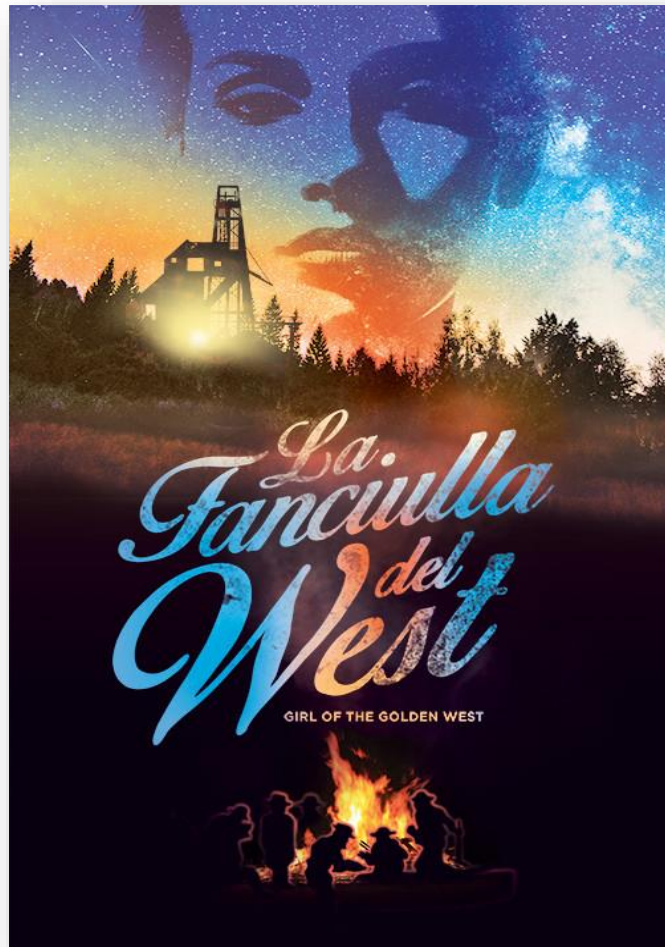


OPERA COLORADO



November 2016

A Letter to the Teachers

Dear Teachers,

Opera Colorado is pleased to provide engaging educational programs and performances for students across Colorado. What follows is a guide that we hope you and your students find useful, as we explore Giacomo Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*. In the spirit of exploration, we have included various lessons that connect *La Fanciulla del West* with different subjects of learning. The lessons reference the new Colorado Department of Education's Academic Standards: specifically, focusing on the fourth grade expectations. This does not mean, however, that these lessons should be limited to this age group. While we would be very pleased if you used these lessons in the exact format provided, we encourage you to expand, alter, and adapt these lessons so that they best fit your students' abilities and development. After all, the teacher knows their student's needs best. We would appreciate your feedback on our teacher evaluation form found at the end of this guide, and we hope that you enjoy all that Opera Colorado has to offer!

Thank you!

- Cherity Koepke -

Director of Education & Community Engagement

- Parisa Zaeri -

Education & Community Engagement Assistant



Contact us to learn more!

Opera Colorado's Education & Community Programs department offers many more programs to assist your students as they continue to discover the world of opera. We have programs that take place at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House as well as programs that we can bring directly to your classroom. We even have opera education specialists that can teach lessons directly to your students.

Cherity Koepke, Director of Education & Community Engagement
ckoepke@operacolorado.org, 303.778.0371

Parisa Zaeri, Education & Community Engagement Assistant
pzaeri@operacolorado.org, 303.778.7350



Opera Colorado makes every effort to ensure that the information provided in this guidebook is as accurate as possible. With the exception of materials used for educational purposes, none of the contents of this guidebook may be reprinted without the permission of Opera Colorado's Education & Community Programs department. Dictionary definitions were taken from www.Merriam-Webster.com, and unless marked otherwise, educational information was gathered from www.Wikipedia.com. Unless otherwise noted, the materials in the La Fanciulla del West guidebook were developed and compiled by Assistant Director of the Opera Colorado Young Artists, Brett Sprague.

Table of Contents

Synopsis of Production	6
Meet the Composer	10
Meet the Librettist	12
Meet the Playwright	15
Introduction to Opera	17
Activity: Diagramming Differences	18
Activity: Compare and Contrast	19
Activity: Storyline Analysis	22
Activity: Visual Arts	24
Activity: Creative Writing	27
Activity: Camp Minstrel Song	29
Activity: Word Search	30
Evaluation	33

La Fanciulla del West

Composed by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Guelfo Civinini

Adapted from David Belasco's play *The Girl of the Golden West*

Professional Debut- Metropolitan Opera, 1910

Cast of Characters

Minnie	Soprano	Melissa Citro
Jack Rance, <i>a Sheriff</i>	Baritone	Mark Rucker
Dick Johnson alias Ramerrez, <i>bandit</i>	Tenor	Jonathan Burton
Nick, <i>bartender at the Polkasaloon</i>	Tenor	Norman Shankle
Ashby, <i>Wells Fargo agent</i>	Bass	Harold Wilson
Sonora, <i>miner</i>	Baritone	Jared Guest
Trin, <i>miner</i>	Tenor	Joseph Gaines
Sid, <i>miner</i>	Baritone	Kasey Nahlovsky
Bello, <i>miner</i>	Baritone	Charles Eaton
Harry, <i>miner</i>	Tenor	TBA
Joe, <i>miner</i>	Tenor	Omar Najmi
Happy, <i>miner</i>	Baritone	Ryan Bradford
Jim Larkens, <i>miner</i>	Bass	Gregory Gerbrandt
Billy Jackrabbit, <i>a Native American trapper</i>	Bass	Nathan Van Arsdale
Wowkle, <i>his wife</i>	Mezzo-soprano	Danielle Lombardi
José Castro, <i>in Ramerrez's band</i>	Bass	Michael Corvino
Pony Express Rider	Tenor	Chorus role

Synopsis

ACT I

Synopsis courtesy of *Stories of the Great Operas* by John W. Freeman (adapted to Opera Colorado's Production)

