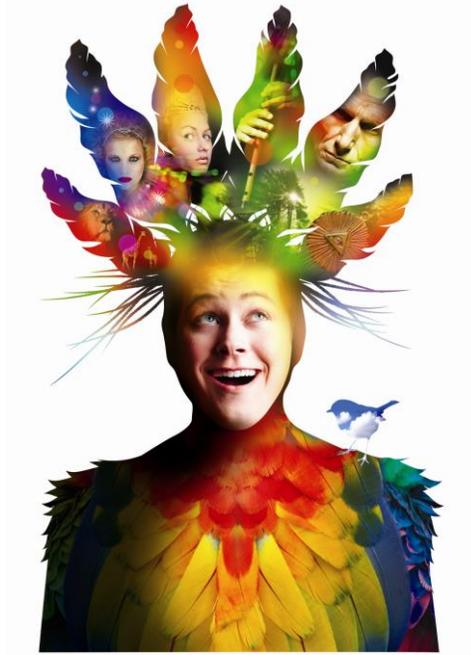




THE MAGIC FLUTE



Study Guide

“Nor do I hear in my imagination the parts successively, I hear them all at once. What a delight this is! All this inventing, this producing, takes place in a pleasing, lively dream.”

– Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart on his compositions

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WELCOME TO MANITOBA OPERA!

We're very pleased that you have decided to bring your students to *The Magic Flute*. We appreciate both your interest in this wonderful art form and your willingness to expose students to opera and thank you for that.

This Study Guide has been created to assist you in preparing your students for their visit to the opera. It is our hope that you will be able to add this to your existing curriculum in order to expand your students' understanding of opera, literature, history, and the fine arts. Materials in the Study Guide may be copied and distributed to students. Some students may wish to go over the information at home if there is insufficient time to discuss in class.



Manitoba Centennial Concert Hall

Singing in Full Voice at the Dress Rehearsal (Student Night)

Please Note: The Dress Rehearsal is the last opportunity the singers will have on stage to work with the orchestra before Opening Night. Since vocal demands are so great on opera singers, some singers choose not to sing in full voice during the Dress Rehearsal in order to avoid unnecessary strain.

The Magic Flute Study Guide compiled by Manitoba Opera from sources including classicalmusic.about.com; Bellevue University; *The Billboard Illustrated Encyclopedia of Opera*; The Canadian Opera Company; *Encyclopedia of Manitoba*; *Fort Worth Opera 2000 Study Guide*; *La Scena*; Lyric Opera of Kansas City; Manitoba Archives; Masonic Interpretation of Manitoba Legislative Building; Metropolitan Opera; *Mozart's Letters*; *Mozart's Life*; musicwithease.com; New York City Opera; *Opera America Learning Centre*; operabuffa.com; *Opera Columbus Study Guide*; *Opera News*; *Operas Every Child Should Know*; *Opera Lyra Ottawa Study Guide*; *Opera Today*; *Orchestra London Study Guide*; *Pacific Opera*; *San Diego Opera Study Guide*; *San Francisco Opera Guild Study Guide*; schubincafe.com; *A Season of Opera*; *Skeletons from the Opera Closet*; timelines.com; *Tulsa Opera Study Guide*; *University of Chicago Press*; University of Manitoba; University of Texas; *Rimrock Study Guide*; *Virginia Opera Study Guide*; *Winnipeg Free Press*; and Wikipedia.

About Manitoba Opera

Founded in 1969 by a group of individuals dedicated to presenting the great works of opera to Manitoban audiences, Manitoba Opera is the province's only fulltime professional opera company. The company attracts great international artists, highlights the best local talent and is supported by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra under the direction of internationally renowned conductors. Manitoba Opera celebrated its 35th Season in 2007/08 by presenting the world premiere of an opera commissioned by the company, *Transit of Venus*.

The Principals

The people who have the major roles in an opera are called the principals and are singers who work professionally. Principals usually arrive about three weeks before the first performance. It is generally expected that they arrive with all of their music learned and memorized and have a good sense of their character in the opera. In rehearsal each day, they work with the director who helps them block each of the scenes. The director works with the principals on understanding their characters so that they are convincing in their acting, as well as their singing. For the first two weeks they are accompanied by a rehearsal pianist. The week of the show, they move into the Concert Hall and begin work rehearsing on stage with the orchestra in the pit.

The Chorus



The Manitoba Opera Chorus, under the direction of Chorus Master, Tadeusz Biernacki, is hailed for their excellent singing and acting abilities. The chorus boasts a core of skilled singers who give generously of their time and talents. Some are voice majors at university, a few are singing teachers, but many work in jobs that aren't music related. By the time you visit the Centennial Concert Hall to see *The Magic Flute*, the chorus of Manitoba Opera will have been busy at work for several months.

The Staff

Tadeusz Biernacki, Chorus Master & Assistant Music Director

Michael Blais, Director of Administration

Monica Wood, Director of Development

Larry Desrochers, General Director & CEO

Livia Dymond, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Sheldon Johnson, Director of Production

Tyrone Paterson, Music Advisor & Principal Conductor

Darlene Ronald, Director of Marketing

Natasha MacDonald-Sawh, Patron Services Representative

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A SHORT OVERVIEW OF OPERA



Canadian opera star, the late Maureen Forrester

An opera, like a play, is a dramatic form of theatre that includes scenery, props, and costumes. In opera, however, the actors are trained singers who sing their lines instead of speaking them. An orchestra accompanies the singers. A conductor coordinates both the singers on stage and the musicians in the orchestra pit.

Opera consists of many dimensions: the human voice, orchestral music, the visual arts (scenery, costumes and special effects), drama (tragedy or comedy), and occasionally dance. The melding of these elements creates one incredible theatrical experience.

Opera has its roots in Greek drama and originated in Florence, Italy, in the late 1500's, with a small group of men who were members of a Camerata (Italian for society). The intellectuals, poets and musicians of the Camerata decided they wanted words to be a featured aspect of music. They used ancient Greek drama as their inspiration, including the use of a chorus to comment on the action.

The Camerata laid down three principles for their new art form:

- The text must be understood; the accompaniment must be very simple and should not distract from the words.
- The words must be sung with correct and natural declamation, as if they were spoken, and must avoid the rhythms of songs.
- The melody must interpret the feeling of the text.

The first significant composer to fully develop the ideas of the Camerata was Jacopo Peri (1561-1633), whose opera *Dafne*, based on a Greek myth, was performed in 1594 and is regarded as the first opera.

Operas are divided into scenes and acts that contain different types of vocal pieces for one or many singers. An aria is a vocal solo that usually focuses on a character's emotions rather than actions. A recitative is sung dialogue or speech that occurs between arias and ensembles. It helps to further the action of the story and shape the relationships between the characters.

The story of the opera is written as a libretto: a text that is set to music. Composers write the score or the music for the opera. Sometimes the composer will also write the text of the opera, but most often they work with a librettist. In the past, the libretto was also bound and sold to the audience. Today, the audience can easily follow the plot with the use of surtitles - the English translation of the libretto, which are projected onto a screen above the stage.

There are several differences between opera and musicals like *Phantom of the Opera*. One significant difference is the 'partnership' found between the music and the drama in an opera. **While musicals use songs to help tell a story, in an opera, the music contributes to the drama, it does not only accompany it.**

The musical style is another important difference between the two art forms; opera is usually classical and complex, while musicals feature pop songs and sometimes rock and roll. Also, singers in musicals have microphones hidden in their costumes or wigs to amplify their voices. **The voices of opera singers are so strong no amplification is needed, even in a large venue.** Furthermore, operas are almost completely sung while the use of spoken words are more common to musicals. There are some operas with spoken words and these are called singspiels (German) and opera-comique (French). Examples are Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Bizet's *Carmen*, respectively.

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

THE MAGIC FLUTE

An Opera in Two Acts

April 9, 12, 15, 2011
(Dress Rehearsal / Student Night: April 7)
Centennial Concert Hall

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Libretto in German by Emanuel Schikaneder
English Dialogue provided by Michael Cavanagh

Premiere Performance: Theatre auf der Wieden, Vienna, September 30, 1791

APPROXIMATELY 2 HOURS, 50 MINUTES WITH ONE 20-MINUTE INTERMISSION
Sung in German with English dialogue and projected English translations.

PRINCIPAL CAST (In Order of Vocal Appearance)

TAMINO, a Prince	Bruce Sledge	Tenor
FIRST LADY	Sarah Halmarson	Soprano
SECOND LADY	Naomi Forman	Soprano
THIRD LADY	Marcia Whitehead	Mezzo Soprano
PAPAGENO, a bird catcher	Hugh Russell	Baritone
QUEEN OF THE NIGHT	Julia Kogan	Soprano
MONOSTATOS, servant of Sarastro	Michel Corbeil	Baritone
PAMINA, daughter of the Queen of Night	Andriana Chuchman	Soprano
FIRST GENIE	Carson Milberg	Treble
SECOND GENIE	Anton Dahl Sokalski	Treble
THIRD GENIE	Torbjörn Thomson	Treble
THE SPEAKER	Gregory Atkinson	Bass
SARASTRO, High Priest of Isis and Osiris	Phillip Ens	Bass
PRIEST / ARMED MAN	Peter John Buchan	Tenor
SECOND ARMED MAN	Gregory Atkinson	Bass
AN OLD WOMAN (later PAPAGENA)	Lara Ciekiewicz	Soprano

With

Manitoba Opera Chorus
Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra

Conductor	Tadeusz Biernacki
Director	Michael Cavanagh
Sets Designer	Thaddeus Strassberger
Sets and Props provided by	Utah Symphony Utah Opera
Costume Designer	Susan Allred
Costumes provided by	Utah Symphony Utah Opera
Lighting Designer	Bill Williams
Stage Manager	Paul Skirzyk
Assistant Stage Manager #1	Kathryn Ball
Assistant Stage Manager #2	Candace Maxwell

THE MAGIC FLUTE SYNOPSIS

Opera in two acts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart; libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder
First performance: Theatre auf der Wieden, Vienna, September 30, 1791
Original Language: German

ACT I.

Prince Tamino, trying to escape a serpent, faints. Three ladies-in-waiting to the Queen of the Night, in whose realm the action takes place, appear, kill the serpent, and leave. Papageno, the Queen's feathered bird catcher, arrives and tells Tamino, who has regained consciousness, that it is he who saved him. The ladies reappear, padlocking Papageno's mouth and showing Tamino a portrait of Pamina, the Queen of the Night's daughter. Tamino falls in love with Pamina and is told that she has been imprisoned by the evil Sarastro.



1815 production: the arrival of the Queen of the Night.

The Queen of the Night appears, lamenting the loss of her daughter. She promises Pamina to Tamino if he and Papageno will rescue her. The ladies remove the padlock from Papageno's mouth and issue him with some magic chimes to ensure his safety; to Tamino they give a magic flute. They are to be accompanied by three Genii.

In Sarastro's palace, Monostatos, a Moor, is forcing his attentions upon Pamina. Papageno appears, frightening Monostatos away. He recognizes Pamina, and tells her of Tamino's love for her and her imminent rescue. The three Genii lead



The Wild Beasts

Tamino to three temples. He enters one and encounters a Priest, who reveals that Sarastro is not evil, but a wise and noble man. Tamino plays the magic flute and charms the wild beasts. He hears Papageno's panpipes and goes to find him.



Tamino plays the magic flute at the three temples

Papageno enters with Pamina. They are almost captured by Monostatos, but Papageno uses his magic chimes to overcome the Moor. As Pamina and Papageno celebrate their escape, a chorus is heard in praise of Sarastro, who then enters in a procession. Pamina explains that they were running away from Monostatos. The Moor then appears with Tamino, expecting to be rewarded by Sarastro, but is instead punished. Pamina falls in love with Tamino. Papageno and Tamino are then taken into the temple to learn how to qualify for higher happiness.

ACT II.



Sarastro announces his intentions. Papageno and Tamino are to undergo the initiation process in order to gain admission to the Temple of Light and thereby overpower the Queen of the Night. Tamino is then free to wed Pamina, who is to be held in Sarastro's protection for the time being.

At the temple, Papageno and Tamino are preparing to undergo their first ordeal: a vow of silence. The ladies-in-waiting try unsuccessfully to trick them into speaking.



Queen of the Night

In the garden, Monostatos creeps up on the sleeping Pamina. The Queen of the Night appears, giving her daughter a dagger with which to kill Sarastro. Monostatos threatens Pamina, but Sarastro arrives and dismisses him. Tamino is still trying to keep his vow of silence. Papageno talks to himself, before entering into conversation with an old lady who claims to be a love he has yet to meet. She vanishes and the Genii appear, arranging a feast. Pamina arrives and, not knowing of Tamino's vow of silence, is hurt by his apparent coldness.



Papageno



Papageno and Papagena

Sarastro comforts Pamina. Papageno is visited again by the old lady, who makes him swear to be faithful to her. When he swears, she turns into Papagena, a beautiful young feathered woman, but Papageno is told that he is not yet ready. Pamina considers suicide, but is prevented by the Genii.

Tamino enters for the final ordeals of his initiation: those of fire and water. Pamina accompanies him as he undergoes the tests; he can now speak again. In a parody of the previous events, Papageno too contemplates suicide, but changes his mind when Papagena is brought to him. At the Temple of Light, the Queen of the Night, her ladies-in-waiting and Monostatos try to wreak revenge on Sarastro, but are destroyed. Tamino and Pamina, who have passed the ordeals, are accepted into the community.



Tamino and Pamina undergo their final trial

Musical Highlights

- Papageno's "Der Vogelfänger bin ich" (I am the Bird Catcher)
- Tamino's "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" (This portrait is beautiful)
- Pamina's aria "Auch, ich fühl's" (Ah, I sense his love fading)
- The Queen of the Night's "O zittre nicht" and "Der Hölle rache" (The Rage of Hell)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

PAMINA

Andriana Chuchman



"... on her way to a major place on the world's operatic stages."
– *Opera Canada*

After studies at the University of Manitoba and at San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, Canadian soprano Andriana Chuchman recently completed three years at the Ryan Opera Center at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, one of the premier professional young artist programs in the world. Ms. Chuchman's 2010 performances at the Lyric included the plum roles of Valencienne (*Merry Widow*) and the saucy bride-to-be Yum-Yum (*The Mikado*). *Opera News* declared Ms. Chuchman, with her "sultry good looks and intriguingly tangy, dark-edged soprano" as "an ideal choice for Yum-Yum."

Ms. Chuchman earned widespread critical praise for her debut with Chicago Opera Theater as Dorinda in Handel's *Orlando*, and returned to sing Alinda in Cavalli's *Giasone*. Ms. Chuchman made her Edmonton Opera debut as Marie (*The Daughter of the Regiment*), and has also performed the roles of Adina (*L'Elisir d'Amore*), Barbarina, Giannetta (*L'Elisir d'Amore*), Ida (*Die Fledermaus*), and Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*). Concert performances have included several engagements with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra including their Holiday Pops concerts, their 2007 New Music Festival in Christos Hatzis' oratorio *The Sepulcher of Life*, and Bach's *Coffee Cantata*.

