

THE MET: HD LIVE IN SCHOOLS

2015–16 Educator Guide

PUCCINI

Madama Butterfly



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MANY OF PUCCINI'S OPERAS FEATURE REALISTICALLY DRAWN FEMALE characters that meet a tragic end, but none of these stories is more poignant than that of Cio-Cio-San, the title heroine of *Madama Butterfly*. This tale of a young Japanese geisha who marries an American naval officer who then leaves her explores themes of devotion and irresponsibility, fidelity and justice. Cio-Cio-San's journey takes her from innocence and happy anticipation through failing hope to calm acceptance of the tragic destiny that her personal code of honor demands. But she is no frail victim. Her optimism in the midst of even the darkest of circumstances makes her a heroine in every sense of the word. It is Cio-Cio-San's touching mixture of sweetness and anguish, vulnerability and courage that elicits some of Puccini's most emotionally expansive and heartbreakingly tender music.

The Met's production, first seen on Opening Night of the 2006-07 season, was directed by acclaimed filmmaker Anthony Minghella, who pointed out that in *Madama Butterfly* everything revolves around Cio-Cio-San. "It's almost a monodrama," he noted at the time of the premiere. "Everyone exists only in relation to her." Minghella described what he saw as the director's responsibility in bringing this particular opera to the stage: "I'd have to be crazy to do anything other than tell the story. To impose some kind of directorial conceit or tricks on a work that has such great integrity and that has been so beloved for so long would have been a foolish act of presumption." Minghella's methods of storytelling embrace several techniques from the traditional theater of Japan, most notably the use of a Bunraku-style puppet for the silent role of Cio-Cio-San's young son.

This guide is designed to help students both enjoy the musical and dramatic riches of *Madama Butterfly* and to examine the complex, sometimes ambiguous attitudes and behaviors that doom Cio-Cio-San to her fate. By exploring the subjects of Westernization and tradition that pulse through this opera, students will gain an understanding of the cultural forces that inform the story and examine some of the themes that continue to make *Madama Butterfly* such a compelling work of music theater. The activities on the following pages are designed to provide context, deepen background knowledge, and enrich the overall experience of this *Live in HD* transmission. This guide also aligns with key strands of the Common Core Standards.

THE WORK:

MADAMA BUTTERFLY

An opera in two acts, sung in Italian

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

Based on the play by David Belasco

First performed February 17, 1904 at the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, Italy

PRODUCTION

Karel Mark Chichon, Conductor

Anthony Minghella, Production

Carolyn Choa, Director and Choreographer

Michael Levine, Set Designer

Han Feng, Costume Designer

Peter Mumford, Lighting Designer

Blind Summit Theatre, Puppetry

STARRING

(In order of vocal appearance):

Roberto Alagna

B.F. PINKERTON (tenor)

Dwayne Croft

SHARPLESS (baritone)

Kristine Opolais

CIO-CIO-SAN (soprano)

Maria Zifchak

SUZUKI (mezzo-soprano)

Production a gift of Mercedes and Sid Bass

Revival a gift of The NPD Group, Inc.

Co-production of the Metropolitan Opera, English National Opera, and the Lithuanian National Opera



OPOLAIS



ZIFCHAK



ALAGNA



CROFT

This guide is divided into five sections.

- **THE SOURCE, THE STORY, WHO'S WHO IN MADAMA BUTTERFLY, AND A TIMELINE**
- **CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:**
Two activities designed to align with and support various Common Core Standard strands used in ELA, History/Social Studies, and Music curricula
- **PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES:**
Two activities to be used during *The Met: Live in HD* transmission, highlighting specific aspects of this production
- **POST-SHOW DISCUSSION:**
A wrap-up activity, integrating the *Live in HD* experience into the students' understanding of the performing arts and the humanities
- **STUDENT RESOURCE PAGES:**
Classroom-ready worksheets supporting the activities in the guide

The activities in this guide will focus on several aspects of *Madama Butterfly*:

- The way the librettist and composer portray the main characters and their cultural backgrounds
- The relationship of the opera to events in world history
- Puccini's musical representation of Asian and American cultures
- 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

This guide is intended to cultivate students' interest in *Madama Butterfly*, whether or not they have any prior acquaintance with opera. It includes activities for students with a wide range of musical backgrounds and seeks to encourage them to think about opera—and the performing arts as a whole—as a medium of both entertainment and creative expression.

THE SOURCE: THE PLAY MADAME BUTTERFLY BY DAVID BELASCO David Belasco was a Broadway impresario and playwright whose innovations to theater technology, including the use of spotlights and variations in colored lighting, were groundbreaking for the age. His 1900 stage play *Madame Butterfly* was based on a short story by John Luther Long, which itself was modeled after the novel *Madame Chrysanthème* by Pierre Loti. Drawing on his experience as a French naval officer, Loti structured *Madame Chrysanthème* as a semi-autobiographical work detailing his service in Nagasaki and dalliance with a local “temporary wife.” Loti’s works are typically set in exotic locales in the Near or Far East and frequently explore the conflict between romantic distractions and duty. Long’s short story similarly features a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who marries a young geisha and then leaves her. Both Loti and Belasco have *Butterfly* communicate in a primitive, pidgin English. Unlike its literary predecessors, Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* casts its heroine in a fully sympathetic light, free from the caricature that mars Loti, Long, and Belasco’s works.

ACT I *Japan, early 20th century.* Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton of the U.S. Navy inspects a house overlooking Nagasaki harbor that he is leasing from Goro, a marriage broker. The house comes with three servants and a geisha wife named Cio-Cio-San, known as Madame Butterfly. The lease runs for 999 years, subject to monthly renewal. The American consul Sharpless arrives breathless from climbing the hill. Pinkerton describes his philosophy of the fearless Yankee roaming the world in search of experience and pleasure. He is not sure whether his feelings for the young girl are love or a whim, but he intends to go through with the marriage ceremony. Sharpless warns him that the girl may view the marriage differently, but Pinkerton brushes off such concerns and says that someday he will take a real, American wife. He offers the consul whiskey and proposes a toast. Cio-Cio-San is heard climbing the hill with her friends for the ceremony. In casual conversation after the formal introduction, she admits her age, 15, and explains that her family was once prominent but lost its position, and she has had to earn her living as a geisha. Her relatives arrive and chatter about the marriage.



VOICE TYPE

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

SOPRANO

the highest-pitched type of human voice, normally possessed only by women and boys

MEZZO-SOPRANO

the female voice whose range lies between the soprano and the contralto (Italian “mezzo” = middle, medium)

CONTRALTO

the lowest female voice, also called an alto

COUNTERTENOR

a male singing voice whose vocal range is equivalent to that of a contralto, mezzo-soprano, or (less frequently) a soprano, usually through use of falsetto

TENOR

the highest naturally occurring voice type in adult males

BARITONE

the male voice lying below the tenor and above the bass

BASS

the lowest male voice

Cio-Cio-San shows Pinkerton her very few possessions, and quietly tells him she has been to the Christian mission and will embrace her husband’s religion. The Imperial Commissioner reads the marriage agreement, and the relatives congratulate the couple. Suddenly, a threatening voice is heard from afar—it is the Bonze, Cio-Cio-San’s uncle, a priest. He curses the girl for going to the Christian mission and rejecting her ancestral religion. Pinkerton orders the guests to leave, and as they go, the Bonze and the shocked relatives denounce Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton tries to console her with sweet words. She is helped by Suzuki into her wedding kimono, and joins Pinkerton in the house.

ACT II—PART 1 Three years have passed, and Cio-Cio-San awaits her husband’s return. Suzuki prays to the gods for help, but Cio-Cio-San berates her for believing in lazy Japanese gods rather than in Pinkerton’s promise to return one day. Sharpless appears with a letter from Pinkerton, but before he can read it to Cio-Cio-San, Goro arrives with the latest potential husband for her, the wealthy Prince Yamadori. Cio-Cio-San politely serves the guests tea but insists she is not available for marriage—her American husband has not deserted her. She dismisses Goro and Yamadori. Sharpless attempts to read Pinkerton’s letter but Cio-Cio-San keeps interrupting him with questions. He then asks her what she would do if Pinkerton never came back. With dark foreboding, she responds that she could do one of two things: go back to her life of singing, or better yet, die. Sharpless suggests that perhaps Cio-Cio-San should reconsider Yamadori’s offer. “And this?” asks the outraged Cio-Cio-San, showing the consul her small son. Sharpless is too upset to tell her more of the letter’s contents. He leaves, promising to tell Pinkerton of the child. A cannon shot is heard in the harbor announcing the arrival of a ship. Cio-Cio-San and Suzuki take a telescope to the terrace and read the name of Pinkerton’s ship. Overjoyed, Cio-Cio-San joins Suzuki in strewing the house with flower petals from the garden. Night falls, and Cio-Cio-San, Suzuki, and the child settle into a vigil, watching over the harbor.

ACT II—PART 2 Dawn breaks, and Suzuki insists that Cio-Cio-San get some sleep. Cio-Cio-San carries the child into another room. Sharpless appears with Pinkerton and Kate, Pinkerton’s new wife. Suzuki realizes who the American woman is and agrees to help break the news to Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton is overcome with guilt and runs from the scene, pausing to remember his days in the little house. Cio-Cio-San rushes in hoping to find Pinkerton, but sees Kate instead. Grasping the situation, she agrees to give up the child but insists Pinkerton return for him. Dismissing everyone, Butterfly takes out the dagger with which her father committed suicide, choosing to die with honor rather than live in shame. She is interrupted momentarily when the child comes in, but Butterfly says goodbye to him and blindfolds him. She stabs herself as Pinkerton calls her name.