A mining camp in Colorado during the gold rush (1849-50). In the Polka saloon, miners' voices are heard in nostalgic refrains. Handsome inquires about Minnie—a sort of den mother for the community—and learns from Nick, the bartender, that she is fine. A card game starts. Larkens is plagued with homesickness. When Sonora and Trin ask Nick whether Minnie seems to favor them, he diplomatically answers yes to each. As Trin jubilantly orders whiskey for everybody, the voice of the camp minstrel, Jake Wallace, is heard approaching. His nostalgic song about the old folks at home (*Che faranno i vecchi miei*) casts a pensive silence over the group and proves too much for Larkens, who breaks down in sobs. The men take up a collection to send him home. In the game that resumes, Handsome catches Sid cheating, and Sonora draws his revolver. The ensuing commotion brings the sheriff, Jack Rance, who pins the offending card on Sid's chest and says he will hang if he takes it off. The others throw Sid out of the bar. Rance turns to welcome Mr. Ashby of the Wells Fargo agency, who has just arrived, and asks news of the bandit who has been plaguing him. Ashby replies that the man has eluded capture for three months but is known to be nearby: his gang of Mexican highwaymen will stop at nothing. Nick announces a round of drinks on Minnie, whom everyone cheers. Rance says she will soon be his wife, but Sonora, somewhat drunk, ridicules the idea and provokes Rance to draw his revolver. Sonora draws too, but Trin grabs his arm, and the shot goes wild. Minnie arrives, demanding to know what the trouble is. She scolds Sonora and threatens not to teach the miners any longer: they try to make up to her, and Joe shyly offers a bunch of flowers he has picked by the river, while Sonora proffers a ribbon and Harry a silk handkerchief. Placated, she offers a cigar to Mr. Ashby and, noticing Rance, greets him. Seeing Sonora pay his bar bill with a bag of nuggets, Ashby tells Rance it is crazy to keep gold in the saloon with bandits around. Minnie pulls a Bible from a drawer and starts to read to the attentive miners, starting with the fifty-first Psalm, asking who remembers who King David was and explaining the moral: "There is no sinner in the world whose way to salvation is barred." As the lesson draws to a close, the pony express arrives, the rider remarking he saw a sinister-looking man en route. Ashby, receiving a dispatch, asks

whether anyone knows a certain Nina Micheltorena, whom Minnie refers to as a “siren.” Ashby says this woman knows the where-abouts of the bandit chief and has asked Ashby to meet her at the Palmas saloon late that night. Happy, Handsome, Harry, and Joe read letters from home. A stranger is reported outside the bar, asking for whiskey and water, an unheard-of mixture. As the miners go to investigate, Rance tells Minnie he loves her. She reminds him he has a wife, but he declares he will get a divorce; she says she lives alone by preference and trusts in her revolver. He replies bitterly that he has had a loveless life; a gambler at heart, he was drawn to California by the gold and would wager everything for Minnie’s love (*Min-nie, dalla mia casa son partito*). Minnie says true love is different: she grew up in a bar-restaurant in Soledad, and her parents loved each other very much (*Laggiù nel Soledad*). When Nick brings in the stranger, Rance roughly tells the newcomer that he must have lost his way and that he is not welcome. Asking his name, he learns that it is “Johnson” from Central City. Johnson and Minnie recognize each other: they met once on the trail to Monterey. Annoyed, Rance calls the miners to say the stranger won’t state his business. When they come in, Minnie vouches for Johnson, satisfying everyone except Rance. Harry suggests a dance in the adjoining hall, and though Minnie protests she has never danced, Johnson leads her off in a waltz. Ashby and some miners come in, having caught a suspicious character, Castro, hanging around outside. Castro throws them off the scent by pretending to despise his leader and offering to show where he can be found. As Rance and the others form a posse, Johnson comes in and Castro whispers that the other bandits are hidden outside the camp, waiting for a whistled signal. The miners go off, and Nick closes the bar. Minnie wanders in from the dance hall and talks with Johnson, saying she has yet to give her first kiss. She adds that she trusts him, though she doesn’t know who he is. He replies that he himself is unsure of his own identity, adding that he is aware of her feelings even if she has trouble finding words for them (*Quello che tacete*). Nick reappears to warn that another suspicious-looking man has been seen outside, and Johnson hears the whistled signal. Minnie tells Johnson that the miners leave their gold in her care: anyone who tries to steal it will have to kill her first. Saying he has to go, Johnson accepts Minnie’s invitation to stop and see her at her cabin halfway up the mountain. She bursts into tears at her sense of worthlessness, but Johnson says she has a pure heart and the face of an angel, then quickly leaves.

ACT II

A short time later, in Minnie's log cabin, an Indian couple, Wowkle and Billy Jackrabbit, discuss how they will soon be married—at their mistress' urging, since they already have a papoose. Minnie arrives and tells Wowkle there will be a guest for dinner. Johnson soon appears, at first trying to embrace Minnie, who stops him. He makes amends for his forwardness and sits down, admiring her cabin. She waxes enthusiastic about her life there (*Oh, se sapeste come il vivere è allegro!*). Johnson offers to send books for her miners' school and tries again to kiss her. She sends Wowkle to the shed and finally yields to Johnson's embrace. When he declares he has loved her ever since they first met, she admits to similar feelings, but he says he must leave. Heavy snow is falling; shots sound in the distance. Minnie says he should stay and offers to give up her bed: she will sleep by the fire. Voices are heard calling outside: Nick and Sonora come to the door to warn that the bandit Ramerrez has been seen near her cabin. Because of the sheriff's jealousy, she hides Johnson behind a curtain, then opens the door to admit the two men with Ashby and Rance. They tell her they feared for her life, because Johnson is actually the notorious Ramerrez. Nick, seeing Johnson's cigar butt, realizes he is in the cabin but tries to help Minnie by saying they may have mistaken the trail. Rance sneer-ingly tells Minnie it was Nina Micheltorena who showed them a picture of her lover, Ramerrez, revealing he was really Johnson. Minnie pretends to make light of it and shows the men out, but as soon as they leave, she orders her visitor out of hiding. He denies nothing but insists he would never have robbed her. Six months ago, he explains, his bandit father died, leaving him no means of support but a band of highwaymen (*Or son sei mesi*). Upset that she gave her first kiss to such a man, she orders him out. He goes, but a shot rings out, and his body falls against the door. She helps him inside and pushes him up the ladder to the loft. Rance returns convinced that Ramerrez is in the cabin, but his search reveals nothing. He again expresses his love for Minnie and declares no one else will have her. As she defies him, a drop of blood from the loft lands on Rance's hand. Shoving Minnie aside, Rance orders Ramerrez down from the loft; painfully the bandit drags himself down, slumping into a chair in a faint. In desperation Minnie offers to gamble with Rance—a game of poker. If he wins, Minnie and Ramerrez are his; if he loses, Minnie keeps her lover. Furtively, she conceals something in her stocking while Rance shuffles. Minnie wins the first hand, Rance the second. When Rance is about to win the third, Minnie asks him to fetch her a drink—she feels faint—and pulls concealed cards from her stocking, giving her a winning hand: three aces and a pair. Stunned by her unlikely win, Rance stalks out.

