks: Brief articles highlighting an important aspect of Golijov's *Ainadamar*

Ten Essential Musical Terms: Musical terminology that will help students analyze and describe Golijov's work

Student Critique: A performance activity highlighting specific aspects of this production

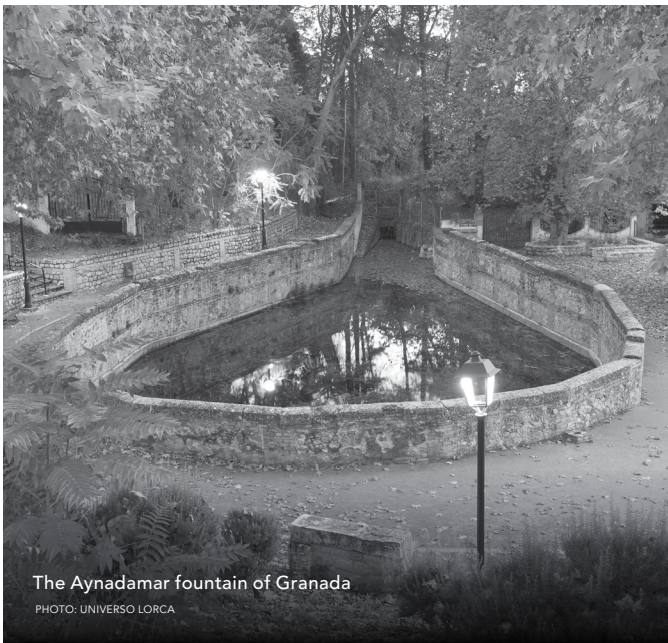
Further Resources: Recommendations for additional study, both online and in print

This guide is intended to cultivate students' interest in *Ainadamar*, whether they have any prior acquaintance with opera or the performing arts. It includes activities for students with a wide range of musical backgrounds and will encourage them to think about opera—and the performing arts as a whole—as a medium of both entertainment and creative expression. In particular, this guide offers in-depth introductions to:

- The culture of Spanish flamenco
- The history of the Spanish Civil War
- Creative choices made by the artists of the Metropolitan Opera for this production
- The opera as a unified work of art, involving the efforts of composer, librettist, and Met artists

Summary

Margarita Xirgu is preparing to go on stage to perform the title role in Federico García Lorca's play *Mariana Pineda*, a role she helped to create and has been performing her entire career. As she prepares, she mourns Lorca and the Spain they envisioned but was never realized. Xirgu tells her student Nuria about her first conversations with Lorca about Pineda, the 19th-century political revolutionary. He recounts how, as a child, he used to watch her statue from his window in Granada. Pineda's message of freedom for all resonates once again in Spain, where the beginnings of the Spanish Civil War are brewing.



The Aynadamar fountain of Granada
PHOTO: UNIVERSO LORCA

Against the sound of the Falange's radio broadcasts, Xirgu tells Nuria how she tried to save Lorca by bringing him on the South American tour of *Mariana Pineda*. The second flashback begins as she tries to persuade Lorca to accompany her to Cuba. He entertains her proposal before declining, insisting that he must stay and witness Spain's struggle. Threats over the Falange radio play in the background. The Falange officer Ramón Ruiz Alonso appears to arrest Lorca on accusations of leftist political affiliations and homosexuality. Lorca joins two other captives, a bullfighter and a teacher, and Falangist guard José Tripaldi takes their final confessions before they are executed.

Back in the present, Xirgu prepares to perform despite Nuria's objections that she is unwell. Xirgu reminds Nuria that she must perform to keep the voices of Pineda and Lorca alive. Lorca appears before Xirgu in a vision, thanking her for honoring his legacy and assuring her that the work will continue. When Nuria declares her intention to follow in her teacher's footsteps, Xirgu can finally reunite with Lorca in death.

THE SOURCE: AN ORIGINAL LIBRETTO BY DAVID HENRY HWANG

The opera *Ainadamar* tells the story of two real-life Spanish cultural figures: poet and playwright Federico García Lorca and his muse, the actress Margarita Xirgu. The opera's librettist, American playwright David Henry Hwang, derived his original story from Lorca's and Xirgu's respective biographies. The chorus that frames each section (called "images" in the opera) is taken directly from Lorca's 1927 play *Mariana Pineda*. The story is told in reverse through a series of flashbacks from the perspective of Xirgu, who begins the opera at the end of her life. Throughout the work, we learn about Lorca's life, his work, the political upheaval he lived through, and his eventual assassination. We also learn about Margarita, her relationship with Lorca, and her devotion to keeping his work and legacy alive. Hwang's libretto was translated from English into Spanish by the composer.