WHO'S WHO IN MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CHARACTER		PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
Cio-Cio-San (known as Madame Butterfly)	A fifteen-year-old geisha in Nagasaki	cho-cho-SAHN	Soprano	Young and idealistic, she views her marriage contract as a permanent, sacred union.
Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton	A lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, stationed in Nagasaki	as in English	Tenor	Dashing but callous, his philosophy is to seek pleasure wherever it may be found.
Suzuki	Maid to Cio-Cio-San	soo-DZOO-kee	Mezzo-soprano	A faithful and empathetic servant, Suzuki remains with Cio-Cio-San throughout her changes in fortune.
Sharpless	U.S. consul at Nagasaki	as in English	Baritone	Sharpless provides a necessary voice of restraint and sympathy.
Goro	A marriage broker	GOH-roh	Tenor	Goro flatters his clients while treating Cio-Cio-San with derision.

Madama Butterfly History

- 1630s** Japan establishes the policy of *sakoku*, which closes the country to immigration and emigration and strictly limits foreign trade to a small number of designated locations. The only location open to trade with Europe is a Dutch trading post at Dejima, a man-made island off the coast of Nagasaki.
- 1853** Japan is compelled to open two of its ports to U.S. trade through the Kanagawa Treaty, after the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrates Tokyo harbor with four warships. The Kanagawa Treaty effectively ends Japan's centuries-long foreign policy of seclusion and border closure.
- 1858** Giacomo Puccini is born on December 22 in Lucca, Tuscany, to a family of church musicians.
- 1874** Puccini begins training in music at the local music institute, studying with his uncle, Fortunato Magi. He soon begins learning the scores of Verdi's operas.
- 1880** Puccini's exemplary musical gifts earn him entry to the Milan Conservatory, the most prestigious musical academy in Italy. In addition to his formal studies, he comes into contact with the bohemian and anti-conformist group of artists known as the Scapigliati (literally "the disheveled ones"). There, he meets many of the leading writers and intellectuals of the day.
- 1883** Puccini composes his first opera, *Le Villi*, which is first performed in a private recital at the home of a member of the Scapigliati. Among those present are the composer Pietro Mascagni, who plays double bass in the orchestra, and Arrigo Boito, who had just become Verdi's collaborator and was working on the libretto to *Otello*. Impressed with Puccini's talent, the music publisher Giulio Ricordi enters an exclusive contract with the composer and provides him with a monthly stipend to concentrate on composition. For the rest of his life, Ricordi acts as mentor and friend to Puccini.
- 1887** The French naval officer and travel writer Pierre Loti publishes *Madame Chrysanthème*, a semi-autobiographical account of his brief relationship with a geisha while stationed in Nagasaki. Loti's work colors the popular Western understanding of Japan for years to come.



- 1893** Puccini achieves his first major success with the premiere of *Manon Lescaut* on February 1 at the Teatro Regio in Turin.
- 1897** John Luther Long publishes the short story *Madame Butterfly*, which is adapted from *Madame Chrysanthème*, in the periodical *Century Magazine*. It similarly depicts a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who takes a temporary “wife” in Nagasaki.
- 1900** Puccini visits London for the Covent Garden premiere of *Tosca* on July 12. While there, he attends a performance at the Duke of York’s theater of the play *Madame Butterfly*, written by the American impresario David Belasco and based on Long’s story. Immediately upon returning home to Milan, Puccini asks his publisher to obtain the rights to Belasco’s play.
- 1901** Puccini officially acquires the rights to *Madame Butterfly* from Belasco in September and begins developing a scenario with his frequent collaborators Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa.
- 1903** Puccini’s work on *Madama Butterfly* is interrupted when he is seriously injured in a car accident. (A lifelong technology enthusiast, he was among the first Italians to own a car.) The long duration of his convalescence with a broken leg is due, as he would learn later, to an undiagnosed case of diabetes.
- 1904** *Madama Butterfly* premieres at La Scala in Milan on February 17. Despite a starry cast, the performance is a disaster, with critics accusing Puccini of plagiarism. He immediately withdraws the score. After a series of revisions, *Madama Butterfly* finds great success elsewhere in Italy and abroad, although it is never again seen at La Scala during Puccini’s lifetime.
- 1906** Puccini’s fourth revision of *Madama Butterfly* is performed at the Opéra Comique in Paris on December 28. This is the version commonly performed today.
- 1924** While in Brussels for treatment of throat cancer, Puccini dies on November 29. His funeral at Milan’s cathedral is attended by fellow musicians, dignitaries, and ambassadors from around the globe.



Rosetta Pampanini sang the title role at La Scala in 1925.

History and Social Studies

IN PREPARATION

For this activity, students will need the reproducible resources available at the back of this guide, as well as the audio selections from *Madama Butterfly* available online or on the accompanying CD. Students will also need photocopies of the sidebar *A Brief History of Japan*.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

History and Social Studies, Government, Ethics, Visual Arts, Music

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To develop an understanding of Japanese history from the mid-19th century through the early 20th century
- To interpret facts about the past based on an analysis of historical artworks
- To prompt curiosity about the interpretation of *Madama Butterfly* as seen in this *Live in HD* production

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan

The story of *Madama Butterfly* takes place in what was the present day when it was written—around the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. At precisely this time, Japan was undergoing massive political and social changes as it transitioned from a closed, feudal culture to a capitalist and increasingly “Westernized” world power. Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* reflects the tensions of this age in Japan’s history, as the country adapted to a new era of open interaction with foreigners and struggled to maintain its independence from colonial domination. The opera presents a multi-faceted view into how these tensions are borne out on a personal level, in the relations between the young geisha Cio-Cio-San and the American naval officer Pinkerton. In this activity, students will:

- investigate a popular song from the age and discover its connection to historical events in Japan
- learn about woodblock prints, or *ukiyo-e*, as an example of traditional Japanese arts
- use artworks and ephemera to draw conclusions about historical events
- become acquainted with some of the music of *Madama Butterfly* in advance of the Met’s *Live in HD* transmission

STEPS

In this activity, students will take a close look at a number of artworks created around the time of *Madama Butterfly*’s story and at two moments in the opera, and consider them within the context of Japanese history. Through their study, students will come to a deeper understanding of the opera’s time period and its representation of Western interests in Japan.

STEP 1: Students will likely be unfamiliar with Japanese history from the time of *Madama Butterfly*. If possible, have them review the sidebar *A Brief History of Japan* before class begins, or alternatively allow for time at the start of class to complete this background reading. Begin the class with a discussion of the era. Questions you might ask include the following:

- What event took place in Japan in 1853?
- What type of government ruled Japan in the Edo period?
- What is *sakoku*?
- What is the Meiji Restoration?
- How did Japan change from 1853 through 1912?

The points to elicit are the following:

- Japan had long been ruled by a warrior class of samurai, organized under military commanders known as the *shogun*. Japanese peasants provided labor in return for protection.
- Beginning in the 1630s, the *shogun* in power enacted a foreign policy known as *sakoku*, or “closed country,” which forbade immigration and emigration and strictly limited foreign trade to a small number of designated locations.
- In 1853, Japan was compelled to open two of its ports to U.S. trade through the Kanagawa Treaty, after the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrated Tokyo harbor with four warships. The Kanagawa Treaty effectively ended Japan’s foreign policy of *sakoku*.
- Following the Kanagawa Treaty, a group of political reformers succeeded in displacing the shogunate and established a centralized, imperial government, in 1868. This restoration of power to the emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration, named after Emperor Meiji, who ruled until 1912.
- During the 45 years of the Meiji era, Japan experienced rapid industrialization, vastly increasing its wealth and power, and successfully avoided falling under the expansionist aspirations of the Western powers.

STEP 2: Next, distribute the reproducible handout at the back of this guide and turn students’ attention to the text provided of a Japanese popular song from around 1880, also reprinted below. Invite a volunteer to read the lyrics aloud.

*In the West there is England,
In the North, Russia.
My countrymen, be careful!
Outwardly they make treaties,
But you cannot tell
What is at the bottom of their hearts.
There is a Law of Nations, it is true,
But when the moment comes, remember,
The Strong eat up the Weak.*

First, give students a few moments to reflect on the poem and jot down a few interpretive notes in the space provided on the handout. Then, initiate a discussion on the meaning of these unsentimental lyrics. What might the Japanese have to fear from their neighbors? What is meant by the phrase “the strong eat up the weak”? Students should recognize that the Japanese felt that the

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY

This activity directly supports the following ELA-Literacy Common Core Strands:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.2

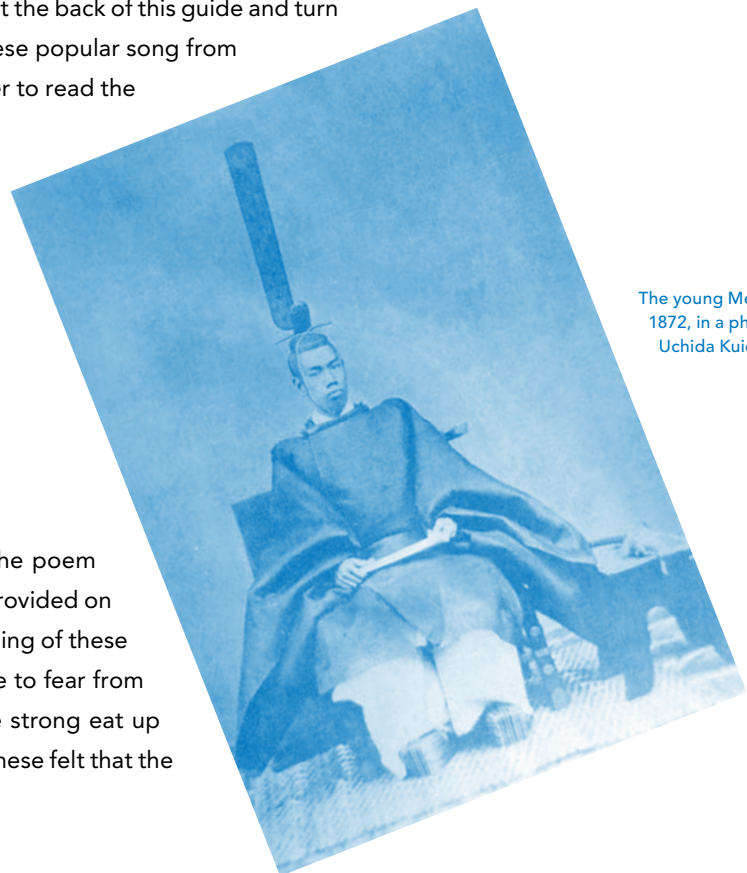
Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1.d

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.8

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.



