### CLASSE ROOM ACTIVITY

**A Musical Collision Course**

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<td>Japanese chant melody (based on the pentatonic scale)</td>
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CLASROOM ACTIVITY
A Musical Collision Course (CONTINUED)

“Dovunque al mondo”

PINKERTON: Dovunque al mondo
lo Yankee vagabondo
si gode e trafica
sporreando i rischi.
Affonda l’ancora alla ventura …
(interrupts himself to offer Sharpless a drink)
Milk-Punch, o Whiskey?
(starting again) Affonda l’ancora alla ventura
finché una raffica scompiglìa nave e
ormeggi, alberatura.
La vita ei non appaga
se non fa suo tesoro
i fiori d’ogni plaga …

SHARPLESS: È un facile vangelo.

PINKERTON: ... d’ogni bella gli amor.

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

PINKERTON: Vinto si tuffa e la sorte raccuiffa.
Il suo talento fa in ogni dove.
Così mi sposo all’uso giapponese
per novecento novantanove anni.
Salvo a prosciugliermi ogni mese.

SHARPLESS: È un facile vangelo.

PINKERTON: “America forever!”
SHARPLESS: “America forever.”

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

Milk punch or whisky?
He drops his anchor where and when he wants
until a storm wind blows and rocks his boat;
then he raises sail and casts off again.
Life isn’t worth living
unless he can make
all the flowers in the fields …

That’s an easy philosophy.
... his own special treasures.
That’s an easy philosophy,
which makes life pleasant
but leaves you with an empty heart.

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

That’s an easy philosophy.

“America forever!”

“America forever.”
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
A Musical Collision Course (CONTINUED)

“Gran ventura”

**butterfly:** Gran ventura.

**butterfly’s friends:** Riverenza.

**pinkerton:** (smiling) È un po’ dura la scalata?

**butterfly:** (calmly) A una sposa costumata più penosa è l’impazienza.

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

**butterfly:** (naturally) Dei più belli ancor ne so.

**pinkerton:** (encouragingly) Dei gioielli!

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

**pinkerton:** Grazie, no.

I’m delighted.
We are honored.
Did you find it difficult to climb the hill?
For a genteel bride, the waiting is much more difficult.
What a beautiful thing to say.
I know even more beautiful phrases.
Such jewels!
If you would like to hear more of them now …
Thank you, no.

Having already observed the group of girls with curiosity, Sharpless draws near Butterfly, who listens to him attentively.

**sharpless:** Miss Butterfly. Bel nome, vi sta a meraviglia.
Siete di Nagasaki?

**butterfly:** Signor si. Di famiglia assai prospera un tempo. (to her friends) Verità!

**butterfly’s friends:** (agreeing eagerly) Verità!

**butterfly:** Nessuno si confessa mai nato in povertà, e non c’è vagabondo che a sentirlo non sia di gran prosapia. Eppur conobbi la ricchezza. Ma il turbine rovescia le querce più robuste e abbiai fatto la ghescia per sostenartici. (to her friends) Vero?

**butterfly’s friends:** Vero!

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

**pinkerton:** (having listened with interest, he turns to Sharpless) (Con quel fare di bambola quando parla m’inflamma.)

**sharpless:** (also interested in butterfly’s chatter, he continues to question her) E ci avete sorelle?

**butterfly:** No, signore. Ho la mamma.

**goro:** (solemnly) Una nobile dama.

**butterfly:** Ma senza farle torto povera molto anch’essa.

**sharpless:** E vostro padre?

**butterfly:** (taken by surprise, she replies dryly) Morto.

Miss Butterfly. A beautiful name, and it suits you so well.
You are from Nagasaki?
Yes, sir. And my family was at one time rather wealthy.
Isn’t that true?
It’s true!
I know that no one will admit to being from a poor family, and even the humblest vagabond will say he was born of noble forebears. Still we were wealthy once. But storm winds can uproot even the strongest oaks. And so, we had to work as geishas to support ourselves. Didn’t we?
It’s true!
I do not hide it, and why should I?

