

SINCE THEIR FIRST JOINT PERFORMANCE AT THE MET IN 1893, Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1890) and Ruggero Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* (1892), written just two years apart, have almost always been presented as a double bill, affectionately called *Cav/Pag* by opera professionals. Both short operas portray a humble southern Italian working-class community on a Roman Catholic feast day, and both concern love triangles that turn violent and deadly. The frank, intense, swift, and economical musical language of these turbulent tales set in the world of ordinary people helped give birth to the short-lived but wildly popular and endlessly influential operatic style called verismo.

Director David McVicar recognizes the links in subject matter and musical style that have perpetually paired these two operas; but he also perceives them as two very distinct works demanding different visual responses. McVicar and his design team have united the two operas by creating, as he puts it, one "scenic envelope" which can embrace both works: they have set both *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* in the same imagined Sicilian village. But *Cavalleria* takes place in its original time period, circa 1900, while *Pagliacci* is set two generations later, in the post-World War II period.

This guide is designed to help your students grasp the cultural background, theatrical and musical style, and key musical details of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*. By exploring the influential theatrical genre of commedia dell'arte and the realistic verismo style pioneered by these two operas, as well as the dramatic functions of the music in both pieces, this guide will give your students a better understanding of what makes this pair of short operas compelling and trailblazing. The activities on the following pages are designed to provide context, deepen background knowledge, and enrich the overall experience of this *Live in HD* transmission. This guide also aligns with key strands of the Common Core Standards.

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WESTBROEK

ÁLVAREZ

LUČIĆ

RACETTE

GAGNIDZE

THE WORKS:

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

An opera in one act, sung in Italian

Music by Pietro Mascagni

Libretto by Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti and Guido Menasci

Based on the play and short story *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Giovanni Verga

First performed May 17, 1890 at the Teatro Costanzi, Rome, Italy

PAGLIACCI

An opera in two acts, sung in Italian

Music and libretto by Ruggero Leoncavallo

First performed May 21, 1892 at the Teatro dal Verme, Milan, Italy

PRODUCTION

Fabio Luisi, Conductor

David McVicar, Production

Rae Smith, Set Designer

Moritz Junge, Costume Designer

Paule Constable, Lighting Designer

Andrew George, Choreographer

Emil Wolk, Vaudeville Consultant

STARRING

(In order of vocal appearance):

In *Cavalleria Rusticana*:

Marcelo Álvarez

TURIDDU (tenor)

Eva-Maria Westbroek

SANTUZZA (soprano)

Jane Bunnell

MAMMA LUCIA (mezzo-soprano)

Željko Lučić

ALFIO (baritone)

Ginger Costa-Jackson

LOLA (mezzo-soprano)

In *Pagliacci*:

George Gagnidze

TONIO (baritone)

Marcelo Álvarez

CANIO (tenor)

Andrew Stenson

BEPPE (tenor)

Patricia Racette

NEDDA (soprano)

Lucas Meachem

SILVIO (baritone)

This guide includes four sections and three types of activities.

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

The activities in this guide will address several aspects of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*:

- The operas as prototypes of the verismo genre, an influential operatic style, rooted in the social and economic upheavals of late 19th-century southern Italy, that emphasizes dramatic realism and the depiction of everyday characters
- The use in *Pagliacci* of commedia dell'arte, a historic and seminal theatrical form, and its far-reaching influence on Western culture
- The use and dramatic meaning of musical themes and the way music closely reflects the moment-to-moment drama
- The choices made by the director and designers of the new Met production in order to both unify and distinguish this similarly-themed but quite discrete pair of operas

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



The set of *Pagliacci*, seen during technical rehearsals
CORY WEAVER/METROPOLITAN OPERA

THE SOURCES: In 1889, the young Tuscan composer Pietro Mascagni decided to enter a competition for one-act operas sponsored by the Milanese music publisher Edoardo Sonzogno, open to young Italian composers who had not yet had an opera performed on stage. When Mascagni asked his friend Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti, a poet and professor of literature, to write a libretto for him, Targioni-Tozzetti suggested basing it on *Cavalleria Rusticana*, a popular short story by the Sicilian realist author Giovanni Verga later adapted as a play. Targioni-Tozzetti enlisted his colleague Guido Menasci to help him write the libretto. In all, 73 operas were entered in the competition. In March 1890, *Cavalleria Rusticana* was selected as one of the final three.

Its premiere at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome in May 1890 is the stuff of legend. Following the performance, Mascagni and the other performers were called back for dozens of curtain calls (as many as 60 in some reports) by an audience wild with enthusiasm. Mascagni soon learned that the First Prize was his. The opera's phenomenal popularity began immediately and has not waned since, completely overshadowing Mascagni's later works. More importantly, *Cavalleria Rusticana* has often been credited with single-handedly spearheading the verismo movement in Italian opera.

The sources of *Pagliacci* are less clear. Inspired by the triumphant premiere of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Leoncavallo, then little known, resolved to create his own opera in the same hot new style. *Pagliacci* has a similar setting and shares the direct emotional appeal of Mascagni's earlier work. The composer claimed that the story was based on an actual incident he remembered from childhood, a murder investigation that his father, as magistrate, had presided over. Other accounts credit the plot to a contemporary newspaper report. French author Catulle Mendès accused Leoncavallo of plagiarizing his play *La Femme de Tabarin* (1874), which, like *Pagliacci*, features a play-within-a-play and a clown who murders his wife. Mendès eventually dropped his lawsuit after he himself was accused of plagiarism in another of his works.

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA: *A village in southern Italy.* At dawn on Easter Sunday, Turiddu is heard in the distance singing of his love for Lola, wife of the carter Alfio. She and Turiddu had been a couple before he went to join the army. When he returned and found her married to Alfio, he took up with Santuzza and seduced her, but now has abandoned her and rekindled his relationship with Lola. Later in the morning, a distraught Santuzza approaches the tavern of Mamma Lucia, Turiddu's mother, who tells her that her son is away buying wine. But Santuzza knows that Turiddu has been seen during the night in the village. Alfio arrives with a group of men, boasting of his horses—and of Lola. He asks Mamma Lucia if she has any more of her good wine. When she says that Turiddu has gone to get more, Alfio replies that he saw the other man near his house that same morning. Lucia is surprised but Santuzza tells her to keep quiet. As the villagers follow the procession to church, Santuzza stays behind

VOICE TYPE

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

SOPRANO

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

MEZZO-SOPRANO

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

CONTRALTO

the lowest female voice, also called an alto

COUNTERTENOR

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

TENOR

the highest naturally occurring voice type in adult males

BARITONE

the male voice lying below the tenor and above the bass

BASS

the lowest male voice

and pours out her grief about Turiddu to Mamma Lucia. The old woman expresses her pity, then also leaves for mass. Turiddu appears and is confronted by Santuzza about his affair with Lola but denies her accusations. Just then Lola passes by on her way to church. She mocks Santuzza, and Turiddu turns to follow her, but Santuzza begs him to stay and implores him not to abandon her. Turiddu refuses to listen and leaves, cursed by Santuzza. Alfio arrives, late for mass. Santuzza tells him that Lola went to church with Turiddu and reveals that his wife has been cheating on him. In a rage, Alfio swears to get even and rushes off, leaving behind the now conscience-stricken Santuzza.

Returning from the church, the villagers gather at Mamma Lucia's tavern. Turiddu leads them in a drinking song, but the atmosphere becomes tense when Alfio appears. He refuses Turiddu's offer of wine and instead challenges him to a knife fight. Turiddu admits his guilt but is determined to go through with the fight, for Santuzza's sake as well as for his own honor. The two men agree to meet outside the village. Alone with his mother, Turiddu begs her to take care of Santuzza if he doesn't come back, then runs off to the fight. As Mamma Lucia waits anxiously, shouts are heard in the distance. A woman runs in screaming that Turiddu has been killed.



The set of *Cavalleria Rusticana*,
seen during technical rehearsals

CORY WEAVER/METROPOLITAN OPERA

PAGLIACCI: PROLOGUE. Before the action begins, Tonio the clown announces that what the audience is about to see is a true story and that actors have the same joys and sorrows as other people.

ACT I: *The same southern Italian village.* A small theatrical company has just arrived and Canio, the head of the troupe, advertises the night's performance to the gathered crowd. One of the villagers suggests that Tonio is secretly courting Canio's young wife, Nedda. Canio warns them all that he will not tolerate any flirting offstage—life and theater are not the same. As the crowd disperses, Nedda is left alone, disturbed by her husband's jealousy. She looks up to the sky, envying the birds their freedom. Tonio appears and tries to force himself on her but she beats him back and he retreats, swearing revenge. In fact, Nedda does have a lover—Silvio, a young peasant, who suddenly appears. The two reaffirm their love and Silvio persuades Nedda to run away with him that night. Tonio, who has returned and overheard the end of their conversation, hurries off to alert Canio, but Silvio manages to slip away unrecognized. Canio violently threatens Nedda but she refuses to reveal her lover's name. Beppe, another member of the troupe, restrains Canio, and Tonio advises him to wait until the evening's performance to catch the culprit. Alone, Canio gives in to his despair—he must play the clown even though his heart is breaking.

ACT II: That evening, the villagers assemble to watch the performance, Silvio among them. Beppe plays Harlequin, who serenades Columbine, played by Nedda. He dismisses her buffoonish servant Taddeo, played by Tonio, and over dinner the two lovers plot to poison Columbine's husband Pagliaccio, played by Canio. When Pagliaccio unexpectedly appears, Harlequin slips away. Taddeo maliciously assures Pagliaccio of his wife's innocence, which ignites Canio's jealousy. Forgetting his role and the play, he demands that Nedda tell him the name of her lover. She tries to continue with the performance with the audience enthralled by its realism, until Canio snaps. In a fit of rage he stabs Nedda and then Silvio, who rushes to her aid. Turning to the horrified crowd, Canio announces that the comedy is over.

WHO'S WHO IN CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

CHARACTER		PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
Turiddu	A young peasant	Too-REE-doo	tenor	A fiery and impetuous young man just back from army service
Santuzza	Turiddu's fiancée	Sahn-TOO-tza	soprano	A distraught young woman trying desperately to hold on to Turiddu
Mamma Lucia	Turiddu's mother	MAHM-mah Loo-CHEE-ah	mezzo-soprano	A simple, religious woman who runs a tavern
Alfio	A carter, Lola's husband	AHL-fee-oh	baritone	A proud and volatile man who jealously loves his wife Lola
Lola	Alfio's wife	LOH-lah	mezzo-soprano	Turiddu's former girlfriend; they have recently resumed their relationship secretly.