The young Meiji emperor, 1872, in a photograph by Uchida Kuichi



country needed to modernize and join the world's imperial powers, or else risk being claimed by those same powers.

STEP 3: Now divide the class into groups and assign each an image from the next section in the reproducible handouts. Each of these images depicts an aspect of Japan, its inhabitants or visitors, its place among the world powers, or its new self-conception, from the time *Madama Butterfly* was written. The images may be drawn from the world of Japanese art (such as *ukiyo-e*, the traditional Japanese genre of woodblock prints), American or British periodicals, or other contemporary sources. As a group, students should discuss and analyze their artworks to determine answers to the following questions (also included on the handouts):

- What is going on in this image?
- Who is being depicted? How can you tell, and how are they dressed?
- Can you hypothesize on the attitude of the artist?
- How does this image reflect the changes that Japan was undergoing at the time?

In their groups, students should make notes in the space provided on the handout with their answers to the questions above. Following their breakout work in groups, have one representative from each group briefly discuss their interpretation of the image. For your reference, the artworks are reproduced below with a descriptive answer key. (Please note that the images are reprinted in larger format on the handouts.)



Example 1: *Picture of a Steam Locomotive along the Yokohama Waterfront* by Hiroshige III (c. 1874)

This *ukiyo-e* triptych by well-known artist Hiroshige III depicts a steam-fueled train approaching a bay, which is crowded with large foreign battleships (indicated by the numerous foreign flags on their masts). The white-sailed Japanese ships are considerably smaller. The work draws attention to Japan's developing industry and compares its naval strength to that of its foreign rivals.



Example 2: "Japan Makes Her Début under Columbia's Auspices," by Udo Keppler in *Puck Magazine*, August 16, 1899

The female figure of Columbia at the center of the image is the personification of the United States, indicated by her striped dress and starred sash, along with a shield decorated with the stars and stripes. She introduces the female personification of Japan to the other imperial world powers, who are identified by their national dress and also by name (Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Spain, Austria, Turkey). A lone figure outside the wall (probably meant to represent China) looks on. Japan had just emerged victorious over China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95.



Example 3: "It Ought to Be a Happy New Year," by Victor Gillam in *Judge Magazine*, January 7, 1899

This cover illustration depicts Uncle Sam and John Bull (a representation of Great Britain), joining together to swallow the globe. The countries on the map have been

FUN FACT: In Italian, "madama" as a form of address is reserved for married women, similar to the English "Mrs." The opera's title, *Madama Butterfly*, can therefore be seen as a commentary on the sad plight of its heroine. Cio-Cio-San herself prefers to be called "Madama Pinkerton," although none of the other characters ever complies with her wish. The fact that she forever remains "Madama Butterfly" reflects a reality that everyone else already understands: her married status and connection to Pinkerton are only temporary.

A Brief History of Japan

The Japanese archipelago has been inhabited since the Paleolithic Age, and by the eighth century AD had become a powerful and unified state ruled by an emperor. Beginning at the end of the 12th century, a less centralized form of government emerged, with a warrior class of samurai, led by military commanders



Crest of the Tokugawa shoguns

called the *shogun*, effectively governing the nation. In this era, Japan was a feudal society, with peasants working the land in return for protection by the samurai.

The office of the *shogun* was subject to competition and coups, and rather than being strictly hereditary, the shogunate passed through a variety of powerful families. Beginning in the 1630s, the shogunate led by the Tokugawa family enacted a series of foreign policy measures that effectively closed Japan's borders, preventing immigration and emigration, strictly limiting foreign trade to a small number of designated locations, and prohibiting Christianity. This policy was known as *sakoku*, or "closed country," and its effects on Japan were significant. On the one hand, the Tokugawa shogunate was able to concentrate on domestic issues and ushered in a 300-year era of peace; on the other, their foreign policy prolonged the

existence of the feudal system and isolated the country from the industrial developments of the rest of the world.

The policy of *sakoku* ended only after intense pressure from the West, which was very keen to engage Japan in foreign trade. In 1853, the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrated Tokyo harbor with four warships. Under the implied threat of military action, Perry requested that Japan initiate relations with America. Faced with warships of a kind they had never seen, the Japanese had no alternative but to sign



New Year's Sunrise
by Eishōsai Chōki (1790)

the Kanagawa Treaty, which immediately opened two ports to U.S. trade and ended the country's centuries-long isolation.

Not long after the Kanagawa Treaty, the age of the shogunate also came to an end in 1868, when a group of political reformers succeeded in re-establishing a centralized, imperial government. This restoration of power to the emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration, named after Emperor Meiji, who ruled until 1912. During the 45 years of the Meiji era, Japan experienced rapid industrialization, vastly increasing its wealth and power, and successfully avoided falling under the expansionist aspirations of the Western powers. The fictional events of *Madama Butterfly* take place during the Meiji era, when Japan was only just adapting to the presence of foreigners, of Christian missions, of international trade, and of the notion of emigration. All of these issues are at play in *Madama Butterfly*.

jumbled so that they re-align with American and British imperial interests. Atop the globe, warships fly the flags of the waterways that would open the world to global trade: the Suez Canal and the Managua Canal (a planned waterway through Nicaragua, later abandoned in favor of the Panama Canal).



Example 4: *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise* by Sadahide (1861)

Sadahide's *ukiyo-e* pentatyck (i.e. series of five woodblock prints) depicts American, French, and British vessels in a harbor, busily unloading crates of cargo. It is a vivid depiction of the hustle and bustle of a busy trading port. Of particular interest is the bank of open gun ports all along the side of the American ship, providing a view into the military might of the vessel. It is a subtle hint of the threat of military action, should trade be disrupted.



Example 5: *Picture of Foreigners' Revelry at the Gankirō in the Miyozaki Quarter* by Yoshikazu (1861)

The Miyozaki Quarter was the entertainment district of Yokohama, and the Gankirō was the section reserved for foreign visitors. In this busy scene, a boisterous celebration is underway in the foreground. Foreigners sit on the floor in the Japanese manner, enjoying the company of Japanese women and drinking sake. Two geishas on the left side play the *samisen*, a traditional Japanese instrument. In the center, an animated (and perhaps inebriated) figure stands and performs a lively dance.



STEP 4: Now it's time to turn to the text and music of *Madama Butterfly*. If students are not already familiar with the plot, it will suffice for them to know only its basic points: it is the story of a young Japanese girl in Nagasaki who enters into a relationship with a visiting American naval officer. While he views their arrangement as temporary, she considers it a binding and permanent marriage. The opera follows her from the time of her engagement through her abandonment by the American, to her eventual suicide.

Have students turn to the libretto text beginning at "*Dovunque al mondo*," Pinkerton's aria from early in Act I. This piece and the following dialogue encapsulate Pinkerton's attitude toward Japan. Play the first portion of the excerpt in **Track 1** entitled "Pinkerton's Philosophy" as students follow along to the text. In a free discussion, encourage students to summarize Pinkerton's worldview. What is the American way of life when it comes to foreign lands? How does he treat those he meets? Does he think of the effect his actions might have on others? Or does he treat everyone and everything as an expendable resource, to be used up and discarded?

Continue by playing **Track 2**, entitled "Pinkerton Continues" as students follow along to the text. Here, Pinkerton makes it clear that he considers his marriage to be a temporary arrangement despite Sharpless's objections, and that he thinks nothing of abandoning his Japanese bride on a whim. He does not consider her to be a "real" wife. Can students draw parallels between Pinkerton's view of his Japanese wife and the behavior of Westerners that students observed in the artworks in Step 3?

STEP 5: Through the character of Pinkerton, we can witness the competing forces at play in Japan in this time period: the West viewed Japan as a land up for grabs in terms of colonization and free trade, while Japan understood that its ability to maintain an independent identity must lie in its adoption of Western-style industry and its development of a military strong enough to dominate its neighbors. Pinkerton treats the people of his temporary home as both expendable and subject to his own whims. In a way, his character reveals the challenges facing Japan as it moved into the modern age.

In *Madama Butterfly*, another character can be understood as representing Japan's past: the Bonze, Cio-Cio-San's uncle. To investigate this aspect of the opera, have students turn to the excerpt on the reproducible handouts under **Track 3**, entitled "The Bonze." They should follow along to the text while you play the recording of the excerpt. Based on their understanding of the text alone, encourage students to discuss the conflict in this scene. What has Butterfly done to upset her uncle? How does he respond?

It may interest students to learn that one of the goals of the policy of *sakoku* had been the removal of foreign religious influence, and accordingly Christian worship was forbidden and those who practiced it were punished. This prohibition was relaxed in the Meiji Restoration, which also adopted a negative stance towards Buddhism, in favor of the Shinto religion. As a Buddhist priest, a bonze was the representative of the previous era, in which the shoguns had cultivated a close connection to Buddhism.

STEP 6: Conclude the activity by asking students to reflect on the popular song, the artworks they studied, and the excerpts from *Madama Butterfly*. Knowing what they know now, why do they think Cio-Cio-San came to such a tragic end? Do they think Japan's uniquely brisk transformation into a modern world power and related cultural tensions played a role in her alienation? How might her story have been different if it had occurred before the end of *sakoku*? Or would it even have been possible?