ACT III

A clearing in the forest. At dawn a week later, the posse is waiting for Johnson to come out of Minnie's cabin. A group of miners appears, having spotted Ramerrez crying to make his escape on the other side of the mountain. Rance gloats that now it is Minnie's turn to suffer (*Or piangi tu, o Minnie*). Miners run in with various reports—their quarry has escaped on horseback -and finally Sonora reports his capture. Ashby and his Wells Fargo men bring in the bandit, whom Rance taunts; everyone is ready to hang him from a tree. Ramerrez asks them to get it over quickly, admitting the robberies but deny-ing the murders his captors charge him with. As a last favor he asks that Minnie not be told how he died: she should believe he got away to a life of redemption (*Ch'ella mi creda libero*). As the miners prepare to string him up, Minnie's call is heard. She rides in, jumps off her horse, and throws herself in front of Johnson, pulling her revolver. As Rance orders the hanging to pro-ceed, the miners hesitate; Sonora is the first to take her side. She tells the men they never objected when she mothered, helped, and taught them—now, she says, this man is hers from God (*Non vi Ju mai chi disse 'Basta!'*), adding he is a bandit no longer. When they still resist, she reminds them individually how she looked after them. As Rance leaves in disgust, the miners give Minnie what she asks: they owe her no less. With sadness on both sides, they bid farewell to Minnie and Ramerrez, who ride off to a new life across the Rocky Mountains.

© Property of Opera Colorado reprinted by written permission only.



The Composer: Giacomo Puccini

Com-po-ser: One that composes; especially, one who writes music

Puccini was born in Lucca, Italy into a family with a long history of music. After the death of his father when he was only five years old, he was sent to study with his uncle Fortunato Magi, who considered him to be a poor and undisciplined student. Later, he took the position of church organist, but it was not until he saw a performance of Verdi's *Aida* that he became inspired to be an opera composer.

In 1880, the *Messa di Gloria* (Glory Mass), composed at the age of 22, marked the end of Puccini's apprenticeship as a composer and the culmination of his family's long association with church music in his native Lucca. The work offers fascinating glimpses of the dramatic power that Puccini was soon to unleash on Milan's stages. The orchestration and the overall feeling of drama conveyed by his music establish a dialogue with Verdi's *Requiem* and perhaps already constitute a prediction of the future operatic career Puccini would embrace for life.

From 1880 to 1883 he studied at the Milan Conservatory under Amilcare Ponchielli and Antonio Bazzini. In 1882, Puccini entered a competition for a one-act opera. Although he did not win, *Le Villi* was later staged in 1884 at

the Teatro dal Verme; it also caught the attention of the publisher Giulio Ricordi who commissioned a second opera (*Edgar*). Not only was *Manon Lescaut*, his third opera, a great success, it also began his relationship with the librettists Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, who worked with him on his next three operas. The first of these, *La Bohème* (based on a story by Henry Murger), is considered one of his best works, as well as one of the most romantic operas ever composed. His next opera, *Tosca*, was Puccini's first foray into verismo. *Madame Butterfly* (based on a play by David Belasco) was greeted with great hostility at its opening (mostly orchestrated by his rivals), but after some reworking it has become another of his most successful operas.

Composition was slow after this. In 1903 he was injured in an automobile accident. In 1906 Giacosa died. In 1909, there was scandal after their maid was falsely accused by Puccini's wife of having an affair with Puccini and then committed suicide. And in 1912, Puccini's editor, Ricordi, died.

In 1918, *Il Trittico* premiered. This work is composed of three one-act operas in the style of the Parisian Grand Guignol: a horrific episode (*Il Tabarro*), a sentimental tragedy (*Suor Angelica*) and a comedy or farce (*Gianni Schicchi*). Of the three, *Gianni Schicchi* is the most popular and *Il Tabarro* the least. *Schicchi* is sometimes performed as a double-bill with a one act opera such as *Cavalleria Rusticana* or *I Pagliacci*.

Puccini died in Brussels, Belgium in 1924 from complications due to treatment for throat cancer. *Turandot*, his last opera was left unfinished; the last two scenes were completed by Franco Alfano. In 2001 a new completion of the final scenes was made by Luciano Berio.



The Librettist: Guelfo Civinini

Li-bret-tist: Writer of the text of a work (as an opera) for the musical theater.

Guelfo Civinini was one of the most important narrators, poets, and journalists in Italy during the first half of the twentieth century.

He was born in Livorno, Italy on 1 August 1873 to Francis and Quintilia Lazzerini. Guelpho spent his childhood in Grosseto, where his father died when he was a young boy. After his mother's second marriage they moved to Rome where he completed his studies by attending high school at Umberto I. His writing style was harshly rebuked by the school, once saying: "Do you know how you'll end up? A Journalist! Here, a journalist! ". And indeed, after a short period as a clerk in the War Office, Guelpho was hired in 1894 by the newspaper "The Reformation." Meanwhile his brother Ricciotto Peter (also a future writer) had become a frequenter of the artistic coterie who attended the "Saletta d'Aragno", and began to publish short stories and poems called twilight tone. In 1898 he married Giuseppina Mazzara Bridgtower, great-granddaughter of a famous violinist mulatto who grew up at the court of England, George Polgreen Bridgtower, with whom Beethoven first performed the sonata later dedicated to Kreutzer. He had a daughter, Juliana, who also became a journalist and died tragically young in 1928. He joined the BBC in 1907, thanks to the report made by Ugo Ojetti to Luigi Albertini. The output from the newspaper induced him to undertake other experiences, such as two expeditions to East Africa and the publication of books which collected memories and stories of the African setting and Maremma. In the 1930s he moved to Florence, where he lived during the war and in the years immediately following. In 1934 he bought an old Sienese tower in Santa Liberata Argentario and having adapted to house he spent much of the year there. A widower, he married a writer in 1941, his second wife Antoinette Germani (Nietta), from which, in 1944, had a daughter, Annalena. He never felt settled and as such moved again to Viareggio. Struck by a stroke in 1953, he died in Rome on April 10, 1954.