WHO'S WHO IN PAGLIACCI

CHARACTER		PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
Canio (Pagliaccio in the play)	Leader of a troupe of travelling commedia dell'arte actors	CAHN-yoh	tenor	A volatile and suspicious man who keeps jealous watch on his younger wife
Nedda (Colombina in the play)	Canio's wife and a member of his troupe	NEHD-dah	soprano	A free-spirited young woman trapped in a loveless marriage
Tonio (Taddeo in the play)	A member of Canio's troupe; sings the opera's Prologue	TOHN-yoh	baritone	A lonely and vengeful actor; in love with Nedda, who finds him repulsive
Beppe (Arlecchino in the play)	A member of Canio's troupe	BEH-peh	tenor	A level-headed actor who tries to keep peace in his troupe
Silvio	A villager	SEEL-vyoh	baritone	A handsome, romantic young man who has secretly become Nedda's lover

Ruggero Leoncavallo and Pietro Mascagni

- 1857** Ruggero Leoncavallo is born in Naples on April 23. The son of a well-to-do local magistrate, he benefits from early instruction in music.
- 1863** Pietro Mascagni is born into a humble family on December 7 in Livorno, a city on the western coast of Tuscany.
- 1866** Leoncavallo begins music instruction at the Naples Conservatory.
- 1876** Leoncavallo continues studies at the University of Bologna, where he is influenced by the Italian followers of Richard Wagner. He leaves a year later without having obtained his degree.
- 1880** The Italian realist writer Giovanni Verga publishes the short story collection *Vita dei Campi* ("Life in the Fields"), portraying aspects of life in rural Sicily. It includes *Cavalleria Rusticana* ("Rustic Chivalry").
- 1882** Leoncavallo finds employment in Paris as a piano teacher and by performing in cafés. Through a friend's recommendation, he receives a commission from the publisher Ricordi to compose an opera. His grand plans to write a trilogy conceived as the Italian answer to Richard Wagner's *Ring* cycle come to nothing and he struggles with the commission. The resulting opera *I Medici* is not performed until 11 years later, with little success.

By the age of 18, Mascagni has composed works of sufficient merit to earn a place at the Milan Conservatory. He begins formal studies in the fall and benefits from the rich cultural opportunities in Milan. His roommate is Giacomo Puccini, and the two establish a lifelong friendship, although one occasionally tempered by rivalry.

- 1883** Mascagni comes into contact with the group of artists, writers, and philosophers in Milan known as the Scapigliati (literally "the Disheveled"), a bohemian and anti-conformist artistic movement. Their influence moves Mascagni to develop a more seamless approach to musical form and a closer emphasis on the musical representation of the text, as seen in the operas of Richard Wagner.
- 1884** Giovanni Verga adapts *Cavalleria Rusticana* as a play. Mascagni sees it performed in Milan.
- 1885** Mascagni's operetta *Il Re a Napoli* is staged in Cremona. Having been restless and ill-suited in temperament to the role of a student, Mascagni withdraws from the Milan Conservatory without completing his diploma. He finds work as a conductor, touring Italy with operetta ensembles. His life for the next few years is marked by instability and penury.

P. Mascagni



- 1888** Mascagni learns from the newspaper *Il Secolo* about a competition hosted by the publishing firm of Eduardo Sonzogno for a new one-act opera, with the winner's composition to be produced at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome. He works with his childhood friend, the poet Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti, to produce a libretto based on Verga's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, with additional literary help from the writer Guido Menasci. By this time Verga's work is famous as an example of the literary school of verismo.
- 1889** Working quickly, Mascagni completes the score of *Cavalleria Rusticana* in May and submits it to the competition's jury. He prevails over 72 other competitors to win the grand prize.
- 1890** *Cavalleria Rusticana* receives its premiere on May 17 at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome. It is an immediate sensation and within a short time has been performed across Europe, establishing Mascagni's international reputation.
- Having witnessed the opera's wild success, Leoncavallo sets out to capture some of the public appetite for verismo himself. He begins work on *Pagliacci*.
- 1892** *Pagliacci* premieres at the Teatro dal Verme in Milan on May 21, conducted by 25-year-old Arturo Toscanini.
- 1893** The Met presents the first-ever performance of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* as a double bill on December 22.
- 1897** Leoncavallo composes an opera based on the novel *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème* by Henri Murger. Although Leoncavallo had conceived the idea first, Puccini succeeds in completing his own adaptation of the same subject faster. The two resulting versions of *La Bohème* are both performed regularly in their first years, but only Puccini's work endures in the operatic repertory.
- 1902** The great Italian tenor Enrico Caruso records "Vesti la giubba" from *Pagliacci* on phonograph with the Gramophone & Typewriter Company and again later with the Victor Talking Machine Company. He holds a record as the first singer to sell over one million copies of a recording.
- 1919** Leoncavallo dies in Montecatini, Tuscany, on August 9. His last years had been concerned mainly with the composition of operettas.
- 1945** Mascagni dies in Rome on August 2. He is mourned not only by his musical and artistic peers, but overwhelmingly by the common people of Rome, who had adopted him as a native son.



English Language Arts

IN PREPARATION

For this activity, students will need a copy of the *Pagliacci* synopsis, the reproducible resources available at the back of this guide, and the audio selections from *Pagliacci* available online or on the accompanying CD. You may wish to supplement these resources by photocopying and distributing one or more of the sidebars found in this section.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

English Language Arts, Music, Theater Studies, Humanities

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explore the direct impact of social history on the arts
- To consider the lasting influence of an ancient theatrical form on our culture
- To explore the close and unique relationship of text and music in opera
- To prompt curiosity about the Met's approach to *Pagliacci*

Life Imitates Art: Commedia dell'arte

Most of the characters we meet in *Pagliacci* are actors, and the opera's shocking climactic scene unfolds in the form of a play-within-a-play. The actors in *Pagliacci* practice a time-honored theatrical form known as *commedia dell'arte* [koh-MEH-dee-ah dell-AHR-teh], loosely translated from Italian as "comedy of craft." In this activity, students will explore and experience *commedia dell'arte* and discover the important and lasting influence of its plots and character types on Western culture, as well as investigate how and why this form is referenced in *Pagliacci*. They will:

- explore the stock characters and plots of *commedia dell'arte* and their analogues both in *Pagliacci* and in today's popular culture
- explore how and why Leoncavallo uses *commedia dell'arte* in *Pagliacci*
- inhabit the characters and situations of *commedia dell'arte* as they improvise their own skits
- become acquainted with the plot and music of *Pagliacci* in advance of the Met's *Live in HD* transmission

STEPS

In this activity, students will have several opportunities to familiarize themselves with *Pagliacci* and with the classic but still-influential theatrical form called *commedia dell'arte*. As a class, students will identify and articulate the influence of classic *commedia* characters and scenarios in contemporary culture. They will also explore why and how Leoncavallo used *commedia* in *Pagliacci* and evaluate its effectiveness. The lesson will close with an improvisational activity in which they will bring the stock characters of *commedia* to life.

STEP 1: Introduce your students to the plot of the opera, placing particular emphasis on the central characters: Canio, Nedda, Tonio, and Silvio. This can be as simple as reading the synopsis aloud as a class and distributing the *Who's Who in Pagliacci* chart.

STEP 2: Introduce *commedia dell'arte* to your students. You may want to refer to the sidebar *Commedia dell'Arte: A Historical Form with Contemporary Implications* or photocopy and distribute it to your students. It will be important that students gain an understanding of the basic characteristics of the various *commedia dell'arte* characters, outlined below.

Innamorati: young lovers; they frequently appear unmasked

Vecchi: older characters (usually masked)

- the Doctor, a wealthy and pedantic old physician
- Pantalone, a grumpy, rich, miserly old merchant who fancies himself a ladies' man
- the Captain, a boastful bully who betrays his cowardice when exposed to real danger

Zanni: servant characters or clowns who skillfully solve the problems at hand (usually masked)

- Arlecchino (Harlequin), a mischevious but loveable clown, sometimes prone to gluttony; usually portrayed wearing a diamond-patterned costume
- Colombina, a smart and feisty problem solver
- Pierrot/Pedrolino/Pagliaccio, a sweet-natured and naïve clown whose love is usually unrequited and who often takes the blame for things he hasn't done

STEP 3: Distribute the printed handout *Life Imitates Art: Commedia dell'arte*, found at the back of this guide. Reinforce the idea, introduced in the sidebar *Commedia dell'Arte: A Historical Form with Contemporary Implications*, that the characters and plots of commedia dell'arte have endured for centuries and may still be found in today's popular culture. You may want to get them started by citing *The Simpsons* as an example:

Homer, Bart = *Arlecchino* (gluttonous, ignorant, mischievous, but lovable)

Marge, Lisa = *Colombina* (feisty, smart, problem solver)

Mr. Burns = *Pantalone* (old, rich, miserly, grumpy)

Smithers = *Pierrot/Pagliaccio* (unrequited love, takes blame)

Ask students to turn to the "Commedia dell'arte Brainstorm" portion of the handout. Students should think of and jot down the names of a few commedia-like figures in television shows and films they know. Have students share what they've written

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CAV/PAG

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.2.b

Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.



An 18th-century actress as Colombina; Patricia Racette as Nedda

Commedia dell'Arte: A Historical Form with Contemporary Implications

Commedia dell'arte is a theatrical form featuring improvised dialogue and colorful stock characters that began in 15th-century Italy and swiftly became popular all over Europe.

Commedia dell'arte plays were usually performed on makeshift outdoor stages, with little scenery, by traveling troupes of actors. Their performances were based on set scenarios—a basic plot, often a familiar story, upon which the actors improvised their dialogue. The actors, then, were free to tailor a performance to their audience, allowing for satiric commentary on current events and bawdy humor that would have been censored if written down. The plots tended to center on the struggles of young lovers (*innamorati* in Italian), whose love is opposed by one or several elders (*vecchi*), often a jealous guardian or even an aged spouse. The *innamorati* seek help from servant characters or clowns called *zanni* (from which the word “zany” derives) who cleverly solve the problems at hand. Other popular scenarios involve adultery and marital jealousy, and the outwitting of a foolish character by a servant.

Apart from these basic plot elements, the only fixed components of commedia dell'arte performances were *lazzi*—well-rehearsed bits of comic stage business, music, acrobatics, or fighting—that could be dropped into many scenarios. These *lazzi* allowed the actors, usually those playing the *zanni*, to display their special skills, which sometimes became famous personal or company “trademarks.”

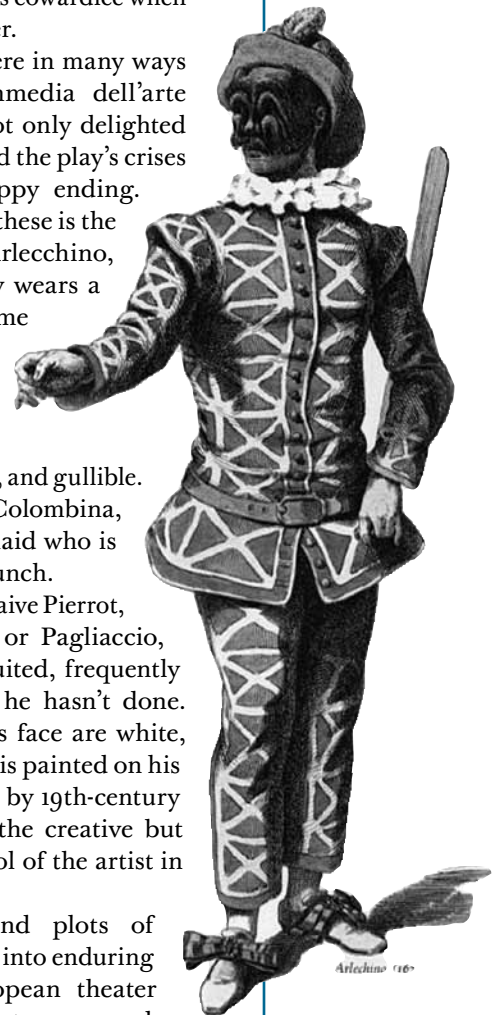
Each stock commedia dell'arte character developed a distinct set of attributes—typical speech, gestures, character traits, props, and costumes—that became standard to the portrayal of the character. Most of the characters, except the *innamorati*, wore masks, a tradition deriving from the art form's roots in ancient Roman comedy.