FOLLOW-UP: As homework, have students imagine that they are an illustrator for a historical newspaper or periodical. They are tasked with creating a cover illustration depicting the story of *Madama Butterfly*. It may be critical of Pinkerton, of Cio-Cio-San, or take any other editorial position of their choice. Their illustration may include a tag line, as do several of the examples in Step 3 above. Students should also compose a one-paragraph description of their illustration and the interpretive position it espouses. The goal of this exercise is to encourage students to view artworks as documents that are rooted in their age and that elicit strong critical responses in the viewer.

FUN FACT: David Belasco, author and director of the play on which Puccini's opera is based, was known for his innovations to stage technology. In *Madama Butterfly*, he won particular praise for creating a new and striking lighting effect in Cio-Cio-San's vigil scene, which replicated the transition from dusk to dawn, including the simulation of starlight. Puccini was very impressed by this episode, set entirely without dialogue, and devised an equally unconventional musical effect for the corresponding moment in his opera, with a chorus of women's voices humming behind the scene.

*Music***IN PREPARATION**

For this activity, students will need the reproducible resources available at the back of this guide as well as the audio selections from *Madama Butterfly* available online or on the accompanying CD.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Music, History and Social Studies, Humanities, and Arts

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To introduce and/or reinforce knowledge of musical terminology
- To listen to musical examples critically and to recognize their harmonic influences
- To explore the notion of “exoticism” in music
- To use new musical vocabulary to create and describe a personal musical style

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

When beginning to work on a new opera, Puccini was often most inspired by settings that included a strong local flavor or ambience. Whether a bohemian garret in the Parisian Quartier Latin in *La Bohème* or a mythic version of ancient China in *Turandot*, these locales stimulated Puccini to evoke the setting in his musical representation and to compose music that inhabits the same world as the opera’s characters.

In *Madama Butterfly*, the composer was very deliberate in crafting a sound world that would transport listeners to Japan—an aural setting that further juxtaposes Cio-Cio-San’s world with that of Pinkerton. Puccini incorporated Japanese and Chinese folksongs into the musical fabric of the score and quoted the Japanese national anthem. He also utilized Japanese gongs in the percussion parts and approximated the sound of Japanese music through the use of pentatonic scales. For Pinkerton, in contrast, he developed a prototypically “American” sound. For audiences both past and present, the musical representation of the cultures that collide in the opera’s story increases the dramatic tension and embodies the dueling desires within the person of Cio-Cio-San herself.

In this activity, students will:

- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture
- listen to and analyze a selection of musical excerpts
- relate some of Puccini’s musical choices to character, plot, and the emotional arc of the opera

STEPS

Students will listen to and analyze a selection of musical passages in order to discern Puccini’s compositional process in developing “Japanese” and “American” musical styles. They will use new musical vocabulary to describe the attributes of each passage and will apply their knowledge in the creation of an independent musical representation of their own identity and culture.

STEP 1: Distribute copies of the *Ten Essential Musical Terms* found in this guide. Have your students review it as a pre-lesson assignment or at the beginning of the class. Where applicable, you may want to demonstrate the terms on the piano or on another instrument. Several of the terms in particular will help students to develop an ear for the ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.

STEP 2: Using the chart provided in the reproducible handouts for this activity, invite students to listen to a selection of excerpts. Each of the examples includes a musical element that Puccini uses to illustrate a kind of “local color,” either American or Japanese. Have students make notes in the right-hand column on how that musical element is presented musically, any associations they feel the element possesses, and any opinions on what its meaning might be. It may be necessary to play each excerpt through a few times.

A completed chart with further details on how Puccini uses the musical element throughout the opera is provided on the following page for your reference.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY

This activity directly supports the following ELA-Literacy Common Core Strands:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.2

Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5

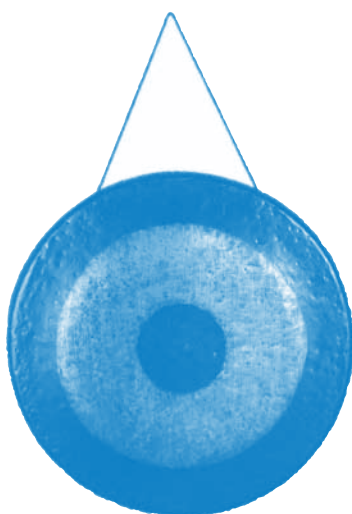
Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

MUSICAL SNAPSHOT

“UN BEL DÌ” Cio-Cio-San’s big Act II solo, “Un bel dì,” is the most famous aria in *Madama Butterfly* (and one of the best known in the entire operatic repertoire). It comes at an important moment emotionally and dramatically, as she faces the dwindling of her fortunes and must decide whether to remain steadfast in awaiting Pinkerton’s return or to relinquish her hopes. The aria is also very demanding from a vocal standpoint. It begins dreamily, as if Cio-Cio-San can see herself in the future, happily reunited with her beloved. The singer must traverse intense expressions of love, longing, and hope, as Cio-Cio-San demonstrates her unshaken faith in and rapturous desire for Pinkerton’s return.

The aria may be heard in its entirety on **Track 14**, and the text and translation are available on page 41..

Answer Key



TRACK	MUSICAL ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION & MEANING/ASSOCIATION
4	The Star-Spangled Banner	Puccini quotes the American national anthem in the opera's first scene to represent the character of Pinkerton and his personality.
5	Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments	The music includes delicate combinations of harp, piccolo, flute, bells, and tremolo strings, which Puccini uses to recreate the effect of traditional Japanese instruments.
6	Japanese national anthem	This brief moment quotes the second phrase of "Kimigayo," the Japanese national anthem. It corresponds to Butterfly's text at " <i>La legge giapponese,</i> " or "The Japanese law."
7	Chinese folksong	By quoting this excerpt from a Chinese folksong Puccini is emulating a generic "eastern" sound that audiences would have recognized.
8	Japanese chant melody (based on the pentatonic scale)	This moment quotes a Japanese chant melody and is based on the pentatonic scale. It is another example of Puccini creating an "eastern" sound in a more general sense. The melody has a minor pentatonic sound to it, above a repetitive, static harmony.
9, 10	Pentatonic harmonies (two examples)	Puccini utilizes the pentatonic scale both melodically (creating melodies out of the notes of the pentatonic scale) and harmonically (playing two or more notes from the scale simultaneously). Using the pentatonic scale often creates open-sounding intervals, such as the perfect 4th and perfect 5th.
11	Japanese percussion	Puccini accentuates the cry of the Bonze with the crash of the tam-tam.

STEP 3: Now, have students turn to the texts and translations found on the next page of the reproducible handouts, corresponding to **Tracks 12 through 15**. These excerpts are longer and involve connecting the meaning of the words with the sound of the music. Working through the excerpts one at a time, have students follow along to the translation while listening to the corresponding music. As they listen, they may wish to highlight or underline passages in the text where they feel that Puccini is using one of the musical elements explored in the previous step. Play each excerpt two or three times to allow students enough time to make notes below the text with details on Puccini's musical techniques and how they correspond to the meaning of the words.

Before moving on to the next excerpt, discuss the passage as a class and have students provide details on the musical sounds Puccini uses to paint a colorful picture and create meaning. Encourage students to use their new musical vocabulary and

Operatic Conspiracies

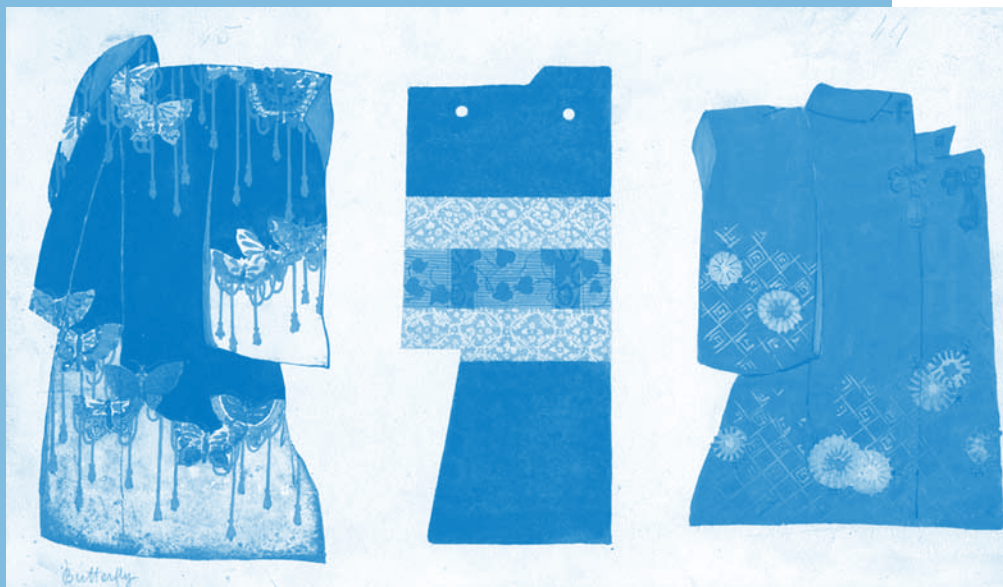
The premiere of *Madama Butterfly* at Milan's La Scala in 1904 was a disaster that has become notorious in theater history. Although audiences a century ago tended to be more vocally demonstrative than today's operagoers, the pandemonium during the opera's first performance was overwhelming even by historical standards. According to contemporary reports, there were animal and bird calls from the audience during the dawn scene, laughter when Butterfly presented her child to Sharpless, and shouts of "She is pregnant!" when a draught caught and billowed the lead singer's costume—all in addition to the typical whistles, hisses, and boos. The professional critics were no less hostile, with several reviewers repeating the claim that Puccini had plagiarized himself by reusing melodies from *La Bohème* in the new opera.