Journalist

Civinini was a great journalist and managed to captivate the reader thanks to his ability to capture the essential aspects of every fact and the lightness of his writing, which was of a highly stylistic, yet accessible.

While working for the BBC he was sent to the Libyan War (1911-12). During the First World War, from July 1915 to March 1916, he was commissioned to describe the political situation

from Greece to Scandinavia, (articles later collected in "Journey around the war - from the Aegean to the Baltic") and subsequently sent near the front.

Though journalists were hated by the military officers during this period, Guelfo was highly respected and honored for his reporting on the war. He received military decoration for his work. He was also the librettist for Puccini (1908-09) with "La Fanciulla del West" inspired by the drama "The Girl of the Golden West" by David Belasco. Civinini was proposed by Giulio Ricordi replacing Carlo Zangarini with whom Puccini had stopped cooperating.

As a poet he is highly regarded. Among its main collections of poetry: "The Urn" (1901) and "The trails and clouds" (1911).

Documentarist and Africanist

He also worked for the Istituto Luce. In 1923, for example, together with the Operator of War Pier Ferdinando Martini, he built the "Aethiopia" reportage, in which the regions crossed were described with ethnographic and anything but an imperialist eye.

In Ethiopia, from Addis Ababa to Khartoum, Civinini returned in 1926 to look for the remains of the explorer Vittorio Bottego. From this adventure he was born the book "A journey through Abyssinia in the footsteps of Victor Bottego" (Rome, Italy Editorial of Union, 1928).

Of absolute importance also, is the work done by Civinini in the early 1900s as an art critic on behalf of the newspaper La Patria and The Next Sunday. A job that led him often in opposition to the official academicism. He promoted young artist and sculptors who were revolutionary in their work. Even the literary career of Elsa Morante began with the help of Civinini, who supported her from early in her career.

Despite being an anarchist-libertarian in his youth, Civinini eventually sympathized with fascism as did most people of the era. Appointed Colonel in Zavia, in Libya, in 1929, he was quickly dismissed for having issued sanctions against part of the hierarchy who mistreated the natives. He participated in the intervention in Ethiopia, but after the alliance with Hitler and the racial laws deemed, he finally ended his Fascist militancy and refused, thereafter, to continue to pick up the piece of the PNF, not hesitating to criticize openly Mussolini, with the usual rough and frankness and with considerable contempt of danger.



The Playwright: David Belasco

Play-wright: A Person who writes plays.

The son of Abraham H. Belasco (1830-1911) and Reyna Belasco, nee Nunes, (1830-1899) David Belasco was born in San Francisco, California, where his Sephardic Jewish parents had moved from London, England, during the California Gold Rush, he began working in a San Francisco theatre doing a variety of routine jobs, such as call boy and script copier.

From late 1873 to early 1874, he worked as an actor, director, and secretary at Piper's Opera House in Virginia City, Nevada, where he found "more reckless women and desperadoes to the square foot. . . than anywhere else in the world." He said that while there, seeing "people die under such peculiar circumstances" made him "all the more particular in regard to the psychology of dying on the stage. I think I was one of the first to bring naturalness to bear in death scenes, and my varied Virginia City experiences did much to help me toward this. Later I was to go deeper into such studies." By March 1874, he was back at work in San Francisco. His recollections of that time were published in *Hearst's Magazine* in 1914.

He eventually was given the opportunity to act and serve as a stage manager, learning the business inside out. A gifted playwright, Belasco went to New York City in 1882 where he worked as stage manager for the Madison Square Theatre (starting with *Young Mrs. Winthrop*), and then the old Lyceum Theatre while writing plays. By 1895, he was so successful that he set himself up as an independent producer.

During his long creative career, stretching between 1884 and 1930, Belasco either wrote, directed, or produced more than 100 Broadway plays including *Hearts of Oak*, *The Heart of Maryland*, and *Du Barry*, making him the most powerful personality on the New York city theater scene.

He is perhaps most famous for having adapted the short story "Madame Butterfly" into a play with the same name and for penning *The Girl of the Golden West* for the stage, both of which were adapted as operas by Giacomo Puccini (*Madama Butterfly* 1904-twice, after revision) and

La Fanciulla Del West (1910). More than forty motion pictures have been made from the many plays he authored.

Belasco was informally known in the theatrical community as "the Bishop of Broadway," due to his penchant for dressing in black clothing and clerical collar, which made him resemble a priest; that he was of the Jewish faith was puzzling at very least. Belasco was mentioned as a contemporary celebrity in Henry Miller's *Tropic of Capricorn*. In *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, chapter III, page 47, Nick encounters "The Owl Eyed Man," who says of Gatsby "This fella's a regular Belasco," commenting on the theatrical (meaning ironically false) nature of Gatsby's giant library. Many prominent performers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries sought the opportunity to work with Belasco; among them were Cecil B. DeMille, D.W. Griffith, Helen Hayes, Lillian Gish and Mary Pickford. Pickford appeared in his plays *The Warrens of Virginia* at the first Belasco Theatre in 1907 and *A Good Little Devil* in 1913. The two remained in touch after Pickford began working in Hollywood; Belasco appeared with her in the 1914 film adaptation of *A Good Little Devil*. He is also credited as giving Pickford her stage name. He also worked with Lionel Barrymore who starred in his play "Laugh, Clown, Laugh" opposite Lucille Kahn, whose Broadway career Belasco launched. Belasco was a member of The Lambs from 1893 to 1931. The Lambs (www.the-lambs.org) was founded in NYC in 1874 and still operates.

David Belasco was married to Cecilia Loverich for over fifty years; they had two daughters, Reina and Augusta. He died in 1931 at the age of 77 in Manhattan and was interred in the Linden Hill Jewish Cemetery on Metropolitan Avenue in Ridgewood.