The *vecchi* included the Doctor, a wealthy and pedantic old physician from Bologna, and Pantalone, a grumpy, rich, miserly old Venetian merchant who fancies himself a ladies man. The bullying braggart Capitano, boasting of his prowess in battle, often appears in a military uniform and carries a sword, but usually reveals his cowardice when he is exposed to real danger.

The *zanni* (servants) were in many ways the most important commedia dell'arte characters, as their *lazzi* not only delighted audiences but usually solved the play's crises and brought about a happy ending. Perhaps the best known of these is the mischievous but lovable Arlecchino, or Harlequin, who usually wears a diamond-patterned costume meant to suggest patchwork, a sign of poverty. Though often a brilliant acrobat, Arlecchino may also be gluttonous, ignorant, and gullible. His female counterpart is Colombina, a feisty, problem-solving maid who is often the smartest of the bunch.

The sweet-natured and naive Pierrot, also known as Pedrolino or Pagliaccio, whose love is often unrequited, frequently accepts blame for things he hasn't done. Both his garments and his face are white, and often a single teardrop is painted on his face. Pierrot was embraced by 19th-century French writers, who saw the creative but lonely character as a symbol of the artist in general.

The stock figures and plots of commedia dell'arte evolved into enduring prototypes, seen in European theater and opera from the 17th century onwards. Indeed, we can still easily identify a few commedia dell'arte archetypes in most of today's sitcoms.



and support their choices by describing the characters they've listed and how they represent a commedia dell'arte archetype. By way of example, here are some of the many contemporary and classic television comedies and films that feature commedia character types:

<i>Family Guy</i>	<i>30 Rock</i>
<i>Parks and Recreation</i>	<i>The Office</i>
<i>Arrested Development</i>	<i>Futurama</i>
<i>All in the Family</i>	<i>The Honeymooners</i>
<i>Fawlty Towers</i>	<i>Winnie the Pooh</i>
<i>Beauty and the Beast</i>	<i>The Rocky Horror Picture Show</i>
Films of the Marx Brothers	Warner Brothers cartoons (Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, etc.)

STEP 4: Turning to the opera *Pagliacci*, call students' attention to the fact that the major characters are performers—members of a traveling commedia dell'arte troupe. There are many instances in the opera in which the characters reference the commedia dell'arte tradition, either by mentioning specific figures by name, or by speaking more generally about their characters' attributes.

Point students' attention to the reproducible handout *Life Imitates Art: Commedia dell'arte*, which includes texts and translations for two different arias: "Un tal gioco" and "Vesti la giubba." First point out that in each excerpt, the character singing makes reference to the theater. As students listen and follow along to the text, have them circle the references to commedia dell'arte on their handouts. After each selection is played and the students have had time to jot down their observations, ask them to share and discuss them with the class. For your convenience, a listening guide to the two tracks is provided below.

Track 1: In the aria "Un tal gioco," Canio threateningly warns the villagers never to joke about his wife's fidelity. He refers to commedia dell'arte and a scenario in which Pagliaccio finds his wife with another man. In typical fashion, he receives an undeserved beating (typical in improvised lazzi segments) and is the object of the audience's laughter.

Track 2: In the famous aria "Vesti la giubba," Canio comments on the irony of a commedia actor's life: He must put on his make-up and costume and make audiences laugh even if his heart is breaking. Canio likens his wife Nedda to Colombina, seduced by the figure of Arlecchino—the mischievous one who takes what isn't his own. Canio identifies with Pagliaccio's loneliness and heartbreak.

FUN FACT *Pagliacci* ends with a gripping play-within-a-play that ominously echoes the opera's plot. One of the theater's oldest and most effective devices, a play-within-a-play is also used to unmask a killer in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, written three centuries earlier. Shakespeare also used the idea (without the murderer) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Love's Labour's Lost*. Other examples of a play-within-a-play include Richard Strauss's opera *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical *The King and I*, and John Adams's contemporary opera *Nixon in China*.





The set of *Pagliacci*, seen during technical rehearsals
CORY WEAVER / METROPOLITAN OPERA

STEP 5: Divide students up into small groups and assign each group a commedia dell'arte scenario from the list below. Students may choose the characters they wish to play in each scenario. (Since there are many more male characters than female ones, girls may choose to play male roles.) As an alternative to the scenarios listed below, students may devise their own simple plots employing their favorite commedia characters. Give the groups ten minutes to plan how they will improvise their scenarios, then allow each group five minutes to perform.

Commedia dell'arte scenarios

1: The Old Man and the Servants (characters: Arlecchino, Pagliaccio, Pantalone)

Two servants, Arlecchino and Pagliaccio, are very hungry. But every time they are about to eat their dinner, their master Pantalone gives them a new task to complete. Arlecchino and Pagliaccio argue about how to solve their problem.

2: The Lovers (characters: Isabella, Lelio, Doctor, Pantalone)

Isabella and Lelio fall in love at first sight. But they discover that their fathers, the Doctor and Pantalone, are enemies and will never let them marry. They decide to run away together. When the Doctor and Pantalone find out, they are furious and try to figure out what to do.

3: *The Captain* (characters: Capitano, Arlecchino, Colombina)

Capitano arrives in a foreign city, heaping abuse upon his servant Arlecchino. Capitano meets lovely Colombina and brags at great length about how bravely he fought in the war, but she is not interested in him. Arlecchino decides to show Colombina the Capitano's true colors. He lets a mouse loose and the Capitano panics and runs away.

4: *Elixir of Love* (characters: Capitano, Arlecchino, Isabella, Colombina)

Capitano wants to marry Isabella, but she does not love him. He tells Arlecchino to find an elixir that makes people fall in love with the first person they see after drinking it with their eyes closed. Arlecchino agrees to get the elixir and administer it to Isabella if Capitano will let him use some of the elixir on his beloved Colombina. When Isabella drinks the elixir she opens her eyes and sees Arlecchino. When Colombina drinks the elixir she opens her eyes and sees Capitano. Capitano is furious at Arlecchino.

5: *The Doctor* (characters: Colombina, Arlecchino, Pantalone, Doctor)

Pantalone is suffering from a mysterious illness. Colombina and Arlecchino, his servants, try to cure Pantalone by using grotesque machines and nasty medicines. When their remedies fail, Pantalone sends the servants out to fetch the Doctor. Colombina cannot find the Doctor, so she returns disguised as him. Arlecchino, meanwhile, arrives with the real Doctor. The two "Doctors" compete to cure Pantalone.

FOLLOW UP: As a wrap-up discussion, explore what made for the most successful improvisations. Which sketches were truest to the original commedia dell'arte characters? Did anyone update that scenario or bring it into a contemporary setting in a particularly funny or imaginative way?

History and Social Studies

IN PREPARATION

Each student will need a copy of the synopsis of *Cavalleria* and the reproducible resources for the activity found at the back of this guide. They will also need basic information about the sociopolitical situation of southern Italy in the late 19th century and about the verismo artistic movement that grew in its wake, which may be found in the sidebars *Italy's Mezzogiorno* and *Verismo: A Portrayal of "Real Life."* You may photocopy these sidebars and assign them as homework in advance of the lesson, or read them aloud at the beginning of the class.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Social Studies, History, Music

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To consider how political, economic, and social conditions inform the subject matter, settings, themes, and perspectives of works of art
- To trace the impact of such conditions on a specific work of art
- To prompt curiosity about the interpretation of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* as seen in the *Live in HD* production

A Slice of Life: The Verismo Style

Like most revolutionary artistic and cultural movements, verismo grew out of a community as a response to its social and economic condition. *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* were among the earliest and most influential operatic manifestations of what would become a powerful literary, theatrical, and musical style. Expressing the circumstances, passions, and preoccupations of southern Italians at the turn of the 20th century, verismo both reflects the mores of its age and resonates within the culture of the century to follow. In this activity, students will explore late-19th-century Italian history and culture and how it led to the creation of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*. They will:

- explore and describe the contrasts and tensions between northern and southern Italy in the late 19th century and how these conditions gave birth to the artistic style known as verismo
- acquaint themselves with the verismo style by exploring the source material and scenes from the opera
- become familiar with some of the music in *Cavalleria Rusticana* in advance of the *Live in HD* transmission

STEPS:

In this activity, students will explore the sociopolitical climate of southern Italy and the larger world in the late 19th century and its manifestations in the arts, specifically in *Cavalleria Rusticana*. They will also take a close look at three moments in the opera and compare them to parallel scenes in its source material, Giovanni Verga's short story of the same name.

STEP 1: The historical context of *Cavalleria Rusticana* will likely be unfamiliar to most of your students. You may wish to copy and distribute in advance the sidebar *Italy's Mezzogiorno* before class begins. If not, be sure to allow a few minutes at the beginning of the lesson for students to do this background reading. Confirm the background knowledge they have gained, encourage them to apply their knowledge, and tap into their own thoughts and experiences by posing some questions, which may include the following:

- How did Italy change during the 19th century?
- How did northern and southern Italy differ economically and socially in the late 19th century, and why?
- How did the background and culture of northern and southern Italy differ?
- Do these contrasts and tensions still exist today?

If your students were southern Italian writers, musicians, or visual artists in the late 19th century, what subject matter and themes might they want to express?

Ask whether any of your students are of Italian ancestry. If so, ask them if they know when and why their forebears immigrated to North America. What were their professions and socio-economic position?

STEP 2: Distribute the sidebar *Verismo: A Portrayal of "Real Life."* If students have not read it in preparation beforehand, allow them some time to read it in class. Afterwards, ask them to name the main characteristics of verismo: earthy plots and characters, violent action, swift pace, declamatory vocalism, and colorful and emphatic orchestration. Write these on your chalkboard.

Next, encourage students to think of verismo in relation to southern Italy. How are the attributes of the Mezzogiorno (i.e. a descriptive term for southern Italy) represented in the verismo style? Why might an impoverished and troubled land provide particularly fertile material for a writer or composer drawn to verismo?