Puccini was convinced that this extremely negative reaction had been orchestrated by someone. A likely candidate for such a villain may have been Edoardo Sonzogno, owner of the music publishing firm that was the main competitor of Ricordi, which represented Puccini. Sonzogno had previously acted as impresario of La Scala, and his rivalry with Ricordi was so great that during his tenure, he forbade any operas published by Ricordi from appearing on the stage. His management of the opera house was disastrous and resulted in massive deficits, and after he was removed from office it was his turn to find few opportunities to

put his operas on stage. When the premiere of *Madama Butterfly* was delayed due to the injuries Puccini suffered in an automobile accident and his subsequent slow recovery, Sonzogno managed to put forward one of the operas from his own roster to fill the resulting void: the now-forgotten *Siberia* by Umberto Giordano. Sonzogno, who was known

After the disaster of the opening night and *Madama Butterfly* was withdrawn from the stage, an article appeared in the newspaper *Il Secolo*. It reflected,

"A second performance would have provoked a scandal among the Milanese, who do not relish being made fun of. The opera... shows that Maestro Puccini was in a hurry."



Costume designs from the 1904 Milan production.

ARCHIVIO STORICO RICORDI © RICORDI & C. S.R.L. MILAN

for his unscrupulous business tactics, would have been keen to ensure that the success of his opera was not eclipsed by Puccini's new work, which immediately followed it on stage. It would not have been the first or the last time that a discreet bribe before a premiere produced a disruptive claque that carried the rest of the public along with it.

Importuned as he was to bring out the work this season, sick as he was, he failed to find original inspiration and had recourse to melodies from his previous operas and even helped himself to melodies by other composers. His opera is dead."

It is worth mentioning that the owner of *Il Secolo* was none other than Edoardo Sonzogno.

Kristine Opolais as Cio-Cio-San with
Maria Zifchak as Suzuki

KEN HOWARD / METROPOLITAN OPERA



to give concrete examples as they are able. A completed chart is provided below for your reference.

Answer Key

TRACK	EXCERPT	DESCRIPTION: CONNECTING MUSIC AND MEANING
12	Act I, Pinkerton's aria "Dovunque al mondo"	Pinkerton reflects on the benefits he enjoys as a member of the U.S. Navy, taking pleasure where he finds it. The Star-Spangled Banner is quoted, creating a strong association between his character and America.
13	Act I, from Pinkerton and Butterfly's first conversation, "Gran ventura"	The delicate melody in the solo violin is a quotation of a Chinese folksong. Puccini also emphasizes Pinkerton's question about Nagasaki by underscoring his vocal line with harmonies based on the pentatonic scale, creating a generic "Eastern" sound. When Butterfly reflects on her family history, Puccini quotes another folk song, now with a more minor inflection, as she tells of the hard life she has led.
14	Act II, "Un bel di"	The aria includes frequent pentatonic inflections, both harmonically and melodically. Several melodic motives are drawn from different folk songs.
15	Act II Finale	The final scene is rife with pentatonic and folk-like melodies. The opera ends with a dramatic, quotation of a Japanese folk song, played in unison, based on the pentatonic scale.

FOLLOW UP: As homework, have students use the final page in the reproducible handouts, “The Songs and Sounds of My World” to brainstorm musical and other sound elements that they associate with their own cultures and everyday life. Using these elements, students should compose a brief essay, incorporating as many musical terms as they are able, in answer to the following questions:

If Puccini had written an opera with you as the title character, how would he have created local flavor to represent your world? What are some of the songs, instruments, and sounds he would have incorporated into the score to capture the world and culture you live in?

Ten Essential Musical Terms

Aria A self-contained piece for solo voice, typically with orchestral accompaniment. Arias form a major part of larger works such as operas and oratorios.

Exoticism The inclusion or imitation of foreign musical styles in Western music. Composers have long drawn on the exotic sounds of other cultures to enrich their own works. In the 19th century, musicians were inspired by influences as varied as Turkish janissary bands and Spanish dance rhythms, among many other examples, to provide local color for their creations. In *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini's use of pentatonic scales and Japanese and Chinese folksongs represents a type of exoticism.

Folk Music and Folksong Music derived from an oral tradition, usually in a simple style and understood to represent the history or "essence" of a nation or cultural group. The term implies a separation between this kind of music and the "higher" form of art music developed by trained composers. Interest in folksong grew steadily throughout the 19th century, parallel and related to the growth of cultural and political nationalism. Folksong formed a rich resource for many 19th-century composers as they sought to broaden the classical idiom and evoke rustic settings, traditional cultures, and the distant past.

Fugue A musical form based on a brief theme, or "subject," and its imitation throughout multiple voices of a composition. The term derives from two Latin words meaning "to flee" and "to chase," reflecting the way that fugal subjects (i.e. repeated musical ideas) figuratively chase one another in repetition. The art of fugal composition reached its pinnacle in the works of Johann Sebastian Bach in the 18th century, but fugues can be found in the works of many later composers, both in orchestral music and in opera. The fugal theme from *Butterfly's* prelude recurs throughout the opera, evoking

the hustle and bustle of Cio-Cio-San's wedding day.

Gong A percussion instrument, usually flat and round in shape, made out of resonating metal such as bronze or brass. Typically hung from a frame and played by hitting them with a mallet, gongs have a very specific timbre. Puccini uses two different kinds in *Madama Butterfly* to evoke the sounds of the Far East: tuned gongs, which create a pitch when they are hit, and the tam-tam, which creates an unpitched crashing sound.

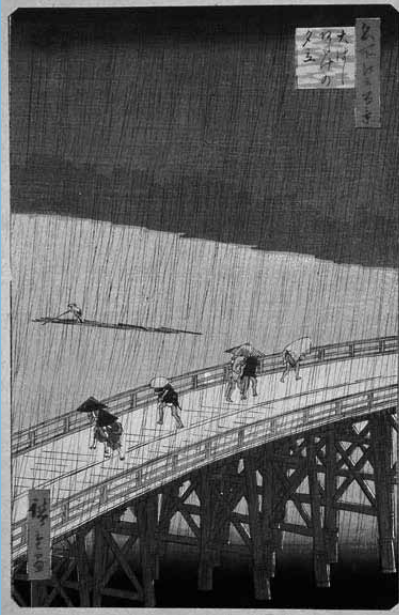
Musical Quotation As in the corresponding concept in speech or literature, a composer's use of a brief passage of pre-existent musical material. The principle is similar to the contemporary notion of sampling, where sounds are taken from a recorded medium and inserted into a new musical work. Musical quotation most frequently entails the borrowing of the melodic line of its source, although it can include borrowed harmony as well. Often, a composer's use of musical quotation increases the web of meanings of a given passage, as it inspires the listener to make associations with the source's text, composer, culture, or musical tradition. An example from *Madama Butterfly* is Puccini's quotation of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Pentatonic Scale A scale made up of five pitches (from the Greek *pente*, five). The most common pentatonic scale includes the pitches C-D-E-G-A, although other combinations of intervals are possible, including some that have a more "minor" inflection to Western ears. The black keys of the piano keyboard form another pentatonic scale. Pentatonic scales have been used in music from many cultures around the world and throughout history, from China, Japan, and Java to European folk music and American popular music, especially the African-American spiritual and jazz. In *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini used pentatonic melodies and harmonies to represent Cio-Cio-San and her Japanese heritage.

Through-Composed A style of seamless musical composition without obvious repetitions or breaks. The concept may be applied to works as a whole, as in entire operas, or to individual pieces. In an aria, for example, it is understood in contrast to the various types of strophic song, all of which include some variety of internal repetition (such as the da capo aria and rondeau form). Through-composed songs, even when they are based on strophic texts, include new music for each stanza. The technique of through-composition allows a composer greater invention and flexibility, as the music may change to reflect the dramatic situation and develop organically, rather than being restricted by repetition or other formal limitations.

Verismo A movement in Italian theater and opera in the late 19th century that embraced realism and explored areas of society previously ignored on the stage: the poor, the lower-class, the outcast, and the criminal. Characters in verismo operas are often driven to defy reason, morality, and occasionally the law. In order to reflect these emotional extremes, composers developed a musical style that communicates raw and unfiltered passions. Before its exploration on the operatic stage, the verismo aesthetic developed in the realm of literature.

Whole-Tone Scale A six-note scale (seven including the upper octave) consisting exclusively of whole steps (or "tones"). There are only two possible whole tone scales: C-D-E-F#-G#-A# (or Bb, spelled enharmonically); and C#-D#-E# (or F)-G-A-B. Whole-tone scales and chords are harmonically unstable as they lack the pitches used in chord resolutions typical of the tonal era. In *Madama Butterfly*, Puccini often uses whole-tone inflections to lend his music an otherworldly or exotic feeling.



right: Van Gogh: *Bridge in the Rain*, after the work by the ukiyo-e printmaker Utagawa Hiroshige, left

JAPONISME One of many wide-ranging effects of the opening of Japan to foreign trade in 1853 was the surge of interest on the part of Western artists in the decorative arts, aesthetics, costumes, and crafts of Japan. The London Exposition of 1862 and the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867 showcased Japan's arts to Europeans for the first time, but even before this many visual artists were already collectors of Japanese fans, kimonos, bronzes, and examples of the rich Japanese tradition of woodblock prints known as *ukiyo-e*. Artists such as Édouard Manet, Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, Mary Cassatt, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and Vincent Van Gogh, among many others, began incorporating Japanese motifs and props into their own artworks, and many developed a visual style influenced by Japanese art in its use of asymmetrical composition, lack of perspective, bold colors, and clarity of line. As a stylistic movement, this interest in Japan and its arts is usually referenced using the French term “Japonisme,” given its prevalence particularly among French artists.

