THE MET: HD LIVE IN SCHOOLS

2015-16 Educator Guide

PUCCINI

Madama Butterfly

The Metropolitan Opera HD Live
Celebrating 10 years

Lead sponsorship of HD Live in Schools is made possible by Bank of America

Bank of America

The program is supported through a partnership with the New York City Department of Education.
WHAT TO EXPECT FROM MADAMA BUTTERFLY

MANY OF PUCCINI’S OPERAS FEATURE REALISTICALLY DRAWN FEMALE characters that meet a tragic end, but none of these stories is more poignant than that of Cio-Cio-San, the title heroine of Madama Butterfly. This tale of a young Japanese geisha who marries an American naval officer who then leaves her explores themes of devotion and irresponsibility, fidelity and justice. Cio-Cio-San’s journey takes her from innocence and happy anticipation through failing hope to calm acceptance of the tragic destiny that her personal code of honor demands. But she is no frail victim. Her optimism in the midst of even the darkest of circumstances makes her a heroine in every sense of the word. It is Cio-Cio-San’s touching mixture of sweetness and anguish, vulnerability and courage that elicits some of Puccini’s most emotionally expansive and heartbreakingly tender music.

The Met’s production, first seen on Opening Night of the 2006–07 season, was directed by acclaimed filmmaker Anthony Minghella, who pointed out that in Madama Butterfly everything revolves around Cio-Cio-San. “It’s almost a monodrama,” he noted at the time of the premiere. “Everyone exists only in relation to her.” Minghella described what he saw as the director’s responsibility in bringing this particular opera to the stage: “I’d have to be crazy to do anything other than tell the story. To impose some kind of directorial conceit or tricks on a work that has such great integrity and that has been so beloved for so long would have been a foolish act of presumption.” Minghella’s methods of storytelling embrace several techniques from the traditional theater of Japan, most notably the use of a Bunraku-style puppet for the silent role of Cio-Cio-San’s young son.

This guide is designed to help students both enjoy the musical and dramatic riches of Madama Butterfly and to examine the complex, sometimes ambiguous attitudes and behaviors that doom Cio-Cio-San to her fate. By exploring the subjects of Westernization and tradition that pulse through this opera, students will gain an understanding of the cultural forces that inform the story and examine some of the themes that continue to make Madama Butterfly such a compelling work of music theater. 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.

THE WORK:

MADAMA BUTTERFLY
An opera in two acts, sung in Italian
Music by Giacomo Puccini
Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica
Based on the play by David Belasco
First performed February 17, 1904 at the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, Italy

PRODUCTION
Karel Mark Chichon, Conductor
Anthony Minghella, Production
Carolyn Choa, Director and Choreographer
Michael Levine, Set Designer
Han Feng, Costume Designer
Peter Mumford, Lighting Designer
Blind Summit Theatre, Puppetry

STARRING
(In order of vocal appearance):
Roberto Alagna
B.F. Pinkerton (tenor)
Dwayne Croft
Sharpless (baritone)
Kristine Opolais
Cio-Cio-San (soprano)
Maria Zifchak
Suzuki (mezzo-soprano)

Production a gift of Mercedes and Sid Bass
Revival a gift of The NPD Group, Inc.
Co-production of the Metropolitan Opera, English National Opera, and the Lithuanian National Opera
The activities in this guide will focus on several aspects of Madama Butterfly:

- The way the librettist and composer portray the main characters and their cultural backgrounds
- The relationship of the opera to events in world history
- Puccini’s musical representation of Asian and American cultures
- Creative choices made by the artists of the Metropolitan Opera for this production
- The opera as a unified work of art, involving the efforts of composer, librettist, and Met artists

This guide is intended to cultivate students’ interest in Madama Butterfly, 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 SOURCE: THE PLAY MADAMA BUTTERFLY BY DAVID BELASCO

David Belasco was a Broadway impresario and playwright whose innovations to theater technology, including the use of spotlights and variations in colored lighting, were groundbreaking for the age. His 1900 stage play Madama Butterfly was based on a short story by John Luther Long, which itself was modeled after the novel Madame Chrysanthème by Pierre Loti. Drawing on his experience as a French naval officer, Loti structured Madame Chrysanthème as a semi-autobiographical work detailing his service in Nagasaki and dalliance with a local “temporary wife.” Loti’s works are typically set in exotic locales in the Near or Far East and frequently explore the conflict between romantic distractions and duty. Long’s short story similarly features a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who marries a young geisha and then leaves her. Both Loti and Belasco have Butterfly communicate in a primitive, pidgin English. Unlike its literary predecessors, Puccini’s Madama Butterfly casts its heroine in a fully sympathetic light, free from the caricature that mars Loti, Long, and Belasco’s works.