Tenor Marcelo Álvarez as Turiddu
ANNE DENIAU/METROPOLITAN OPERA

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CAV/PAG

This activity directly supports the following Social Studies/Literacy Common Core Strands:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.8

Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-12.7

Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8

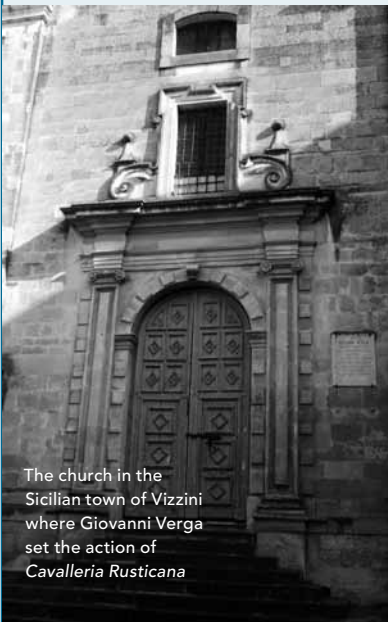
Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

Verismo: A Portrayal of “Real Life” In the prologue to *Pagliacci*, Tonio states that the author has sought to portray “uno squarcio di vita” (“a slice of life”). This description fits not only *Pagliacci*, but also verismo, the genre it helped spawn, and the flood of works that it generated. The immediate roots of verismo lie in naturalism, a late-19th-century literary movement kindled by the French novelists Gustave Flaubert and Émile Zola. After centuries of literature whose characters were drawn from the upper classes, naturalism spotlighted the common people. It strove to look at the world with an objective eye, focusing on the dark, harsh, violent side of life, often with the goal of social reform. Naturalist writers tried to realistically portray recent political, industrial, and social revolutions that had caught Europeans off guard and created an atmosphere of uncertainty and alienation, especially among the lower classes.

The French naturalist movement strongly influenced the literature of other nations, especially Italy, where the style was called verismo. Verismo brought new prominence to southern Italy, where masses of artists rose to depict the hardships of life in the Mezzogiorno. One of the major figures of Italian verismo literature was Giovanni Verga, whose short story *Cavalleria Rusticana*

(“Rustic Chivalry”) of 1880 was purportedly based on an actual event. So great was its impact that the famous actress Eleanora Duse asked Verga to dramatize it so that she could play the female lead. The resulting drama was then adapted for the operatic stage by no fewer than three different Italian composers.

Verismo permeated Italian literature, art, theatre, and film from the late 19th through the early 20th centuries, but perhaps its most lasting embodiment has been in the immensely popular operatic works of Puccini, Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and others, whose earthy plots and characters, violent action, swift pace, declamatory vocalism, and colorful and emphatic orchestration still pack opera houses. Though pure verismo was relatively short-lived and soon challenged by modernist artistic movements, many hallmarks of its style lasted well into the 20th century, most notably in Italian neorealist cinema and in American operas by such composers as Gian Carlo Menotti, Samuel Barber, and Carlisle Floyd.



The church in the Sicilian town of Vizzini where Giovanni Verga set the action of *Cavalleria Rusticana*

STEP 3: Distribute *Rustic Chivalry* (found on the reproducible handout), the short story upon which *Cavalleria Rusticana* is based. Have students take turns reading it aloud in class. Then open a discussion with them on how the story underlines or elaborates on what they have learned about southern Italian society in the late 19th century. The points to elicit include the following:

- the rural and old-fashioned way of life
- the prevalence of violence and crime
- the insularity and volatility of the community
- the importance of religion
- the prevalence of superstition
- the importance of ritual and a heightened sense of honor

You may also wish to ask them what they think the title of the short story means. Can they describe the kind of music that might best embody this story? Would it be mostly loud or soft, high or low, smooth or jagged, subtle or larger-than-life, thinly or heavily accompanied, etc.? What might the voices of each character sound like—high or low, warm or cold, rich, ringing, booming, shrill, soothing, etc.? Discuss the reasons for their choices and, if they disagree, encourage them to debate and support their choices.

STEP 4: From the reproducible resources at the back of this guide, distribute the pages containing the Italian texts and English translations for the audio selections from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, available online or on the accompanying CD. The handout provides texts for two moments in the opera, both of which display important musical traits of the verismo style. Play the selections one by one, while the students follow along and note their observations on the handout. You may want to play each selection twice, so that students can first get a general sense of the music and then listen to it more analytically. After they've heard all the selections and have had time to take notes on them, ask them to share their responses and discuss them with the class. For your convenience, a listening guide to the two tracks is provided below.

Track 3: In this duet at the midpoint of the opera, Santuzza has confronted Turiddu about his infidelity. She begs him to stay with her, but he refuses more and more adamantly. This scene displays one of verismo opera's most defining traits: the manner in which it builds dramatic tension through such devices as increasing volume, rising musical pitch, wide melodic leaps, declamatory singing, and thickening orchestration. Have your students identify each of those characteristics in this track.

You may ask your students what effect these techniques have. Why, in the most intense moments, does Mascagni have the full orchestra play in unison with the singers? Why does he repeatedly raise the key? Why does he repeat text? And why is Santuzza's last line half-sung and half-spoken?



FUN FACT: French soprano Emma Calvé made her Met debut in 1893 singing the role of Santuzza. A critic praised her performance “She is a singer of true magnetic instincts, unflinching musical taste and magnetic eloquence in pose, action and vocal utterance. Her Santuzza is a dramatic creation—a woman with hot blood in her veins, whose voice takes color from the situation, and occasionally sets one’s fingertips to tingling.”

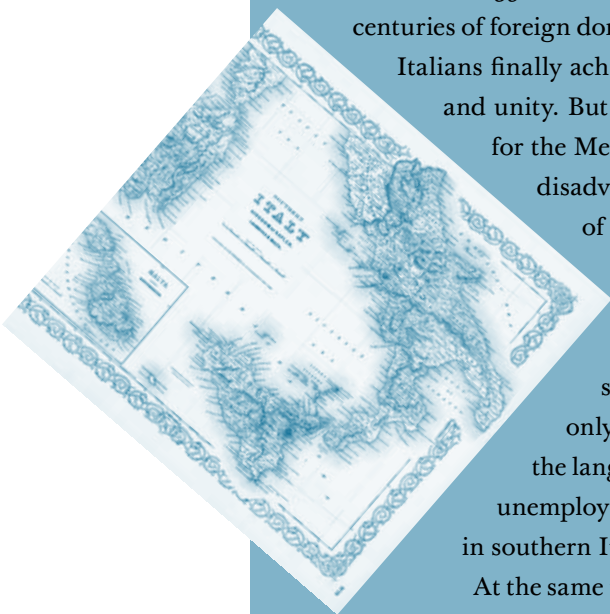
Italy's Mezzogiorno Mezzogiorno (pronounced: MEH-dzoh-JOHR-noh) literally means “midday” in Italian, but it is also the traditional name for the sunny south of Italy, encompassing the bottom portion of the familiar boot-shaped peninsula, including the regions of Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Molise, Puglia, and the two large islands of Sicily and Sardinia. Sometimes the southern and eastern parts of Lazio are included, since these areas had been, along with all the previously named regions (except Sardinia), part of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies formed by the union of the historical kingdoms of Naples and Sicily in 1816.

Between 1859 and 1870, Italy's political landscape was radically transformed. After centuries of foreign domination and division into small, often remotely-governed regions,

Italians finally achieved their long-cherished and hard-won dream of independence and unity. But the transition to the new Kingdom of Italy did not go smoothly for the Mezzogiorno. The south already suffered from longstanding natural disadvantages like steep hills and eroded topsoil which make about half of the land unfit for farming, even though agriculture had long been the region's mainstay. Wealthy landowners still controlled much of the countryside, with the peasants living and farming very small plots. Upward mobility was rare, since a weak educational system rendered many southern Italians illiterate or able to speak only regional dialects rather than the northern-leaning “King's Italian,” the language of educated professionals and politicians. As a result, poverty, unemployment, violence, and organized crime, already persistent problems in southern Italy, worsened after unification.

At the same time, northern Italy was undergoing an industrial revolution, with an explosion of new factories and railways. The growing economic divide between North and South made for a tricky political situation, with the sharply differing needs of the two regions constantly putting them at odds. The economic crises of the Mezzogiorno drove hordes of southern Italians to emigrate, particularly between 1892 and 1921, creating a worldwide southern Italian diaspora, especially in the United States and South America. Other southerners relocated to the industrial cities in northern Italy, such as Genoa, Milan, and Turin.

Even today, the South remains less economically developed than the North. Unemployment, while rising throughout the nation, has become particularly acute in the Mezzogiorno, and the continuing disparity between the wealthy North and the impoverished South remains one of Italy's most stubborn and distressing problems.



Track 4: Just before Turiddu goes off to duel with Alfio, he bids his mother goodbye in the aria “Mamma, quel vino è generoso.” He asks for her blessing and tells her to be a mother to Santuzza if he doesn’t return. This is one of the few passages in the opera which has a direct analogue in the short story on which it’s based. Ask your students to locate it and compare it with the aria.

Prompt your students with interpretive questions such as: How have Mascagni and his librettists changed and expanded this section? Why do you think they made the choices they did? Have they made this moment more realistic? Does the operatic version make us feel differently about Turiddu?

The goal of the preceding listening activity is to encourage students to begin understanding operatic numbers within the context of verismo and to think of ways in which the music and its representation are steeped in the culture of southern Italy.

STEP 5: As a final class activity or as a take-home assignment, have students apply their knowledge of how verismo grew out of the environment of southern Italy to a creative project set in the present day. As a genre which sought to shine a light on social ills and the plight of an under-represented swath of society, verismo holds the potential for a rich re-imagining inspired by contemporary culture.

Have students consider which aspects of life today they believe should be addressed in art. Are there political or social issues which they think are apt for exploration in a present-day verismo work? What might be the corollary to the under-represented groups explored in *Cavalleria Rusticana*?

Encourage students to think creatively about the most appropriate artistic medium for a proposed work of contemporary verismo. Should it be an opera or a play? A painting? A film or video game? A Twitter novel? Something else? Students should be able to justify their choices with reasons why their chosen medium fits their subject of exploration and how it is an appropriate medium for our age.

FOLLOW UP: For homework, students may compose a paragraph-long proposal outlining a new work of art, based on their imagining of contemporary verismo. They should explain its subject matter, the social issues it addresses, and the aspects of today’s society it reflects.

FUN FACT In 1940, Mascagni himself conducted the orchestra and chorus of Milan’s La Scala in a 50th-anniversary recording of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, starring the great tenor Beniamino Gigli as Turiddu. The complete performance, including Mascagni’s introductory remarks, is available on YouTube.

Music

IN PREPARATION

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

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Music, Theater, English Language Arts, Humanities, and Arts

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To introduce and/or reinforce knowledge of musical terminology
- To hone careful listening skills by examining musical themes and their development in selections from *Pagliacci*
- To practice aural recognition and memory

Musical Passions and Pathologies

As one of the prime examples of verismo opera, *Pagliacci* features a style of vocal writing expressly designed to amplify the “true-to-life” character of its story. Leoncavallo crafts musical themes that reflect the action’s all-consuming passion and violence, weaving them throughout the score as evocative and sometimes menacing allusions. This activity is designed to help students break down the different dramatic and musical elements at work within the opera and tease out the different layers of raw emotion and human experience portrayed through the music. In the following lesson, students will:

- explore the function of recurring musical themes in a work
- get acquainted with the primary musical themes associated with the characters of Leoncavallo’s *Pagliacci* and be able to recognize each theme within a larger musical excerpt
- apply new terminology to describe the musical fabric of each theme

STEPS

The prologue to *Pagliacci* acts as a musical introduction to various themes that will recur throughout the opera and that are associated with specific characters. The prologue is sung by Tonio, who is dressed as the commedia dell’arte character, Taddeo, whom he will portray later in the play-within-a-play.