Synopsis

FIRST IMAGE: MARIANA

Teatro Solís, Montevideo, Uruguay, April 1969. The voices of little girls sing the opening ballad of Lorca's play *Mariana Pineda*. The actress Margarita Xirgu looks back across 40 years since she gave the premiere of this daring play by a brilliant young author. In the last minutes of her life, she tries to convey to her young student Nuria the fire, the passion, and the hope of her generation that gave birth to the Spanish Republic. She flashes back to her first meeting with Lorca in a bar in Madrid.

Lorca tells her that the freedom in his play is not only political freedom and sings a rhapsodic aria that opens the world of imagination, a world inspired by the sight of the statue of Mariana Pineda that he saw as a child in Granada. Mariana was martyred in 1831 for sewing a revolutionary flag and refusing to reveal the names of the revolutionary leaders, including her lover. Her lover deserted her, and she wrote a serenely composed final letter to her children explaining her need to die with dignity.

Margarita reflects on the parallel fates of Mariana and Federico. The reverie is shattered by the call of Ramón Ruiz Alonso, the Falangist who arrested and executed Lorca in August 1936.



SECOND IMAGE: FEDERICO

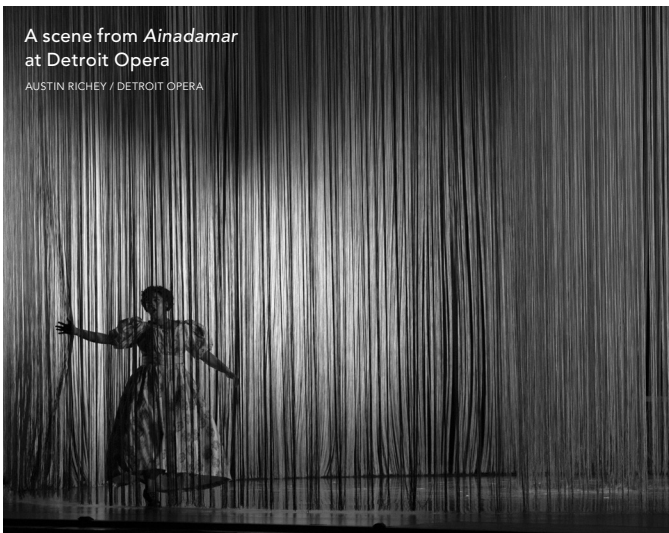
The ballad of Mariana Pineda sounds again, taking Margarita back to the summer of 1936, the last time she saw Federico. The young Spanish Republic is under attack: the rising of the right-wing generals has begun, there are daily strikes and massacres. Margarita's theater company is embarking on a tour of Cuba. She begs Federico to come. He decides to go home to Granada instead, to work on new plays and poetry.

No one knows the details of Lorca's murder. Margarita has a vision of his final hour: the opportunist Ruiz Alonso arresting Lorca in Granada and leading him to the solitary place of execution, *Ainadamar*, the fountain of tears, together with a bullfighter and a teacher. The three of them are made to confess their sins. Then they are shot.

THIRD IMAGE: MARGARITA

For the third time we hear the ballad of Mariana Pineda. One more time the play is about to begin, the story retold for the generation of Margarita's Latin American students. Margarita knows she is dying. She cannot make her entrance; the others must go on. As her heart gives way, she tells Nuria that an actor lives for a moment, that the individual voice is silenced, but that the hope of a people will not die. The Fascists have ruled Spain for more than 30 years. Franco has never permitted Margarita Xirgu, the image of freedom, to set foot on Spanish soil. Margarita has kept the plays of Lorca alive in Latin America while they were forbidden in Spain.

The spirit of Lorca enters the room. He takes Margarita's hand, and he takes Nuria's hand. Together they enter a blazing sunset of delirious, visionary transformation. Margarita dies, offering her life to Mariana Pineda's final lines: "I am freedom." Her courage, her clarity, and her humanity are passed on to Nuria, her students, and the generations that follow. She sings "I am the source, the fountain from which you drink."