PAPAGENA

Lara Ciekiewicz



"... at once the comedienne and the seductress in Papagena's two 'incarnations.'"
– *La Presse*

A recent graduate of l'Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal, versatile soprano Lara Ciekiewicz has distinguished herself at some of the continent's most prestigious training programs including San Francisco's Merola Opera Program, the Banff Centre for the Arts' Opera as Theatre program, the Janiec Opera Company at the Brevard Music Center, and Opera NUOVA. This season sees Ms. Ciekiewicz return to l'Opéra de Montréal as the saucy Musetta in *La Bohème*, and to the Winnipeg Symphony for a rarely heard performance of Penderecki's *Seven Gates of Jerusalem*.

Last season began with l'Opéra de Montréal's *Gianni Schicchi* covering Lauretta and performing Papagena in *The Magic Flute* while also covering Pamina. Toronto Operetta Theatre heard her in the title role of *Countess Maritza*. Ms. Ciekiewicz's 2008/09 season culminated in performances as Fiordiligi for the Merola Opera Program's production of *Così Fan Tutte*. *San Francisco Classical Voice's* Jason Victor Serinus declared, "...she could build a career as a consummate Mozartian and also branch out into weightier, more dramatic repertoire." In addition, Ms. Ciekiewicz made two company debuts – one on the mainstage at l'Opéra de Montréal as the Dama in *Macbeth*, the other as Paquette for Manitoba Opera's *Candide*.

Ms. Ciekiewicz holds a Masters in Music (Opera) from McGill University and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours, Voice) from the University of Winnipeg.

SARASTRO

Phillip Ens



"... a superb company debut by the rich-voiced Canadian bass..."
– *San Francisco Chronicle*

Canadian bass Phillip Ens made his operatic debut in 1985 with Manitoba Opera, followed by appearances with the opera companies of Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, National Arts Centre, and Montreal in such roles as Sarastro (*The Magic Flute*), Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Don Basilio (*The Barber of Seville*), and Frere Laurence (*Romeo et Juliette*). He made his Canadian Opera Company debut in 1991 as Don Fernando (*Fidelio*), followed by his debut in the United States with the Philadelphia Orchestra as Colline (*La Bohème*), and with appearances with the opera companies of Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Denver.

From 1993-1997, Mr. Ens was principal bass with the Staatsoper Stuttgart, performing numerous roles. Other European credits during this period include La Monnaie in Brussels, Staatsoper Hamburg, the Deutsche Opera Berlin, the English National Opera, the Welsh National Opera, and Teatro Real de Madrid.

In the past decade Mr. Ens has made a number of important operatic debuts including at Metropolitan Opera, the Paris Bastille, the Royal Opera House-Covent Garden, the Chicago Lyric Opera, the San Francisco Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, and the Houston Grand Opera.



QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

Julia Kogan

"Kogan sings a dazzling version of the Queen's famous second-act aria."
– *The Indianapolis Star*

Julia Kogan is an American-raised Ukrainian-born coloratura soprano living in France and enjoying an international career in concert and opera. Ms. Kogan's Queen of the Night in Austria's Musikfestival Steyr production of *The Magic Flute* was described in the national press as "flawless" and "brilliant." Her Queen of the Night at Indianapolis Opera received praise both from local press and from *Opera News*. Julia has won numerous awards, and has sung the Queen of the Night for the Toulouse and Avignon opera houses. She has also performed at Limoges Opera, as well as solo concerts with the orchestra of the Opéra de Toulon. Upcoming roles include Greta Fiorentino in Toulon, and Madame Herz in Mozart's *Der Schauspieler Direktor* in Aix, Toulon, Angers, etc. Ms. Kogan's concert appearances have taken place throughout Austria, France, Russia, Spain, the UK, and the US.

Alongside traditional opera, art song, and oratorio repertoire, Ms. Kogan is also an avid performer of contemporary music. She has a special interest in new projects fusing literature, music, theatre, and language and is equally comfortable with English, French, German, Italian, and Russian texts.



PAPAGENO

Hugh Russell

"... a bravura turn as Papageno. He is immensely entertaining as the bumpkin ..."
– *Victoria Times Colonist*

Canadian baritone Hugh Russell has been consistently hailed for his beautiful voice, dramatic gifts and interpretive originality. *The Victoria Times Colonist* said, "Hugh Russell, singing and acting with easy assurance, does a bravura turn as Papageno. He is immensely entertaining as the bumpkin." The 2009/10 season included Lescaut in *Manon* for Angers-Nantes Opéra, Papageno in *The Magic Flute* for Atlanta Opera as well as concert performances of Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* with Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and *Carmina Burana* with Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra and the Sarasota Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Russell began the 2008/09 season as Dandini in *La Cenerentola* with Atlanta Opera, was heard as Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* with Arizona Opera, and made his role debut as Papageno in *The Magic Flute* with Pacific Opera Victoria and Orchestra London.



TAMINO

Bruce Sledge

"Best of all was the tenor Bruce Sledge ..."
– *The New York Times*

Bruce Sledge is one of today's most in-demand Bel Canto tenors and sings a wide variety of repertoire with many international houses. Recently Mr. Sledge appeared at the New York City Opera as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, in Japan as Alfredo in *La Traviata* and at Teatro Real in Madrid as Argirio in Rossini's *Tancredi*. He also debuted with the New Orleans Opera as the Duke in *Rigoletto*, as Tito in Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* in Bari and as Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore* in San Antonio.

Bruce Sledge received his master's degree in vocal arts from the University of Southern California, and was awarded most outstanding music masters graduate.



Director

Michael Cavanagh

Michael Cavanagh is one of Canada's most versatile and popular opera interpreters. Born and raised in Winnipeg, he studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Hamburg, Germany and served as Artistic Director of Edmonton Opera from 1998 to 2001. Highlights of the 2009/10 season include Kentucky Opera to direct *Of Mice and Men*, *Tosca* at L'Opéra de Montréal and a return to Vancouver Opera for *Nixon in China*. Projects for the 2010/11 season include the direction of Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* for Edmonton Opera.



Conductor

Tadeusz Biernacki

Mr. Biernacki is Assistant Music Director, Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master at Manitoba Opera. Tadeusz Biernacki is also Music Director and Conductor of Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet and of Saskatoon Opera. Tadeusz maintains a busy schedule as pianist in solo and chamber recitals as well as an accompanist for opera stars like Judith Forst, Tracy Dahl, John Fanning, Allen Monk and Philip Enns.



ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Wolfgang Mozart

Born: January 27, 1756, Salzburg, Austria

Died: December 5, 1791, Vienna

Wife: Constanze Weber

Children: six, only two of which survived infancy: Karl Thomas and Franz Xaver Wolfgang

Mozart is the first composer whose operas have never left the performed repertory. With their vivid characters, beautiful melodies, deft and elaborate ensembles and superb plots, they remain among the most popular works in the genre and have inspired many later composers, along with writers and artists. Mozart's is one of the greatest achievements in the history of opera.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart and his sister Maria Anna ('Nannerl') were excellent keyboard players. From 1762 onwards, Leopold, their father, regularly took them on concert tours, first to Germany and later further afield. By the time Mozart was 15, he had played before such royal figures as Louis XV of France and George III of England, and spent long periods in the major cities of Europe. He was also composing steadily. By the time he was 17, his output included several sets of symphonies, various pieces of sacred music, some chamber music and three full-length operas, the *opera buffa* *La finta semplice*, and two *opere serie* based on Roman history: *Mitridate, re di Ponto*, and *Lucio Silla*.



A portrait of the young Mozart



Mozart family portrait, 1780

The Salzburg Years (1773–80)

Mozart became an official musician in the employment of the Archbishop of Salzburg, Count Colloredo, in 1773. He composed prolifically, including many short pieces of sacred music. In 1780, he wrote what is regarded as his first mature opera, *Idomeneo*, for the Munich court. It was performed in January 1781, revealing fully Mozart's great gifts as a dramatist and composer for the voice. In 1781, Mozart visited Vienna and asked to be discharged from his position with Archbishop Colloredo. For the rest of his life, he would largely support himself as a freelance teacher and composer.

Success in Vienna (1781–85)

In 1782, Mozart married Constanze Weber, a talented singer, and settled in Vienna. His first years in the Austrian capital were successful ones. Though he was regularly in debt, he was constantly busy, and much admired as a composer, performer, and teacher. In 1785, when his father, Leopold, visited Vienna and met the composer Haydn, Haydn described the young Mozart to him as "the greatest

composer known to me in person and by name."

Mozart's works from his early years in Vienna include several piano concertos, six string quartets dedicated to Haydn, and the 'Turkish' opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782). The latter was a Singspiel written during the short period when Emperor Joseph II had set up an opera company to perform in German. It was a success, despite the Emperor's complaints that there were "very many notes" (a reference to the virtuosic style of much of the vocal writing).



Constanze Mozart, 1782



Concert ticket from 1782

A Golden Period of Composition (1786–89)

Far from being the talented fool of popular myth, all evidence suggests that Mozart was a highly intelligent and literate man, who cared deeply about the construction of his opera librettos. He was at great pains to find a librettist to match his musical talents. In 1785, he found such a man, and began his collaboration with the brilliant Italian librettist Lorenzo da Ponte. Together, over the next five years, they created three of Mozart's greatest operas. The first, *Le nozze di Figaro*, opened at the Vienna Court Opera in 1786. It later had enormous success in Prague, which led to Mozart being commissioned to write *Don Giovanni*, performed there in 1787, and in Vienna the following year.



Prague: Mozart's room at Bertramka

While his composition was going well, Mozart was still burdened with money troubles during the later 1780s, and suffered bouts of illness. He had a minor position as a court musician, was always reliant on teaching to help him make a living, and often asked his friends for financial loans.

The Final Years (1790–91)

Mozart's last two years were frantically busy. His last collaboration with Lorenzo da Ponte, *Così fan tutte*, had its first performance in Vienna in January 1790. The opera was less successful than the other Da Ponte operas. Mozart, who now had a young family to support, spent much of 1790 desperately trying to get a full-time salaried post in Vienna.

In 1791, Mozart began a new partnership with his friend, the actor and theatre manager Emanuel Schikaneder, which was to produce *The Magic Flute*. Prague also asked him to compose an opera, for celebrations of the coronation of Leopold II as King of Bohemia, and a mysterious stranger asked him to write a requiem setting (the stranger turned out to be a Count who wanted to pass the composition off as his own). Mozart had completed *The Magic Flute* by the time he set off for Prague for the performances of his opera there, *La clemenza di Tito*. This was his first *opera seria* for nearly a decade, and was based on a libretto by the great dramatist Pietro Metastasio. It had a mixed reception, but soon rose in public esteem.



The young Mozart in London

Mozart's last months were spent working on the requiem, and completing a clarinet concerto, one of his greatest orchestral works, for his friend Anton Stadler. By November 1791, he was seriously unwell and bedridden. He died on December 5th, it is thought of rheumatic fever. There is no evidence to suggest, as legend has it, that he was poisoned, and nor was he buried in a pauper's grave. Mass burials in unmarked graves were customary in Vienna at the time, and one account says that several musicians, including Salieri, followed Mozart's body to the cemetery. All the obituary notices for Mozart acknowledged his greatness as a composer, and his music has never left the repertory since his death.



Mozart playing

In his short life Mozart produced over 600 works including:

- 41 symphonies
- 27 piano concertos
- 19 piano sonatas
- 16 operas
- masses
- chamber music
- orchestral pieces

Mozart's Operas in Context

Early Works

Mozart wrote his first opera, *La finta semplice*, at the age of 13. His first full-length opera seria, *Mitridate, re di Ponto* was written two years later and lasted a full six hours including its ballet sections. It contains some striking virtuosic arias and is still performed, with cuts, today. Two years later, Mozart returned to Milan with *Lucio Silla*, which had a triumphal premiere. His next full-length opera was *La finta giardiniera* (*The Pretend Gardener Girl*, 1775). Although these early works are surprisingly sophisticated in construction and contain much fine music, they have never been as popular as his mature works. The drama is less subtle than in the operas from 1781 onwards, and the characters more one-dimensional. There is also less interesting interaction between characters than in Mozart's later operas, as the focus is often placed on arias rather than ensembles.



Young Mozart at the piano

The First Masterpiece

Mozart's first undisputed masterpiece was the opera seria *Idomeneo, re di Creta* (1781). Mozart was much influenced by the operatic reforms of Gluck, who advocated avoiding superficial effects in opera (such as florid vocal writing to show off singers' skills) and called for a new style of operatic drama, with words and music of equal importance. Gluck also made inventive use of the chorus in opera. In *Idomeneo*, Mozart gives a prominent dramatic role to the chorus, and puts virtuosic display in the opera's arias only when dramatically necessary. *Idomeneo* is Mozart's first opera with strongly individual, complex characters, whose music directly reflects their personalities.

An Exotic Singspiel

Mozart's next opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782) is a Singspiel with an exotic Turkish setting, written for Emperor Joseph II's National Singspiel Company in Vienna, set up to perform opera in German. Mozart worked very closely with his librettist to create a gripping drama and had great fun with the exotic percussion required to create an appropriately 'Turkish' atmosphere, and with his comic characters, such as the rascally servant Osmin.



A modern-day Mozart concert in Vienna

A Golden Period: The Da Ponte Operas

Mozart composed three operas with librettos by his friend Lorenzo da Ponte: *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786), *Don Giovanni* (1787) and *Così fan tutte* (1790). They all depict vivid characters in detail; no protagonist is a stereotype, and all are of interest to the audience. All three contain many fine arias, bringing each character vividly to life, and ensembles of an intricacy never attempted before in *opera buffa*, such as the finale of Act II of *Le nozze di Figaro* and the sextet in Act II of *Don Giovanni*. Although there is no shortage of humour in any of these works, the mood is more profound than in Mozart's previous comic works. In *Le nozze di Figaro*, Mozart developed complex, large-scale 'action'

ensembles. In *Don Giovanni*, he experimented with the juxtaposition of the darkly tragic and the farcically comic, in both the story and the music. *Così fan tutte* was for many years the least popular of the three operas, largely because its story was considered 'immoral', but this opera contains some particularly beautiful arias and ensembles, such as Ferrando's romantic "Un aura'amoroso," Fiordiligi's "Per pietà," the three trios for the men at the start of Act I and the trio "Soave sial il vento," and all the characters are vividly brought to life in their music. There are also some particularly good instrumental effects, such as the horn obbligato in "Per pietà," and the use of Mozart's beloved clarinet to illustrate the amorous feelings of the four young lovers.

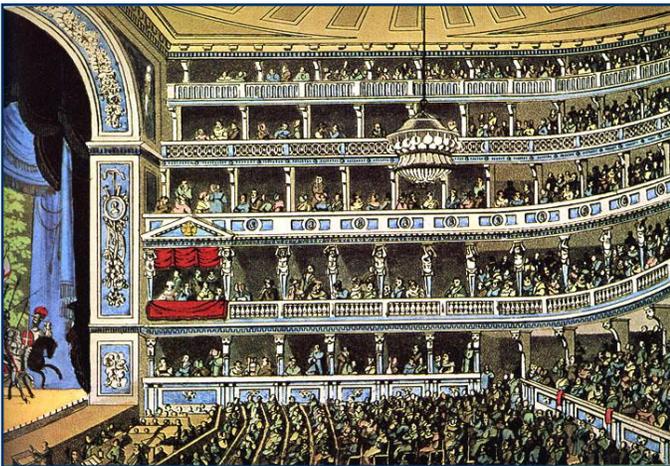
The Final Operas



Mozart's last two operas were written in the final year of his short life, 1791. *La clemenza di Tito*, his first opera seria since *Idomeneo*, was inspired by the legendary mercy of the Roman Emperor Titus. Its libretto has been criticized for being old-fashioned and less subtle than those of the Da Ponte operas, but it contains some memorable characters, including the gentle Roman nobleman Sesto and his beloved, the ferocious Vitellia, along with the saintly Tito himself. Again, there are some lyrical arias, including Sesto's "Parto, parto," with elaborate clarinet obbligato, and Vitellia's 'mad scene' towards the end of Act II, "Non più di fiori."