In this activity, students will learn new musical terminology, investigate important musical themes from *Pagliacci*, and study the prologue in order to discern thematic material. The exercise aims to encourage students to develop musical recognition and improve their aural skills.

Part 1: The Primary Musical Themes of Pagliacci

STEP 1: Distribute copies of the *Ten Essential Musical Terms* found in this guide. Have your students review it as a pre-lesson assignment or at the beginning of the class. If your students already know most of these terms, then feel free to jump right into the exercise after a quick review. It will also be helpful to provide a summary of the plot of *Pagliacci* so that students are familiar with the main dramatic points of the story.

STEP 2: Distribute the *Musical Passions and Pathologies* reproducible handout. Using the handout as a guide, listen to each musical theme as a class. The first time students hear each excerpt, ask them to follow along to the notated music on the handout. After students have heard an excerpt once, have them (either individually or in groups) craft written descriptions of the theme using Part 1 of the reproducible, including notes on the most prominent instrument(s). Students may need to listen to each excerpt several times. A Teacher’s Guide is provided on the following page.

TEACHER'S GUIDE TO PRIMARY MUSICAL THEMES

TRACK 5: Acting Troupe Theme

STRINGS AND WOODWINDS: In quick triple meter, a lively call and response between chords in the lower strings and a rapid run in the woodwinds



TRACK 6: Canio's Lament Theme

HORNS: A melancholy melody depicting sighing or lamenting, with unresolved dissonances against the minor-mode accompaniment.



TRACK 7: Love Theme

VIOLINS: A sweeping legato melody with major harmonies and a romantic feeling played by the violins.



TRACK 8: Revenge Theme

CELLO: A chromatic melody line played by solo cello; without a clear tonal center, it has a foreboding and sinister quality.



TRACK 9: Tragic Clown Theme

TENOR VOICE, ENGLISH HORN, BASSOON, AND CLARINET: The descending, dissonant melody line, against pulsating bass instruments, creates a feeling of tragedy and pathos.



Note: This is the opening phrase of the best-known aria in the opera, in which Canio laments how he must put on his costume and face paint to play the part of a clown, while his heart is breaking.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CAV/PAG

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.2

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.5

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

Part 2: Musical Themes and Dramatic Foreshadowing

STEP 3: Now that students are familiar with the five main musical themes, it is time to have them apply their knowledge of each theme to a larger musical context. If you have not done so already, review the concept and function of a prologue in a piece of dramatic theater, drawing on the definition found in the *Ten Essential Musical Terms*.

STEP 4: Turn to the libretto and translation for the prologue, found in the reproducible handouts for this activity, and divide the class into groups. Have the groups read through the libretto translation together and discuss the different aspects of the plot that Tonio alludes to.

STEP 5: As a class, listen to **Track 10**, which contains the entire prologue from start to finish, including the orchestral introduction and conclusion. While they are listening, instruct students to make notes on their worksheet of every appearance of the musical themes. It will be easiest for them to circle lines of the libretto and use numbers or similar symbols to indicate which theme they hear. Students may require several rounds of listening before they are able to discern the themes. You may use the Teacher's Guide on the following page as you work through the musical example.



Enrico Caruso

The Tears of a Clown Even to those unacquainted with *Pagliacci* or with opera at all, the figure of the sad clown in baggy white garments and a floppy cap is an easily recognizable and enduringly evocative image: the pathetic comic who must go on with the show despite his personal sorrows. Frequently referenced in popular culture, this powdery-faced clown is an avatar of Pierrot or Pagliaccio, one of the servant characters of commedia dell'arte, who figures so importantly in the opera *Pagliacci*. It is in the form of Canio in *Pagliacci* that the sad clown has become a cultural icon. He is evoked in the Marx Brothers' film *A Night at the Opera*, in Smokey Robinson's song "Tears of a Clown" and Queen's "It's a Hard Life," and in episodes of *Seinfeld* and *The Simpsons*, to name just a few references. Spoofs of Canio's famous aria "Vesti la giubba" are legion, perhaps the most memorable being the 1969 television commercial in which a beleaguered man wails "No more Rice Krispies!" to the familiar tune of "Ridi, Pagliaccio."

TEACHER'S GUIDE TO THE PROLOGUE

	LIBRETTO	MAIN INSTRUMENTS AND MUSICAL DESCRIPTION
	Orchestral Introduction	
The Acting Troupe Theme	.....	<i>Strings, woodwinds</i>
Canio's Lament Theme	.....	<i>French horns</i>
Love Theme	.....	<i>Violins</i>
Revenge Theme	.....	<i>Solo Cellos</i>
The Acting Troupe Theme	.....	<i>Strings, woodwinds</i>
	<p>Si può? Si può?</p> <p>Signore! Signori! Scusatemi</p> <p>se da sol mi presento.</p> <p>Io sono il Prologo.</p> <p>Poiché in scena ancor le antiche maschere</p> <p>mette l'autore, in parte ei vuol riprendere</p> <p>le vecchie usanze, e a voi di nuovo inviami.</p>	
Acting Troupe Theme Fragments	<p>Ma non per dirvi come pria: "Le lacrime</p> <p>che noi versiam son false! Degli spasimi</p> <p>e de' nostri martir non allarmatevi"</p> <p>No! L'autore ha cercato invece pingervi</p> <p>uno squarcio di vita. Egli ha per massima</p> <p>sol che l'artista è un uomo e che gli uomini</p> <p>scrivere ei deve. Ed al vero ispiravasi.</p>	<p><i>Cellos play the dotted rhythm;</i></p> <p><i>violins play fragments of the rising scale.</i></p> <p><i>Both are pianissimo.</i></p>
Tragic Clown Theme	<p>Un nido di memorie In fondo a l'anima</p> <p>cantava un giorno,</p> <p>ed ei con vere lacrime</p> <p>scrisse, e i singhiozzi il tempo gli battevano!</p>	<p><i>The vocal line contains the theme,</i></p> <p><i>but with a lowered second note.</i></p>
Love Theme	<p>Dunque, vedrete amar sì come s'amano</p> <p>gli esseri umani;</p>	<p><i>Strings begin the theme, which is</i></p> <p><i>picked up by the voice.</i></p>
Revenge Theme	<p>vedrete de l'odio</p> <p>i tristi frutti. Del dolor gli spasimi,</p> <p>urli di rabbia, udrete, e risa ciniche!</p> <p>E voi, piuttosto che le nostre povere</p> <p>gabbane d'istrioni, le nostr'anime</p> <p>considerate, poichè siam uomini</p> <p>di carne e d'ossa, e che di quest'orfano</p> <p>mondo al pari di voi spiriamo l'aere!</p> <p>Il concetto vi dissi... Or ascoltate</p> <p>com'egli è svolto.</p> <p>Andiam. Incominciate!</p>	<p><i>Unison strings state</i></p> <p><i>the revenge theme in</i></p> <p><i>counterpoint to the voice.</i></p>
	Closing orchestral section	
Acting Troupe Theme	.....	<i>Strings, woodwinds</i>

Ten Essential Musical Terms

The following list of terms provides basic vocabulary to help your students engage more deeply with the music of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*.

Accent and **articulation** A musical accent refers to the prominence given to a note by a change in volume, duration, or attack. Articulation is a related term that describes the amount of separation between notes, on a range from short and detached (“staccato”) to connected (“legato”). To indicate which note should receive an accent, a composer notates an accent symbol above the note. There are many different kinds of accents in music—for example, “marcato” indicates that a note should be “marked” or stressed; “martellato” or “martelé” indicates a “hammered style” both loud and short, and “tenuto” indicates that a note should be sustained for its full length.

Cadence Also called “resolution,” a cadence is the musical equivalent of a period at the end of a sentence. It provides closure, resolves dissonance, and reaffirms the key of a phrase, formal section, or composition as a whole. Cadences can also be deceptive, interrupted, or delayed, all of which thwart the expectation of the listener and frustrate the harmonic resolution. In later 19th-century opera, full cadences are successively delayed for longer and longer periods of time, and the music only achieves ultimate resolution at the very close of the opera.

Dissonance Two or more notes that are perceived to be in discord. Dissonance feels unstable to the listener and calls for harmonic resolution.

Major and minor Western music written since around 1600 has been built on two basic tonal principles: major and minor. Although the terms can be used to describe scales, intervals, harmonies, or keys, in their most basic application they refer to the overarching tonal organization of a composition, or its mode. Pieces in the major mode typically sound bright, cheery, or optimistic, while pieces in the minor mode may sound somber, plaintive, or sinister. Music in the major mode in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* is often celebratory and carefree, romantic or passionate. Conversely, music in the minor mode in the operas is often dramatic, heartbreaking, angry, or foreboding. For example, Canio’s lament theme is based on minor harmonies, while

Nedda and Silvio’s love theme is based on major harmonies.

Phrase A phrase is a self-contained unit of music, comprised of melody and harmony, that ends with a cadence. A phrase is usually several musical bars long. It has a sense of coherence within itself, but also combines with adjacent phrases into a larger whole. The term is borrowed from the analogous linguistic concept.

Prologue A prologue is an introductory scene prior to the formal start of an opera or drama. Sometimes with an actor addressing the audience directly, it serves to introduce the action to come, to provide background information necessary for understanding the story, to elaborate on the philosophical intent of the work, or even to praise a patron from the stage. In the prologue to *Pagliacci*, the character Tonio informs the audience that what they are about to see is a story drawn from “real life” and that the players on the stage are “flesh and bone,” possessing the same capacity as the audience to love, hurt, and hate. In this way, *Pagliacci*’s prologue firmly situates the opera within the verismo aesthetic.

Recitative A term with far-reaching significance across the history of opera, recitative refers to a type of vocal utterance that can be characterized as song-speech. It is derived from the Italian verb that translates as “to recite” and is meant to capture the gestures of the spoken word. Recitative is understood in contrast to the more tuneful and reflective mode of arias and ensemble pieces, in which texts are often repeated. Recitative may be sung against a very basic harmonic structure, with accompaniment provided by a single keyboard or bass instrument, in which case it is called “secco,” or “dry.” As opera developed over the course of the 19th century, recitative accompaniment became more colorful and was enriched by the addition of the orchestra (this is sometimes called “recitativo accompagnato”). In time, the strict division between recitative and aria became blurred as composers sought to capture a more naturalistic and dramatic style of vocal delivery. In the prologue to *Pagliacci*, there are a few instances of recitativo accompagnato that flow seamlessly

from the more tuneful melodic material surrounding them.

Stage directions While not technically a musical term, stage directions are nevertheless an important concept in opera, especially in the verismo genre. The term refers to scenic instructions written into the score by the composer that indicate physical movements to accompany the music. As composers of verismo operas sought to imbue their music with heightened emotion and realism, they began to provide specific physical and interpretive directions in the score. For example, when Canio stabs Nedda at the end of *Pagliacci*, Leoncavallo indicates through stage directions that the physical gesture should coincide with his words “take that.”

Tempo Literally “time” in Italian, the term refers to the speed of a given piece of music. Tempo is indicated in a score by a variety of conventional (and typically Italian) words—allegro, adagio, vivace, moderato, grave, and many more—that not only provide direction on the composer’s desired rate of speed, but also carry associations of gesture and character. For instance, vivace indicates not only a brisk rate of speed but also a lively spirit. There are also additional tempo markings that indicate when a composer wants a section of music to speed up (such as “accelerando”) or slow down (such as “rallentando”).