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

And do you have any sisters?
No sir. I just have my mother.
A gracious lady.
But to speak the truth, she’s just as poor as I am.
And your father?
He’s dead.
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
A Musical Collision Course (CONTINUED)

“Un bel di”

Butterfly: Un bel dì, vedremo levarsi
un fil di fumo sull’estremo confine del mare.
E poi la nave appare.
Poi la nave bianca entra nel porto,
romba il suo saluto. Vedi? È venuto!
Io non gli scendo incontro, io no.
Mi metto là sul ciglio del colle e aspetto,
e aspetto gran tempo e non mi pesa
la lunga attesa.
E uscito dalla folla cittadina
un uom, un picciol punto
s’avvia per la collina.
Chi sarà? chi sarà?
E come sarà giunto
che dirà? che dirà?
Chiamerà “Butterfly” dalla lontana.
Io senza dar risposta
me ne starò nascosta
un po’ per cella, e un po’ per non morire
al primo incontro, ed egli alquanto in pena
chiamerà, chiamerà: “Piccina mogliettina,
olezzo di verbena”
i nomi che mi dava al suo venire.
(to Suzuki) Tutto questo avverrà, te lo prometto.
Tieni la tua paura—io con sicura fede l’aspetto.

One fine day, we’ll see a thin thread of smoke rising
on the horizon where the sky meets the ocean.
And then a ship appears.
The white ship enters the harbor,
booming its salute. You see? He’s come!
But I won’t go down to meet him—not me.
I’ll go to the top of our little hill and wait,
and wait for a long time, but I don’t mind
the long interval.
And emerging from the crowded city,
a man, a tiny figure,
sets out for the hilltop.
Who is it? Who can it be?
And when at last he arrives,
what will he say? What?
From afar, he’ll call, “Butterfly.”
I’ll give no answer,
I’ll stay hidden,
partly to tease him, and partly so that I don’t die
at our reunion! And then he’ll call to me, worried,
he’ll call: “My little wife, my darling,
my sweet girl who smells of flowers”—
the names he used to call me when we first met.
All of this will happen, I promise you.
Have no fear; I wait for him with unshaken faith!
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course (CONTINUED)

The opera’s final scene

**Butterfly:** (*softly reading the words inscribed on the knife*)

“Con onor muore chi non può serbar
vita con onore.”

“Let those who cannot live an honorable life have an
honorable death instead.”

She places the tip of the blade at her throat. Suddenly the door opens, and Suzuki pushes the child into the room. The child runs toward his mother with his hands outstretched. Butterfly lets the knife fall. She rushes toward the child, embraces him, and smothers him with kisses.

**Butterfly:** Tu? tu? tu? tu? tu? tu?
(*with great feeling, breathing hard*)

piccolo Iddio! Amore, amore mio,
fior di giglio e di rosa.
(*taking the child’s head and pulling it toward herself*)

Non saperlo mai per te,
pe’ tuoi puri occhi,
(*in tears*) muor Butterfly ...
perché tu possa andar di là dal mare
senza che ti rimordia ai di maturi,
il materno abbandono.
(*with great love*)

O a me, sceso dal trono dell’alto Paradiso,
guarda ben fisso, fisso di tua madre la faccia!
che ten resti una traccia, guarda bene!
Amore, addio! addio! piccolo amor!
(*her voice breaking*) Va, gioca, gioca!


Oh, my dearest darling,
blossom of lily and rose.

I hope you never know this,
but it’s for your sake, for your beautiful eyes,
that Butterfly must die ...

So that you can go to the other side of the sea
without thinking, when you’ve grown up,
that your mother abandoned you.

Oh my angel, who came to me from heaven,
look at your mother’s face with care,
so that you’ll one day remember a trace of it.
Goodbye, love! Goodbye, my little one!
Go now, go play! Go play!

Butterfly picks up the child and places him on her tatami mat. She hands him an American flag and a little doll, then carefully puts a blindfold over his eyes. Then she picks up the knife again and, with her gaze fixed on her child, places the knife against her own chest. With great conviction, the stabs herself and pulls the knife across her stomach. Collapsing on the floor, she looks up at her child, who is oblivious to what is happening. With a weak smile, she drags herself toward him, hugs him one last time, and then falls dead on the ground.