WHO'S WHO IN AINADAMAR

CHARACTER	PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
Margarita Xirgu A Spanish actress	mahr-gah-REE-tah SHEER-goo	soprano	The opera's protagonist, Xirgu's recollections of her life and work with Lorca—including her attempts to protect them from persecution—unfold in a series of images.
Federico García Lorca A Spanish writer	feh-deh-REE-koh gar-SEE-yah LOR-kah	mezzo-soprano	Appearing in Xirgu's memories and as a vision before the actress's death, Lorca is both a pathbreaking artist and a symbol of freedom against political persecution.
Nuria A student of Xirgu	NOO-ree-yah	soprano	One of Xirgu's favorite students, Nuria learns about the actress's friendship and collaboration with Lorca, inspiring her to carry on the tradition Xirgu has championed.
Ramón Ruiz Alonso A Falangist officer	rah-MOWN roo-EEZ ah-LAHN-soh	flamenco singer	An officer in Spain's fascist regime, Alonso arrests Lorca on accusation of conspiracy against the government.
José Tripaldi A Falangist guard	ho-SAY tree-PAHL-dee	baritone	A guard in the fascist forces, Tripaldi takes Lorca's final confession before his execution.
Maestro A teacher	MY-stroh	tenor	These two anonymous victims of the Falangist regime are executed alongside Lorca at Ainadamar.
Torero A bullfighter	toh-REH-roh		

The Creation of *Ainadamar*

- 1888** Margarita Xirgu is born outside Barcelona, Spain.
- 1898** Federico del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús García Lorca is born in Fuente Vaqueros, Granada, Spain. His father is a wealthy landowner, and his mother is a teacher.
- 1916** Lorca attends the University of Granada.
- 1918** Lorca publishes his first book, the travelogue *Impresiones y Paisajes (Impressions and Landscapes)*.
- 1919** Lorca relocates to the Residencia de Estudiantes while studying at the University of Madrid. There, he encounters fellow artists like filmmaker Luis Buñuel and painter Salvador Dalí.
- 1920** Lorca's first play, *El Maleficio de la Mariposa (The Butterfly's Evil Spell)*, premieres in Madrid.
- 1921** Lorca publishes his first collection of poems.
- 1922** Lorca collaborates with famed Andalusian composer Manuel de Falla on the Concurso de Cante Jondo, a festival dedicated to promoting flamenco music and culture—especially the style of *cante jondo* (“deep song”)—in Granada.
- 1925** Lorca begins a close, affectionate friendship with Dalí.
- 1926** Lorca meets Catalan actress Margarita Xirgu.
- 1927** Lorca's play *Mariana Pineda* premieres in Barcelona, with Xirgu portraying the title role and costumes and sets designed by Dalí.
- 1928** The first public exhibition of Lorca's drawings coincides with the publication of his poetry collection *Romancero Gitano (Gypsy Ballads)*, which is immediately popular.
- 1929-30** Lorca visits New York and Cuba, inspiring poems ultimately published posthumously in *Poeta en Nueva York (1940)*.
- 1931** Lorca becomes the director of La Barraca, a student troupe funded by Spain's new Republican government to bring classical Spanish theater to rural audiences.
- 1933** *Bodas de Sangre (Blood Wedding)* opens in Madrid and establishes Lorca as a major figure in Spanish theater.

- 1933-4** Lorca travels to Buenos Aires, Argentina, to oversee productions of his works and present lectures. During this time, he befriends the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.
- 1936** The Spanish Civil War begins, and Francisco Franco's Falangist fascist government comes to power. Lorca is arrested and imprisoned without trial on August 19. Shortly thereafter, perhaps on the same day, he is executed at the Fuente Grande, or Aynadamar, by the Falange. The exact date of Lorca's death remains unknown.
- When the war breaks out, Xirgu is on tour producing and acting in Lorca's plays throughout Latin America, where she spends the rest of her life in voluntary exile.
- 1949** Xirgu co-founds the Municipal School of Dramatic Art in Montevideo, the first acting school in Uruguay. She remains artistic director until 1957.
- 1957** David Henry Hwang is born in Los Angeles, California.
- 1960** Osvaldo Golijov is born in La Plata, Argentina.
- 1969** Xirgu dies in Montevideo, having been granted citizenship as an exile from the Spanish Civil War.
- 1979** Hwang graduates from Stanford University with a degree in English literature.
- 1983** Golijov emigrates to Israel and enrolls at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem.
- 1986** Golijov moves to the United States to pursue a doctoral degree in composition at the University of Pennsylvania and studies with eminent avant-garde composer George Crumb.
- 1988** Hwang's play *M. Butterfly* premieres on Broadway. The work goes on to earn the Tony Award for Best Play, Drama Desk Award for Outstanding New Play, and Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding New Broadway Play and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama.
- 1991** Golijov begins teaching at College of the Holy Cross, where he currently serves as composer-in-residence.
- 1995** Golijov is awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.