Verismo A movement in Italian theater and opera in the late 19th century that embraced realism and explored areas of society previously ignored on the stage: the poor, the lower-class, and the criminal. Its characters are driven by passion to defy reason, morality, and the law. In order to reflect these emotional extremes, composers of verismo opera developed a musical style that communicates raw and unfiltered passions. For instance, in “Vesti la giubba,” as Canio is consumed by rage and self-loathing after learning that his wife has been unfaithful, his vocal lines emulate both sobs of despair and hysterical laughter. Before its exploration on the operatic stage, the verismo aesthetic first developed within the realm of literature.

STEP 6: Leoncavallo was very deliberate in pairing the musical themes with lines of text in the prologue in order to add an additional layer of meaning. As a conclusion to this part of the lesson, discuss as a class which aspects of the plot Leoncavallo might have been foreshadowing when choosing which themes enter at specific times in the prologue.

Part 3 – Testing Thematic Knowledge

To test students’ memory of the musical themes, this final part of the lesson is a simple listening quiz based on the five musical themes students have learned.

STEP 7: Have students turn to the “Testing Thematic Knowledge” quiz on the reproducible handout. With their completed *Musical Passions and Pathologies* handouts in front of them, play the tracks in the chart below and have students write down which musical theme (or themes) they hear in each track. For a more difficult version, have students turn over their handouts and complete the quiz entirely by memory. The tracks in the quiz are taken from a variety of scenes throughout the opera; if students can successfully identify the themes in this exercise, they will be well equipped to track the themes’ appearances throughout the opera at the *Live in HD* transmission.

TRACK #	MUSICAL THEME(S)
1 Track 11	Love Theme
2 Track 12	Revenge Theme
3 Track 13	Acting Troupe Theme
4 Track 14	Canio’s Lament Theme AND Tragic Clown Theme
5 Track 15	Love Theme
6 Track 16	Revenge Theme AND Canio’s Lament Theme

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

IN PREPARATION

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

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CAV/PAG

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

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

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.6

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

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

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

The production of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* that students will hear and see in this *Live in HD* transmission reflects the director's and designers' efforts to underline the similarities of dramatic theme, musical style, and geographic setting between the two short operas, while at the same time contrasting the darkness and traditionalism of *Cavalleria Rusticana* with the relative color and modernity of *Pagliacci*. They have achieved this, in part, by setting both operas in the same Sicilian village but in two very different periods, 1900 and 1948. The first activity sheet, called *Visualizing Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci*, is meant to be completed during the intermission and after having seen *Cavalleria*. It challenges students to imagine how the director and designers—and how they themselves—might convey the contrasts in the two operas through the means of sets, costumes, lighting design, and staging.

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

The activity handouts can be found in the back of this guide. Either activity can provide the basis for class discussion after the transmission. On the next page, you'll find an additional activity created specifically for after-transmission follow-up.

The Trials of Alfio and Canio: Moral and Legal Issues

Students will enjoy starting the class with an open discussion of the Met performance. What did they like? What didn't they like? Did anything surprise them? What would they like to see or hear again? What would they have done differently? The discussion offers an opportunity to apply the notes on students' *My Highs and Lows* sheet, as well as their thoughts about the visual design of the Met production—in short, to see themselves as experts on *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*.

Cavalleria Rusticana and *Pagliacci* have the tone and impact of fast-moving popular thrillers. But the moral questions they leave in their wake are not as cut-and-dried as they may seem. Both operas portray the dangerous effects and deadly consequences of infidelity and jealousy, yet both reveal sympathetic sides of the killers. Students will often display surprisingly diverse and complex reactions to an opera's plot and characters, based on their own personal views and life experiences. Their feelings about *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* may be particularly strong due to the immediacy of their stories, characters and settings, particularly in the Met's new production, which draws the action of *Pagliacci* closer to the present day.

Mock trials provide an engaging and instructive way for your students to process their reactions to these works. Divide your class into a *Cavalleria Rusticana* group and a *Pagliacci* group. Let each group choose a prosecutorial team and a defense team. Other students may serve as the two defendants and as witnesses and jury members. The role of the judge may be assigned to a student particularly interested in law, or perhaps might be taken by a civics teacher or a parent or visitor who is in the legal profession.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF DUELING In Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Alfio challenges Turridu to a one-on-one fight after he learns of his wife's infidelity. They agree to meet outside the village. Their actions—the formal challenge, the physical gesture of biting the ear, the pre-arrangement of a time and place—correspond to the centuries-old tradition of dueling. From at least the early Middle Ages, duels had been common throughout Europe and later in the Americas as a method for settling disagreements and satisfying affronts. By the 16th century, they had become so prevalent that governments resorted to passing the first laws prohibiting duels. Despite this, the practice survived well into the 19th century. It has been immortalized in a number of operas: besides *Cavalleria Rusticana*, duels are crucial to the plots of Verdi's *Il Trovatore* and *La Forza del Destino*, as well as Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*.

IN PREPARATION

This activity requires no preparation other than attendance at the *Live in HD* transmission of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To review and synthesize students' understanding of *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*
- To apply what students have learned about the verismo style in music and drama, its influence on the arts, and its historical context
- To explore how music affects dramatization
- To discuss their overall experience in watching *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*
- To think about how artistic choices are made

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CAV/PAG

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-12.1d

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

Give the prosecutors, defense attorneys, and defendants time to plan their strategies based on evidence gathered from the operas. Arguments can be fashioned, including alternative ways to understand each turn of the story. Different characters' points of view can be taken into account. Based on the evidence assembled, the Mock Trials should explore and answer questions including, but not limited to, the following:

- What motivated Canio and Alfio to kill?
- Should they be pronounced guilty or not? Should they be charged with first or second degree murder, or voluntary manslaughter? Should they be pronounced not guilty by reason of insanity? Or should they be acquitted? What evidence and testimony can be presented in support of each sentence? It may be helpful to refer to the sidebar *A Brief History of Dueling*.
- If they are convicted, what sentences would be fitting punishments for them?

Your mock trials may be quite informal, with basic regulations devised by the students. For a more authentic trial experience, some helpful teacher resources for staging a mock trial have been prepared by the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education and by the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit Court of Lake County, both available online.

By conducting mock trials, students may better understand, articulate, and engage with the moral and legal issues raised by *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, practice flexible, critical thinking, and sharpen their skills of persuasion and logical argument.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Life Imitates Art: Commedia dell'arte

- 1 Pagliacci: "Un tal gioco"
- 2 Pagliacci: "Recitar/Vesti la giubba"

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

'A Slice of Life': The Verismo Style

- 3 Cavalleria Rusticana: "Ah! Lo vedi"
- 4 Cavalleria Rusticana: "Mamma, quel vino è generoso"

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: MUSIC

Musical Passions and Pathologies

- 5 Acting Troupe Theme
- 6 Canio's Lament Theme
- 7 Love Theme
- 8 Revenge Theme
- 9 Tragic Clown Theme
- 10 Prologue
- 11 Quiz: Love Theme
- 12 Quiz: Revenge Theme
- 13 Quiz: Acting Troupe Theme
- 14 Quiz: Canio's Lament and Tragic Clown Themes
- 15 Quiz: Love Theme
- 16 Quiz: Revenge Theme and Canio's Lament Theme

Excerpts taken from the
Metropolitan Opera broadcast of
January 22, 2000

Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana*

SANTUZZA

Dolora Zajick

TURRIDU

Fabio Armiliato

LOLA

Victoria Livengood

ALFIO

Kim Josephson

MAMMA LUCIA

Jane Shaulis

Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci*

NEDDA

Veronica Villarroel

CANIO

Dennis O'Neill

TONIO

Juan Pons

SILVIO

Dwayne Croft

BEPPE

Charles Castronovo

Conducted by Steven Crawford

Metropolitan Opera
Orchestra and Chorus

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Life Imitates Art: Commedia dell'Arte

Commedia dell'Arte Brainstorm

Source _____ Character from commedia dell'arte _____

Characteristics _____

Source _____ Character from commedia dell'arte _____

Characteristics _____

Source _____ Character from commedia dell'arte _____

Characteristics _____

Source _____ Character from commedia dell'arte _____

Characteristics _____

Source _____ Character from commedia dell'arte _____

Characteristics _____

Source _____ Character from commedia dell'arte _____

Characteristics _____

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Life Imitates Art: Commedia dell'Arte (CONTINUED)

Two Arias from *Pagliacci*

In each of these excerpts, the character of Canio comments on theater and its relationship to real life. While you listen and follow the texts below, identify and circle each of his references to *commedia dell'arte*.

EXAMPLE 1: "UN TAL GIOCO"

In this brief solo, Canio threateningly warns the villagers not to joke about his wife's fidelity.

TRACK 1

CANIO: Un tal gioco, credetemi,
è meglio non giocarlo con me, miei cari;
e a Tonio... e un poco a tutti or parlo!
Il teatro e la vita non son la stessa cosa;
no... non son la stessa cosa!

E se lassù Pagliaccio
sorprende la sua sposa
col bel galante in camera,
fa un comico sermone,
poi si calma
od arrendesi ai colpi di bastone!
Ed il pubblico applaude, ridendo allegramente!

Ma se Nedda sul serio sorprendessi...
altramente finirebbe la storia,
com'è ver che vi parlo!
Un tal gioco, credetemi,
è meglio non giocarlo!

It's not such a good idea, believe me,
to play a trick on me, my friends;
and I speak now to Tonio and indeed to everyone.
The stage and life are not the same thing;
no... not at all the same thing!

Up there on stage, when Pagliaccio discovers
his wife with a handsome
young man in her room,
he recites some funny lines,
then calms down, and allows himself
to be beaten with a stick!
And the audience applauds and laughs happily.

But if I should ever really find Nedda...
the story would end differently,
and that is the truth!
It's not such a good idea, believe me,
to play a trick on me!

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Life Imitates Art: Commedia dell'Arte (CONTINUED)

EXAMPLE 2: "VESTI LA GIUBBA"

In this famous aria, Canio comments on the irony of a commedia actor's life: he must put on his make-up and costume and make audiences laugh even if his heart is breaking.

TRACK 2

CANIO: Recitar! Mentre presso dal delirio
non so più quel che dico e quel che faccio!
Eppur è d'uopo... sforzati!
Bah! sei tu forse un uom?
Tu se' Pagliaccio!

Vesti la giubba e la faccia infarina.
La gente paga e rider vuole qua.
E se Arlecchin t'invola Colombina,
ridi, Pagliaccio... e ognun applaudirà!
Tramuta in lazzi lo spasmo ed il pianto;
in una smorfia il singhiozzo e'l dolor.
Ridi, Pagliaccio, sul tuo amore in franto!
Ridi del duol che t'avvelena il cor!

Go on stage! Even though I am going out of my mind
and no longer know what I'm saying or doing!
And yet I must! Force yourself!
Bah, are you even a man?
You're a clown!

Put on your costume and powder your face.
The audience has paid and wants to laugh.
And when Arlecchino steals Colombina from you,
laugh, clown... and everyone will applaud!
Turn your tragedy into a comedy,
your sobs and grief into a smile.
Laugh, clown, at your broken love!
Laugh at the pain which poisons your heart!