**Pinkerton:** (*from outside*) Butterfly! Butterfly! Butterfly!

Butterfly! Butterfly! Butterfly!
CLASSESE ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course (CONTINUED)

THE SONGS AND SOUNDS OF MY WORLD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRAINSTORMING CATEGORIES:</th>
<th>MY IDEAS:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folk songs and instruments from my cultural background</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(Example: the songs “Danny Boy” or “Santa Lucia,” and instruments like the oud, conga drums, flamenco guitar, etc.)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Songs I listen to on a regular basis</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(Example: your favorite song from your favorite band)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sounds that I encounter on a daily basis</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(Example: car horns, subway door closing chimes, alarm clock, etc.)</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sounds that I associate with my favorite memories</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(Example: bird calls in the summer, my father playing guitar, my mother singing, etc.)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instruments that I think capture my personality</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(Example: violin, harp, trumpet, guitar, etc.)</em></td>
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</table>
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
A Musical Collision Course (CONTINUED)

THE SONGS AND SOUNDS OF MY WORLD

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

What’s in Cio-Cio-San’s Box?

SCENE 1: Cio-Cio-San shows Pinkerton her box of possessions

PINKERTON: Vieni, amor mio! Vi piace la casetta?  
Come, my love! Do you like the house?

BUTTERFLY: Signor F. B. Pinkerton  
Mr. F. B. Pinkerton
Perdono ... io vorrei ... pochi oggetti da donna ...  
Sorry ... I’d like ... a few lady’s things ...  
PINKERTON: Dove sono?  
Where are they?

She indicates the lacquer box.

BUTTERFLY: Sono qui ... vi dispiace?  
They’re here ... does that bother you?

Slightly surprised, he smiles, then invites her to show him.

PINKERTON: O perché mai, mia bella Butterfly?  
Why would it bother me, my beautiful Butterfly?

One by one, she takes the objects from the box.

BUTTERFLY: Fazzoletti. La pipa. Una cintura.  
Un piccolo fermaglio. Uno specchio. Un ventaglio.  

PINKERTON: (seeing a little jar) Quel barattolo?  
The jar?

BUTTERFLY: Un vaso di tintura.  
A pot of rouge.

PINKERTON: Ohbô!  
Oh!

BUTTERFLY: Vi spiace? ... Vial!  
You don’t like it? ... I’ll get rid of it!

He pulls a long, narrow case out of the box.

PINKERTON: E quello?  
What’s this?

BUTTERFLY: (very seriously) Cosa sacra e mia.  
Something sacred that belongs to me.

PINKERTON: (with curiosity) E non si può vedere?  
Can I see?

BUTTERFLY: C’è troppa gente. Perdonate.  
There are too many people here. Excuse me.

She disappears into the house, taking the case with her.

GORO: (approaching Pinkerton and whispering into his ear)  
È un presente del Mikado a suo padre ...  
It’s a present from the Mikado to her father ...  
coll’invito ...  
with an invitation to ...  

He makes a gesture of slicing open his own stomach.

PINKERTON: (softly, to Goro) E ... suo padre?  
And ... her father?

GORO: Ha obbedito.  
He obeyed.
Goro moves away, heading back into the house. Butterfly, meanwhile, has returned. She sits by Pinkerton on the terrace and removes several small statues from her box.

**BUTTERFLY:** Gli Ottokè. The Hotoke.

Pinkerton picks up a statue and examines it with curiosity.

**PINKERTON:** Quei pupazzi? ... Avete detto? What, dolls? ... What did you call them?

**BUTTERFLY:** Son l'anime degli avi. They hold the souls of my ancestors.

Pinkerton puts the statue back down.

**PINKERTON:** Ah! ... Il mio rispetto. Ah! ... Then they have my respect.

She leans respectfully toward Pinkerton, as though wishing to tell him a secret.

**BUTTERFLY:** Ieri non salì tutta sola in segreto alla Mission. With my new life, I want to adopt a new religion.

Colla nuova mia vita posso adottare nuova religione.