Introduction to Opera

What do you think of when you hear the term “Opera”? Do you think of people in funny hats with horns, or of singing that’s very loud and hard to understand?

While you have probably moved beyond this point, most students are familiar only with these opera stereotypes. The goal of this first exercise is to help students recognize stereotypes about opera and to move on to a greater understanding and appreciation for the art form.

In other words, to help students move from this:



To this:



Diagramming Differences

Instructor Guide



Supplies:

- Large sheets of butcher paper
- Colored pencils or markers

Directions:

- Have students break into groups of 4 or 5. Instruct them to work together to draw what they think an opera singer looks like. Encourage them to be as detailed as possible.
- Give students 20 to 30 minutes to work on their pictures
- When they're done, have the students explain their choices to the rest of the class

Discussion:

- Start out with a brief definition of what a stereotype is (an oversimplified standardized image of a person or group). Ask the students to identify any stereotypes in their drawings. Write these on the board.
- Next, go back through the list and write down the truth behind each stereotype (for example, if students thought that opera singers are all old, write down that opera singers can be both young and old).

Additional Activities:

- Have the students make their own T chart compiling the two lists of stereotypes and realities.
- Have the students write a short paragraph summarizing what they've learned.
- Have the students identify stereotypes in another area they've been studying (maybe a story they've been reading in class or a topic from history) and create a T chart for it.

Example:

Stereotype	Reality
- Opera is for old people	- Opera is for everyone
- Opera singers dress like Vikings	- Opera singers dress according to the time period of the opera
- Operas have to be serious	- Operas can be both tragic and comedic
- Operas were written long ago	- Operas are still being written today

Activity: Compare and Contrast!

While the opera is more rich and varied than it is often given credit for, it is still a distinct musical form. As you've probably guessed...Opera and pop music are genres with many differences! Singers such as Renee Fleming, Denyce Graves and Joan Sutherland are much different than pop singers such as Miley Cyrus and Taylor Swift. In this activity, we will listen to different examples of famous opera excerpts and famous pop songs. Can you spot the differences?



EXAMPLE #1: “Wildest Dreams” by Taylor Swift

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdneKLhsWOQ>

EXAMPLE #2: “Sempre Libera” (Always Free) by Giuseppe Verdi sung by Natalie Dessay

<https://youtu.be/5HDKgsXfkaA?t=2m44s>



Translation:

<http://lyricstranslate.com/en/%C3%A8-strano-ah-fors%C3%A8-lui-sempre-libera-how-strange-ah-maybe-hes-one-always-free.html>

Activity: Compare and Contrast

Instructor Guide

Introduction

If time permits, let your students enjoy each song in its entirety. (Make sure they are taking notes on the differences between Taylor Swift's "Wildest Dreams" and the aria "Sempre Libera" from Verdi's opera *La traviata*.)

Lesson

Using their individual notes, have the class break into small groups. Give the groups 5 to 10 minutes to discuss the differences they are noting.

After small group discussions, hand out the attached worksheet, and give students another 10 minutes to fill them out individually. Musicians must keep keen ears, and noting differences in instrumentation, language, and style/genre of music is critical for any performer, musicologist or critic. Suggest these factors to students who may be having trouble on their worksheets.

Recommended musical factors to cover:

- 1.) Forum
 - a.) Live or recorded?
 - b.) Microphone or no microphone?
 - c.) Types of audiences?
- 2.) Language
 - a.) Italian vs. English
 - b.) Are operas and popular songs written in other languages?
- 3.) Instrumentation
 - a.) Electric or acoustic?
 - b.) Differences in singing: is it speech-like or not?
 - c.) Concert hall vs. a recording studio



Conclusion

Listen to each song once again, and then have a class discussion, giving students time to finish their worksheets and share their ideas.



Compare and Contrast Pop and Opera Worksheet

- 1.) After your first listening, what do you notice that is similar between each song?

- 2.) After your first listening, what do you notice that is different between each song?

- 3.) Notes from small group discussion.

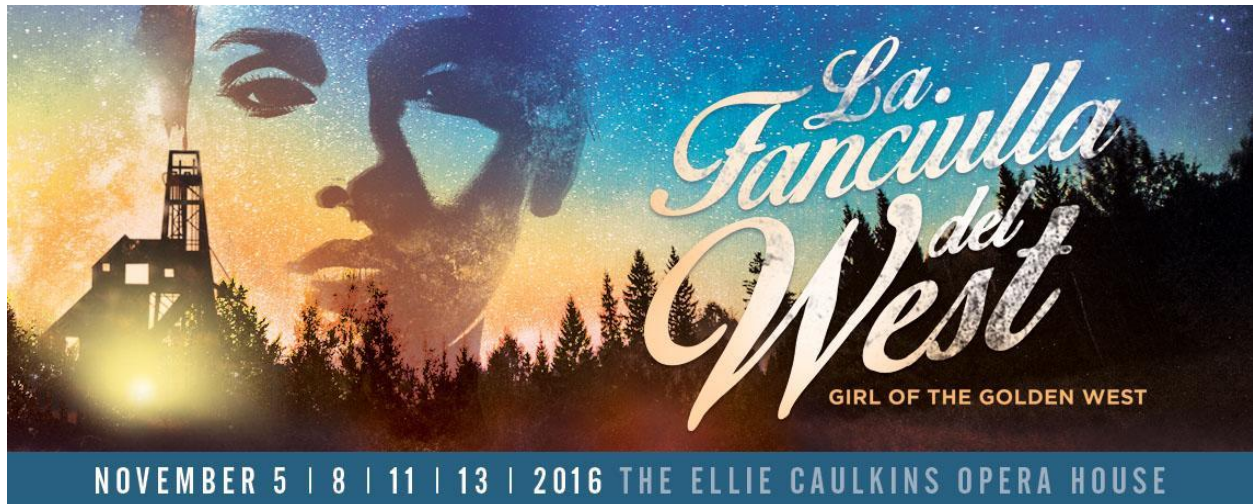
- 4.) After your second hearing, what do you notice is different concerning language, instruments used, and performance setting?

- 5.) Notes from class discussion.