- 2003** Commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, *Ainadamar* premieres at the Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music. The same year, Golijov is awarded a MacArthur Fellowship.
- 2005** A new, revised version of *Ainadamar* opens at the Santa Fe Opera in a production by Peter Sellars.
- 2006** Deutsche Grammophon releases a recording of the opera, featuring soprano Dawn Upshaw as Xirgu. The album goes on to garner Grammy Awards for Best Opera Recording and Best Classical Contemporary Composition.
- 2022** The opera has its first performances in the United Kingdom at Scottish Opera, in a production directed and choreographed by Deborah Colker.
- 2023** Colker's production of *Ainadamar* moves to Welsh National Opera, Detroit Opera, and Pacific Opera Victoria.
- 2024** *Ainadamar* opens on October 15 at the Metropolitan Opera.

The Soul of Spain

Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* is deeply infused with the spirit of flamenco, showcasing all three primary components of the genre—song (*cante*), dance (*baile*), and guitar playing (*toque*). Though the precise origins of flamenco remain disputed, most scholars agree that it developed when traveling Romani communities began to settle in Andalusia, or southern Spain, in the second half of the 15th century. The Romani people are believed to have originally migrated from northern India, reaching the European continent by the 14th century. Here, Romani music and dance practices came into contact with various other subcultures, including those of Sephardic Jews and Moors (Muslims from North Africa and the Mediterranean), as well as Afro-Andalusians brought to the region through the Atlantic Slave Trade. The resulting cultural mixing created vibrant art forms, flamenco principal among them.

Flamenco dancers in Colker's production at Detroit Opera

AUSTIN RICHEY / DETROIT OPERA



Flamenco is perhaps most known as a style of dance. It typically features fluid yet stylized motion, producing angular shapes in the arms, upper torso, and fingers, which are often spread expressively wide. Dancers also participate in the music making by wearing special flamenco shoes, which have small nails embedded in the sole to amplify the percussive effect of their intricate foot- and heelwork. It is commonly said that, after 15 to 20 minutes of flamenco movement, the dancer will slip into a trancelike state of emotion called *duende*. During these moments, the dancer is encouraged by rhythmic clapping and shouts from the audience. For Romani communities in Andalusia known as the Gitano, this transcendent state also has religious dimensions, as dancers are believed to be capable of communicating with God.

VOICE TYPES

Since the early 19th century, singing voices have usually been classified into six basic types, three male and three female, according to their range:

SOPRANO the highest voice type, normally possessed only by women and boys

MEZZO-SOPRANO the voice type lying below the soprano and above the contralto; the term comes from the Italian word “mezzo,” meaning “middle”

CONTRALTO the lowest female voice type, also called “alto”

TENOR the highest standard voice type in adult males

BARITONE the voice type lying below the tenor and above the bass

BASS the lowest voice type

There are three types of flamenco song, or *cante*: the *cante jondo* (“deep song”), *cante intermedio* (“intermediate song”), and *cante chico* (“light song”), each distinguishable by its emotional character. In the 1920s, poet and playwright Federico García Lorca befriended the Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, who introduced him to Romani music and traditional Andalusian song. As part of their efforts to revive and elevate the traditional arts of Spanish culture, the collaborators planned the El Concurso del Cante Jondo, a music and art festival celebrating flamenco culture. Taking place across two days at the Plaza de los Aljibes in the Alhambra, the event featured celebrated dancers and musicians—but all contest prize money was awarded exclusively to amateurs.

The *cante jondo* (“deep song”) was most important to Lorca, who composed a *Poema del Cante Jondo* (1931) and wrote essays on the art of flamenco. In this style of song, he found a source of inspiration that aligned with his own interest in the themes of anguish, pain, and death. The structural characteristics of *cante jondo* can further be traced in Lorca’s writing; the flamenco choruses sung at the beginning and conclusion of each “image” in *Ainadamar*, for example, are taken directly from Lorca’s play, *Mariana Pineda*. In order to acknowledge this influence in Lorca’s life, the opera also employs pronounced rhythmic patterns and traditional flamenco instruments, such as the flamenco guitar and cajón, a wooden drum that accompanies flamenco’s performance. On the stage, flamenco dancers and choreography bridge the worlds of music and movement to imbue the opera with a unique energy and vitality.

