

THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE, AND DANCE PRESENTS

# OPERA SCENES



**OCTOBER 21/23, 2022**



**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

# COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY FALL OPERA SCENES

Friday, October 21st, 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, October 23rd, 2 p.m.

*Marie, a “canteen-girl” for a local troop, has just been found by her supposed long-lost aunt and wealthy heiress, the Marquise. After bringing Marie home in the hopes of reforming her rowdy behavior, the Marquise decides to teach Marie a voice lesson to educate her on the merits of art and culture. Marie’s surrogate father and leader of the troop, Sulpice, accompanies her to the lesson in the hopes of lifting her spirits. Unfortunately for the Marquise, things don’t go as planned and the lesson gets somewhat out of control.*

***Le fille du regiment***, Act II Trio

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848)

Marie: Mykayla Fitzpatrick

Sulpice: Matt Doole

Marquise: Floren Kahan

Director: John Lindsey

Original Opera Scene: ***Signor rubata la tua ragazza (Mr. I’m Gonna Steal Your Girl)***

Written and performed by:

Susanna Jacobson

Deklin Herman

Lucy Logan

*Pinkerton, a brash American, has arrived at his housing arrangements in Japan and is being shown his new high-rise apartment. Goro, a marriage-broker who is showing him the home, included it as part of Pinkerton's contract to marry a Japanese woman. After Goro explains the housing and wedding arrangements, Pinkerton's friend Sharpless enters and expresses doubt about Pinkerton's opportunistic motives in taking advantage of a young foreign bride. Pinkerton isn't swayed, however, and ends the scene by toasting his eventual return home to find "a real American wife".*

**Madama Butterfly**, Opening of Act I

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Pinkerton: David Silvano

Goro: Brianna Dene

Servants: Nina Mast Redding, Alexis Delgadillo, Sara Jo Reeder

Sharpless: John Lindsey

Director: John Lindsey

*Siblings Hänsel and Gretel play in the woods and gather berries. As evening falls, they realize they are lost and become frightened. The Sandman arrives to comfort them. They say their evening prayer and cuddle together to sleep.*

**Hänsel und Gretel**, Act II  
(1854-1921)

Engelbert Humperdinck

Gretel: Kristy Shuck

Hänsel: Lucy Logan

Sandman: Lauren Lang

Chorus: Lexi Carlson, Alexis Delgadillo, Lauren Haid,

Nina Mast, Sara Jo Reeder, Aspen Ulibarri

Director: Tiffany Blake

Original Opera Scene: ***The Escape***

Written and performed by:

Brianna Dene

Mykayla Fitzpatrick

David Silvano

*Count Almaviva pursues Susanna and presses her to meet him for an assignation in the garden that evening. Susanna vacillates, but eventually agrees. Little does the Count know he has fallen into the trap set by Susanna and the Countess to expose his perfidy.*

***Le nozze di Figaro***, Act III Duet

W.A. Mozart (1756-1791)

Count Almaviva: Deklin Herman

Susanna: Amity Matthews

Director: Tiffany Blake

Original Opera Scene: ***Le Petit Chou***

Written and performed by:

Kristy Shuck

Chandler Peveto

Amity Matthews

*The Viceroy and his cronies prepare to marry Perichole to a “stranger”, so she can become the Viceroy’s mistress. Little do they know that the man they have chosen for the job is Perichole’s beloved, Paquillo. The situation is convoluted and confusing, which is only exacerbated by the fact that most everyone in attendance at the wedding is falling down drunk!*