- 6.) Which piece of music do you like better? Use evidence from what you are hearing to back up your answer.

Activity: Storyline Analysis

There are few wild west love stories like *La Fanciulla del West*. Using the worksheet on the following page, have students choose five scenes from the opera – one that illustrates each part of the story (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution). Draw a picture of the scene, then summarize it on the side of the paper.



Definitions:

- Exposition – Beginning of the story where the characters and setting are introduced
- Rising Action – Conflict arises that the characters must confront
- Climax – The final confrontation between the characters and the conflict, the turning point
- Falling Action – The actions that occur as a direct result of the turning point
- Resolution – When all the actions are complete and the story draws to a conclusion
- (Denouement)

Activity: Storyline Analysis

Exposition



Rising Action



Climax



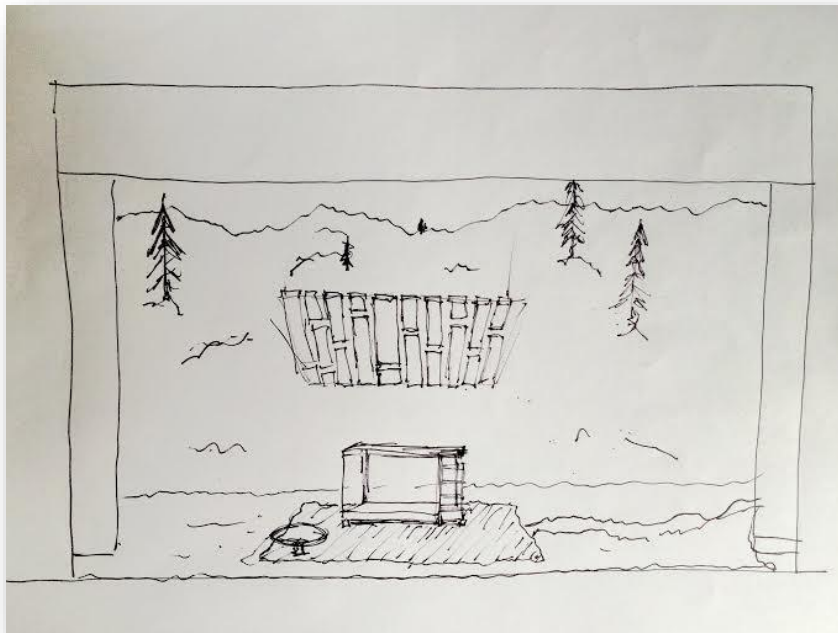
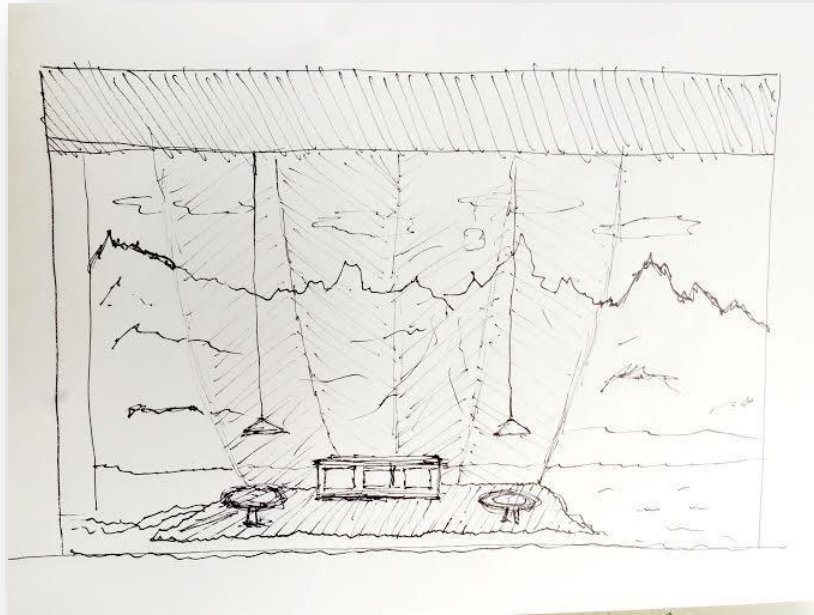
Falling Action



Resolution



Activity: Visual Arts



Set design is a pivotal part of any opera production. The set provides the context and background for the story and each character that makes up the story. Certain designers and directors prefer simple sets, which puts more emphasis on the opera singers themselves as seen below in Opera Colorado's 2016 production of *La Fanciulla del West*. Other directors and designers create grandiose scenes with large sets and a large chorus of singers.