Mozart's birthplace, Salzburg



Theater an der Wien

Mozart's final opera was *The Magic Flute*, a Singspiel written for the actors and singers of the suburban Theater an der Wieden, managed by Mozart's friend Emanuel Schikaneder. It took Singspiel to new heights and contained a vast range of very different characters – from the noble priest Sarastro and the heroic Prince Tamino and Princess Pamina to the simple and humorous birdcatcher Papageno. Its complex and intricate plot combines elements of philosophy, religion, fairytale and popular theatre. Its use of large-scale ensembles, such as the finales to Act I and II and the Act I quintet for Tamino, Papageno and the three Ladies, and the beauty of its arias, such as Tamino's beautiful "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" and the Queen of the Night's famously virtuosic rage aria in Act II, was beyond anything attempted in Singspiel before.

"There is scarcely a famous master in music whose works I have not frequently and diligently studied."

"Neither a lofty degree of intelligence nor imagination nor both together go to the making of genius. Love, love, love, that is the soul of genius."

"Melody is the essence of music. I compare a good melodist to a fine racer, and counterpoints to hack post-horses."

"I pay no attention whatever to anybody's praise or blame. I simply follow my own feelings."



Unfinished portrait of Mozart by his brother-in-law Joseph Lange

Timeline of Mozart's Life



Leopold, Wolfgang and Nannerl on stage, 1764

- 1756** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart born, Salzburg
- 1762** Performs at the Vienna court
- 1763** Tour of Western Europe begins, including Paris and London
- 1770** *Mitridate, rè di Ponto* commissioned, written and premiered in Milan, with the young Mozart directing
- 1772** Premiere of *Lucio Silla*, Milan
- 1778** Visits to Mannheim and Paris
- 1781** Premiere of *Idomeneo*, Munich; Mozart settles in Vienna
- 1782** Premiere of *Die Entführung, aus dem Serail*, Vienna; marries Constanze Weber
- 1784** Joins the Freemasons, which was to influence his writing, most notably in *Die Zauberflöte*
- 1786** Premiere of *Le nozze di Figaro*, Vienna; *Idomeneo* revived, Vienna
- 1787** Premiere of *Don Giovanni*, Prague; Mozart receives position of Chamber Composer to the court at Vienna
- 1789** Travels to Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin
- 1790** Premiere of *Così fan tutte*, Vienna
- 1791** Premieres of *Die Zauberflöte*, Vienna and *La clemenza di Tito*, Prague (allegedly written in just 18 days); *Requiem* composed; death of Mozart



Mozart's Operas

- 1770** *Mitridate, rè di Ponto*
- 1772** *Lucio Silla*
- 1775** *Il rè pastore*
- 1780-81** *Idomeneo*
- 1781-82** *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*
- 1786** *Le nozze di Figaro*
- 1787** *Don Giovanni*
- 1789-90** *Così fan tutte*
- 1791** *Die Zauberflöte*
- 1791** *La clemenza di Tito*



The Burgtheater in Vienna is one of the most important German language theatres in the world. Three Mozart operas premiered there: *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*.



Wolfgang Mozart

W.A. Mozart: The Myths

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is legendary. That is, while he was a real person, well documented in many sources, we can also find stories about him that are somewhat removed from fact.

The play and movie *Amadeus* started a fresh wave of Mozart mania—and popularized the following myths about Mozart’s life:



Antonio Salieri

- **Did Salieri kill Mozart?** In real life, Antonio Salieri was not the jealous rival of Mozart and did not plot out his demise. Salieri was a pivotal figure in the development of late 18th century opera and an esteemed musical colleague of Mozart’s who later taught music to Mozart’s son. Toward the end of his life Salieri confessed to murdering Mozart - which might have been believable had Salieri not been confined to an insane asylum at the time of his confession.
- **Did Salieri scare Mozart into writing his own Requiem?** The origin of Requiem does have an interesting story, but it does not involve a feverish obsession by Mozart with the ghost of his father. Mozart was commissioned anonymously to compose Requiem by intermediaries acting for Franz Count of Walsegg, who hoped to pass it off as Walsegg’s own work.
- **Was Mozart a silly, vulgar idiot with an annoying laugh?** Mozart had to retain a degree of dignity when working at court and therefore could not have acted as he did in *Amadeus*. His entertaining letters, however, do reveal that he was playful and wonderfully quick-witted. He could sometimes have a vulgar sense of humour, but only showed that to his family and close friends and, accidentally, to us when we read his letters. The laugh in *Amadeus* might be based on his sister’s comment, in a letter, that Wolfgang’s laugh sounded like metal scraping glass.
- **Did Mozart write “too many notes”?** Emperor Joseph II’s reaction to Mozart’s *The Abduction from the Seraglio* in 1782 is...true! Or at least is widely believed to be so. The complete quote was, “Too many notes, my dear Mozart, and too beautiful for our ears.” The Emperor may have been echoing a sentiment felt by many regarding Mozart’s music: that it was so complex and sublime that it sometimes overwhelmed the senses of his 18th century audience. Or he may have said, “An extraordinary number of notes,” and been mistranslated from German.

How did Mozart die?

Nobody knows for certain how Mozart died. Theories include:

- A sudden attack of rheumatic fever, from which he had often suffered as a child
- Kidney failure
- Trichinosis—a parasitic disease caused by undercooked pork
- Fever and stroke caused by too much bloodletting
- Mercury poisoning

What most people do agree on is that Mozart’s final illness came upon him suddenly and included fever and rashes.

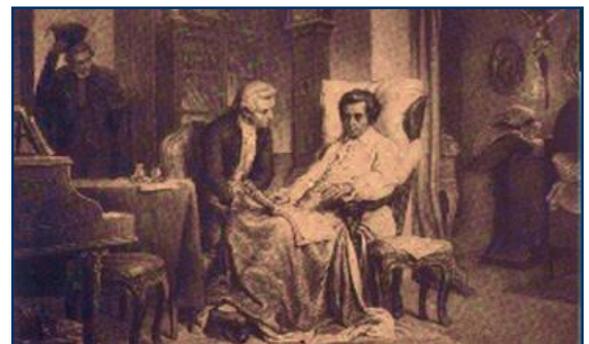


Illustration of Mozart's deathbed

“In Mozart and Salieri we see the contrast between the genius which does what it must and the talent which does what it can.”

- Maurice Baring, dramatist, poet, and novelist



Schikaneder as he appeared in about 1784 playing the title role of "The Stranger."

ABOUT THE LIBRETTIST

Emanuel Schikaneder

Born: September 1, 1751

Died: September 21, 1812

Schikaneder first appeared with the theatrical troupe of F. J. Moser around 1773. Aside from operas, the company also performed farces and Singspiel (operettas). Schikaneder married an actress in this company, Eleonore Arth, in 1777, the same year he performed the role of *Hamlet* in Munich to general acclaim. He became the director of his troupe in 1778. He met Mozart in Salzburg in 1780, during an extended stay there with his company.

Schikaneder performed at the Kärntnertortheater in Vienna from 1785, while still working with the Salzburg group as time permitted. His plan to build a theatre in Vienna was vetoed by

Emperor Joseph II, which prompted him to temporarily leave for Regensburg. His company returned to Vienna in 1789 and became the resident company of the suburban Theater auf der Wieden.

The company was successful there, producing among other works a production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's already-popular opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (April and May of 1789). It also produced a series of fairy tale operas often involving elaborate theatrical machinery. These operas also made use of Schikaneder's ability to perform improvised comedy, as a "Hanswurst"-like character, inherited from the long tradition of the popular Viennese theater.

The Magic Flute

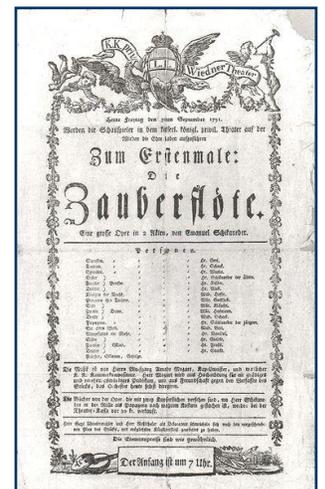


The series of fairy tale operas culminated in the September 1791 premiere of *The Magic Flute*, with music by Mozart. The libretto was Schikaneder's and incorporated a loose mixture of Masonic elements and traditional fairy tale themes. Schikaneder took the role of Papageno - a character reflecting the Hanswurst tradition, and thus suited to his skills - at the premiere.

Schikaneder also may have given advice to Mozart concerning the musical setting of his libretto. The dramatist Ignaz Franz Castelli tells the following tale:

"The late bass singer Sebastian Meyer told me that Mozart had originally written the duet where Papageno and Papagena first see each other quite differently from the way in which we now hear it. Both originally cried out 'Papageno!', 'Papagena!' a few times in amazement. But when Schikaneder heard this,

he called down in to the orchestra, 'Hey, Mozart! That's no good, the music must express greater astonishment. They must both stare dumbly at each other, then Papageno must begin to stammer: 'Pa-papapa-pa-pa'; Papagena must repeat that until both of them finally get the whole name out.' Mozart followed the advice, and in this form the duet always had to be repeated."



Playbill for the premiere, September 30, 1791

Castelli adds that the "March of the Priests" which opens the second act was also a suggestion of Schikaneder's, added to the opera at the last minute by Mozart. These stories are not accepted as necessarily true by all musicologists.

Later career

The success of *The Magic Flute* and other productions allowed Schikaneder to construct a new theatre in Vienna in 1801, making use of an Imperial license he had obtained 15 years earlier. This theatre, the Theater an der Wien, was opened to a performance of the opera *Alexander*, to Schikaneder's own libretto with music by Franz Teyber. According to the New Grove, the Theater an der Wien was "the most lavishly equipped and one of the largest theatres of its age." However, Schikaneder may have overextended himself in building it, as in less than a year he had to give up ownership, though he twice served the theatre as artistic director, staging elaborate productions there.



Theater an der Wien as it appeared in 1815

During this period, Schikaneder was an artistic associate of Ludwig van Beethoven, who for a time attempted to set Schikaneder's libretto *Vestas Feuer* (*Vesta's Fire*) as an opera. Beethoven lived in rooms in the Theater an der Wien during this time at Schikaneder's invitation, and continued there for a while as he switched his efforts in operatic composition to his *Fidelio*.



Emanuel Schikaneder



An illustration of Papageno



1791 illustration showing Schikaneder's troupe performing. All but one took part in *The Magic Flute* premiere the same year.

In 1804, the Theater an der Wien was sold to Baron Peter von Braun who immediately dismissed his archrival. Schikaneder left Vienna to work in Brno and Steyr. His life took a catastrophic turn starting in 1811. First, after economic problems caused by war and an 1811 currency devaluation, he lost most of his fortune. Then, in 1812, during a journey to Budapest to take up a new post, Schikaneder was stricken with insanity. He died in poverty on September 21, 1812, aged 61, in Vienna. Schikaneder wrote a total of about 55 theatre pieces and 44 libretti.

Theater auf der Wieden and Theater an der Wien

The Theater auf der Wieden was located in the Wieden district of Vienna. It existed for only 14 years (1787-1801), but during this time it was the venue for the premiere of no fewer than 350 theatrical works, of which the most celebrated was *The Magic Flute*. During most of this period the director of the theater was Emanuel Schikaneder.

The Theater an der Wien opened in 1801 and was the brainchild of Schikaneder. Schikaneder's troupe had already been successfully performing for several years in Vienna in the smaller (800-seat) Theater auf der Wieden. Schikaneder, whose performances often emphasized spectacle and scenery, felt ready to move to a larger and better equipped venue.

The Magic Flute: Context and Overview

Introduction

The Magic Flute was first performed just under three months before Mozart died. It was his first work for a popular theatre rather than a court audience, and was commissioned by the famous impresario Emanuel Schikaneder, who was also an actor, singer and playwright. Schikaneder wrote the libretto (possibly in consultation with Mozart and with at least one of his theatrical troupe) and was the first performer of the role of Papageno. The work was an immediate popular success. By 1800 Schikaneder's company had performed *The Magic Flute* over 200 times.

The plot is a mixture of myth, moral tale and fairytale, and deals with the adventures and ordeals of Prince Tamino, his friend Papageno the birdcatcher and his beloved Pamina, daughter of the Queen of the Night. As the opera progresses, Tamino, guided by the mysterious Sarastro, and with a magic flute to ward off evil, learns wisdom and becomes worthy of Pamina, while Papageno obtains his heart's desire – a wife.

The Magic Flute is markedly different to the literary operas that Mozart had previously written with Italian librettist Lorenzo da Ponte, such as *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, but it has an equally moving and highly enjoyable story, and some of Mozart's most sublime and complex music.

History: Mozart's Last Opera



The Magic Flute was Mozart's final opera, and something of a departure from his earlier works. Mozart was keen to work with Schikaneder, who had been a friend of his for some time, and to experiment with writing a different kind of opera to the Italian comic operas he had written with librettist Lorenzo da Ponte. These had been written for the Imperial Court Theatre or in one case, the Prague National Theatre; *The Magic Flute*, by contrast, was written for the suburban Theater auf der Wieden and would have had a more varied audience, from members of the Court to the working classes. The Theater auf der Wieden was a very

popular venue, and Mozart was friendly with various members of Schikaneder's troupe there.

Mozart intended *The Magic Flute* to be both comic and profound, as is illustrated in two of his letters. In one, he expresses his fury at an audience member who thought that the whole of *The Magic Flute* was a comedy. In another, he describes playing a trick on Schikaneder in a scene where Schikaneder had to mime playing the glockenspiel: Mozart hid in the pit and played the instrument when Schikaneder, in character as Papageno, least expected it.

The Music: Singspiel with Extended Ensembles and Sublime Arias

The Magic Flute is a Singspiel: literally "sung play," an opera which juxtaposes sung arias and ensembles with spoken dialogue rather than sung recitative and has German text. Though performed in a less prestigious theatre than the Da Ponte operas, *The Magic Flute* played to good audiences. The composer Salieri (allegedly a great rival of Mozart) attended a performance and was deeply impressed. The opera continued to be widely performed after Mozart's death, though abroad it was often heard in translation or in edited versions until the early 20th century.

Although the opera begins with a simple alternation of sung numbers and long passages of text, increasingly the action of the piece is carried forward in the music, particularly towards the end of Act II, with a greater emphasis on large-scale ensembles and less on spoken dialogue.