**La Périchole**, Act I Finale  
1880)

Jacques Offenbach (1819-

La Perichole: Susanna Jacobson      Paquillo: Chandler Peveto

Guadalena: Lauren Lang      Estrella: Lexi Carlson

Virginella: Haley Candelario      Don Andres: Matt Doole

Don Pedro: Aspen Ulibarri      Panatellas: Lauren Haid

1<sup>st</sup> Notary: Alyssa Banister      2<sup>nd</sup> Notary: Hayley Wood

Chorus: Alexis Delgadillo, Brianna Dene, Mykayla Fitzpatrick, Deklin Herman,

Floren Kahan, Lucy Logan, Nina Mast, Amity Matthews,

Sara Jo Reeder, Jasmine Retland, Kristy Shuck, David Silvano

Director: Tiffany Blake

## **PRODUCTION STAFF AND CREW**

Directors: Tiffany Blake and John Lindsey

Music Director: Alaina DeBellvue

Pianists: Alaina DeBellevue and Juhyun Lee

Stage Manager: Kylie Barger and Matt Grevan

Lighting Designer: Lily Morelock

Supertitles: Kristy Shuck

Costume Coordinator: Kristy Shuck

Light Board Op-Ava Barbieri

Deck/Wardrobe Crew: Tyler Worden, Rigo Perez

Wardrobe: Kayleigh Owen

## **SYNOPSIS**

### ***Le Fille du Régiment***

Marie, the adopted daughter of the 21st Regiment of the French army, has fallen in love with a young man, Tonio, who has saved her life. They plan to wed, but a wrench is thrown into their plans, when news about Marie's birth family arises and she must leave the regiment to live with her "Aunt" the Marquise of Berkenfield. The Marquise does her best to reform the crude tom-boy, Marie, in hopes of marrying her to nobility. The prospective groom and his family are horrified to learn that Marie was raised by an uncouth army regiment, but they, along with the Marquise, are deeply moved by her loyalty to the men who raised her from infancy. The Marquise relents and gives Marie permission to marry Tonio.

### ***Madama Butterfly***

A U.S. Naval Officer, Pinkerton, weds a Japanese girl, Cio-Cio San (the titular Madame Butterfly) for convenience while stationed in Nagasaki, fully intending to wed an American girl when he permanently returns to the U.S. Butterfly, unaware of his duplicity, converts to Christianity in her desire to please her husband. As a result, her family disowns her. A son

is conceived and Pinkerton leaves Butterfly to return to the U.S. For three years, Butterfly waits with heartfelt devotion for Pinkerton's return. When he does return, he brings his American wife with him, and they make plans to take his son and raise him in the United States. Deeply dishonored and heartbroken, Butterfly takes her own life.

### ***Hänsel und Gretel***

Based upon the classic Grimm's fairy tale, the opera follows two siblings as they try to survive a life of poverty. When they are sent into the woods to gather strawberries, they encounter a gingerbread house. The gingerbread house is occupied by a witch who captures children, bakes them in her oven and turns them into gingerbread. Hansel and Gretel outwit the witch and push her into her own oven, burning her alive. They rejoice as they are reunited with their parents.

### ***Le nozze di Figaro***

Count Almaviva is an aggressive, manipulative womanizer and his once-beloved wife, the Countess, is despondent over the state of their marriage. The Count is pursuing his valet, Figaro's fiancée, Susanna and is determined to assert his *droit du seigneur* (right to bed her on her wedding night). Figaro, Susanna, and the Countess create a plan to expose the Count and his womanizing ways, hoping to shame him into change. The Count, however, continues to try to break up the marriage by trying to get Figaro to marry an older woman at court, who turns out to be his mother. Figaro, Susanna, and the Countess succeed in their plot, and the Count asks forgiveness of his wife and Figaro and Susanna plan to finally be wed.

### ***La Périchole***

During a birthday celebration for the Viceroy of Peru, two street performers entertain the crowd. Too poor to marry, the performers briefly part and the girl, La Perichole, falls asleep in the park. The Viceroy sees her and falls in love. Out of practicality, she agrees to become his mistress. Since the Viceroy's ladies-in-waiting must be married, his henchman must find La Perichole a husband. He inadvertently enlists her devastated lover Paquillo. With the help of some wine and a promise of a title and riches, Paquillo agrees to marry "an unknown young woman". La Perichole, who has reconsidered her decision, agrees to marry once she realizes that the man selected is Paquillo. When a sober Paquillo learns that

he married La Perichole, he throws her at the Viceroy's feet, thinking her to be unfaithful, an act that puts him in prison. La Perichole tries bribing the jailer, only to discover he is the Viceroy in disguise. He punishes his faithless mistress by imprisoning her, too. The Viceroy is captured and the lovers escape. After a search, the lovers appear singing of their misfortune and their love, and the Viceroy releases them, awarding their promised estates and titles.

### **DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

What a joy it has been to return to a sense of normalcy in the staging of these wonderful opera scenes. It has been three long years since our pre-COVID production of Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges*. It feels appropriate to be back in the intimacy of the Studio Theater to share with you, our audience, a program free of COVID protocols. Opera is an intimate art, bringing us larger-than-life and yet fully relatable characters. To be able to share these scenes with you free of barriers is a true delight that has reaffirmed my love of this art form and reminds me how lucky I am to direct the CSU opera program!