Fascism, Falangists, and Franco



Portrait of Francisco Franco
BIBLIOTECA VIRTUAL DE DEFENSA

Although Federico García Lorca was executed in the first year of the three-year conflict, the Spanish Civil War forms a significant historical backdrop to the story of Lorca and his muse, Catalan actress Margarita Xirgu, told in *Ainadamar*. In 1931, the last monarch of Spain, King Alfonso XIII, was deposed, and a democratic government known as the Second Spanish Republic was formed. The new democratic government established a constitution and instituted several reforms intended to modernize Spain. The constitution granted freedom of speech and association, the right to vote for both men and women, and legalized divorce. It also stripped Spain's nobility of its titles and privileges and significantly weakened the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. The region of Catalonia was also granted political autonomy and given its own governing body.

Although they expanded civil liberties and promised greater political representation, the reforms of the Second Spanish Republic came at the expense of the church and other time-honored Spanish institutions—thereby alienating citizens in more rural regions of the country, for whom these traditions were pillars of social and political life. While the country held two democratic elections in the ensuing five years, Spain's population became increasingly polarized. In July 1936, the conflict reached fever pitch when an attempted coup d'état by the military sought to overthrow the recently elected left-wing government.

Leading the conservative opposition was General Francisco Franco, who represented the interests of the Nationalists. Among his supporters were monarchists, traditionalists, and members of the fascist Falangist party. Franco's coup was only partly successful, however, and an immensely bloody civil conflict followed before the Falangists firmly took control of the government in 1939. During this period, members of Franco's forces carried out organized purges and mass executions to gain control of regions where the Republicans, representing the elected government, were still popular. Franco reigned as dictator until his death in 1975.

Although Lorca was not himself particularly political, he voiced his support for pro-communist causes and benefitted from the reforms of the Second Spanish Republic. Under the democratic government, he was able to direct a state-funded student theater troupe, La Barraca, and freely pursue a new avant-garde style of Spanish theater. His support for left-leaning groups and initiatives eventually attracted the attention of Franco and the Falangists. His homosexuality, meanwhile, also made him a target of the fascist regime. In August 1936, Lorca was arrested. Alongside a schoolteacher and a bullfighter, he was executed at the Fuente Grande, or Aynadamar, in Granada. Xirgu, also a prominent supporter of leftist ideas, was on tour in Latin America when the Spanish Civil War started and could never return to her native Spain. She instead lived in voluntary exile, staging Lorca's works in Argentina and teaching drama in Uruguay, where she eventually obtained citizenship.

**COMMON CORE
STANDARDS AND
AINADAMAR**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-12.1d

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

Encouraging Student Response in Attending the Final Dress Rehearsal

Watching and listening to a performance is a unique experience that takes students beyond the printed page and immerses them in images, sound, interpretation, technology, drama, skill, and craft. This performance activity will help students analyze different aspects of the experience, engage critically with the performance, and express their views in a respectful and supported environment.

The enclosed performance activity is called “Opera Review: *Ainadamar*.” The handout for this activity, available at the back of this guide, will invite students to think of themselves as opera critics, taking notes on what they see and hear during the performance and critiquing each singer and scene on a five-star scale. Students should bring this activity sheet to the final dress rehearsal and fill it out during intermission and/or after the final curtain. When they return to class, students can use their “Opera Review” sheets as they review and discuss their experience.

DISCUSSION

Students will enjoy starting the class with an open discussion of the final dress rehearsal. What did they like? What didn’t they? Did anything surprise them? What would they like to see or hear again? What would they have done differently?

A central aspect of *Ainadamar* is the way it weaves together the lives and legacies of three individuals—Mariana Pineda, Margarita Xirgu, and Federico García Lorca—while incorporating multiple musical styles, including orchestral music, flamenco, electronic sampling, and prerecorded sounds. Students might enjoy discussing these distinct narrative and dramatic strands, where they converge, and how they are conveyed through distinct forms of music and dance. You may prompt them with the following questions:

- How does the opera deal with the subject of legacy? Which characters participate in preserving the legacies of others?
- How would you describe Osvaldo Golijov’s musical style?
- How did the composer incorporate unconventional sounds into the performance?
- What role does art play in times of turbulence?