Musically, *The Magic Flute* is hugely varied. The music of Papageno, the simple "Man of Nature," owes much to folksong, while the Queen of the Night's histrionics are expressed in virtuosic

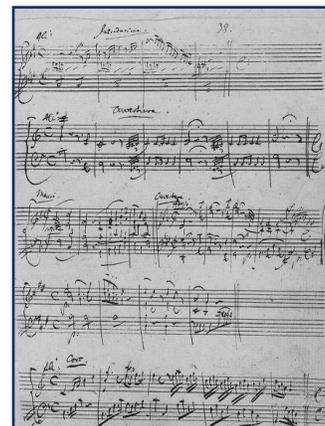
coloratura (this is one of the hardest parts for a soprano to sing). Tamino and Pamina's lyrical style highlights their position as hero and heroine of the drama, including two beautiful arias for Tamino and one for Pamina. Meanwhile, Sarastro's rich bass voice and slow, dignified arias convey the nobility of the ruler of the Temple. With such a wealth of different characters and styles, it is easy to see why *The Magic Flute* has remained one of the most popular operas of all time.

Behind the Story

The Magic Flute premiered in Vienna on September 30, 1791, at the suburban Freihaus-Theater auf der Wieden. Mozart conducted the orchestra, Schikaneder himself played Papageno, while the role of the Queen of the Night was sung by Mozart's sister-in-law Josepha Hofer. The opera garnered only a lukewarm reception at the time of its opening but slowly gained popularity, and celebrated its 100th performance in November 1792. Mozart did not have the pleasure of witnessing this milestone, as he had died on December 5, 1791, barely two months after the opera's premiere.

The Magic Flute is noted for its prominent Masonic elements; both Schikaneder and Mozart were Masons and lodge brothers. The opera is also influenced by Enlightenment philosophy, and can be regarded as an allegory espousing enlightened absolutism. The Queen of the Night represents irrational-diabolic plotting, whereas her antagonist, Sarastro, symbolizes the reasonable sovereign who rules with paternalistic wisdom and enlightened insight.

Mozart evidently wrote keeping in mind the skills of the singers intended for the premiere, which included both virtuosi and ordinary comic actors, asked to sing for the occasion. Thus, the vocal lines for Papageno and Monostatos are often stated first in the strings so the singer can find his pitch, and are frequently doubled by instruments. In contrast, Mozart's sister-in-law Josepha Hofer, who premiered the role of the Queen of the Night, evidently needed no such help: this role is famous for its difficulty. In ensembles, Mozart skillfully combined voices of different ability levels.



A page from the thematic catalogue of his works, which Mozart kept between 1784 and 1791. This page, covering July-November 1791, shows *The Magic Flute*, *The Clemency Titus*, the *Clarinet Concerto*, and a Masonic cantata.



Costumes for Sarastro and a genie from an 1816 production of *The Magic Flute*

The Story: A Freemasonry Fable

The Magic Flute has a huge range of dramatic influences, from fairytales to puppet theatre to myth (Tamino charms animals with his flute like Orpheus) to Enlightenment and Masonic ideals. The story of *The Magic Flute* was largely invented by Schikaneder, though he may have been in part inspired by various fairytales (the title of the opera comes from a story from the collection *Dchinnistan*) and by dramas which he had seen set in ancient Egypt (the gods Isis and Osiris are often referred to in the opera). Mozart was a Mason (as, briefly, was Schikaneder) and many of the rites and symbols in the opera relate to Freemasonry.

RELATED TOPICS OF STUDY

The Masons

The Masonic Square and Compass

Freemasonry is an organization of people who believe in brotherhood and helping others. Its members are known as "Freemasons" (in full: "Ancient Free and Accepted Masons," or simply "Masons"). Freemasons also help one another in times of hardship. Arising from obscure origins claimed to be anywhere from the mid-1600s to the time of the building of King Solomon's Temple, Freemasonry now exists in various forms all over the world, and claims millions of members. All of these various forms share moral and metaphysical ideals, which include in most cases a constitutional declaration of belief in a Supreme Being.



Freemasonry uses the metaphors of operative stonemasons' tools and implements, against the allegorical backdrop of the building of King Solomon's Temple, to convey what is most generally defined as "a system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols."

Principles and Activities: Ritual, Symbolism, and Morality

Masonic ritual makes use of the architectural symbolism of the tools of the medieval operative stonemason. Freemasons, as speculative masons (meaning philosophical building rather than actual building), use this symbolism to teach moral and ethical lessons of the principles of "Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth" — or as related in France: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

Two of the principal symbols always found in a Lodge are the square and compass. Some Lodges and rituals explain these symbols as lessons in conduct: for example, that Masons should "square their actions by the square of virtue" and to learn to "circumscribe their desires and keep their passions within due bounds toward all mankind." However, as Freemasonry is non-dogmatic, there is no general interpretation for these symbols (or any Masonic symbol) that is used by Freemasonry as a whole.

These moral lessons are communicated in performance of ritual. A candidate progresses through degrees gaining knowledge and understanding of himself, his relationship with others and his relationship with the Supreme Being (as per his own interpretation). While the philosophical aspects of Freemasonry tend to be discussed in Lodges of Instruction or Research, and sometimes informal groups, Freemasons, and others, frequently publish studies that are available to the public. Any Mason may speculate on the symbols and purpose of Freemasonry, and indeed all Masons are required to some extent to speculate on Masonic meaning as a condition of advancing through the degrees. It is well noted, however, that no one person "speaks" for the whole of Freemasonry.



Masonic Lodge initiation

Traditionally, only men can be made Freemasons in Regular Freemasonry. Many Grand Lodges do not admit women because they believe it would break the ancient Masonic Landmarks. However, there are many non-mainstream Masonic bodies that do admit both men and women or exclusively women. Furthermore, there are many female orders associated with regular Freemasonry.

Freemasonry and the Manitoba Legislative Building



Completed in 1920, the Manitoba Legislative Building is a remarkable monument to Masonic architecture and ancient temple design. Its iconography, replete with arcane imagery and esoteric lore, honours numerous deities from the Classical and ancient Near Eastern world.

CBC: Winnipeg's Secret Code
(Manitoba's Masonic Legislature building)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqO52erTdqk>

What is the Masonic Connection to *The Magic Flute*?

Mozart and Schikaneder were both Masons. *The Magic Flute* appears to be filled with many Masonic references of one kind or another. The rituals which Tamina and Pamina have to undergo bear strong resemblance to the Masonic initiation rituals. Mozart and Schikaneder show us duality: the lightness and reason of one set of characters vs. the darkness and irrationality of others. The scenery used in the early productions made the story appear as if it were taking place in Egypt or somewhere in the East. The Masonic Sacred number is three: the opera is written in E flat major, which has three flats. The groupings in three's and other concepts that refer to the grouping of liberty, equality, and fraternity include:

- the three ladies who attend the Queen of the Night
- the three youth who are sent to help Tamino and Pamina
- the serpent who is cut into three pieces
- the three long chords at the beginning of overture, and the three chords that appear again in the scene in the temple
- the three temples of Wisdom, Reason and Nature
- the three trials of ordeal

There are many more examples and although there is no direct mention of the Freemasons in *The Magic Flute*, it is generally considered that Mozart and Schikaneder deliberately wrote a Masonic opera. This is somewhat surprising given the vows of secrecy members are expected to observe, but it's generally concluded that there are too many references for it to be merely coincidence. Mozart was 28 when he joined the mysterious order. During those days in Vienna, the Freemasons were seen as striving to save humanity by moral means and *The Magic Flute* has always been viewed as a tribute to the benevolent organization.



Sarastro's palace in the opera
The Magic Flute

Libretto



What is a Libretto?

'**Libretto**' literally means 'little book' or 'booklet' in Italian. It refers to the written text of an opera set to music by the composer.

Today, we commonly refer to an opera as being 'by' e.g., Mozart or Verdi. But the text is a vital component and is normally written first. In earlier times it was often regarded as more important than the music and it was common for audience members to purchase the libretto to read.

Early composers were usually contracted to set music to a pre-existing text. Only later did composers (such as Mozart and Verdi) work in close collaboration with their librettists. A few composers – notably Wagner – wrote their own texts.

A Short History of Librettos

17th Century - The Age of the Librettist

In the 17th century, visitors to the opera often remarked on the drama more than the music. The librettist was typically a member of the professional or political classes, perhaps a young nobleman. It was his text that the composer was contracted to set to music, he who decided what scenery, costumes, dances and stage effects were required, and he who arranged for his 'little book' to be printed and marketed.

In the candle-lit theatres, it was the libretto as much as the show on stage that many seem to have relished. People collected their librettos much as enthusiastic opera-goers today make a collection of their programmes; one Venetian doctor had over 70 of them in his library.

18th Century - Da Ponte and Mozart, a Perfect Collaboration

The most famous librettist of the 18th century was Metastasio. His *Didone abbandonata* was set to music by some 40 different composers, and it was usually Metastasio's work, not theirs, that attracted audiences.

In Vienna in the 1780s, Mozart met the librettist Lorenzo da Ponte. In his memoirs, written many years later, Da Ponte tells how he managed to persuade the Emperor Joseph II to permit the performance of a new opera he and Mozart were working on based on the politically subversive recent play *The Marriage of Figaro*.



The Magic Flute 1791 libretto

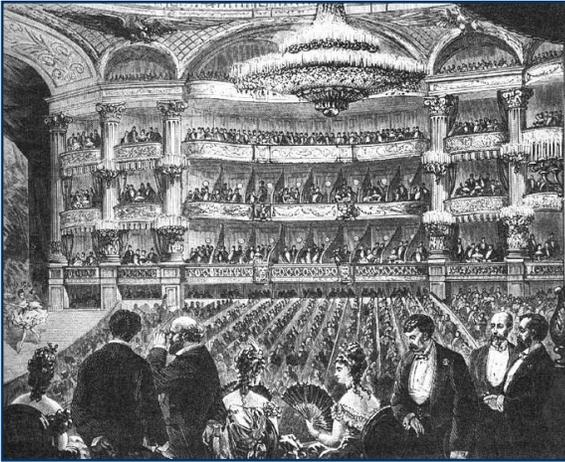
Da Ponte also describes how he worked on the libretto for *Don Giovanni*. His methods were unorthodox, but evidently effective! "A beautiful girl of 16 – I should have preferred to love her only as a daughter, but alas..! – was living in the house with her mother, who took care of the family, and came to my room at the sound of the bell. To tell the truth the bell rang rather frequently, especially at moments when I felt my inspiration waning... "

Mozart's last opera, *The Magic Flute*, was advertised as being by Emanuel Schikaneder, the actor-manager who had commissioned it and who wrote all or most of the text. Mozart's name came lower down the bill, after the cast list.

19th Century - Opera Composers Get Top Billing

By the 1830s, the composer was getting top billing. It was Bellini's *Norma* or Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* that people went to hear, even though both works benefited from a text by the finest librettist in Italy, Felice Romani. In Paris, similarly, it was Meyerbeer's (rather than Eugène Scribe's) *Robert le Diable* or *Les Huguenots* that drew the crowds.

Romani wrote some 90 texts which were set by 34 different composers. Scribe's productivity was higher still, both men becoming better known and better recompensed than many of the lesser composers who set their words to music. As early as the 1820s, Scribe was living in an elegant country estate and was probably the richest playwright in Europe.



Some opera librettists were important authors in their own right; Boito, who wrote the texts of Verdi's *Otello* and *Falstaff*, was also an opera composer. Others are scarcely remembered, and some (e.g., Solera and Piave, early collaborators with Verdi) ended their lives in poverty.

Wagner, more than any other composer, was determined to mastermind all aspects of his works. That included writing his own texts.

20th Century Librettists

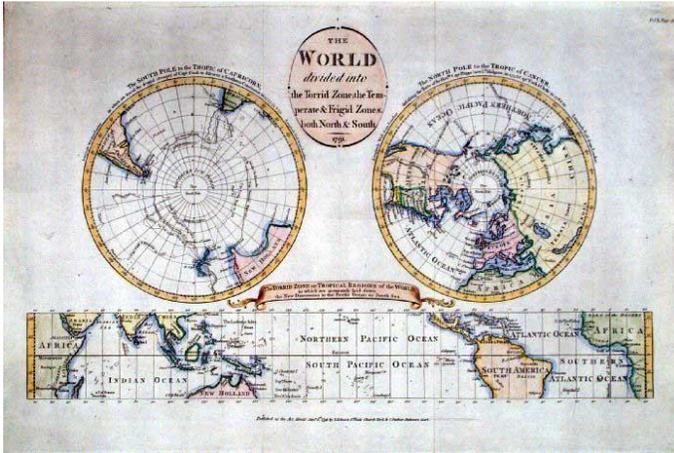
The most fruitful 20th century collaboration between composer and librettist was probably that between Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal; together, they created *Elektra*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and other operas. The poet W.H. Auden (with Chester Kallman) wrote the texts of operas for Britten, Stravinsky and Henze.



Five Facts about *The Magic Flute*

1. Mozart's last opera, *The Magic Flute* premiered on September 30, 1791 - roughly three months before Mozart died. Mozart himself conducted the orchestra, while the librettist, Emanuel Schikaneder, sang the role of Papageno.
2. Mozart's opera is widely known as a Masonic allegory. Mozart, as well as the librettist, was a Freemason. Throughout the opera, the symbolism is easily apparent, especially during the trials in the Temple of Wisdom.
3. When Mozart wrote this opera, many of the vocal passages were written specifically for the singers that would premier his work. Mozart accommodated the less experienced performers by doubling their parts in the orchestra.
4. The Queen of the Night's aria, "Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen" is one of the most well-known opera arias of all time. Taking place in the second act, this difficult aria demands a two-range octave and a lyric soprano voice dramatic enough to convey the emotional brevity of the scene.
5. The author of 50 libretti, including *The Magic Flute*, Emanuel Schikaneder ranked among the most talented comic singer-actors of his day. His 1780 meeting with Mozart, was fortuitous as some years later Schikaneder sank deep in debt, but was saved from financial ruin by the success of *The Magic Flute*.

What was happening in the World in 1791?



The event dominating all political thought in Europe was the French revolution. The Bastille had been stormed on July 14, 1789, and this act of defiance of royal power, followed by a mob attacking the Palace of Versailles in October 1789 led to the royal family closeting themselves in the Tuileries Palace in Paris. In an ill-advised move, recommended by Queen Marie Antoinette (sister of Emperor Joseph II of Austria), the royal family, disguised as servants, tried to flee to safety in June 1791 but were recognized and returned to Paris in disgrace, leading to their house arrest in the Tuileries. The King was so discredited by this attempt that the revolution moved inexorably towards abolition of the monarchy, the trial for

treason of the King and Marie Antoinette and their eventual guillotining.

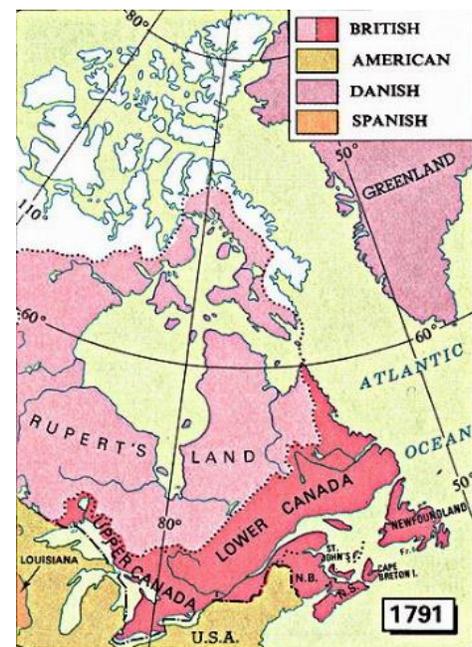
In Vienna, all the talk was of intervention to restore King Louis XVI to his throne, as an attack on one monarchy was considered an attack on all monarchies, not to mention Emperor Joseph's concern for his sister. In fact war broke out with Austria the following year, but France won and the war simply served to hasten the declaration of the French republic and the charges of treason levied against Louis and Marie Antoinette. Mozart would certainly have been aware that an opera exalting the merits of a royal personage (Prince Tamino) would be welcomed in the Vienna of 1791.