This semester we are presenting scenes from standard operatic literature as well as original opera scenes crafted by our student singer-actors. Each student workshopped one of their arias in class, focusing on honing their performance skills. They were then split into small groups and asked to reimagine and recontextualize their arias. The results are highly imaginative!

Welcome back to CSU Opera Theater!

## PROGRAM NOTES

### ***Le Fille du Régiment***

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848)

Gaetano Donizetti was an Italian composer known for his opera seria (literally meaning “serious opera”), a style opposite that of opera comica. Donizetti’s operatic career started in 1822 with the premiere of *Zoraide di Granata* in Rome. His success there led him to become resident composer with the Neapolitan theaters after 1826. In this role, he became a renowned international composer. When in 1830 Gioachino Rossini gave up his position at the famous opera house in Milan, Donizetti, who by this time was writing around four operas a year, took the esteemed composer’s place. It was this position that solidified Donizetti’s career, and he became one of the wealthiest and most productive opera composers of the nineteenth century.

*Le fille du régiment* (The Daughter of the Regiment) was composed when Donizetti lived in Paris. As a resident of the country, he managed to capture a sort of national feeling, so much so that this Italian composer’s opera became a foremost patriotic French treasure. The opera’s libretto, or text, was written by Jean Francois Bayard and Vernoy St. Georges, but its inspirational source has not been located. *Le fille du régiment* was premiered in Paris by the Opéra-Comique on February 11, 1840. By the end of the same year, the work had been performed forty-four times, and by 1914 had reached the one thousand production mark. Such a success! The story takes place in a Tyrol, Austria village during the time of Napoleon I. Its main themes are young love and military battles.

### ***Madama Butterfly***

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

Giacomo was the fifth of seven Puccini children and the most prominent of them all. Even though he began his music education at an early age, however, it was not as useful as it might have been. Little Giacomo received instruction from his uncle, who was not very successful with his student-nephew. When Puccini was ten, he joined the St. Martino and St. Michele choirs, where he excelled, and when he was fourteen, he became the organist of several churches of the region. Puccini was prolific in many genres, including orchestral music, but he is widely known today solely as an opera composer. In fact, after Verdi, Puccini is considered the most successful Italian opera composer. He composed three of the most popular and frequently produced operas of all time: *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly*.

Puccini waited somewhat impatiently for the *Madama Butterfly* libretto, written by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. He finally received it in November of 1902, when he started composing the opera. In February of the following year, however, he was involved in a car accident and broke one of his legs. Thus, he had to stop working on the opera for another four months. Finally, the opera's orchestration was completed on December 27, 1903, and *Madama Butterfly* premiered February 17, 1904, at the famed La Scala di Milan. Despite impeccable casting, the premiere was a complete fiasco. The audience recognized themes used by Puccini in previous operas and several costume mishaps took place. Yet despite that first, difficult performance, three months later this same opera proved to be a great success at the Teatro Grande in Brescia.

— notes by Cristian Mazo

### ***Hänsel und Gretel***

Engelbert Humperdinck (1854–1921)

Born in Siegburg, Germany in 1854, Engelbert Humperdinck began his musical journey at a young age. His parents, however, did not approve of their son becoming a musician, so instead he began his collegiate studies in the field of architecture. Not long after, his parents changed their minds and he enrolled at the Cologne Conservatory. During his time there, he studied with many great professors and won important competitions. The monetary prizes he earned allowed him to travel throughout Europe to places such as Rome, Spain, Morocco, and France, studying and composing the entire time.

The development of *Hänsel und Gretel* spanned a number of years and was heavily influenced by the Grimm Brothers' fairytale of the same name. The librettist for this opera was Humperdinck's sister, Adelheid Wette. She had two young children for whom she had written various short plays, one of which was *Hänsel und Gretel*. In order to make the story sweeter for her children, she left out some of the darker moments and included new plotlines with additional characters, such as the Dew Fairy and the Sandman. Adelheid asked her brother to compose a few pieces to go along with her words, leading Humperdinck to begin composing a rudimentary version that would later become a full opera. In December of 1890, Humperdinck celebrated his engagement to Hedwig Taxer by gifting her the singspiel version of *Hänsel und Gretel* as an expression of his love. By Christmas 1891, he had completed a full draft of the opera, which he again gave to his fiancée as a present. One month later, he began his composition of the full score.