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Act and Scene

Acts and scenes are ways of categorizing sections of operas. An act is a large-scale division of an opera, and each opera will typically include two to five acts. Acts can be subdivided into scenes, which are often differentiated by a change in setting or characters.

Aria

A song for solo voice accompanied by orchestra. In opera, arias mostly appear during a pause in dramatic action when a character is reflecting musically on his or her emotions. Most arias are lyrical, with a tune that can be hummed, and many arias include musical repetition.

Ballad

A type of song, often associated with folk music, that tells a story. Ballads typically feature a strophic structure (i.e., the same melody is sung over and over with changing text) and predominantly syllabic melodies. In addition, ballads are usually sung by a solo performer, even though the text might include quoted speech as well as descriptions of actions and events. Examples of ballads in the Anglophone tradition include "Oh My Darling, Clementine," "Streets of Laredo," and "Barbara Allen."

Chorus

A section of an opera in which a large group of singers performs together, typically with orchestral accompaniment. Most choruses include at least four different vocal lines, in registers from low to high, with multiple singers per part. The singers are typically from a particular group of people who play a certain role on stage—soldiers, peasants, prisoners, and so on. Choruses may offer a moral, comment on the plot, or participate in the dramatic action.

Ensemble

A musical piece for two or more soloists, accompanied by orchestra. Types of ensembles include duets (for two soloists), trios (for three soloists), and quartets (for four soloists). Sometimes singers will respond directly to one another during an ensemble. At other times, singers will each sing to themselves as if the other singers were not on stage. In ensembles, multiple characters may simultaneously express very different emotions from one another.

Libretto

The text of an opera, including all the words that are said or sung by performers. Until the early eighteenth century, a composer would frequently set music to a pre-existing libretto, and any given libretto could thus be set to music multiple times by different composers. During the 18th and 19th centuries, collaboration between the author of the libretto, known as the librettist, and the composer became more frequent. Some opera composers, most notably Richard Wagner, are known for writing their own text.

Melody

A succession of pitches that form an understandable unit. The melody of a piece consists of the tune that a listener can hum or sing. During arias, the singer will usually sing the main melody, though other instruments may play parts of the melody. Sometimes, such as during ensembles, multiple melodies can occur simultaneously.

Orchestration

An aspect of composition, orchestration is the art of choosing which instruments should play each part of a musical work. Successful orchestration requires both practical considerations (e.g., that a given melody is within an instrument's range) and more creative elements (e.g., whether an instrument's unique timbre is suited to the emotions or ideas that a melody needs to express).

Score

The complete musical notation for a piece, the score includes notated lines for all the different instrumental and vocal parts that together constitute a musical composition. In an opera orchestra, the conductor follows the score during rehearsals and performances while each performer follows his or her individual part.

Theme and Motive

Themes are the melodic ideas that are musical building blocks for a piece. A theme is often recognizable as a distinct tune and may reappear in its original form or in altered form throughout the piece. A motive (or motif) is a brief musical idea that recurs throughout a musical work. Motives can be based on a melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic component, and their repetition makes them recognizable to the listener. In opera, musical motives are often symbolically associated with specific characters or dramatic ideas.

Ainadamar

Performance date:

Reviewed by:

Have you ever wanted to be a music and theater critic? Now's your chance!

As you watch *Ainadamar*, use the space below to keep track of your thoughts and opinions. What did you like about the performance? What didn't you like? If you were in charge, what might you have done differently? Think carefully about the action, music, and stage design, and rate each of the star singers. Then, after the opera, share your opinions with your friends, classmates, and anyone else who wants to learn more about the opera and this performance at the Met!

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN / STAGING
As she prepares to go on stage, Margarita tells her student Nuria about friendship with Federico. MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
Margarita and Federico discuss his new play before being interrupted by the arrival of a Falange officer. MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
Back with Nuria, Margarita is distressed at her inability to save Federico's life. MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
Margarita tries to convince Federico to accompany her to Cuba, but he refuses. MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN / STAGING
<p>The Falange officer arrests Federico.</p> <p>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</p>	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
<p>The Falange guard takes the final confessions of Federico and two other prisoners.</p> <p>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</p>	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
<p>Nuria worries that Margarita is too frail to perform, but the actress insists on her duty to preserve Federico's legacy.</p> <p>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</p>	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆
<p>Nuria vows to continue Margarita's work.</p> <p>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</p>	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