*(fearfully)* Lo zio Bonzo non sa, My uncle, the Bonze, doesn't know,

nè i miei lo sanno.

Io seguo il mio destino e piena d'umiltà, I'm following my own path, and, full of humility,

al Dio del signor Pinkerton m'inchino. I wish to bow to the god of my husband Pinkerton.

È mio destino.

Nella stessa chiesetta in ginocchio con voi This is my destiny:

pregherò lo stesso Dio. È per farvi contento praying with you, in the same church,

potrò forse obliar la gente mia. to the same god. And if you want,

I can perhaps even forget my own people entirely.
CLASSESRoom ACTIVITY

Objects of Inquiry (continued)

What is the object?

Why might this object be important to Cio-Cio-San? How did (or how might) Pinkerton react to this object?

Draw the object.
What’s in Cio-Cio-San’s Box?

**SCENE 2: Cio-Cio-San prays silently before her Hotoke, and Suzuki prays audible offstage**

The walls of Butterfly’s house are closed, leaving the living room in semi-darkness. Suzuki prays, bowing before an image of the Buddha. From time to time, she sounds her prayer bell. Butterfly sits alone, with her lacquered box open in front of her. One by one, she silently removes her Hotoke and looks at them longingly.

**Suzuki: (praying)** E Izagi ed Izanami, Sarundasico e Kami ...
**interrupting the prayer** Oh! la mia testa!

Izagi and Izanami, Surundasico and Kami ...
Oh, my head!

She rings the bell again, to capture the gods’ attention.

**E tu Ten-Sjoo-dai!**
(on the verge of tears, looking at Butterfly)
**fate che Butterfly non pianga più,**
**mai più, mai più!**

**Butterfly: (without moving)** Pigri ed obesi
**son gli Dei giapponesi.**
**L’Americano l’idio son persuasa**
**ben più presto risponde a chi l’implori.**
**Ma temo ch’egli ignori**
**che noi st’am qui di casa.**

And you, Ten-Sjoo-dai!
Please make Butterfly stop crying.
Please, may she never, never cry again!
The gods you pray to
are lazy and fat.
I’m convinced that the American god
will respond to your prayers much more quickly.
But I’m afraid that he doesn’t know
that we live here.
CLASSE ROOM ACTIVITY

Objects of Inquiry (CONTINUED)

What’s in Cio-Cio-San’s Box?

SCENE 3: Cio-Cio-San prepares for Pinkerton’s arrival

**BUTTERFLY:** (to Suzuki) Or vienmi ad adornar.
No! prìa portami il bimbo.

Come help me get dressed.
No, first bring me my child.

Suzuki goes into the neighboring room and brings the child, whom she places next to Butterfly. Butterfly, meanwhile, looks at a little hand mirror.

**BUTTERFLY:** (sadly) Non son più quella!
Troppi sospiri la bocca mandò,
e l’occhio riguardò nel lontano troppo fisso.
(to Suzuki) Dammi sul viso un tocco di carminio

I’m no longer the beautiful girl I once was!
Too many sighs have passed these lips,
my eyes have spent too much time gazing at a far horizon.
Put a hint of rouge on my cheeks …

She takes a brush and places some rouge on the cheeks of her child.

ed anche a te, piccino, perché la veglia non ti faccia vòte per pallore le gote.

... and also some rouge for you, little one, so that this night of waiting won’t make you look pale and tired.

**SUZUKI:** (asking Butterfly to sit still) Non vi movete,
che v’ho a ravviare i capelli.

Don’t move!
I need to fix your hair.
CLASSEROOM ACTIVITY

Objects of Inquiry (CONTINUED)

What's in Cio-Cio-San's Box?

SCENE 4: Cio-Cio-San’s suicide

Butterfly picks up her lacquer box, carries it to the center of the room, and slowly lifts the lid. She takes out the long, thin case, and slowly pulls out the knife with which her father killed himself. Holding the hilt in one hand and the tip of the blade in the other, she kisses the blade with almost religious devotion.