What was happening in Canada when *The Magic Flute* premiered in 1791?

In the wake of the American Revolution, waves of United Empire Loyalists (Americans remaining loyal to the British Crown) fled the United States to settle in the British Provinces of Nova Scotia and Quebec. In order to defend the remaining British colonies in North America, soldiers of the many British regiments that fought in the war were also encouraged to settle in British North America by the grant of free land. In recognition of the influx of loyalists, the British Government decided to divide the Province of Quebec into two new colonies: *The Constitutional Act, 1791*, created Upper Canada and Lower Canada and granted legislatures to both new provinces. Upper Canada was given English law and institutions, while Lower Canada was allowed to retain the French language, its Civil Code, based on French law and Roman Catholic religious institutions.

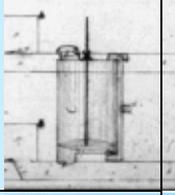
The steps in the "Canadas" followed the 1784 decision to create the new Province of New Brunswick out of the western portion of Nova Scotia in recognition of the loyalist population settling in the Saint John River valley. Nova Scotia had been granted a legislative assembly in 1754 and New Brunswick was granted an assembly when it was created in 1784.

Hence, at the time of Mozart, Canada experienced not only war with the United States, but also the beginnings of Constitutional Government.



1791 Timeline

1791 was an eventful year; *La clemenza di Tito* premiered on September 6, *The Magic Flute* premiered on September 30, and W.A Mozart died on December 5, at age 35. Here are other events that occurred in 1791:

<p>The Brandenburg Gate, a former city gate and one of the main symbols of Berlin and Germany, was commissioned by King Frederick William II of Prussia as a sign of peace and built from 1788 to 1791.</p>	
<p>The Day of Daggers or 'Day of Poignards' was an event during the French Revolution which occurred on February 28, 1791, when the Marquis de Lafayette arrested 400 armed aristocrats at the Tuileries in Paris.</p>	
<p>The Flight to Varennes (June 20-25, 1791) was a significant episode in the French Revolution during which King Louis XVI of France and his immediate family were unsuccessful in their attempt to escape, from the radical agitation of the Jacobins in Paris. This represented a turning point after which popular hostility towards the monarchy, as well as towards Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, became more pronounced. They were only able to make it as far as Varennes.</p>	
<p>On August 22, the slaves of Saint Domingue rose in revolt and plunged the colony into civil war. The plantation owners retaliated by massacring black prisoners as they were being escorted back to town by soldiers. Within weeks, the number of slaves that joined the revolt was approximately 100,000.</p>	
<p>On August 26, John Fitch and James Rumsey, rivals battling over claims to the invention, each were granted a federal patent for the steamboat. They devised different systems for their steamboats.</p>	
<p>The Declaration of Pillnitz, on August 27, was a statement issued at the Castle of Pillnitz in Saxony by the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Leopold II and Frederick William II of Prussia, calling on European powers to intervene if Louis XVI of France was threatened. The statement helped begin the French Revolutionary Wars.</p>	
<p>The short-lived French Constitution of 1791 was the first written constitution of France. One of the basic precepts of the revolution was adopting constitutionality and establishing popular sovereignty, following the steps of the United States of America.</p>	
<p>During the French Revolution, the Legislative Assembly was the legislature of France from October 1, 1791 to September 1792. It provided the focus of political debate and revolutionary law-making between the periods of the National Constituent Assembly and of the National Convention.</p>	
<p>On December 15, 1791, the new United States of America ratified the Bill of Rights, the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution, confirming the fundamental rights of its citizens.</p>	



The Enlightenment has been defined as beginning with the publication of Sir Isaac Newton's *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*.

The Age of Enlightenment

The **Age of Enlightenment** (or simply the **Enlightenment**) is the era in Western philosophy, intellectual, scientific and cultural life, centered upon the 18th century, in which reason was advocated as the primary source for legitimacy and authority. It is also known as the **Age of Reason**. The Enlightenment was a movement of science and reason.

Developing simultaneously in France, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the American colonies, the movement culminated in the Atlantic Revolutions, especially the success of the American Revolution, when breaking free of the British Empire. The authors of the American Declaration of Independence, the United States Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and the Polish-Lithuanian Constitution of May 3, 1791, were motivated by Enlightenment principles.

The "Enlightenment" was not a single movement or school of thought, for these philosophies were often mutually contradictory or divergent. The Enlightenment was less a set of ideas than it was a set of values. At its core was a critical questioning of traditional institutions, customs, and morals, and a strong belief in rationality and science. Thus, there was still a considerable degree of similarity between competing philosophies. Some historians also include the late 17th century as part of the Enlightenment. Modernity, by contrast, is used to refer to the period after the Enlightenment; albeit generally emphasizing social conditions rather than specific philosophies.



Olympe de Gouges: Declaration of the Rights of Women, 1791

Olympe de Gouges, a butcher's daughter, proved to be one of the most outspoken and articulate women revolutionaries. In 1791 she wrote the following declaration, directly challenging the inferiority presumed of women by the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Her attempts to push this idea led to her being charged with treason during the rule of the National Convention. She was quickly arrested, tried, and on November 3, 1793, executed by the guillotine.

Woman, wake up; the tocsin of reason is being heard throughout the whole universe; discover your rights. The powerful empire of nature is no longer surrounded by prejudice, fanaticism, superstition, and lies. The flame of truth has dispersed all the clouds of folly and usurpation. Enslaved man has multiplied his strength and needs recourse to yours to break his chains. Having become free, he has become unjust to his companion. Oh, women! When will you cease to be blind? What advantage have you received from the Revolution? A more pronounced scorn, a more marked disdain. In the centuries of corruption you ruled only over the weakness of men. The reclamation of your patrimony, based on the wise decrees of nature-what have you to dread from such a fine undertaking? The *bon mot* of the legislator of the marriage of Cana? Do you fear that our French legislators, correctors of that morality, long ensnared by political practices now out of date, will only say again to you: women, what is there in common between you and us? Everything, you will have to answer. If they persist in their weakness in putting this non sequitur in contradiction to their principles, courageously oppose the force of reason to the empty pretensions of superiority; unite yourselves beneath the standards of philosophy; deploy all the energy of your character, and you will soon see these haughty men, not grovelling at your feet as servile adorers, but proud to share with you the treasures of the Supreme Being. Regardless of what barriers confront you, it is in your power to free yourselves; you have only to want to....

Marriage is the tomb of trust and love. The married woman can with impunity give bastards to her husband, and also give them the wealth which does not belong to them. The woman who is unmarried has only one feeble right; ancient and inhuman laws refuse to her for her children the right to the name and the wealth of their father; no new laws have been made in this matter. If it is considered a paradox and an impossibility on my part to try to give my sex an honorable and just consistency, I leave it to men to attain glory for dealing with this matter; but while we wait, the way can be prepared through national education, the restoration of morals, and conjugal conventions.

From "Olympe de Gouges, 'Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Female Citizen,'" in Darline Gav Levy, H. Applewhite, and M. Johnson, eds., *Women in Revolutionary Paris, 1785-1795* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1979), pp. 9296.



Portrait of Mozart,
1763-64

Family Life in the 18th Century

Marriage, children, economic circumstances and social status were closely linked during the 1700s. The majority of families were termed "the middling class" or the middle class, a status of family that was non-existent before the 18th century. During the 1600s people were either wealthy and privileged or utterly poor and there was no in-between whatsoever. The rise of the middle class began during the 18th century and its impact upon family was enormous.

Women and men of the upper classes did not marry for love. Instead, they married strictly for financial and social reasons. Women who wished to continue living within a wealthy household simply did not marry a man of the middle or lower class. A self-respecting gentleman didn't even consider marrying a woman from a poor family. It was unlikely she would possess the social graces and dowry required to marry into such a society. Moreover, rumors would abound as to why a wealthy young man would wed a girl of such poor means. Perhaps he had gotten her "in the family way" and was inclined to do right by her? Such humiliation could never be visited upon his family.

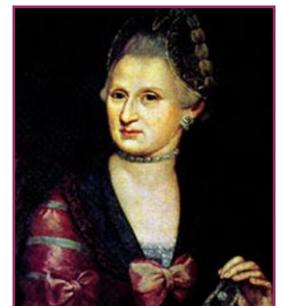
The middle class on the other hand could marry whomever they liked. It wasn't sensible for a middle-class women to marry a poor man since her children would be raised in poverty, yet if her happiness depended upon it, her family was unlikely to intervene. There was no need to marry for social status or wealth since the middle class did not possess either.

Yet the concept of the middle class was still one of privilege. Up until the 18th century, childhood, like the middle class, did not exist. The lower class worked hard to eke out a living and their children were expected to work alongside them. School was a privilege that only the upper class could afford. And well into the 18th century childhood still did not exist for the lower class.

The Industrial Revolution set into motion incredible changes in 1700s society. The vast majority of people who worked inside the new factories producing items such as farm equipment, clothing and toys were of the lower class. Not surprisingly, lower class children also worked inside these factories earning far less than their parents' meager wage. Children labored as hard as their parents, often carrying heavy loads of materials or sitting at industrial machines for countless hours inside deplorable factory conditions. Had the term "sweatshop" been coined at that time, then it would indeed have described the factories where these lower class families labored.

The middle and upper classes however did not set foot inside of a factory. Children of the middle class began to attend school for the first time in history. Only farmers' children took time away from school for significant periods in order to assist with the sowing and harvesting of crops during the summer and autumn months.

The dominant household figure was the father. It was he who determined whether or not his wife could work outside the home or whether or not his children were to attend school. He owned all of the family's property and money. Divorce was exceedingly rare since women who left their husbands had no viable means of survival. Mothers usually remained at home, keeping a hearth and producing several children. Their job was not an easy one. Mothers cleaned the house, made clothing for their families by hand, cooked, minded the children, tended a garden and generally tried to please their husbands. Women's social status was well below that of men's and they seldom questioned any of their husbands' decisions.



Mozart's mother
Anna Maria, 1775

Yet many upper and middle class families were quite content during the 18th century. The Industrial Revolution generated excitement about new technologies meant to make life easier. Marriages were usually harmonious, children were treated kindly and a belief in God was extremely important. The inherent goodness in people provided a solid backbone for families and produced a law-abiding and civilized society in which families flourished.

The Magic Flute, the Blockbuster

The Magic Flute is one of the three most-performed operas in the world. It's certainly a candidate for the most popular. But its phenomenal success would have surprised Emanuel Schikaneder, the actor-singer-impresario and self-promoter who wrote the libretto, played Papageno, and managed to rope in a busy Mozart to supply the music in the summer of 1791. Schikaneder was not trying to create 'a masterpiece,' but simply churning out another money-spinning mix of dialogue, singing, pantomime, mystical mumbo-jumbo and drama, to appeal to Vienna's middlebrow audiences of the time.

At first glance, his plot looks a jumbled nonsense. It does at most further glances, too. In essence, *The Magic Flute* is a 'buddy movie' set in some vaguely Egyptian legendary past: Tamino (a prince, the straight man) and Papageno (a yokel, the funny man) team up to win their respective sweethearts, Pamina and Papagena. To do so they have to go through various initiation ceremonies set up by some priests they run into. Along the way we also have murderous intrigue involving baddies who turn out to be goodies (Sarastro, the head priest) and goodies who turn out to be baddies (Queen of the Night, Pamina's mother).

So why has it proved so popular? Partly it's the odd mix of the thing. On the one hand, it's a celebration of the Enlightenment: that remarkable new wave of social tolerance, equality and liberated thinking that set Western society on its modern secular, democratic path. All its ideals greatly appealed to Mozart. Both society and individuals are better at the end of the opera, after their self-testing ordeals. Yet on the other hand, it's a slapstick comedy with pantomime, magic bells, and flutes. Schikaneder's libretto is a derivative old rag-bag, but it's had enough to it to appeal to directors over the centuries.



Emanuel Schikaneder, playing Papageno (in the picture from the playbill of the first performance)



Mozart, pictured in an engraving from 1789, said to be the best likeness of the composer

But mainly, of course, what has made *The Magic Flute* endure is the music. Mozart was a man equally at home playing pool over a beer with his chums as he was discussing politics or art in the highest social and intellectual circles; possibly only he could have written music of such a wide range of styles, yet also such quality. Everywhere the notes flesh out the characters in a way beyond that of acting and words. Tamino's music, like him, is earnest and cultured; Pamina's is graceful and beautiful. Papageno, though - who doesn't care about moral or social progress, and just wants a decent job, pretty wife and a glass of wine or two with dinner - has unpretentious, bouncy popular tunes. Monostatos, a bully and sexual abuser, shouts in disconnected, crude fragments. Sarastro, the priestly patriarch, has controlled melodic gravitas; the Queen of the Night, a vindictive harpie, is vertically unhinged and intense, most notoriously in her manic top F (yes, *that* F) vengeance aria in Act II.

But there's also the happy end. No one dies after being stabbed and then sings about it. In fact, nobody really dies at all: Monostatos, the Queen of the Night and her henchpersons all disappear at the end in a clap of thunder, but it's more a symbolic kind of thing - Wisdom and Enlightenment winning over the old ways of sycophancy, brute force and vengeance.

And the goodies get their reward. Tamino gets his Pamina, and in the most appealingly daft duet in all of mainstream opera, Papageno gets his Pa-pa-pa-pa-pa-papagena. Silly but serious, popular yet profound: what goes for their duet goes for the opera as a whole. Perhaps only Mozart could attempt all this - and make it work so well.



The playbill from a London performance in the late 1830's

Mozart in the Movies

You think you don't know Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's music? Chances are you've been hearing it while watching a movie, TV, or DVD. Below is a list of pieces from selected films.