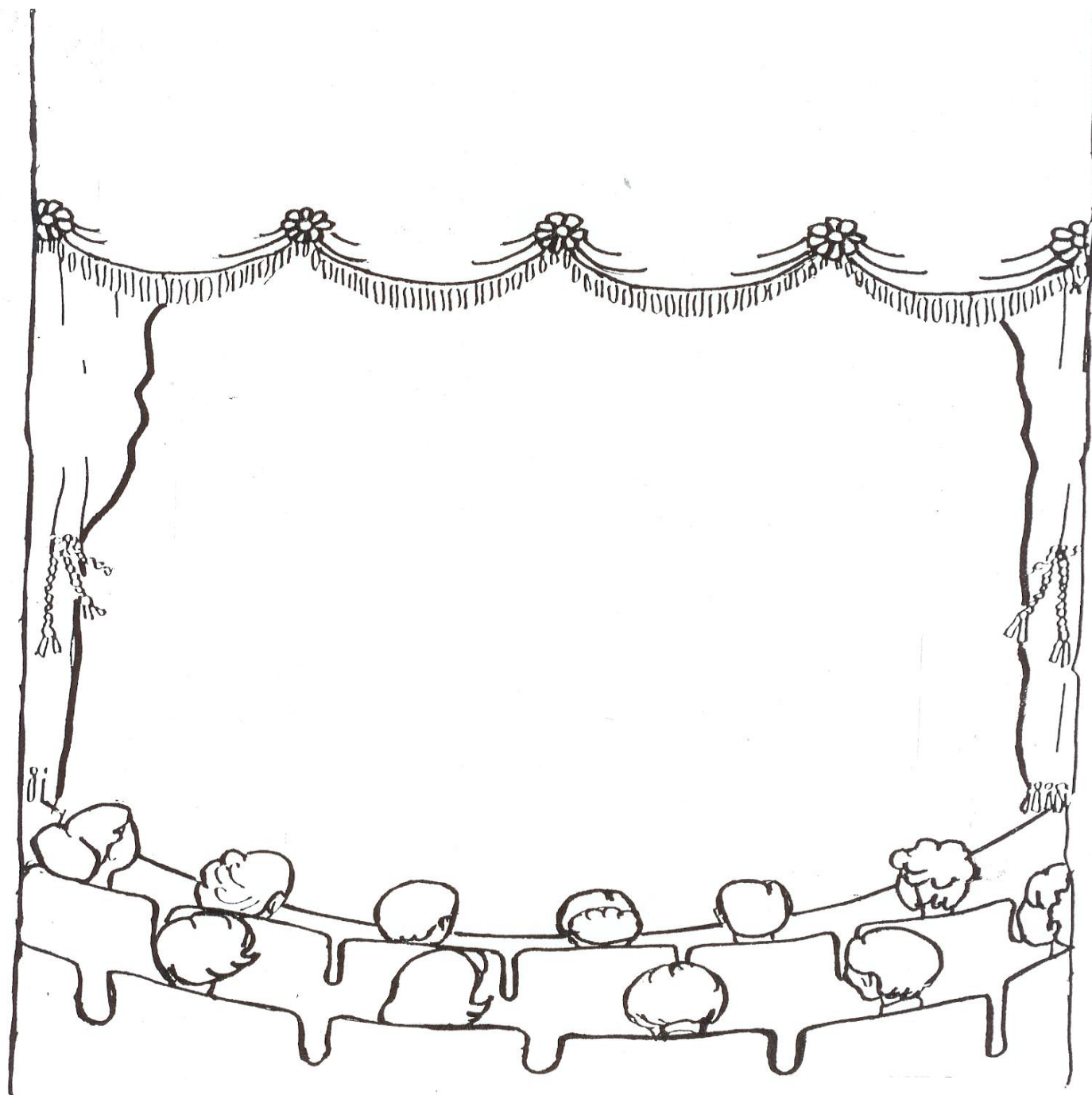


Design Your Own Set



(Activity on next page)

Directions: Set design teams (along with directors) not only establish their vision of what they want in the scene, but what color the lights will be and where the singers will be placed. Using what you know about *La Fanciulla del West*, choose a scene to create a set for. Think about what items will need to be placed where and what color schemes you can use to enhance the quality of the performance.



Activity: Visual Arts

Instructor Guide



Introduction

Hand out a worksheet (on previous page) to each student and read the introductory paragraph on set design. If time permits, you may wish to show the students pictures of different opera sets. Links can be found below.

http://extras.mnginteractive.com/live/media/site36/2011/0428/20110428_ae29cind3~p1.jpg

<http://www.dallasartsrevue.com/ArtSpaces/opera/JR52038-svr-species-sets.jpg>

[http://www.operanews.com/uploadedImages/Opera_News_Magazine/2011/4\(1\)/Departments/Broadcast_WalkBcst3hdl1511.jpg](http://www.operanews.com/uploadedImages/Opera_News_Magazine/2011/4(1)/Departments/Broadcast_WalkBcst3hdl1511.jpg)

<http://www.operanews.com/uploaded/image/article/orfeobcst2hdl14107.jpg>

Lesson

Allow the students 20-30 minutes to design their sets. Encourage them to be as creative and as detailed as possible. The set should also tell a story, and should reflect what is going on in the opera.

When they are finished, bring the class back together. Ask for volunteers to describe their drawings. Encourage the students to explain why they made the choices they did. The goal of this project is to allow students to see all of the thought and planning that go into set designs.

Recommended discussion questions

1.) Setting

- a.) Is the scene inside or outside? Can you tell what types of people might inhabit that space by looking at it (rich or poor, workers, a king, a family)?
- b.) What props and backdrops are necessary to convey a sense of place?

2.) Color

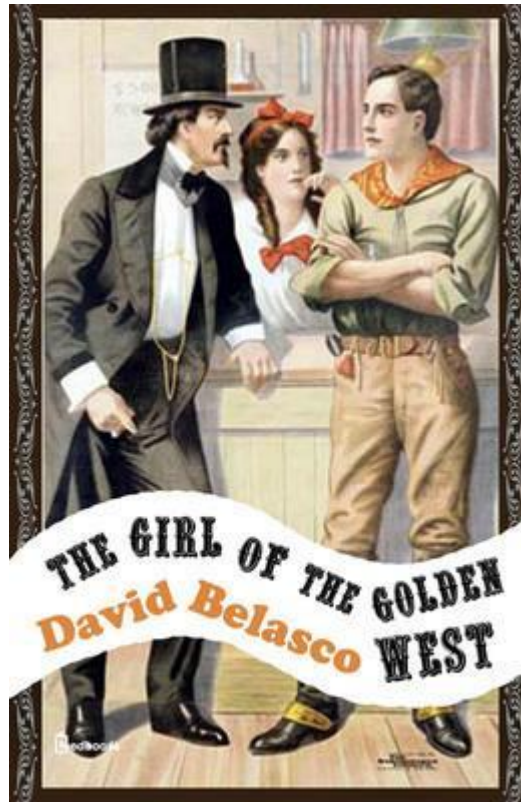
- a.) What colors were used?
- b.) How does color and lighting affect the mood of the scene?

3.) Planning

- a.) Was it difficult to include everything in the amount of space given?
- b.) What problems would set designers face in having to create a set for a big theater (directing audience attention to the appropriate spot, time of making such big sets)? What problems would designers face in having to create a set for a little theater (consolidation, utilizing every inch, not making it too crowded).

Activity: Creative Writing

When writing a story, an author has to consider many things. Like a good detective, an author must consider who, what, when, where, and why – who the characters are, what the plot line is, when and where the story takes place, and why the characters behave the way they do (or, in other words, the setting, characters, conflict, and resolution). In this exercise, students will practice manipulating the setting and characters of the story.





Activity: Creative Writing Worksheet



La Fanciulla del West takes place right here in Colorado during the mining boom. Imagine instead that it took place today. Think about the various details of the plot and setting that would have to change. How could you rewrite the characters and setting in *La Fanciulla del West* to be contemporary while still making sure that the conflict and resolution make sense? Use the space below to outline your thoughts.