ACT I

Japan, early 20th century. Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton of the U.S. Navy inspects a house overlooking Nagasaki harbor that he is leasing from Goro, a marriage broker. The house comes with three servants and a geisha wife named Cio-Cio-San, known as Madame Butterfly. The lease runs for 999 years, subject to monthly renewal. The American consul Sharpless arrives breathless from climbing the hill. Pinkerton describes his philosophy of the fearless Yankee roaming the world in search of experience and pleasure. He is not sure whether his feelings for the young girl are love or a whim, but he intends to go through with the marriage ceremony. Sharpless warns him that the girl may view the marriage differently, but Pinkerton brushes off such concerns and says that someday he will take a real, American wife. He offers the consul whiskey and proposes a toast. Cio-Cio-San is heard climbing the hill with her friends for the ceremony. In casual conversation after the formal introduction, she admits her age, 15, and explains that her family was once prominent but lost its position, and she has had to earn her living as a geisha. Her relatives arrive and chatter about the marriage.
This guide is divided into five sections.

• THE SOURCE, THE STORY, WHO’S WHO IN MADAMA BUTTERFLY, AND A TIMELINE

• CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:
  Two 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 the 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 focus on several aspects of Madama Butterfly:

• The way the librettist and composer portray the main characters and their cultural backgrounds

• The relationship of the opera to events in world history

• Puccini’s musical representation of Asian and American cultures

• Creative choices made by the artists of the Metropolitan Opera for this production

• The opera as a unified work of art, involving the efforts of composer, librettist, and Met artists

This guide is intended to cultivate students’ interest in Madama Butterfly, 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 SOURCE: THE PLAY MADAMA BUTTERFLY BY DAVID BELASCO

David Belasco was a Broadway impresario and playwright whose innovations to theater technology, including the use of spotlights and variations in colored lighting, were groundbreaking for the age. His 1900 stage play Madama Butterfly was based on a short story by John Luther Long, which itself was modeled after the novel Madame Chrysanthème by Pierre Loti. Drawing on his experience as a French naval officer, Loti structured Madame Chrysanthème as a semi-autobiographical work detailing his service in Nagasaki and dalliance with a local “temporary wife.” Loti’s works are typically set in exotic locales in the Near or Far East and frequently explore the conflict between romantic distractions and duty. Long’s short story similarly features a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who marries a young geisha and then leaves her. Both Loti and Belasco have Butterfly communicate in a primitive, pidgin English. Unlike its literary predecessors, Puccini’s Madama Butterfly casts its heroine in a fully sympathetic light, free from the caricature that mars Loti, Long, and Belasco’s works.

ACT I

Japan, early 20th century. Lieutenant B.F. Pinkerton of the U.S. Navy inspects a house overlooking Nagasaki harbor that he is leasing from Goro, a marriage broker. The house comes with three servants and a geisha wife named Cio-Cio-San, known as Madame Butterfly. The lease runs for 999 years, subject to monthly renewal. The American consul Sharpless arrives breathless from climbing the hill. Pinkerton describes his philosophy of the fearless Yankee roaming the world in search of experience and pleasure. He is not sure whether his feelings for the young girl are love or a whim, but he intends to go through with the marriage ceremony. Sharpless warns him that the girl may view the marriage differently, but Pinkerton brushes off such concerns and says that someday he will take a real, American wife. He offers the consul whiskey and proposes a toast. Cio-Cio-San is heard climbing the hill with her friends for the ceremony. In casual conversation after the formal introduction, she admits her age, 15, and explains that her family was once prominent but lost its position, and she has had to earn her living as a geisha. Her relatives arrive and chatter about the marriage.
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**
- A 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.

Cio-Cio-San shows Pinkerton her very few possessions, and quietly tells him she has been to the Christian mission and will embrace her husband’s religion. The Imperial Commissioner reads the marriage agreement, and the relatives congratulate the couple. Suddenly, a threatening voice is heard from afar—it is the Bonze, Cio-Cio-San’s uncle, a priest. He curses the girl for going to the Christian mission and rejecting her ancestral religion. Pinkerton orders the guests to leave, and as they go, the Bonze and the shocked relatives denounce Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton tries to console her with sweet words. She is helped by Suzuki into her wedding kimono, and joins Pinkerton in the house.