*Hänsel und Gretel* premiered in Weimar, Germany on December 23, 1893, with Richard Strauss as conductor. The opera made its Hamburg debut the following year with Gustav

Mahler at the orchestral helm. *Hänsel und Gretel* debuted in the U.S. at the Met in 1905, and Humperdinck and his wife were in attendance. This opera holds two distinct honors: it the first to be played in its entirety on the radio (London, January 1923), and it was also the first full opera to be broadcast live from the Met in 1931. *Hänsel und Gretel* has long been hailed as a triumph of German opera, a perfect juxtaposition of German folk music and a childlike sense of adventure.

### ***Le nozze di Figaro***

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

*Le nozze di Figaro* (The Marriage of Figaro) is one of Mozart's most famous opera buffas, or Italian comic operas. Productions have been performed countless times in some of the biggest opera houses in the world. The libretto was written by Lorenzo da Ponte, a man who continued collaborating with Mozart on two more operas following the success of Figaro. The storyline was not original; in fact, a French playwright named Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais wrote three plays featuring the protagonist Figaro, including the one focused on his wedding day. Beaumarchais's play, penned in 1778, was considered extremely scandalous by members of the French aristocracy, who found solace in the character of Count Almaviva and were horrified by how his servants outwitted him. Pushback from the monarchy delayed staging of the play for six years. Tensions in France were already high between the nobility and commoners, a situation which eventually led to the French Revolution. The introduction of a play presenting a nobleman fooled by mere servants only added to its infamy and triumph upon opening.

Once hearing of this French play, performances of which were also prohibited by the Austrian monarchy, Mozart and da Ponte set out to turn it into an opera for the people of Vienna. At the insistence of the emperor, many elements from the original play were changed. The new opera focused on the idea of desire, both unwanted and wanted, as opposed to the political debauchery featured in the French version. Mozart began composing *Le nozze di Figaro* in the Fall of 1785. The following May, the opera debuted at the Burgtheater in Vienna. It reached a level of moderate success, with nine performances in its opening year. The 1787 Prague opening reached a higher level of achievement and allowed Mozart to begin writing another of his celebrated operas, *Don Giovanni*. Figaro was revived on the Viennese stage in 1789 to roaring approval, which gave the composer even more momentum, resulting in *Così fan tutte*, the third opera on which da Ponte collaborated. Mozart's musical genius survived long past his 1791 death, and his operas continue to fare well today. *Le nozze di Figaro* continues to be one of Mozart's most triumphant works.

## ***La Périhole***

Jacques Offenbach (1819–1880)

Jacques Offenbach played a major part in the expansion of French operetta, his unique developments in the genre propelling him to great success and inspiring many composers who followed in his footsteps. *La Périhole* was one of his many operettas that portrayed an amusingly satirical sense of humor, enjoyed immensely by audiences both then and now. The composer was especially successful when it came to his collaborators throughout his career. The decision to select Ludovic Halévy and Henri Meilhac as librettists for *La Périhole* proved no exception. Offenbach also worked with one of his favorite divas: Hortense Schneider. Many of the lead roles in his operettas were written specifically for her, including that of street rat Périhole.

After years of having his compositional work rejected, Offenbach saved enough money from his cello performances to allow him to open his own theatre by 1855. He gave it the name of Théâtre des Bouffes-Parisiens, which coined the term opéra bouffe (satirical opera), a genre that Offenbach went on to dominate. Opéra bouffe is classified by its use of joyful, almost sporadic music and parodic characters; these operettas were much bolder and ruder regarding political or social standards than their neighboring genre, the opéra comique. On October 6, 1868, *La Périhole* made its debut at the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris, charming the audience. The opéra bouffe genre reached the pinnacle of its status during the reign of Napoléon III, the Emperor of France and nephew of famed French general Napoléon Bonaparte. Offenbach took great joy in poking fun at Napoléon III, and Offenbach's works proved to be the perfect balance of humor and insult to this command. With the fall of the Emperor, the popularity of Offenbach and his operettas suffered. Fortunately, the works of Jacques Offenbach have since become a staple in the opera world.

— notes by Amity Matthew

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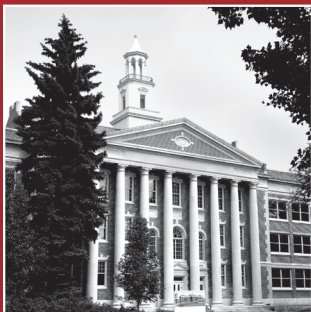
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