Japonisme influenced the most important French writers of the day, such as Stéphane Mallarmé and Marcel Proust, and popular interest in Japan also helped make the works of Pierre Loti wildly successful—including the novel *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887), one of the sources for *Madama Butterfly*. In music, examples of Japonisme can be found in the opera *La Princesse Jaune* (“The Yellow Princess,” 1872) by Camille Saint-Saëns, Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* (1885), and the operettas *The Geisha* (1896) and *San Tòy* (1899) by Sydney Jones.

Supporting the Student Experience during *The Met: Live in HD* Transmission

IN PREPARATION

For this activity, students will need the Performance Activity reproducible handouts found in the back of this guide.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3

Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

Watching and listening to a performance is a unique experience that takes students beyond the printed page to an immersion in images, sound, interpretation, technology, drama, skill, and craft. Performance activities help students analyze different aspects of the experience and engage critically with the performance. They will consider the creative choices that have been made for the particular production they are watching and examine different aspects of the performance.

Each Performance Activity incorporates a reproducible sheet. Students should bring this activity sheet to the *Live in HD* transmission and fill it out during intermission and/or after the final curtain. The activities direct attention to details of the production that might otherwise go unnoticed.

For *Madama Butterfly*, the first activity sheet, *The Art of the Director*, encourages students to tease out the interpretive decisions of the director from the visual clues on stage. Students will consider how added props and various staging decisions affect their perception of the opera's meaning and its overall style.

The second, basic activity sheet is called *My Highs & Lows*. It is meant to be collected, opera by opera, over the course of the season. This sheet serves to guide students toward a consistent set of objective observations, as well as to help them articulate their own opinions. It is designed to enrich the students' understanding of the art form as a whole. The ratings system encourages students to express their critique: use these ratings to spark discussions that require careful, critical thinking.

The Performance Activity reproducible handouts can be found in the back of this guide. On the next page, you'll find an activity created specifically for follow-up after the *Live in HD* transmission.

Asking for Help: Could Cio-Cio-San's Crisis Have Been Averted?

Students will enjoy starting the class with an open discussion of the Met performance. 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? The discussion offers an opportunity to apply the notes on students' *My Highs & Lows* sheet, as well as their thoughts about the visual design of the Met production—in short, to see themselves as *Madama Butterfly* experts.

Students may feel the need to discuss the opera's shocking ending and to voice their emotional responses to viewing Cio-Cio-San's suicide. Over the



course of the opera, viewers are drawn more and more closely into Cio-Cio-San's world, as her hopes gradually narrow and her future disappears. Her sweet optimism and grace under tragedy render her tragic end all the more affecting, a fact acknowledged by director Anthony Minghella, who said of his approach to bringing the opera to the stage that "it's no good unless it breaks your heart."

It may be helpful for students to consider the various causes, both personal and cultural, that contributed to Cio-Cio-San's suicide, and how her circumstances might have been improved by different kinds of help and support.

Some of the questions your students might want to consider are:

- What would Cio-Cio-San's life have been like if she had not been disowned by her family? How might they have helped her?
- Would it have been different or better if Pinkerton had not waited three years to return to Nagasaki?

IN PREPARATION

This activity requires no preparation other than attendance at the *Live in HD* transmission of *Madama Butterfly*.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To review students' understanding of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*
- To examine the opera's characters and discuss their motivations
- To discuss students' overall experience in watching *Madama Butterfly*
- To think about how artistic choices are made

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY

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.

- Is there anything that Sharpless could have done to help Cio-Cio-San?
- Was giving up her son to Pinkerton and his American wife the right decision? Do you think his life in America will be better than his life with a loving mother?
- Could Suzuki have done anything differently to help Cio-Cio-San?
- Do you think that Cio-Cio-San's young age played a role in her response both to Pinkerton and to her reaction at losing him?

As a culminating activity, students can apply their observations about Cio-Cio-San and her plight in an interactive game incorporating modern-day resources. Divide the class into pairs of students and have them imagine that Cio-Cio-San is telephoning a crisis hotline. (Students may imagine that Cio-Cio-San is calling just prior to the final moments of the opera, or alternatively pick an earlier moment from the opera when she is facing a crucial decision.) One student will play the role of Cio-Cio-San, explaining her desires and emotions, and the other student will work with Cio-Cio-San, attempting to talk her down from her crisis and bring about a more positive outcome. After interacting in this vein for several minutes, students should switch roles.

By discussing Cio-Cio-San's plight and its causes, students can engage with *Madama Butterfly* and the issues it raises, practice flexible, critical thinking, sharpen their skills of persuasion and logical argument, and practice empathy and positive emotional modeling.

Asao Tamejōrō I operating a
Bunraku puppet by Katsukawa
Shunei (ca. 1790)

COURTESY THE LYON COLLECTION, KANSAS CITY



Bunraku Theater

For most Western audiences, puppet theater is identified either with provocative comedy, à la Punch and Judy or Charlie McCarthy ventriloquism, or with educational entertainment for children, as in *The Muppets* or *Sesame Street*. But the puppets featured in the Met's *Madama Butterfly* were inspired by Japanese Bunraku theater, a serious and sophisticated art form established in the late 17th century in the city of Osaka. The art of puppet plays accompanied by musical narration had a long history in Japan, appearing as early as the 11th century. Like the stylized theatrical genre of *kabuki*, which dates from close to the same time and shares many of the same stories, *Bunraku* from its inception was an entertainment created for ordinary people, unlike other dramatic forms of the time that were performed exclusively for the nobility and samurai classes.

Bunraku puppeteers go through lengthy apprenticeships to master the form, which may account for the gradual waning of its popularity in the 19th century. But there are still a number of practitioners today in Japan, and interest has revived in recent years, including in the West. Mark Down and Nick Barnes, the founders of Blind Summit Theatre, take inspiration from this tradition for their puppet-theater presentations. For Anthony Minghella's production of *Madama Butterfly*, they created Bunraku-style puppets to represent Cio-Cio-San's child, her servants, and, in a dream sequence, Cio-Cio-San herself. Generally one-half to two-thirds life size, a Bunraku puppet has no strings and is operated by three puppeteers, dressed in black and discreetly visible to the audience, each responsible for a different body part.

Excerpts taken from the Metropolitan Opera broadcast of December 17, 2011

CIO-CIO-SAN

Liping Zhang

PINKERTON

Robert Dean Smith

SUZUKI

Maria Zifchak

SHARPLESS

Luca Salsi

GORO

Joel Sorensen

Conducted by

Plácido Domingo

Metropolitan Opera Orchestra
and Chorus

- 1 Pinkerton's Philosophy in "Dovunque al mondo"
- 2 Pinkerton Continues
- 3 The Bonze
- 4 Star Spangled Banner
- 5 Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments
- 6 Japanese National Anthem
- 7 Chinese Folksong
- 8 Japanese chant melody
- 9 Pentatonic Harmonies
- 10 Pentatonic Harmonies (example 2)
- 11 Japanese Percussion
- 12 Pinkerton's aria "Dovunque al mondo"
- 13 Pinkerton and Cio-Cio-San's interaction at "Gran ventura"
- 14 Cio-Cio-San's aria "Un bel dì"
- 15 The final scene

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan

In the West there is England,
In the North, Russia.
My countrymen, be careful!
Outwardly they make treaties,
But you cannot tell
What is at the bottom of their hearts.
There is a Law of Nations, it is true,
But when the moment comes, remember,
The Strong eat up the Weak.

Interpretation:

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)



Example 1: *Picture of a Steam Locomotive along the Yokohama Waterfront* by Hiroshige III (c. 1874)

Interpretation:

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)



Example 2: "Japan Makes Her Début under Columbia's Auspices," by Udo Keppler in *Puck Magazine*, August 16, 1899

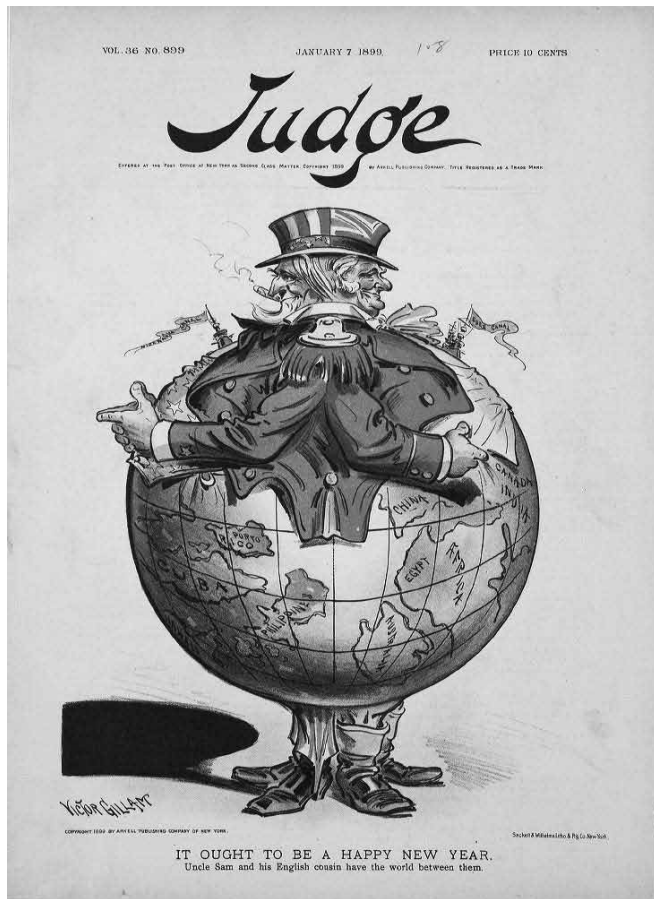
Interpretation:

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)



Example 3: "It Ought to Be a Happy New Year," by Victor Gillam in *Judge Magazine*, January 7, 1899

Interpretation:

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)



Example 4: *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise* by Sadahide (1861)

Interpretation:

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)



Example 5: *Picture of Foreigners' Revelry at the Gankirō in the Miyozaki Quarter* by Yoshikazu (1861)

Interpretation:

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)

Pinkerton's Philosophy

TRACK 1

PINKERTON: Dovunque al mondo
lo Yankee vagabondo
si gode e traffica
sprezzando i rischi.
Affonda l'ancora alla ventura...
(interrupts himself to offer Sharpless a drink)
Milk-Punch, o Wiskey?
(starting again) ...finchè una raffica
scompigli nave e ormeggi, alberatura.
La vita ei non appaga
se non fa suo tesoro
i fiori d'ogni plaga,
d'ogni bella gli amor.