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

"A Slice of Life": The Verismo Style

Cavalleria Rusticana by Giovanni Verga (1880)

Turiddu Macca, *gnà** Nunzia's son, after returning from the army, used every Sunday to strut like a peacock through the square in his bersegliere uniform and red cap, looking like the fortune-teller as he sets up his stand with his cage of canaries. The girls on their way to Mass gave stolen glances at him from behind their mantellinas, and the urchins buzzed round him like flies.

He had brought back with him, also, a pipe with the king on horseback carved so naturally that it seemed actually alive, and he scratched his matches on the seat of his trousers, lifting his leg as if he were going to give a kick.

But in spite of all this, Lola, the daughter of *massaro* Angelo, had not shown herself
 10 either at Mass or on the balcony, for the reason that she was going to wed a man from Licodia, a carter who had four Sortino mules in his stable.

At first, when Turiddu heard about it, *santo diavolone!* he threatened to disembowel him, threatened to kill him—that fellow from Licodia! But he did nothing of the sort; he contented himself with going under the fair one's window, and singing all the spiteful songs he knew.

"Has *gnà* Nunzia's Turiddu nothing else to do," asked the neighbors, "except spending his nights singing like a lone sparrow?"

At length, he met Lola on her way back from the pilgrimage to the Madonna del Pericolo, and when she saw him, she turned neither red nor white, just as if it were none
 20 of her affair at all.

"Oh, *compare** Turiddu, I was told that you returned the first of the month."

"But I have been told of something quite different!" replied the other. "Is it true that you are to marry *compare* Alfio, the carter?"

"Such is God's will," replied Lola, drawing the two ends of her handkerchief under her chin.

"God's will in your case is done with a snap and a spring; to suit yourself! And it was God's will, was it, that I should return from so far to find this fine state of things, *gnà* Lola!"

The poor fellow still tried to bluster, but his voice grew hoarse, and he followed the
 30 girl, tossing his head so that the tassel of his cap swung from side to side on his shoulders. To tell the truth, she felt really sorry to see him wearing such a long face, but she had not the heart to deceive him with fine speeches.

"Listen, *compare* Turiddu," she said to him at last, "Let me join my friends. What would be said in town if I were seen with you?"

* The words "*gnà*" (pronounced nyah) and "*compare*" (com-PAH-reh) are forms of address, corresponding to "Mrs." and "Brother"

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

"A Slice of Life": The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

"You are right," replied Turiddu, "Now that you are going to marry *compare* Alfio, who has four mules in his stable, it is best not to let people's tongues wag about you. But my mother, poor soul, was obliged to sell our bay mule, and that little plot of vineyard on the highway while I was off in the army. The time 'when Berta spun,' is over and gone, and you no longer think of the time when we used to talk together from the window
 40 looking into the yard, and you gave me that handkerchief before I went away, and God knows how many tears I shed into it at going so far that even the name of our place is lost! So good-by, *gnà* Lola,—Let's pretend it's rained and cleared off, and our friendship is ended."

Gnà Lola married the carter, and on Sundays used to go out on the balcony with her hands crossed on her stomach, to show off all the heavy gold rings that her husband gave to her. Turiddu kept up his habit of going back and forth through the street with his pipe in his mouth, his hands in his pockets, and an air of unconcern, and ogling the girls; but it gnawed his heart that Lola's husband had so much money, and that she pretended not to see him when he passed.

50 "I'll get even with her, under her very eyes; the vile beast," he muttered.

Opposite *compare* Alfio lived *massaro* Cola, the vinedresser, who was as rich as a pig, and had one daughter at home. Turiddu said and did all he could to become *massaro* Cola's workman, and he began to frequent the house, and make sweet speeches to the girl.

"Why don't you go and say sweet things to *gnà* Lola?" asked Santa.

"*Gnà* Lola is a fine lady. *Gnà* Lola has married a crowned king now!"

"I don't deserve crowned kings!"

"You are worth a hundred Lolas, and I know someone who wouldn't look at *la gnà* Lola or her saint when you are by, for *gnà* Lola isn't worthy to wear your shoes, no, she isn't!"
 60

"The fox when he couldn't get at the grapes said, 'How beautiful you are, *racinedda mia*,' my little grape!"

"Ohè! hands off, *compare* Turiddu!"

"Are you afraid that I will eat you?"

"I'm not afraid of you or of your God."

"Eh! your mother was from Licodia, we all know that! You have quarrelsome blood. Uh! How I could eat you with my eyes!"

"Eat me then with your eyes, for we should not have a crumb left, but meantime help me up with this bundle."

70 "I would lift up the whole house for you, yes, I would!"

She, so as not to blush, threw at him a stick of wood which was within reach, and by a miracle didn't hit him.

"Let's have done, for chattering never picked grapes."

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

“A Slice of Life”: The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

“If I were rich I should try to get a wife like you, *gnà* Santa.”

“I shall never marry a crowned king like *gnà* Lola, but I have my dowry as well as she, whenever the Lord shall send me anyone.”

“We know you are rich, we know it.”

“If you know it, say no more, for father is coming, and I shouldn’t like to have him find me in the court-yard.”

80 The old father began to turn up his nose, but the girl pretended not to notice it, because the tassel of the bersegliere’s cap had set her heart to fluttering, and was constantly dancing before her eyes. When the *babbo* put Turiddu out of the house, his daughter opened the window for him, and stood chatting with him all the evening long, so that the whole neighborhood talked of nothing else.

“I’m madly in love with you,” said Turiddu, “and I am losing my sleep and my appetite.”

“How absurd!”

“I wish I were Victor Emmanuel’s son, so as to marry you.”

90 “How absurd!”

“By the Madonna, I would eat you like bread!”

“How absurd!”

“Ah! on my honor!”

“Ah! *mamma mia!*”

Lola, who was listening every evening, hidden behind the vase of basil, and turning red and white, one day called Turiddu:—

“And so, *compare* Turiddu, old friends don’t speak to each other anymore?”

“*Ma!*” sighed the young man, “blessed is he who can speak to you.”

“If you have any desire to speak to me, you know where I live,” replied Lola.

100 Turiddu went to see her so frequently that Santa noticed it, and shut the window in his face. The neighbors looked at him with a smile or with a shake of the head when the bersegliere passed. Lola’s husband was making a round of the fairs with his mules.

“Sunday I am going to confession, for last night I dreamed of black grapes,” said Lola.

“Put it off, put it off” begged Turiddu.

“No, Easter is coming, and my husband will want to know why I haven’t been to confession.”

110 “Ah,” murmured *massaro* Cola’s Santa, as she was waiting on her knees before the confessional for her turn, while Lola was making a clean breast of her sins. “On my soul, I will not send you to Rome for your punishment!”

Compare Alfio came home with his mules; he was loaded with money, and he brought to his wife for a present, a handsome new dress for the holidays.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

"A Slice of Life": The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

"You are right to bring her gifts," said his neighbor Santa, "because while you are away your wife adorns your house for you."

Compare Alfio was one of those carters who wear their hats over one ear, and when he heard his wife spoken of in such a way he changed color as if he had been knifed.

"*Santo diavolone!*" he exclaimed, "if you haven't seen aright, I will not leave you eyes to weep with, you or your whole family."

"I am not used to weeping!" replied Santa, "I did not weep even when I saw with
120 these eyes *gnà* Nunzia's Turiddu going into your wife's house at night!"

"It is well," replied *compare* Alfio, "many thanks!"

Turiddu, now that the cat was at home, no longer went out on the street by day, and he whiled away the tedium at the inn with his friends; and on Easter eve they had on the table a dish of sausages.

When *compare* Alfio came in, Turiddu realized, merely by the way in which he fixed his eyes on him, that he had come to settle that affair, and he laid his fork on the plate.

"Have you any commands for me, *compare* Alfio?" he asked.

"No favors to ask, *compare* Turiddu; it's some time since I have seen you, and I wanted to speak concerning something you know about."

130 Turiddu at first had offered him a glass, but *compare* Alfio refused it with a wave of his hand. Then Turiddu got up and said to him,—

"Here I am, *compare* Alfio."

The carter threw his arms around his neck.

"If tomorrow morning you will come to the prickly pears of la Canziria, we can talk that matter over, *compare*."

"Wait for me on the street at daybreak, and we will go together."

With these words they exchanged the kiss of defiance. Turiddu bit the carter's ear, and thus made the solemn oath not to fail him.

The friends had silently left the sausages, and accompanied Turiddu to his home.
140 *Gnà* Nunzia, poor creature, waited for him till late every evening.

"Mamma," said Turiddu, "do you remember when I went as a soldier, that you thought I should never come back any more? Give me a good kiss as you did then, for tomorrow morning I am going far away."

Before daybreak he got his spring-knife, which he had hidden under the hay, when he had gone to serve his time in the army, and started for the prickly-pear trees of la Canziria.

"Oh, Gesummaria! where are you going in such haste!" cried Lola in great apprehension, while her husband was getting ready to go out.

150 "I am not going far," replied *compare* Alfio. "But it would be better for you if I never came back."

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

"A Slice of Life": The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

Lola in her nightdress was praying at the foot of the bed, and pressing to her lips the rosary which Fra Bernardino had brought to her from the Holy places, and reciting all the Ave Marias that she could say.

"*Compare* Alfio," began Turiddu, after he had gone a little distance by the side of his companion, who walked in silence with his cap down over his eyes, "as God is true I know that I have done wrong, and I should let myself be killed. But before I came out, I saw my old mother, who got up to see me off, under the pretence of tending the hens.
160 Her heart had a presentiment, and as the Lord is true, I will kill you like a dog, so that my poor old mother may not weep."

"All right," replied *compare* Alfio, stripping off his waistcoat. "Then we will both of us hit hard."

Both of them were skilful fencers. Turiddu was first struck, and was quick enough to receive it in the arm. When he returned it, he returned it well, and wounded the other in the groin.

"Ah, *compare* Turiddu! so you really intend to kill me, do you?"

"Yes, I gave you fair warning; since I saw my old mother in the hen-yard, it seems to me I have her all the time before my eyes."

170 "Keep them well open, those eyes of yours," cried *compare* Alfio, "for I am going to give you back good measure."

As he stood on guard, all doubled up, so as to keep his left hand on his wound, which pained him, and almost trailing his elbow on the ground, he swiftly picked up a handful of dust, and flung it into his adversary's eyes.

"Ah!" screamed Turiddu, blinded, "I am dead."

He tried to save himself, by making desperate leaps backwards, but *compare* Alfio overtook him with another thrust in the stomach, and a third in the throat.

"And that makes three! That is for the house which you have adorned for me! Now your mother will let the hens alone."

180 Turiddu staggered a short distance among the prickly pears, and then fell like a stone. The blood foaming, gurgled in his throat, and he could not even cry, "*Ah! mamma mia!*"

Nathan Haskell Dole, Translator

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

"A Slice of Life": The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

EXAMPLE 1: DUET OF SANTUZZA AND TURIDDU

This musical number is a great example of one of verismo opera's most defining traits: the manner in which it builds dramatic tension through such devices as increasing volume, rising musical pitch, wide melodic leaps, declamatory singing, and thickening orchestration. As you listen to this excerpt, pay attention to these characteristics and mark where they occur in the text below.