A scene from *Amadeus*

- **Alien:** Eine Kleine Nachtmusik
- **Amadeus:** Requiem, Symphony No. 25, Symphony No. 29, Piano Concerto No. 20, Eine Kleine Nachtmusik
- **The Big Lebowski:** Music (Requiem in D Minor)
- **Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan:** Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, "II Andante"
- **Babette's Feast:** "La ci darem" from *Don Giovanni*
- **Big Trouble:** Eine Kleine Nachtmusik
- **Bonfire of the Vanities:** Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, *Don Giovanni*
- **Breathless:** Clarinet Concerto
- **Elizabeth:** Requiem Aeternam from the Requiem
- **Elvira Madigan:** Piano Concerto No. 21
- **Face-off:** "Ach, ich fühl's" from *The Magic Flute*
- **Five Easy Pieces:** Symphony No. 40, 1st Movement
- **French Lieutenant's Woman:** Piano Sonata K576
- **The General's Daughter:** "In diesen heil'gen Hallen" from *The Magic Flute*
- **Green Card:** Clarinet Concerto, Flute and Harp Concerto, Flute Concerto No. 1
- **Grumpy Old Men:** Haydn Quartet No. 14 K38
- **Guarding Tess:** the Catalogue Aria from *Don Giovanni*, "Ich Gehe", "Doch Rate Ich Dir" from *The Abduction from the Seraglio*
- **Hopscotch:** "Non più Andrai" from *The Marriage of Figaro*
- **JFK:** Horn Concerto No. 2
- **The Joy Luck Club:** Flute and Harp Concerto, 2nd Movement
- **The Killing Room:** Song (String Quartet K 458 The Hunt)
- **Last Action Hero:** *The Marriage of Figaro* Overture
- **Love Story:** Piano Sonata (K332)
- **My Left Foot:** "Un'aura amorosa" from *Così fan tutte*
- **Out of Africa:** Clarinet Concerto
- **Sex in the City 2:** *The Marriage Of Figaro*
- **Sophie's Choice:** Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (K525), Piano Concerto 23 in A Major (K488)
- **Spiderman 3:** Minuet from Symphony No. 39, K.543
- **Sunday, Bloody Sunday:** Trio from *Così fan tutte*
- **Trading Places:** *The Marriage of Figaro* Overture
- **The Truman Show:** Piano Sonata No. 11 in A Major (K. 331) (300): Third Movement: "Alla Turca"
- **Under Suspicion:** Requiem
- **When Harry Met Sally:** Quintet in E flat

The Flute

Background

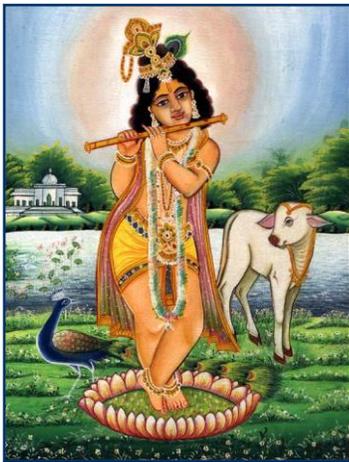
A flute is a musical instrument that produces sound when a stream of air is directed against the edge of a hole, causing the air within the body of the instrument to vibrate. Most flutes are tubular, but some are globular or other shapes. Some flutes are played by blowing air into a mouthpiece, which directs the air against the edge of a hole elsewhere in the flute. These instruments, known as whistle flutes, include the tubular recorder and the globular ocarina. Other flutes are played by blowing air directly against the edge of the hole.

Some flutes are held vertically and are played by blowing air against the edge of a hole in the end of the flute. These instruments include Japanese bamboo flutes and the panpipe. The panpipe, also known as the syrinx, consists of several vertical flutes of various sizes joined together. Other flutes are held horizontally, and are played by blowing air against the edge of a hole in the side of the flute. These instruments, known as transverse flutes, include the modern flute used in orchestras.



Lady Jeanne and Sir James Galaway (known as "The Man with the Golden Flute")

History



Krishna with flute

Flutes have existed since prehistoric times. A fragment of a cave bear thigh bone containing two holes, discovered in Slovenia in 1995, is believed by some scientists to be part of a flute used by Neanderthals more than 43,000 years ago. Flutes were used by the Sumerians and Egyptians thousands of years ago. Some ancient Egyptian flutes have survived, preserved in tombs by the arid desert climate. This Egyptian instrument was a vertical flute, about one yard (0.9 m) long and about 0.5 in (1.3 cm) wide, with between two to six finger holes. Modern versions of this flute are still used in the Middle East today.

The ancient Greeks used panpipes, probably indirectly influenced by more sophisticated Chinese versions. The transverse flute was used in Greece and Etruria by the second century B.C. and later appeared in India, China, and Japan. Flutes almost disappeared from Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire, until the Crusades brought Europeans into contact with the Arabs. Vertical flutes spread from the Middle East to Europe, and are

still used in the Balkans and the Basque regions of Spain and France. Transverse flutes spread from the Byzantine Empire to Germany, then appeared in Spain and France by the 14th century.

During the Renaissance, transverse flutes consisted of wooden cylinders of various sizes, typically made of boxwood, with a cork stopper in one end and six finger holes. During the late 17th century, the Hotteterre family, noted French instrument makers, redesigned the transverse flute. Instead of a single cylinder, the flute consisted of a head joint, a body, and a foot joint. Modern flutes are still made in these three basic parts. The new flute also had a single key added, allowing more notes to be played. After 1720, the body was often divided into two parts of varying lengths, allowing the flute to be adjusted to play in various musical keys. By 1760, three more keys were added by London flutemakers, followed by two additional keys by 1780 and two more by 1800.

The transverse flute was completely redesigned in the middle of the 19th century by the German instrument maker Theobald Bohm. Bohm changed the position of the holes and increased their size. Because the new holes were impossible to reach with the fingers, new mechanisms were added to cover and uncover them as needed. The Bohm system is still used in modern transverse flutes.

Raw Materials

Some modern flutes are made from wood that produces a different sound from metal flutes. These wooden flutes generally have metal keys and mechanisms. Most flutes are made of metal. Less expensive flutes, intended for students, may be made from alloys of nickel and other metals. More expensive flutes may be plated with silver.

The pads attached to the surface of the keys in order to cover the holes are made of cork and felt. The springs that provide tension to hold the keys firmly against the holes may be made of steel, bronze, or gold. The pins and screws that hold the mechanism together are made of steel. The mouthpiece, containing the hole into which air is blown, may be made of the same metal as the rest of the flute, or it may be made of another metal, such as platinum.



Design

Every flute is an individually crafted work of art. Students need relatively inexpensive but reliable instruments. Professional musicians must have instruments of very high quality, often with special changes made in the keys to accommodate special needs.

The most individual portion of a flute is the head joint. Professional musicians often test several head joints before selecting one which produces the sound they prefer. Head joints are often manufactured to meet the special demands of individual musicians.

The material from which a flute is made greatly alters the sound which is produced. Wooden flutes produce a dark sound. Silver flutes produce a bright sound. The thickness of the metal used to make a flute also alters the sound it makes, as well as changing the weight of the instrument. All these factors may influence the design of a flute preferred by a particular musician.

A flute may be elaborately decorated. The physical appearance of a flute is an important consideration for professional musicians who perform in public. The most detailed designs are likely to be found on the professional quality flutes. The process of forming these designs, known as chasing, requires the skill of an experienced artist, and makes the individual flute a truly unique instrument.

Most flutes are made of metal. Less expensive flutes, intended for students, may be made from alloys of nickel and other metals. More expensive flutes may be plated with silver. All flutes are individually assembled and play tested prior to sale.



A scene from the film, *The Magic Flute*, 2006

The Future

Very few changes have been made in the basic design of the modern transverse flute since the middle of the 19th century. Flutemakers will continue to find ways to make small but critical changes in individual instruments to fit the needs of individual musicians.

Two seemingly opposite trends hint at the future of flutemaking. Many performers of music from the Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical periods prefer to use flutes that resemble the instruments used during those times. Such instruments are believed to be more suited to older music than modern flutes, which were developed during the Romantic period. On the other hand, many performers of jazz, rock, and experimental music use

electronic devices to alter the sounds of flutes in new ways. Despite these two trends, the instrument originally designed by Theobald Bohm is likely to dominate flutemaking for many years to come.

THE OPERATIC VOICE & PROFESSIONAL SINGING



Soprano Jessye Norman, being awarded the National Medal of the Arts at the White House.

Operatic singing, which was developed in Europe during the 17th century, places far greater vocal demands on an opera singer than on any other type of singing. Opera singers rarely use microphones, and therefore must develop their voices to make a sound that will project and be heard above an orchestra and be heard throughout a large theatre.

After years of practice and study, an opera singer learns to use his or her body as an amplification device. By controlling the muscles of the diaphragm (a muscle beneath the lungs and above the stomach) the singer can regulate the amount of breath used. The diaphragm expands and contracts, regulating the air that passes through

the vocal cords, which, in turn, causes them to vibrate. The speed at which the cords vibrate determines the pitch. As the sound passes through the mouth, it resonates in the upper chest cavities and the sinus cavities of the face and head. These cavities act as small echo chambers and help amplify the sound. The shape of the mouth and the placement of the tongue near the lips contribute to the tone and sound of the words.

Many singers begin their operatic training in university. Opera students study singing, music history, composition and vocal pedagogy (voice teaching). In addition to music classes, they study diction and often study at least one foreign language. After university, singers begin to work in the professional world. Their first roles are usually small parts, but if they continue to study and train, they may move on to the bigger principal roles.

Professional singers develop a number of roles in their repertoire. Since the principal artists are required to have their parts memorized before rehearsals begin, singers must prepare well in advance of each contract. Singers have voice teachers who help them refine their singing techniques and many will also have an acting coach. Even a well established singer will have a vocal coach to teach singing and acting techniques for specific roles.

Each person's vocal tract is constructed differently. The roles that a singer performs are dependent mostly upon their vocal range, but within the vocal ranges, there are many colours and weights of voice that further determine which roles he or she can sing safely. Vocal colour refers to the richness of the sound and vocal weight refers to how powerful a voice sounds.

After the role has been studied intensely and the singer is hired to perform, they arrive at the opera company for the rehearsals. This time is spent refining the music with the conductor and staging the action with the stage director. Each director has a different idea of how the character should be played, and each conductor has a different idea of how the character should sound, therefore the singer must modify his or her techniques to reach the desired result.

Physical health is a major priority to a singer. Contrary to popular belief, not all opera singers are overweight. Conventional wisdom used to state that excessive weight gave added volume and richness to the voice however, in recent years, people have discovered that physical fitness can give similar benefits to a voice. Plus, the overall health benefits of being in shape overshadow any loss of vocal power. Most singers, like professional athletes try to avoid such substances as tobacco, alcohol and caffeine.



Internationally acclaimed lyric soprano Dame Kiri Te Kanawa. In 2010, the New Zealander received a prestigious Te Waka Toi award in recognition of her artistic leadership and lifetime of exceptional musical achievement.

Vocal Categories

WOMEN:

Soprano: The highest female voice, similar to a flute in range and tone colour. Usually plays the heroine in the opera since a high, bright sound can easily suggest youth and innocence.

Mezzo-Soprano: The middle-range female voice, similar to an oboe in range and tone colour. Called an alto in choral arrangements, can play a wide variety of characters including gypsies, mothers and the part of a young man (trouser role).

Contralto: The lowest female voice, similar to an English horn in range and tone colour. Usually play unique roles including fortune-tellers, witches and older women.

MEN:

Tenor: The highest male voice, similar to a trumpet in range, tone color and acoustical "ring." Usually plays the hero or the romantic lead in the opera.

Baritone: The middle-range male voice, similar to a French horn in tone color. Often plays the leader of mischief in comic opera or the villain in tragic opera, sometimes even the hero.

Bass: The lowest male voice, similar to a trombone or bassoon in tone color. Usually portrays old, wise men, or foolish, comic men.

The vocal parts overlap each other. The notes that are high for baritone to sing are low for a tenor. The notes that are low for a baritone to sing are high for a bass. For this reason you may see a high range mezzo-soprano singing a soprano's role or a low-range baritone singing a bass' role.

The following terms can be used to describe special characteristics in a vocal range:

Coloratura: A light, bright voice that has the ability to sing many notes quickly, usually with an extended upper range.

Lyric: A light to medium weight voice, often singing beautiful sweeping melodies.

Dramatic: Dark, heavy and powerful voice, capable of sustained and forceful singing.

George Shirley and Shirley Verrett in Washington National Opera's *Oedipus Rex*, 1962



	Coloratura	Lyric	Spinto	Dramatic
Soprano	Norina (<i>Don Pasquale</i>) Gilda (<i>Rigoletto</i>) Lucia (<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i>)	Liu (<i>Turandot</i>) Mimi (<i>La Bohème</i>) Pamina (<i>The Magic Flute</i>)	Tosca (<i>Tosca</i>) Amelia (<i>A Masked Ball</i>) Leonora (<i>Il Trovatore</i>)	Turandot (<i>Turandot</i>) Norma (<i>Norma</i>) Elektra (<i>Elektra</i>)
Mezzo-Soprano	Rosina (<i>The Barber of Seville</i>) Angelina (<i>La Cenerentola</i>) Dorabella (<i>Così fan tutte</i>)	Carmen (<i>Carmen</i>) Charlotte (<i>Werther</i>) Giulietta (<i>Hoffmann</i>)	Santuzza (<i>Cavalleria</i>) Adalgisa (<i>Norma</i>) The Composer (<i>Ariadne auf Naxos</i>)	Azucena (<i>Il Trovatore</i>) Ulrica (<i>A Masked Ball</i>) Herodias (<i>Salome</i>)
Tenor	Count Almaviva (<i>The Barber of Seville</i>) Don Ottavio (<i>Don Giovanni</i>) Ferrando (<i>Così fan tutte</i>)	Alfredo (<i>La Traviata</i>) Rodolfo (<i>La Bohème</i>) Tamino (<i>The Magic Flute</i>)	Calaf (<i>Turandot</i>) Pollione (<i>Norma</i>) Cavaradossi (<i>Tosca</i>)	Dick Johnson (<i>Fanciulla</i>) Don Jose (<i>Carmen</i>) Otello (<i>Otello</i>)
Baritone	Figaro (<i>The Barber of Seville</i>) Count Almaviva (<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>) Dr. Malatesta (<i>Don Pasquale</i>)	Marcello (<i>La Bohème</i>) Don Giovanni (<i>Don Giovanni</i>) Sharpless (<i>Madama Butterfly</i>)	Verdi Baritone Germont (<i>La Traviata</i>) Di Luna (<i>Il Trovatore</i>) Rigoletto (<i>Rigoletto</i>)	Scarpia (<i>Tosca</i>) Jochanaan (<i>Salome</i>) Jack Rance (<i>Fanciulla</i>)
Bass	Bartolo (<i>The Barber of Seville</i>) Don Magnifico (<i>Cenerentola</i>) Dr. Dulcamara (<i>The Elixir of Love</i>)	Leporello (<i>Don Giovanni</i>) Colline (<i>La Bohème</i>) Figaro (<i>The Marriage of Figaro</i>)	Buffo Bass Don Pasquale (<i>Don Pasquale</i>) Don Alfonso (<i>Così fan tutte</i>)	Basso Cantate Oroveso (<i>Norma</i>) Timur (<i>Turandot</i>) Sarastro (<i>The Magic Flute</i>)

GLOSSARY: IMPORTANT WORDS IN OPERA



Act- a section of the opera that is then divided into scenes.

Aria- means "air" in Italian. This is a piece of music written for a one singer (soloist), usually with instrumental accompaniment.

Aside- a secret comment from an actor directly to the audience that the other characters cannot hear.

Baritone- the middle singing range of the male voice.

Bass- the lowest singing range of the male voice.

Basso buffo (Italian)- a bass singer who specializes in comic characters.

Basso profundo (Italian)- the most serious bass voice.

Baton- short stick that the conductor uses to lead the orchestra.

Bel Canto- Italian phrase literally meaning "beautiful singing." A traditional Italian style of singing emphasizing tone, phrasing, coloratura passages, and technique. Also refers to the operas written in this style.

Blocking- directions given to the performers for movement on stage.

Bravo- (Italian)- a form of appreciation shouted by audience members at the end of a particularly pleasing performance. Technically, Bravo refers to a male performer, Brava refers to a female performer and Bravi refers to many performers.