SHARPLESS: È un facile vangelo
che fa la vita vaga
ma che intristisce il cuore.

PINKERTON: *(continuing)* Vinto si tuffa e la sorte riacciuffa.
Il suo talento fa in ogni dove.
Così mi sposo all'uso giapponese
per novecento novantanove anni.
Salvo a prosciogliermi ogni mese.
"America forever!"

SHARPLESS: "America forever."

Pinkerton Continues

TRACK 2

SHARPLESS: Ed è bella la sposa?

GORO: *(Goro, who has been listening in, comes forward attentively and suggestively)* Una ghirlanda di fiori freschi.
Una stella dai raggi d'oro.
E per nulla: sol cento yen.
(to the Consul) Se Vostra Grazia mi comanda
ce n'ho un assortimento.
(the Consul, laughing, thanks him)

PINKERTON: *(very impatiently)* Va, conducila Goro.

(Goro runs to the rear and disappears down the hill; the two servants go back in the house. Pinkerton and Sharpless sit down.)

SHARPLESS: Quale smania vi prende!
Sareste addirittura cotto?

Wherever the Yankee
vagabond roams,
he throws caution to the wind and
seeks his fortune and pleasure.
He drops his anchor where and when he wants...

Milk punch or whisky?
...until a storm wind blows and rocks
his boat; then he raises sail and casts off again.
Life isn't worth living
unless he can make
all the flowers in the fields
his own special treasures.

That's an easy philosophy,
which makes life pleasant
but leaves you with an empty heart.

Always undaunted, his luck will never run out.
He works his magic in every place he goes.
And so I'm marrying in the Japanese manner,
for nine hundred and ninety-nine years,
with the option to renew each month.
"America forever!"

"America forever."

And is the bride a beauty?

She is a garland of fresh flowers,
like a star with golden rays.
And cheap: only one hundred yen.
If Your Honor would like to see,
I have a nice collection.

Go and get her, Goro.

What has come over you!
Are you so deeply in love?

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)

PINKERTON: Non so! Dipende dal grado di cottura!
Amore o grillo, donna o gingillo,
dir non saprei. Certo costei
m'ha colle ingenuie arti invescato.
Lieve qual tenue vetro soffiato
alla statura al portamento
sembra figura da paravento.
Ma dal suo lucido fondo di lacca
come con subito moto si stacca
qual farfalletta svolazza e posa
con tal grazietta silenziosa
che di rincorrerla furor m'assale
se pure infrangerne dovessi l'ale.

SHARPLESS: (*seriously and affably*) Ier l'altro, il Consolato
sen' venne a visitar!
Io non la vidi, ma l'udii parlar.
Di sua voce il mistero l'anima mi colpì.
Certo quando è sincero l'amor parla così.
Sarebbe gran peccato le lievi ali strappar
e desolar forse un credulo cuor.
Quella divina mite vocina
non dovrebbe dar note di dolor.

PINKERTON: Console mio garbato, quietatevi!
Si sa, la vostra età è di flebile umor.
Non c'è gran male s'io vo' quell'ale
drizzare ai dolci voli dell'amor!
(*again offering him a drink*)
Wiskey?

SHARPLESS: Un altro bicchiere.
(*Pinkerton pours another for Sharpless and then fills his own glass.*)
Bevo alla vostra famiglia lontana.

PINKERTON: (*also raising his glass*)
E al giorno in cui mi sposerò con vere nozze,
a una vera sposa americana.

Who knows! It depends on how you measure depth.
I don't know if it's love or just a crush
for a woman or a doll. I do know
that she has enticed me with her innocent charms.
As delicate and fragile as blown glass
in her appearance and her behavior,
she's like a maiden painted on a silk screen.
But that little butterfly breaks
free from her shiny lacquered background,
takes wing and then comes to rest:
with such quiet grace that
I am overcome by the desire to catch her,
even if it means breaking her lovely wings.

She came to visit the consulate
the other day.
I didn't see her, but I heard her speaking.
The mystery of her voice gripped my soul;
Surely only a love that is sincere speaks like that.
It would be wrong to tear off those fragile wings,
and perhaps crush an innocent heart.
That heavenly, gentle, little voice
should never sound notes of pain.

My fine Consul, calm down!
You know that men of your age can't handle the stress.
I'll do no great harm if I want to guide
those wings on sweet flights of love.

Whisky?

I'll take another.

A toast to your family far away.

And to the day when I'll marry for real,
to a real American wife.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)

The Bonze

TRACK 3

THE BONZE: Cio-Cio-San! Cio-Cio-San! Abbominazione!

GORO: (*annoyed by the arrival of the Bonze*)

Un corno al guastafeste!

Chi ci leva d'intorno le persone moleste?!

(*signs to the servants to take away the tables, stools and cushions; and then prudently retires, grumbling furiously*)

ALL: (*terrified, they crowd stammering into a corner*) Lo zio Bonzo!

THE BONZE: (*to Butterfly, who stands isolated from the rest*)

Che hai tu fatto alla Missione?

PINKERTON: Che mi strilla quel matto?

THE BONZE: Rispondi, che hai tu fatto?

ALL: Rispondi Cio-Cio-San!

THE BONZE: Come, hai tu gli occhi asciutti?

Son dunque questi i frutti? (*shouting*) Ci ha rinnegato tutti!

ALL: Hou! Cio-Cio-San!

THE BONZE: Rinnegato, vi dico, il culto antico.

ALL: Hou! Cio-Cio-San! (*Butterfly hides her face in her hands*)

THE BONZE: (*yelling at Butterfly*) Kami Sarundasico!

All'anima tua guasta qual supplizio sovrasta!

(*Butterfly's mother comes forward to protect her, but the Bonze pushes her away roughly, Pinkerton, annoyed, gets up and yells at the Bonze.*)

PINKERTON: Ehi, dico: basta, basta!

(*at the sound of Pinkerton's voice, the Bonze stops short in amazement, then with a sudden resolve he invites family and friends to leave*)

THE BONZE: Venite tutti. Andiamo!

(*to Butterfly*) Ci hai rinnegato e noi...

ALL: Ti rinneghiamo!

PINKERTON: (*sternly*) Sbarazzate all'istante. In casa mia niente baccano e niente bonzeria.

(*Everyone—relatives, friends, the Bonze—all depart hastily down the hill, continuing to curse Butterfly. Butterfly, who had remained immobile and silent with her face in her hands, finally breaks down and cries like a baby.*)

Cio-Cio-San! Cio-Cio-San! What an abomination!

What a bore!

Who will get rid of this intruder?

It's our uncle, the Bonze!

What did you do at the mission?

What is that lunatic yelling at me?

Answer me, what have you done?

Answer him, Cio-Cio-San!

What's this, you're not even crying?

Is this how you treat us? She has betrayed us all!

Oh! Cio-Cio-San!

I tell you, she has renounced the old religion of our ancestors.

Oh! Cio-Cio-San!

Kami Sarundasico!

A soul as rotten as yours will be tormented in eternity.

That's enough, I say! Enough!

Come, everyone. Let us go!

You have disowned us all, and we...

We disown you!

Get out of here this instant. In my house, I'll have no yelling and no Bonzes.

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini's Representation of Conflicting Cultures

MUSICAL ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION & MEANING/ASSOCIATION
The Star-Spangled Banner	
Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments	
Japanese national anthem	
Chinese folksong	
Japanese chant melody (based on the pentatonic scale)	
Pentatonic harmonies (two examples)	
Japanese percussion	

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini's Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(CONT'D)

“Dovunque al mondo”

TRACK 12

PINKERTON: Dovunque al mondo
lo Yankee vagabondo
si gode e traffica
sprezzando i rischi.
Affonda l'ancora alla ventura...
(interrupts himself to offer Sharpless a drink)
Milk-Punch, o Wiskey?
(starting again) ...finchè una raffica
scompigli nave e ormeggi, alberatura.
La vita ei non appaga
se non fa suo tesor
i fiori d'ogni plaga,
d'ogni bella gli amor.

SHARPLESS: È un facile vangelo
che fa la vita vaga
ma che intristisce il cuor.

PINKERTON: *(continuing)* Vinto si tuffa e la sorte riacciuffa.
Il suo talento fa in ogni dove.
Così mi sposo all'uso giapponese
per novecento novantanove anni.
Salvo a prosciogliermi ogni mese.
“America forever!”

SHARPLESS: “America forever.”

Wherever the Yankee
vagabond roams,
he throws caution to the wind and
seeks his fortune and pleasure.
He drops his anchor where and when he wants...

Milk punch or whisky?
...until a storm wind blows and rocks
his boat; then he raises sail and casts off again.
Life isn't worth living
unless he can make
all the flowers in the fields
his own special treasures.

That's an easy philosophy,
which makes life pleasant
but leaves you with an empty heart.

Always undaunted, his luck will never run out.
He works his magic in every place he goes.
And so I'm marrying in the Japanese manner,
for nine hundred and ninety-nine years,
with the option to renew each month.
“America forever!”

“America forever.”



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MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini's Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(CONT'D)

“Gran ventura”

TRACK 13

BUTTERFLY: Gran ventura.

BUTTERFLY'S FRIENDS: Riverenza.