TRACK 3

TURIDDU: (*angrily*) Ah! Lo vedi, che hai tu detto?

SANTUZZA: L'hai voluto, e ben ti sta.

TURIDDU: (*rushing forward*) Ah! perdio!

SANTUZZA: Squarciami il petto!

TURIDDU: (*getting a grip on himself*) No!

SANTUZZA: (*holding him back*) Turiddu, ascolta!

TURIDDU: No!

SANTUZZA: No, no, Turiddu, rimani ancora.
Abbandonarmi dunque tu vuoi?

TURIDDU: Perché seguirmi, perché spiarmi
sul limitare fin della chiesa?

SANTUZZA: La tua Santuzza piange e t'implora;
come cacciarla così tu puoi?

TURIDDU: Va, ti ripeto. Va non tediarmi.
Pentirsi è vano dopo l'offesa!

SANTUZZA: (*threateningly*) Bada!

TURIDDU: Dell'ira tua non mi curo!
(*He throws her to the ground and flees into the church.*)

SANTUZZA: (*overcome with rage*) A te la mala Pasqua, spergiuoro!
(*She falls, broken-hearted.*)

Ah, you see? What did you say?

It's the way you wanted it, so that's the way it is.

Ah! By Heaven!

Tear my heart out!

No!

Turiddu, listen!

Go away!

No, no! Turiddu, stay with me awhile.
Are you just trying to leave me?

Why do you stalk me? Why do you spy on me,
up to the very doors of the church?

Your Santuzza weeps and pleads with you;
how can you drive her away like this?

Go away, I say. Go away and do not bother me;
It's useless to regret now the wrong you have done.

Beware!

Your anger means nothing to me!

May your Easter be cursed, you liar!

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/PAGLIACCI

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

"A Slice of Life": The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

What effect do these musical techniques have?

How do they relate to the words?

Why does Mascagni have the full orchestra play along with the singers' melody at the most intense moments?

Why does he repeatedly raise the key?

Why do you think he repeats text?

Is Santuzza's last line surprising? Why? Is it effective?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

“A Slice of Life”: The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

EXAMPLE 2: “MAMMA, QUEL VINO È GENEROSO”

This aria marks one of the few passages in *Cavalleria Rusticana* with a direct analogue in the story on which it's based. Refer to the short story and compare it with the aria.

TRACK 4

TURIDDU: Mamma, quel vino è generoso,
e certo oggi troppi bicchieri ne ho tracannati.
Vado fuori all'aperto.

Ma prima voglio che mi benedite
come quel giorno che partii soldato.
E poi... mamma...
sentite... s'io... non tornassi...
voi dovrete fare da madre a Santa,
ch'io le avea giurato di condurla all'altare.

LUCIA: Perché parli così, figliuol mio?

TURIDDU: Oh! Nulla! È il vino che mi ha suggerito!
Per me pregate Iddio! Un bacio, mamma...
un altro bacio... addio!

Mamma, that wine is strong,
and I've gulped down too many glasses of it today.
I'm going outside for some air.

But first I want you to bless me,
as you did that day when I left as a soldier.
And then... mamma...
listen... if I don't come back...
you must be like a mother to Santuzza,
who I had promised to marry.

My son, what are you saying?

Oh, nothing! The wine is making me say things!
Pray to God for me! One kiss, mamma...
one more kiss... farewell!

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

"A Slice of Life": The Verismo Style (CONTINUED)

How have Mascagni and his librettists changed and expanded this section from the story? Why do you think they made the choices they did?

Have they made this moment more or less realistic?

Having first read the source material, does the music sound as you expected or different? How so?

How does the music amplify the emotions in the text?

Does the operatic version make us feel differently about Turiddu?

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/PAGLIACCI

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Musical Passions and Pathologies

PART 1 – THE PRIMARY MUSICAL THEMES OF PAGLIACCI

Acting Troupe Theme



Main Instruments and Musical Description

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Canio's Lament Theme



.....

.....

.....

Love Theme



.....

.....

.....

Revenge Theme



.....

.....

.....

Tragic Clown Theme



.....

.....

.....

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Musical Passions and Pathologies (CONTINUED)

Pagliacci: Prologue

TRACK 10

TONIO: Si può? Si può?

Signore! Signori! Scusatemi

se da sol mi presento.

Io sono il Prologo.

Poiché in scena ancor le antiche maschere
mette l'autore, in parte ei vuol riprendere
le vecchie usanze, e a voi di nuovo inviami.

Ma non per dirvi come pria: "Le lacrime
che noi versiam son false! Degli spasimi
e de' nostri martir non allarmatevi"

No! L'autore ha cercato invece pingervi
uno squarcio di vita. Egli ha per massima
sol che l'artista è un uomo e che gli uomini
scrivere ei deve. Ed al vero ispiravasi.

Un nido di memorie In fondo a l'anima
cantava un giorno, ed ei con vere lacrime
scrisse, e i singhiozzi il tempo gli battevano!
Dunque, vedrete amar sì come s'amaro
gli esseri umani; vedrete de
l'odio i tristi frutti. Del dolor gli spasimi,
urli di rabbia, udrete, e risa ciniche!

E voi, piuttosto che le nostre povere
gabbane d'istrioni, le nostr'anime
considerate, poichè siam uomini
di carne e d'ossa, e che di quest'orfano
mondo al pari di voi spiriamo l'aere!
Il concetto vi dissi... Or ascoltate
com'egli è svolto.
Andiam. Incominciate!

Ladies and gentlemen! If you please?

Will you allow me? Excuse me
for doing my own introduction.

I am the Prologue.

Since our author is putting before you the ancient
masks of the stage, he wishes to revive, in part,
the old customs, and once more he sends me to you.
But not to tell you as in the past, "The tears
we shed are fake! Do not be alarmed by
our pain and violence!"

No! Our author has endeavoured, rather, to paint for
you a slice of life. He insists that the artist
is a just another person and that he must write
for ordinary people. The truth has inspired him.

A flock of memories sang one day
within his heart, and he wrote with real tears
and marked time with his sighs!
Now, then, you will see men love
as they do in real life; you will see
hatred and its bitter fruit. You will hear
painful cries, angry shouts, and cynical laughter.

Mark well, therefore, our souls,
rather than the theatrical costume
we wear, for we are men
of flesh and bone, like you, breathing
the same air of this orphan world that you do.
I have told you our plan. Now listen
as it unfolds.
Let's go! On with the show!

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/PAGLIACCI

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Musical Passions and Pathologies (CONTINUED)

PART 2: MUSICAL THEMES AND DRAMATIC FORESHADOWING

Musical Themes	Libretto	Main Instruments and Musical Description
	Orchestral Introduction	
	TONIO: Si può? Si può? Signore! Signori! Scusatemi se da sol mi presento. Io sono il Prologo. Poiché in scena ancor le antiche maschere mette l'autore, in parte ei vuol riprendere le vecchie usanze, e a voi di nuovo inviami. Ma non per dirvi come pria: "Le lacrime che noi versiam son false! Degli spasimi e de' nostri martir non allarmatevi"	
	No! L'autore ha cercato invece pingervi uno squarcio di vita. Egli ha per massima sol che l'artista è un uomo e che gli uomini scrivere ei deve. Ed al vero ispiravasi.	
	Un nido di memorie In fondo a l'anima cantava un giorno, ed ei con vere lacrime scrisse, e i singhiozzi il tempo gli battevano! Dunque, vedrete amar sì come s'amano gli esseri umani; vedrete de l'odio i tristi frutti. Del dolor gli spasimi, urli di rabbia, udrete, e risa ciniche!	
	E voi, piuttosto che le nostre povere gabbane d'istrioni, le nostr'anime considerate, poichè siam uomini di carne e d'ossa, e che di quest'orfano mondo al pari di voi spiriamo l'aere! Il concetto vi dissi... Or ascoltate com'egli è svolto. Andiam. Incominciate!	
	Closing Orchestral Section	

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Musical Passions and Pathologies (CONTINUED)

PART 3: TESTING THEMATIC KNOWLEDGE

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

At the Met: *Visualizing Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci*

David McVicar, who directed this new production, tried to stress the similarities in dramatic theme, musical style, and geographic setting between the two short operas, while also contrasting the darkness and traditionalism of *Cavalleria Rusticana*'s plot with the more colorful and fast-moving story of *Pagliacci*. One way he achieved this is by setting both operas in the same Sicilian village but in two very different time periods: 1900 and 1948. Can you describe what you've seen in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and then imagine what the director and designers might have done, and what you might do, to show that *Pagliacci* takes place almost a half-century later, just after World War II?

SETS

Cavalleria Rusticana

Pagliacci

COSTUMES

Cavalleria Rusticana

What men wear

What women wear

Pagliacci

What men wear

What women wear

LIGHTING

Cavalleria Rusticana

Pagliacci

CONCLUSIONS: What important world events, societal changes, and technological advances happened between 1900 and 1948 that might be shown in the staging and design of *Pagliacci*?

Cavalleria Rusticana & Pagliacci: My Highs & Lows

APRIL 25, 2015

CONDUCTED BY FABIO LUISI

REVIEWED BY _____

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

THE STARS	STAR POWER	MY COMMENTS
MARCELO ÁLVAREZ AS TURIDDU	*****	
EVA-MARIA WESTBROEK AS SANTUZZA	*****	
JANE BUNNELL AS MAMMA LUCIA	*****	
ŽELJKO LUČIĆ AS ALFIO	*****	
GINGER COSTA-JACKSON AS LOLA	*****	

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN/STAGING
TURIDDU'S OFFSTAGE LOVE SONG MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
SANTUZZA VISITS MAMMA LUCIA MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
THE EASTER PROCESSION MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
SANTUZZA CONFIDES IN MAMMA LUCIA MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
SANTUZZA CONFRONTS TURIDDU MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
LOLA PASSES BY MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
SANTUZZA TELLS ALFIO ABOUT TURIDDU AND LOLA MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
TURIDDU MAKES A TOAST MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
ALFIO CHALLENGES TURIDDU TO A DUEL MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
TURIDDU SAYS GOODBYE TO HIS MOTHER MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
TURIDDU RUSHES OFF TO FIGHT ALFIO MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
A VILLAGER REPORTS TURIDDU'S DEATH MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5

PAGLIACCI

THE STARS	STAR POWER	MY COMMENTS
MARCELO ÁLVAREZ AS CANIO	*****	
PATRICIA RACETTE AS NEDDA	*****	
GEORGE GAGNIDZE AS TONIO	*****	
ANDREW STENSON AS BEPPE	*****	
LUCAS MEACHEM AS SILVIO	*****	

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN/STAGING
TONIO INTRODUCES THE SHOW MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CANIO'S TROUPE ARRIVES IN THE VILLAGE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
NEDDA FIGHTS OFF TONIO MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
NEDDA AND SILVIO'S LOVE SCENE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CANIO FINDS NEDDA AND SILVIO TOGETHER MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CANIO CONSIDERS HIS DESPERATE SITUATION MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
THE VILLAGERS ARRIVES FOR THE PLAY MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
THE COMEDY BEGINS MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
CANIO MAKES HIS ENTRANCE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
THE CRISIS POINT MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5