Buffo- from the Italian for "buffoon." A singer of comic roles (basso-buffo) or a comic opera (opera-buffa.)

Cadenza- a passage of singing, often at the end of an aria, which shows off the singer's vocal ability.

Castrato- (Italian)- a castrated male prized for his high singing voice.

Choreographer- the person who designs the steps of a dance.

Chorus- a group of singers of all vocal ranges, singing together to support the vocal leads.

Classical- the period in music which comes after the Baroque and before the Romantic, roughly from the birth of Mozart to shortly after the death of Beethoven. It represents the greatest standardization in orchestral form and tonality.

Coloratura- elaborate ornamentation of music written for a singer using many fast notes and trills. Also used to describe a singer who sings this type of music.

Composer- the individual who writes all the music for both voice and instrument.

Comprimario- (Italian)- a nineteenth century term referring to secondary or supporting roles such as confidantes, messengers, and matchmakers.

Contralto- the lowest female voice range.

Conductor- the person responsible for the musical interpretation and coordination of the performance.

The conductor controls the tempo, the dynamic level and the balance between singers and orchestra. You will see this person standing in the orchestra pit conducting the musicians and the singers.

Countertenor- a male singer with the highest male voice range, generally singing within the female contralto or mezzo soprano range.

Crescendo- a build in the volume or dynamic of the music.

Cue- a signal to enter or exit from the stage, to move or to change lighting or scenery; or a signal given by the conductor to the musicians.

Curtain Call- occurs at the end of the performance when all the cast members and the conductor take bows. This can occur in front of the curtain or on the open stage.

Designer- a production can have two or three designers: a lighting designer, a costume designer, a set designer, or someone who is both costume and set designer. They work closely with the stage director to give the production a distinctive look.

Diva- literally, "goddess" in Italian. An important female opera star. The masculine form is divo.

Dress Rehearsal- the final rehearsal before opening night, includes costumes, lights, makeup, etc. Sometimes it is necessary to stop for adjustments, but an attempt is made to make it as much like a regular performance as possible.

Duet- music that is written for two people to sing together.



Encore- a piece that is performed after the last scheduled piece of a concert. An encore is usually performed because the audience wants to hear more music even though the concert is over.

Ensemble- a part of the opera written for a group of two or more singers. This may or may not include the chorus.

Falsetto- the upper part of a voice in which the vocal cords do not vibrate completely. Usually used by males to imitate a female voice.

Finale- the last musical number of an opera or an act.

Grand Opera- spectacular French opera of the Romantic period, lavishly staged, with a historically-based plot, a huge cast, an unusually-large orchestra, and ballet. It also refers to opera without spoken dialogue.

Helden- German prefix meaning "heroic." Can also apply to other voices, but usually used in "heldentenor."

House- the auditorium and front of the theatre excluding the stage and backstage areas.

Impresario- the proprietor, manager, or conductor of an opera or concert company; one who puts on or sponsors an entertainment; manager, producer.

Interlude- a short piece of instrumental music played between scenes and acts.

Intermission- a break between acts of an opera. The lights go on and the audience is free to move around.

Librettist- the writer of the opera's text. Libretto- Italian for "little book." It is the text or story of the opera.

Lyric- used to describe a light to medium weight voice with an innocent quality, capable of both sustained, forceful singing and delicate effects.

Maestro- means "master" in Italian. Used as a courtesy title for the conductor (male or female).

Mark- to sing, but not at full voice. A full-length opera is very hard on a singer's voice so most performers mark during rehearsals. During the Dress Rehearsal singers try to sing at full voice for part if not all of the rehearsal.

Mezzo-soprano- the middle singing range for a female voice.

Motif or Leitmotif- a recurring musical theme used to identify an emotion, person, place, or object.

Opera- a dramatic presentation which is set to music. Almost all of it is sung, and the orchestra is an equal partner with the singers. Like a play, an opera is acted on stage with costumes, scenery, makeup, etc. Opera is the plural form of the Latin word opus, which means "work".

Opera buffa- (Italian)- an opera about ordinary people, usually, but not always comic. First developed in the eighteenth century.

Opera seria- (Italian)- a serious opera. The usual characters are gods and goddesses, or ancient heroes.

Opera-comique- (French) or Singspiel (German)- a form of opera which contains spoken dialogue.

Operetta- lighthearted opera with spoken dialogue, such as a musical.

Orchestra- an ensemble, led by a conductor, that is comprised of string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments.

Orchestra pit- sunken area in front of the stage where the orchestra sits.

Overture- an orchestral introduction to the opera played before the curtain rises. Usually longer than a prelude and can be played as a separate piece.

Pitch- how high or low a note sounds.

Prelude- a short introduction that leads into an act without pause.

Prima Donna- literally, "first lady" in Italian. The leading woman in an opera. Because of the way some of them behaved in the past, it often refers to someone who is acting in a superior and demanding fashion. The term for a leading man is primo uomo.

Principal- a major singing role, or the singer who performs such a role.

Production- the combination of sets, costumes, props, and lights etc.

Props- objects carried or used on stage by the performers.

Proscenium- the front opening of the stage which frames the action.

Quartet- four singers or the music that is written for four singers. Also quintet, sextet, etc.

Raked Stage- a stage that slants downwards towards the audience.

Recitative- lines of dialogue that are sung, usually with no recognizable melody. It is used to advance the plot.

Rehearsal- a working session in which the singers prepare for public performance.

Score- the written music of an opera or other musical work.

Serenade- a piece of music honouring someone or something, an extension of the traditional performance of a lover beneath the window of his mistress.

Soprano- the highest range of the female singing voice.

Soubrette- (French)- pert young female character with a light soprano voice.

Spinto- (Italian)- a lyric voice that has the power and incisiveness for dramatic climaxes.

Stage Areas- refers to the various sections of the stage as seen by those on stage.

Stage Director- the person in charge of the action on stage. He or she shows the singers, chorus and cast where and when to move and helps them create their characters. The stage director develops a concept for how the entire performance should look and feel. He or she works closely with the stage managers, lighting designer, set designers, costume designer and wig and make-up artists to make his or her vision into reality.

Stage Manager- the person who coordinates and manages elements of the performance.

Supernumeraries- (Supers)- appear on stage in costume in non-singing and usually, non-speaking roles.

Surtitles- the English translations of the opera's language, in this production Italian, that are projected above the stage during a performance to help the audience follow the story. Much like subtitles in a foreign film.

Synopsis- a short summary of the story of the opera.

Tableau- occurs at the end of a scene or act, when all cast members on stage freeze in position and remain that way until the curtain closes. It looks as though that moment has been captured in a photograph.

Tempo- speed of the music.

Tenor- the highest natural adult male voice.

Trill- very quick alternation between two adjacent notes. See coloratura.

Trio- an ensemble of three singers or the music that is written for three singers.

Trouser role- the role of an adolescent boy or young man, written for and sung by a woman, often a mezzo soprano. Also known as a pants role.

Verismo- describes a realistic style of opera that started in Italy at the end of the 19th century.

What is a sitzprobe??

Pronounced "zits-probe" this German word is not what you may think! It is the name given to the type of rehearsal that is held the first day of moving on to the main stage. For the first time, the principals and chorus are together with the Maestro and the orchestra. The entire opera is sung through without any costumes or blocking. This gives everyone a chance to check the ensemble and balance between the singing and the orchestra (remember, up until now rehearsals have been accompanied by piano).

Tenor Taro Ichihara

Japanese tenor Taro Ichihara's story is a fairytale come true. In 1984 he stepped in to replace an ailing Luciano Pavarotti in a performance of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* and went on to develop an international career with appearances at La Scala and the Met.

"Lucia di Lammermoor" - Fra poco a me ricovero (Taro Ichihara)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmUf4t5xFt4>

OPERA PRODUCTION

Opera is created by the combination of myriad art forms. First and foremost are the actors who portray characters by revealing their thoughts and emotions through the singing voice. The next very important component is a **full symphony orchestra** that accompanies the **singing actors and actresses**, helping them to portray the full range of emotions possible in the operatic format. The orchestra performs in an area in front of the singers called the orchestra pit while the singers perform on the open area called the stage. Wigs, costumes, sets and specialized lighting further enhance these performances, all of which are designed, created, and executed by a **team of highly trained artisans.**



The creation of an opera begins with a dramatic scenario crafted by a **playwright or dramaturg** who alone or with a librettist fashions the script or libretto that contains the words the artists will sing. Working in tandem, the **composer and librettist** team up to create a cohesive musical drama in which the music and words work together to express the emotions revealed in the story. Following the completion of their work, the composer and librettist entrust their new work to a **conductor** who, with a **team of assistants** (repetiteurs), assumes responsibility for the musical preparation of the work. The conductor collaborates with a **stage director** (responsible for the visual component) in order to bring a performance of the new piece to life on the stage. The stage director and conductor form the creative spearhead for the new composition while assembling a **design team** which will take charge of the actual physical production.

Set designers, lighting designers, costume designers, wig and makeup designers and even choreographers must all be brought "on board" to participate in the creation of the new production. The set designer combines the skills of both an artist and an architect using "blueprint" plans to design the actual physical set which will reside on the stage, recreating the physical setting required by the storyline. These blueprints are turned over to a team of carpenters who are specially trained in the art of stage carpentry. Following the actual building of the set, **painters** following instructions from the set designers' original plans paint the set. As the set is assembled on the stage, the lighting designer works with a team of electricians to throw light onto both the stage and the set in an atmospheric, as well as practical way. Using specialized lighting instruments, colored gels and a state-of-the-art computer, the designer, along with the stage director, create a "lighting plot" by writing "lighting cues" which are stored in the computer and used during the actual performance of the opera.

During this production period, the costume designer, in consultation with the stage director, has designed appropriate clothing for the singers to wear. These designs are fashioned into patterns and crafted by a team of highly skilled artisans called **cutters, stitchers, and sewers**. Each costume is specially made for each singer using his/her individual measurements. The wig and makeup designer, working with the costume designer, designs and creates wigs which will complement both the costume and the singer as well as represent historically accurate "period" fashions.

As the actual performance date approaches, rehearsals are held on the newly crafted set, combined with costumes, lights, and orchestra in order to ensure a cohesive performance that will be both dramatically and musically satisfying to the assembled **audience.**



**The Three Genii in the film,
The Magic Flute, 2006**

AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE



The following list will help you (and those around you) enjoy the experience of a night at the opera:

- Dress to be comfortable. Many people enjoy dressing up in formal attire.
- Arrive on time. Latecomers disturb the singers and others in the audience. Latecomers will only be seated at suitable breaks - often not until intermission.
- Find your seat with the help of your teacher or an usher.
- Remove your hat. This is customary and is respectful to the artists and to people sitting behind you.
- Turn off cell phones, ipods, pagers, digital watch alarms and all electronic devices.
- Leave your camera at home. A flash can be very disturbing to the artists and audience members.
- Save all conversations, eating and drinking, and chewing gum, for the intermission. Talking and eating can be disruptive to other audience members and distracts from your ability to be absorbed by the show. The audience is critical to the success of the show – without you, there can be no performance.
- Settle in and get comfortable before the performance begins. Read your program before the performance – rustling through the program during the show can disrupt everyone.
- Clap as the lights are dimmed and the conductor appears and bows to the audience. Watch as the conductor then turns to the orchestra and takes up his or her baton to signal the beginning of the opera.
- Listen to the prelude or overture before the curtain rises. It is part of the performance. It is an opportunity to identify common musical themes that may reoccur during the opera.
- Read the English surtitles projected above the stage.
- Sit still during the performance. Only whisper when it is absolutely necessary, as a whisper is heard all over the theatre, and NEVER (except in an emergency) stand during the performance.
- Applaud (or shout Bravo!) at the end of an aria or chorus piece to show your enjoyment. The end of a piece can be identified by a pause in the music.
- Laugh when something is funny – this is a performance and you are expected to respond!
- Listen for subtleties in the music. The tempo, volume and complexity of the music and singing often depict the “feeling” or “sense” of the action or character.
- Notice repeated words or phrases; they are usually significant.
- **Finally, have fun and enjoy the show!!!**

WHAT'S IN A REVIEW? LET'S REVIEW



A young Mozart

Being a music critic has its rewards -- but it also has its drawbacks. On one hand, you get to go to lots of concerts -- and you get in free. On the other hand, you can't just sit back and enjoy the listening experience. You spend most of the time analyzing, evaluating and scribbling notes about what you're hearing and seeing.

Star Ratings



One especially difficult part of the job is deciding the star ratings. Reviewers are required to rate performances on a five-star scale, five being the highest rating.

Criteria

Musical interpretation and expression: Did the soloist/ensemble project and capture the spirit of the work?

Technical execution: Was this an accurate, well prepared performance?

Creativity and originality: Did the conductor/musicians bring their own personality to the work, possibly showing us something new?

Programming: Was this a well-balanced, cohesive combination of musical choices? Quality/style of works: This applies especially to new works.

Venue: Was it suitable for the genre of show, offering good acoustics and sightlines?

Costuming (in opera or some pops concerts): Did they add authenticity and flair to the performance?

Choreography (opera and some pops concerts): Was it well done, creative and suitable?

Demeanour: Did the performers project personality, confidence, energy, etc., and connect with the audience?

Atmosphere: What was the overall feeling at this concert? Was it an event? Was there warmth, excitement, etc.?

Introductory remarks: Were they useful in giving us background that enhanced the listening experience or were they just lengthy lists of housekeeping items that detracted from the reason we were there?

A scene from
Ingmar Bergman's
film, *The Magic Flute*



Considerations contributing to an overall rating

Gut feeling

One thing we can't ignore, as human beings, is the gut feeling we get at a concert. This is the intuitive, perhaps partly emotional reaction to a performance. Every work and every performance contributes to the whole, and not until the end can one render a decision.

A great performance speaks to everybody ... If you put at the heart of an opera company the desire to serve the art form, and genuinely make it available and invite in the complete cross-section of society, then everything that company does comes somehow or other under the heading Education ... the skill to be taught in these programmes, throughout an opera house, to every audience and every sponsor, the skill we are in danger of losing, and the biggest threat to our own art form, is listening. It's the only door you need to open: how to listen.

- Graham Vick, Commander of the Order of the British Empire, Opera Director

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activity #1 – Have your students act out the story

Think about the characters and the role they play in the story. Choose one of the following:

CHARACTERS

TAMINO, a prince

PAPAGENO, a bird catcher

QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

MONOSTATOS, servant of Sarastro

PAMINA, daughter of the Queen of Night

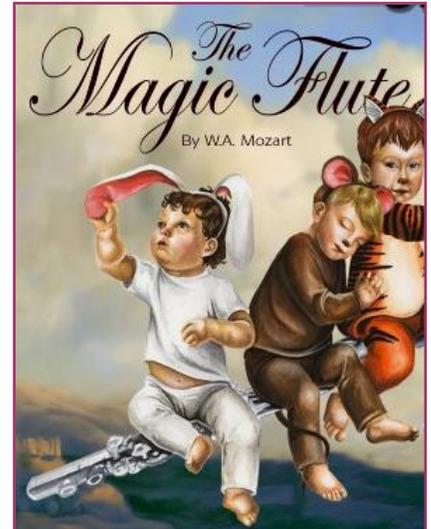
THE SPEAKER

SARASTRO, High Priest of Isis and Osiris

PAPAGENA

Three Ladies-in-Waiting to the Queen, a Serpent, Three Genii of the Temple, Slaves, Menagerie of Wild Beasts, Priests, Priestesses and Armed Men

If you were going to play this character, you would have to discover, create, and imagine the background, personality, physical qualities of him or her. Some clues are provided in the story and the music and some you need to make up yourself.