PINKERTON: *(smiling)* È un po' dura la scalata?

BUTTERFLY: *(calmly)* A una sposa costumata più penosa è l'impazienza.

PINKERTON: *(somewhat derisively)* Molto raro complimento.

BUTTERFLY: *(naively)* Dei più belli ancor ne so.

PINKERTON: *(encouragingly)* Dei gioielli!

BUTTERFLY: *(wishing to show off her collection of compliments)* Se vi è caro sul momento...

PINKERTON: Grazie, no.

SHARPLESS: *(Having already observed curiously the group of girls, he draws near Butterfly, who listens to him attentively.)*

Miss Butterfly. Bel nome, vi sta a meraviglia.

Siete di Nagasaki?

BUTTERFLY: Signor sì. Di famiglia assai prospera un tempo. *(to her friends)* Verità?

BUTTERFLY'S FRIENDS: *(agreeing eagerly)* Verità!

BUTTERFLY: Nessuno si confessa mai nato in povertà, e non c'è vagabondo che a sentirlo non sia di gran prosapia. Eppure conobbi la ricchezza. Ma il turbine rovescia le quercie più robuste e abbiam fatto la ghescia per sostentarci. *(to her friends)* Vero?

BUTTERFLY'S FRIENDS: Vero!

BUTTERFLY: Non lo nascondo nè m'adonto. *(seeing that Sharpless is laughing)* Ridete? Perché? Cose del mondo.

I'm delighted.

We are honored.

Did you find it difficult to climb the hill?

For a genteel bride, the waiting is much more difficult.

What a beautiful thing to say.

I know even more beautiful phrases.

Such jewels!

If you would like to hear more of them now...

Thank you, no.

Miss Butterfly. A beautiful name, and it suits you so well.

You are from Nagasaki?

Yes, sir. And my family was at one time rather wealthy.

Isn't that true?

It's true!

I know that no one will admit to being from a poor family, and even the humblest vagabond will say he was born of noble forebears. Still we were wealthy once. But storm winds can uproot even the strongest oaks. And so, we had to work as geishas to support ourselves. Didn't we?

It's true!

I do not hide it, and why should I? You're laughing? But why? That's life.

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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini's Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(CONT'D)

PINKERTON: (*having listened with interest turns to Sharpless*)
(Con quel fare di bambola quando parla m'infiamma.)

SHARPLESS: (*also interested in Butterfly's chatter, he continues to question her*) E ci avete sorelle?

BUTTERFLY: No, signore. Ho la mamma.

GORO: (*solemnly*) Una nobile dama.

BUTTERFLY: Ma senza farle torto povera molto anch'essa.

SHARPLESS: E vostro padre?

BUTTERFLY: (*is taken by surprise, then replies dryly*) Morto.

(With her innocent chatter, she sets me on fire.)

And do you have any sisters?

No sir. I just have my mother.

A gracious lady.

But to speak the truth, she's just as poor as I am.

And your father?

He's dead.

“Un bel dì”

TRACK 14

BUTTERFLY: Un bel dì, vedremo levarsi
un fil di fumo sull'estremo confin del mare.
E poi la nave appare.

Poi la nave bianca entra nel porto,
romba il suo saluto. Vedi? È venuto!
Io non gli scendo incontro, io no.
Mi metto là sul ciglio del colle e aspetto,
e aspetto gran tempo e non mi pesa
la lunga attesa.

E uscito dalla folla cittadina
un uom, un picciol punto
s'avvia per la collina.

Chi sarà? chi sarà?

E come sarà giunto
che dirà? che dirà?

Chiamerà “Butterfly” dalla lontana.

Io senza dar risposta
me ne starò nascosta

un po' per celia, e un po' per non morire
al primo incontro, ed egli alquanto in pena
chiamerà, chiamerà: “Piccina mogliettina,
olezzo di verbena”

i nomi che mi dava al suo venire.

(*to Suzuki*) Tutto questo avverrà, te lo prometto.

Tienti la tua paura – io con sicura fede l'aspetto.

One fine day, we'll see a thin thread of smoke rising
on the horizon where the sky meets the ocean.

And then a ship appears.

The white ship enters the harbor,
booming its salute. You see? He's come!

But I won't go down to meet him—not me.

I'll go to the top of our little hill and wait,
and wait for a long time, but I don't mind
the long interval.

And emerging from the crowded city,
a man, a tiny figure,
sets out for the hilltop.

Who is it? Who can it be?

And when at last he arrives,
what will he say? What?

From afar, he'll call, “Butterfly.”

I'll give no answer,
and I'll stay hidden,

partly to tease him, and partly so that I don't die
at our reunion! And then he'll call to me, worried,

he'll call: “My little wife, my darling,
my sweet girl who smells of flowers”—

the names he used to call me when we first met.

All of this will happen, I promise you.

Have no fear; I wait for him with unshaken faith!

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MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini's Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(CONT'D)

Final scene

TRACK 15

BUTTERFLY: "Con onor muore
Chi non può serbar vita con onore."

(She points the knife sideways towards her throat. The door at the left opens; Suzuki's arm is seen pushing the child toward his mother; he enters, running with his little arms raised. Butterfly drops the knife and rushes up to the child; she embraces him and smothers him with kisses.)

Tu, tu, piccolo Iddio!
Amore, amore mio,
fior di giglio e di rosa.
Non saperlo mai
per te, pei tuoi puri occhi,
muor Butterfly
perchè tu possa andare
di là dal mare
senza che ti rimorda ai dì maturi
il materno abbandono.
O a me, sceso dal trono
dell' alto Paradiso,
guarda ben fiso, fiso
di tua madre la faccia...
che te'n resti una traccia,
guarda ben!
Amore addio!

(looking at her child at length and giving him another kiss)
Addio! piccolo amor!
Va. Gioca, gioca.

(Butterfly takes the child and places him on a mat with his head turned away; she places an American flag and a doll in his hands and tells him to play while she delicately blindfolds him. Then she seizes the knife and, with her gaze fixed on the child, she goes behind the screen. The knife falls to the floor, and Butterfly appears from behind the screen and waveringly moves toward the child.)

PINKERTON: Butterfly! Butterfly!

"Let him die with honor
who can no longer live with honor."

You, you! Little idol of my heart,
my love, my love,
flower of the lily and the rose.
You must never know
that for you, for your innocent eyes,
Butterfly dies,
so that you may go
across the sea
and never know when you are older
that your mother abandoned you.
Oh, you who came to me
from Paradise,
look well, look well
on your mother's face
so that you might remember it!
One more glance!
Farewell, my love!

Farewell, little love!
Go and play.

Butterfly! Butterfly!

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(CONT’D)

THE SONGS AND SOUNDS OF MY WORLD

BRAINSTORMING CATEGORIES:	MY IDEAS:
Folks songs and instruments from my cultural background <i>(Example: the songs “Danny Boy” or “Santa Lucia,” and instruments like the Ud, conga drums, flamenco guitar, etc...)</i>	
Favorite songs I listen to on a regular basis <i>(Example: your favorite song from your favorite band)</i>	
Sounds that I encounter on a daily basis <i>(Example: car horns, subway door closing chimes, alarm clock, etc...)</i>	
Sounds that I associate with my favorite memories <i>(Example: bird calls in the summer, my father playing guitar, my mother singing, etc...)</i>	
Instruments that I think capture my personality <i>(Example: violin, harp, trumpet, guitar, etc...)</i>	

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini's Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(CONT'D)

THE SONGS AND SOUNDS OF MY WORLD

Written Response:

If Puccini had written an opera based on your life, what are some of the songs, instruments, and sounds he would have incorporated into the score to best capture the world and culture you live in? Draw from your list of brainstormed songs and sounds, and incorporate as many musical terms as you can in your description.

At the Met: *The Art of the Director*

The stage production of *Madama Butterfly* seen in this *Live in HD* presentation was conceived by the late Anthony Minghella, best known as the director of films such as *The English Patient* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Minghella's staging includes a number of actions and designs not mentioned in Puccini's score or Illica and Giacosa's libretto. We've listed a selection below. Look for them in the production, and then write a few words about what you think about the director's innovations. Why did he make the creative choices he did, and how do you interpret those choices?

The opening dance: _____

Cio-Cio-San prays while Suzuki sings her own prayers: _____

Cio-Cio-San wears a cross around her neck: _____

Flower petals hang frozen in the air during Act II: _____

Puppet household servants: _____

Depiction of the child as a puppet: _____

Falling flower petals during the love duet: _____

Representation of Cio-Cio-San's dream: _____

Cio-Cio-San's vision of Pinkerton at the beginning of Act II: _____

Puppet birds: _____

Pinkerton's representation as an empty armchair: _____

Depiction of Cio-Cio-San's death at the opera's close: _____

Madama Butterfly: My Highs & Lows

APRIL 2, 2016

CONDUCTED BY KAREL MARK CHICHON

REVIEWED BY _____

THE STARS	STAR POWER	MY COMMENTS
KRISTINE OPOLAIS AS CIO-CIO-SAN	*****	
ROBERTO ALAGNA AS PINKERTON	*****	
DWAYNE CROFT AS SHARPLESS	*****	
THE CHILD (PUPPET)	*****	

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN/STAGING
OPENING DANCE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
PINKERTON EXPLORES THE HOUSE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
PINKERTON DESCRIBES A SAILOR'S LIFE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
THE WEDDING MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
THE WEDDING NIGHT MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CIO-CIO-SAN IMAGINES PINKERTON'S RETURN MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
GORO BRINGS YAMADORI TO MEET CIO-CIO-SAN MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
SHARPLESS READS THE LETTER MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
PINKERTON'S SHIP ARRIVES MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CIO-CIO-SAN'S VIGIL MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CIO-CIO-SAN MEETS MRS. PINKERTON MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CIO-CIO-SAN'S TRAGIC END MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5