BUTTERFLY: (softly reading the words inscribed on the knife)
"Con onor muore chi non può serbar vita con onore."

"Let those who cannot live an honorable life have an honorable death instead."

She places the tip of the blade at her throat. Suddenly the door opens, and Suzuki pushes the child into the room. The child runs toward his mother with his hands outstretched. Butterfly lets the knife fall. She rushes toward the child, embraces him, and smothers him with kisses.


(piccolo Idio! Amore, amore mio, fior di giglio e di rosa.

(taking the child's head and pulling it toward herself)
Non saperlo mai per te,
pe i tuoi puri occhi,
(in tears) muor Butterfly ...
perché tu possa andar di là dal mare
senza che ti rimordia ai di maturi,
il materno abbandono.

(I hope you never know this)
(you? you? you? you? you?)

Oh, my dearest darling,
blossom of lid and rose.

O a me, sceso dal trono dell’alto Paradiso,
guarda ben fisso, fiso di tua madre la faccia!
che ten restì una traccia, guardà ben!
Amore, addio! addio! piccolo amor!

(her voice breaking) Va, gioca, gioca!

(Oh my angel, who came to me from heaven)

Go now, go play! Go play!

BUTTERFLY picks up the child and places him on her tatami mat. She hands him an American flag and a little doll, then carefully puts a blindfold over his eyes. Then she picks up the knife again and, with her gaze fixed on her child, places the knife against her own chest. With great conviction, she stabs herself and pulls the knife across her stomach. Collapsing on the floor, she looks up at her child, who is oblivious to what is happening. With a weak smile, she drags herself toward him, hugs him one last time, and then falls dead on the ground.

PINKERTON: (from outside) Butterfly! Butterfly! Butterfly!

Butterfly! Butterfly! Butterfly!
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Objects of Inquiry (CONTINUED)

What’s in *Your* Box?

**Object 1:** What is this object? __________________________________________

What does it mean to you? _______________________________________________

**Object 2:** What is this object? __________________________________________

What does it mean to you? _______________________________________________

**Object 3:** What is this object? __________________________________________

What does it mean to you? _______________________________________________

**Object 4:** What is this object? __________________________________________

What does it mean to you? _______________________________________________

**Object 5:** What is this object? __________________________________________

What does it mean to you? _______________________________________________
PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY

The Art of the Director

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

The opening dance: ____________________________  Cio-Cio-San prays while Suzuki sings her own prayers: ____________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Cio-Cio-San wears a cross around her neck: ____________________________  Flower petals hang frozen in the air during Act II: ____________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Puppet household servants: ____________________________  Depiction of the child as a puppet: ____________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Falling flower petals during the love duet: ____________________________  Representation of Cio-Cio-San’s dream: ____________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Cio-Cio-San’s vision of Pinkerton at the beginning of Act II: ____________________________  Puppet birds: ____________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Pinkerton’s representation as an empty armchair: ____________________________  Depiction of Cio-Cio-San’s death at the opera’s close: ____________________________

__________________________________________
PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY

Opera Review: *Madama Butterfly*

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

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

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<tr>
<th>THE STARS</th>
<th>STAR POWER</th>
<th>MY COMMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hui Le as Cio-Cio-San</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth DeShong as Suzuki</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Carè as Pinkerton</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plácido Domingo as Sharpless</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The child (puppet)</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conductor Pier Giorgio Morandi</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>MUSIC</th>
<th>SET DESIGN / STAGING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening dance</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
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<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinkerton explores the house</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
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<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinkerton describes a sailor’s life</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
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<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>The wedding</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
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<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>The wedding night</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
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<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE</td>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td>MUSIC</td>
<td>SET DESIGN / STAGING</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cio-Cio-San imagines Pinkerton’s return</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
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<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goro brings Yamadori to meet Cio-Cio-San</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
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<td>Sharpless reads the letter</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
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<td>Pinkerton’s ship arrives</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
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<td>Cio-Cio-San’s vigil</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
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<td>Cio-Cio-San meets Mrs. Pinkerton</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
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<td>Cio-Cio-San’s tragic end</td>
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<td>⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐</td>
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