Outline:

Singing Minstrel Activity

After you see the opera (and/or listen to selections of the opera) get in groups of 3-4 students and write a camp minstrel song, like the tunes Jake Wallace sings in the opera. Your minstrel song should be about one to two minutes long and should feature everyone in your group. Use your song to tell the plot of your favorite part of the opera!

If you need more inspiration check out the following YouTube clips:

The Ballad of Jake Wallace: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HmliUXuSiU>

“I ride an old paint”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaeAK3gIYk8>



Name: _____

Fanciulla del West Wordsearch

W	L	W	L	P	A	U	E	Y	R	A	M	E	R	R	E	Z	O
J	E	E	S	M	O	X	G	O	L	D	E	N	W	E	S	T	D
V	M	L	R	H	A	N	J	R	H	A	R	G	C	J	N	U	N
B	I	X	L	S	E	I	Y	A	T	P	O	T	G	J	J	D	H
A	N	T	H	S	A	R	V	E	C	B	U	P	G	N	J	Q	Q
R	N	F	Y	Y	F	L	I	E	X	K	A	C	E	E	G	I	A
I	I	G	P	F	O	A	O	F	R	P	R	N	C	R	A	B	O
T	E	B	D	B	V	H	R	O	F	I	R	A	D	I	A	I	Z
O	F	U	S	J	R	V	H	G	N	X	S	E	N	I	N	C	D
N	M	I	N	S	T	R	E	L	O	P	K	M	S	C	T	I	J
E	G	Y	A	K	Z	M	M	O	R	G	U	E	O	S	E	Z	Z
F	Q	E	J	S	Y	P	M	M	I	N	E	R	S	R	B	W	R

Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

BANDIT
BARITONE
GOLDEN WEST
JACK RANCE
MINERS
MINNIE

MINSTREL
OPERA
PONY EXPRESS
PUCCINI
RAMERREZ
SALOON

SHERIFF
VERISMO
WELLS FARGO

SOLUTION

Fanciulla del West Wordsearch

W	.	.	.	P	.	.	.	.	R	A	M	E	R	R	E	Z	.
.	E	.	S	.	O	.	G	O	L	D	E	N	W	E	S	T	.
.	M	L	.	H	.	N	J	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
B	I	.	L	S	E	.	Y	A	.	P	O	.	.	.	.	.	.
A	N	.	.	S	A	R	V	E	C	B	U	P	.	.	.	.	.
R	N	.	.	.	F	L	I	E	X	K	A	C	E	.	.	.	.
I	I	.	.	.	.	A	O	F	R	P	R	N	C	R	.	.	.
T	E	.	.	.	.	.	R	O	F	I	R	A	D	I	A	.	.
O	.	.	.	.	.	.	G	N	.	S	E	N	I	N	.	.	.
N	M	I	N	S	T	R	E	L	O	.	.	M	S	C	T	I	.
E	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	O	S	E	.	.
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	M	I	N	E	R	S	.	.	.	.

Word directions and start points are formatted: (Direction, X, Y)

BANDIT (SE,11,5)
BARITONE (S,1,4)
GOLDEN WEST (E,8,2)
JACK RANCE (SE,8,3)
MINERS (E,9,12)
MINNIE (S,2,3)

MINSTREL (E,2,10)
OPERA (SE,12,4)
PONY EXPRESS (SE,5,1)
PUCCINI (SE,11,4)
RAMERREZ (E,10,1)
SALOON (SE,5,4)

SHERIFF (SE,4,2)
VERISMO (SE,8,5)
WELLS FARGO (SE,1,1)

PUZZLE INFO

Fanciulla del West Word search

This worksheet was created with the Word Search Generator on Super Teacher Worksheets (www.superteacherworksheets.com).

Puzzle Word List:

MINNIE	PUCCINI	GOLDEN WEST
MINERS	SALOON	BANDIT
SHERIFF	VERISMO	OPERA
PONY EXPRESS	WELLS FARGO	MINSTREL
BARITONE	JACK RANCE	RAMERREZ

Puzzle Title: Fanciulla del West Word search

Created by: Brett Sprague

Date Created: Jul 29, 2016

Filename: cmewB

Direct Link:

<https://www.superteacherworksheets.com/custom/?ws=cmewB>

Program Evaluation

Opera Colorado strives to provide quality programs that meet the needs of students and teachers across the state. Please take a few minutes to complete this evaluation and give us feedback on your experience. **Opera Colorado is also interested in your students' response to the programs. We would be happy to receive any letters or artwork from them!**

Program: _____
_____ *Fanciulla del West* (dress rehearsal)
_____ *Lucia di Lammermoor* Please circle one: (dress rehearsal / matinee)
_____ **Backstage Workshops** (Please circle one: 11/8, 11/9, 11/10, 5/8, 5/10, 5/12)
_____ **Touring Opera Performance** (Please circle one: *Barber of Seville* / *Elixir of Love*)
_____ **Opera in a Trunk** (Please name which trunk: _____)
_____ **In-School Workshop** (Please specify: _____)
_____ **Other** (Please specify: _____)

Is this your first time participating in Opera Colorado's Education programs? YES / NO

If YES, what made you participate this year?

If NO, how many years have you been a participant?

Were you able to incorporate opera into your curriculum? YES / NO

If YES, please share how.

If NO, do you have suggestions?

Please estimate the percentage of your students who had never been exposed to Opera prior to this event: _____

How would you describe your students' initial attitude toward exposure to Opera?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
negative/unwilling *neutral* *positive/excited*

Did their attitude change after learning more about opera and attending the event? If so, please show on the scale:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
negative/unwilling *neutral* *positive/excited*

Was the Opera Colorado Teacher Guidebook helpful in preparing your students to attend the event?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
not helpful *very helpful*

On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you rate the priority of Arts Education in your school?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
not important *very important*

Please share with us any additional comments you have. We especially love stories of how Opera impacted your students. Please use space on back if needed.

Thank you for your time and comments!

Name _____ School/Subject _____

Teacher _____ Administrator _____ Paraprofessional _____ Parent / Chaperone _____ Other _____

My students are: K-2 3-5 6-8 9-12 College