Pretend you are that character and answer the following questions:

1. How old are you?
 2. Do you have brothers and sisters?
 3. What sort of home do you have (a house/castle/cave?) Describe it.
 4. What do you really want in the story? This is called your character's objective.
 5. What obstacles stand in your way?
 6. What steps in the opera do you take to achieve this objective? What are the results?
 7. What obstacles are beyond your control (laws, social status, others' actions)?
 8. What are your (character's) greatest strengths?
 9. Greatest weaknesses?
 10. Can you think of a modern day character that has similar characteristics and traits?
 11. If this character were alive today, how would he/she be more or less successful in the world?
 12. What different steps would he or she take to achieve an objective?
- Get up and walk around the room. How does your character walk? It should be different than you. How does this character sit?



Main Characters

Tamino: A prince. He is lured into the forest by the Queen of the Night and enlisted by her to rescue her daughter Pamina from Sarastro. Later, he becomes an ally of Sarastro, determined to learn Wisdom in his temple. *Tenor*

Papageno: A birdcatcher who becomes Tamino's attendant. He is a simple-minded man whose main desire in life is for a wife and children, and good food and drink. *Baritone*

The Queen of the Night: A sorceress, who initially appears good, but is in fact evil. She persuades Tamino to rescue her daughter Pamina from Sarastro's palace. *Soprano*

Monostatos: Sarastro's servant, a wicked man, later dismissed by his master. *Tenor*

Pamina: The Queen of the Night's daughter. Unlike her mother, Pamina is good and brave. She is kept captive by Sarastro, but it later transpires that he is seeking to protect her from her sorceress mother. *Soprano*

Sarastro, Priest of Isis and Osiris: A mysterious figure who the Queen of the Night says is an evil sorcerer. However, he is later revealed to be a good and wise man. *Bass*

Papagena: Papageno's sweetheart, who magically appears when he rings his magic bells. *Soprano*



The Story

ACT I

A mysterious forest



Set Design for *The Magic Flute*

Tamino is being pursued by a serpent. He is saved by three ladies, attendants of the Queen of the Night, who kill the serpent. Awaking after his ordeal, Tamino meets the birdcatcher Papageno, who pretends that it was he who saved the prince.

The three ladies return with the Queen of the Night, who asks Tamino to save her daughter Pamina, who has been kidnapped by the magician Sarastro. She gives Tamino a portrait of Pamina, and Tamino begins to fall in love with the beautiful girl. He vows to save her.

The three ladies present Tamino with a magic flute to ward off evil, and Papageno with magic bells, which play sweet melodies. Tamino and Papageno set off for Sarastro's palace.

A room in Sarastro's palace

Pamina is threatened by Sarastro's servant Monostatos, who lusts after her. Papageno appears and frightens Monostatos away. He tells Pamina that Tamino loves her and is on his way to rescue her. Papageno tells Pamina of his own wish for a wife, and Pamina assures him he will find love.



1816 print of the costume design by Sturmer for Papageno

Indian temple
The Magic Flute, 2001



Sarastro's palace; the temples of Wisdom, Reason and Nature.

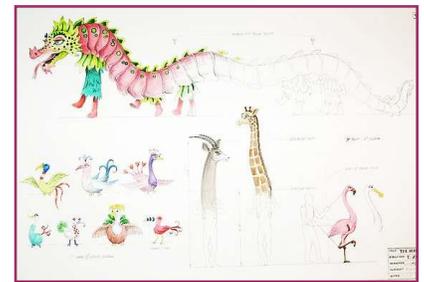
Tamino arrives at Sarastro's temple, led by Three Genii who have promised to guide him. He has to choose between three doors, one marked Reason, one marked Nature and one marked Wisdom. He knocks at the first two, but is refused. He is admitted to the last where he is greeted by one of Sarastro's attendants, the Speaker of the Temple.

The Speaker listens to Tamino's story, but tells him that he is mistaken; Sarastro is not evil, but is protecting Pamina from her mother, who is a wicked and proud enchantress. Tamino is left alone. He plays his flute, and a menagerie of wild beasts, charmed by his music, appear and dance.

Pamina and Papageno are attempting to escape the palace, following the noise of Tamino's flute. They are caught

by Monostatos, but Papageno charms him and his men with his magic bells. Sarastro is heard approaching and Pamina tells Papageno that they must stay and speak to him.

Sarastro explains to Pamina why he has taken her away from her mother, and orders Monostatos to be whipped for his brutal behaviour towards Pamina. Tamino and Pamina meet for the first time. They fall in love at first sight, but Sarastro says that Tamino must prove himself worthy of Pamina's love and learn wisdom by undergoing a series of ordeals. Papageno will join him.



Sketches of puppets from a production of The Magic Flute

ACT II

The Temple

Sarastro and the priests discuss Tamino's forthcoming ordeals. If he succeeds, he will be able to defend Sarastro's brotherhood against the evil Queen of the Night. The trials commence. Tamino and Papageno are commanded not to speak to any woman and are left alone in a dark room. The Queen of the Night's ladies appear and tempt them, but they remain firm, Papageno with great difficulty.

A room in the palace

The Queen of the Night reveals her true purpose and tells Pamina that she wants to destroy Sarastro and his brotherhood of Wisdom. She gives her daughter a dagger and instructs her to kill Sarastro. Monostatos appears and again threatens Pamina. He is dismissed by Sarastro, who tells Pamina that no harm will come to her in his palace, and sings her to sleep.



A scene from the film, The Magic Flute, 2006

The Temple

Tamino and Papageno continue their ordeal of silence. Papageno chatters to an old woman who brings him water, but Tamino remains steadfast even when Pamina appears and entreats him to talk. Pamina believes that Tamino no longer loves her and is heartbroken. Sarastro prepares Tamino for further trials. Papageno sings of his need for a wife, accompanied by his magic bells. The old woman appears and insists that he marry her. As he agrees, she turns into a young and beautiful girl – Papagena – but suddenly disappears. Papageno runs off to search for her.

A Garden

Pamina has decided to kill herself, but is stopped by the Three Genii, who assure her that Tamino does love her, and that she can now share in his trials.

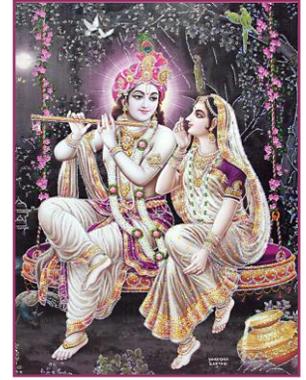
Tamino prepares for his final ordeal: trials of Fire and Water. Pamina offers to go with him – together, they feel they can face anything. As they set off, Tamino plays his magic flute to ward off evil. They pass through the trials of fire and water successfully and are greeted in triumph by Sarastro's subjects.

Papageno cannot find Papagena and in despair, prepares to hang himself. The Genii remind him to use his magic bells. Their magic summons Papagena, and she and Papageno embrace and plan a future with many children.

The Queen of Night attempts to attack the temple, helped by Monostatos, but Sarastro's subjects repel them and they descend into darkness.

The Temple of the Sun

Sarastro declares the victory of Tamino and Pamina over the powers of night, and hands over the rule of his kingdom to them. Everyone rejoices.



Activity #2 – A Review



**A scene from the film,
The Magic Flute, 2006**

Step 1 – Think-Group-Share

Individually students will write, in point form, the answers to the following questions:

1. What did you like about the opera? What did you dislike?
2. What did you think about the sets, props and costumes?
3. Would you have done something differently? Why?
4. What were you expecting? Did it live up to your expectations?
5. What did you think of the singers' portrayal of their characters?

Break the students into groups to discuss their feelings and reactions to the production. Have the students write on poster papers their answers or important points of their discussion. Encourage the students to go beyond the questions posed.

Step 2 – Class Discussion

Have the whole class examine the poster papers and discuss the different ideas from each group.

Step 3 – Outlining your review

Go over the essential aspects of a review including: a clearly stated purpose, a coherent comparison/contrast organizational pattern, a summary paragraph capturing the interest of the reader, precise nouns, revision for consistency of ideas. You might give your students a few samples of reviews for fine arts events – or ask them to bring in some reviews they find themselves. Have the students fill out the review outline, then complete a rough draft.

1. Purpose (why are you writing this and who is your audience?)
2. Plot Synopsis (including who sang what role, etc.)
3. Paragraph 1 (compare and contrast, things you liked or didn't like)
4. Paragraph 2 (compare and contrast, things you liked or didn't like)
5. Paragraph 3 (compare and contrast, things you liked or didn't like)
6. Summary/Closing Paragraph



**Young Mozart with a
bird's nest, 1764-65**

Step 4 - Peer Conferencing

Students will exchange reviews to critique and edit. Encourage the students to focus on effective coordination of ideas in sentences and the correct use of grammar and punctuation.

Step 5 - Creating the final draft

Have students make the appropriate adjustments to their reviews. You could also have the students type the pieces up and organize them into a newspaper.

Activity #3 – An 18th Century Newspaper Review

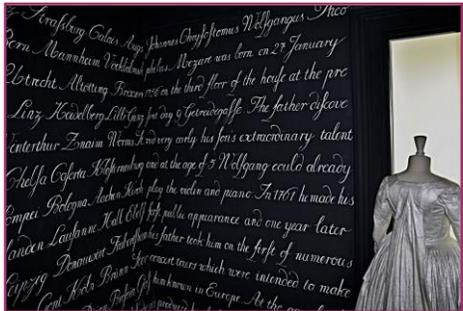
Be a music critic in Austria. Students imagine they are living at the time of the first performance of *The Magic Flute*.

Step 1 - Historical Research

Students will need to learn about the historical context in Austria, around the time Mozart composed *The Magic Flute*. They may want to learn more about what was happening in other art forms (e.g., literature and painting).



Empress Maria Theresa, ruler of Austria, 1740 -1780



Step 2 - Writing the Review

Students may want to create a newspaper in which their review is included. The review itself could incorporate quotes and/or headlines from actual historical reviews. The students' reviews can follow a similar outline to that for the activity above, but they must remember the time period in which they are writing. If they design a newspaper, they can try to use similar type styles (font) and page layout as were used in the late 1700s.

Activity #4 – Write a Letter from One Character to Another

Choose a moment in the story and have one character write a letter to another.

Activity #5 – Create a Costume, Set, Poster, News Ad, Press Release or Biography

- **Sketch a costume** for a character in *The Magic Flute*. The costume can be traditional or modern.
- **Draw a set** for a production of *The Magic Flute*. The set can be traditional or modern.
- **Design a poster** for *The Magic Flute* Student Night at the Opera, including the date, the time, and the people involved. The poster can be traditional or modern.
- **Create a newspaper ad** for *The Magic Flute*. Include whatever you feel is the biggest "selling point" of the opera - what makes it exciting? Why should people come to see it?
- **Write a press release** about *The Magic Flute* Student Night at the Opera, including the date, the time, the people involved, and why it would be exciting or fun to attend.
- Write a biography of one of the characters.



Costume design for *The Magic Flute*

Activity #6 – Using the Five C’s, Have your Students Analyze the Opera as Drama:

Characters: Are they interesting? Believable? Are their actions, words, thoughts consistent?

Conflict: What conflicts are established? How are they resolved?

Climax: To what climax does the conflict lead?

Conclusion: How well does the conclusion work? Is it consistent? Satisfying? Believable?

Context: What are the historical, physical, and emotional settings? Sets and costumes?

In the classroom

- Give students the synopsis in your own words, by making copies for them to read, or by having them re-tell the story after they have read it to their classmates.
- Ask comprehensive questions.
- Present and discuss composer and librettists.
- Listen to the preview CD. Have students identify and recognize recurring themes.
- Discuss the historical background, emphasizing the visual and performing arts and history-social science frameworks. Discuss the results of certain events. Whom did they affect? How? Why? Did any changes occur as a result?
- Review the glossary of terms.
- Assign topics for written reports related to the opera. Essays can be written on historical aspects, as well as ethical questions raised by plot or character.
- Listen to excerpts from the opera. Watch a video of the opera.
- Have the students watch for references to themes in the opera in their everyday lives. Radio, TV, magazines, and movies often refer back to classics.



Tamino's flute playing charms the wild beasts



An illustration of *The Magic Flute*

After the opera

- Have students write a review of what they saw. Was the production a good representation of the five C'S?
- Have the students create their own designs for sets, costumes, wigs, make-up, etc.
- Have them listen to another opera, read the libretto and design the above for it. Stress the importance of historical accuracy.
- Have your students write a letter to one of the characters giving them advice for the future.

Activity #7 – “Tweet” about *The Magic Flute*

- Have students “tweet” about *The Magic Flute* by writing out a twitter in 140 characters or less on a sheet.
- Have them read their tweet aloud to the class.
- Have them post it to Manitoba Opera’s Facebook wall.

Activity #8 – Enlightenment and *The Magic Flute*

The end of the opera brings the victory of light over darkness. This represents the ideals of a major trend of thought in the 18th century called the Enlightenment.

- Research the Enlightenment and identify examples of this philosophy in *The Magic Flute*.



Manitoba Opera would love to receive a copy of any activities produced by the students. Please forward them to the attention of:

Livia Dymond, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Manitoba Opera, 1060 - 555 Main St., Winnipeg, MB R3B 1C3

Activity #9 - Make a bird mask

Materials:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Paper plates
- Glue
- Glitter, yarn, buttons, etc. (optional)
- Popsicle sticks



Instructions:

1. Cut a paper plate in two. Use one half to make your mask.
2. Cut out the eyes of the mask by gently folding the mask and snipping the centre of each eye area, then carefully cut the outline of the eye area.
3. Decorate your paper plate mask by drawing with crayons or pencil crayons or by cutting and gluing pieces of coloured construction paper. You could also use other crafts supplies such as yarn, buttons, glitter, tissue, etc.
4. Glue a popsicle stick to the lower portion of the mask (on the back) to use as a handle.

Activity #10 - Opera Comprehension Tests

General Opera

1. _____ A theatrical production incorporating both vocal and instrumental music, drama, and sometimes dance.
2. _____ The lowest male vocal range.
3. _____ An instrumental introduction to an opera.
4. _____ The area where the orchestra is seated.
5. _____ The female vocal range lying between soprano and contralto.
6. _____ A song for solo voice in an opera.
7. _____ The highest female vocal range.
8. _____ A song for two voices.
9. _____ The lowest female vocal range.
10. _____ The Italian word meaning "little book."
11. _____ The middle male vocal range.
12. _____ He/she has the artistic view for the performance of the opera.

The Magic Flute

1. *The Magic Flute* was first performed in the year _____ .
2. *The Magic Flute* premiered roughly three months before Mozart died. _____ himself conducted the orchestra.
3. Name an historical event that occurred during Mozart's lifetime
_____.
4. The libretto for *The Magic Flute* was written by _____.
5. The role of Pamina is sung by a _____ (name the singing voice).
6. The role of Tamino is sung by a _____ (name the singing voice).
7. The role of Queen of Night is sung by a _____ (name the singing voice).



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