**ACT II—PART 1**

Three years have passed, and Cio-Cio-San awaits her husband’s return. Suzuki prays to the gods for help, but Cio-Cio-San berates her for believing in lazy Japanese gods rather than in Pinkerton’s promise to return one day. Sharpless appears with a letter from Pinkerton, but before he can read it to Cio-Cio-San, Goro arrives with the latest potential husband for her, the wealthy Prince Yamadori. Cio-Cio-San politely serves the guests tea but insists she is not available for marriage—her American husband has not deserted her. She dismisses Goro and Yamadori. Sharpless attempts to read Pinkerton’s letter but Cio-Cio-San keeps interrupting him with questions. He then asks her what she would do if Pinkerton never came back. With dark foreboding, she responds that she could do one of two things: go back to her life of singing, or better yet, die. Sharpless suggests that perhaps Cio-Cio-San should reconsider Yamadori’s offer. “And this?” asks the outraged Cio-Cio-San, showing the consul her small son. Sharpless is too upset to tell her more of the letter’s contents. He leaves, promising to tell Pinkerton of the child. A cannon shot is heard in the harbor announcing the arrival of a ship. Cio-Cio-San and Suzuki take a telescope to the terrace and read the name of Pinkerton’s ship. Overjoyed, Cio-Cio-San joins Suzuki in strewing the house with flower petals from the garden. Night falls, and Cio-Cio-San, Suzuki, and the child settle into a vigil, watching over the harbor.

**ACT II—PART 2**

Dawn breaks, and Suzuki insists that Cio-Cio-San get some sleep. Cio-Cio-San carries the child into another room. Sharpless appears with Pinkerton and Kate, Pinkerton’s new wife. Suzuki realizes who the American woman is and agrees to help break the news to Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton is overcome with guilt and runs from the scene, pausing to remember his days in the little house. Cio-Cio-San rushes in hoping to find Pinkerton, but sees Kate instead. Grasping the situation, she agrees to give up the child but insists Pinkerton return for him. Dismissing everyone, Butterfly takes out the dagger with which her father committed suicide, choosing to die with honor rather than live in shame. She is interrupted momentarily when the child comes in, but Butterfly says goodbye to him and blindfolds him. She stabs herself as Pinkerton calls her name.
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

---

Cio-Cio-San shows Pinkerton her very few possessions, and quietly tells him she has been to the Christian mission and will embrace her husband’s religion. The Imperial Commissioner reads the marriage agreement, and the relatives congratulate the couple. Suddenly, a threatening voice is heard from afar—it is the Bonze, Cio-Cio-San’s uncle, a priest. He curses the girl for going to the Christian mission and rejecting her ancestral religion. Pinkerton orders the guests to leave, and as they go, the Bonze and the shocked relatives denounce Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton tries to console her with sweet words. She is helped by Suzuki into her wedding kimono, and joins Pinkerton in the house.

**ACT II—PART 1**

Three years have passed, and Cio-Cio-San awaits her husband’s return. Suzuki prays to the gods for help, but Cio-Cio-San berates her for believing in lazy Japanese gods rather than in Pinkerton’s promise to return one day. Sharpless appears with a letter from Pinkerton, but before he can read it to Cio-Cio-San, Goro arrives with the latest potential husband for her, the wealthy Prince Yamadori. Cio-Cio-San politely serves the guests tea but insists she is not available for marriage—her American husband has not deserted her. She dismisses Goro and Yamadori. Sharpless attempts to read Pinkerton’s letter but Cio-Cio-San keeps interrupting him with questions. He then asks her what she would do if Pinkerton never came back. With dark foreboding, she responds that she could do one of two things: go back to her life of singing, or better yet, die. Sharpless suggests that perhaps Cio-Cio-San should reconsider Yamadori’s offer. “And this?” asks the outraged Cio-Cio-San, showing the consul her small son. Sharpless is too upset to tell her more of the letter’s contents. He leaves, promising to tell Pinkerton of the child. A cannon shot is heard in the harbor announcing the arrival of a ship. Cio-Cio-San and Suzuki take a telescope to the terrace and read the name of Pinkerton’s ship. Overjoyed, Cio-Cio-San joins Suzuki in strewing the house with flower petals from the garden. Night falls, and Cio-Cio-San, Suzuki, and the child settle into a vigil, watching over the harbor.

**ACT II—PART 2**

Dawn breaks, and Suzuki insists that Cio-Cio-San get some sleep. Cio-Cio-San carries the child into another room. Sharpless appears with Pinkerton and Kate, Pinkerton’s new wife. Suzuki realizes who the American woman is and agrees to help break the news to Cio-Cio-San. Pinkerton is overcome with guilt and runs from the scene, pausing to remember his days in the little house. Cio-Cio-San rushes in hoping to find Pinkerton, but sees Kate instead. Grasping the situation, she agrees to give up the child but insists Pinkerton return for him. Dismissing everyone, Butterfly takes out the dagger with which her father committed suicide, choosing to die with honor rather than live in shame. She is interrupted momentarily when the child comes in, but Butterfly says goodbye to him and blindfolds him. She stabs herself as Pinkerton calls her name.
**1630s**
Japan establishes the policy of *sakoku*, which closes the country to immigration and emigration and strictly limits foreign trade to a small number of designated locations. The only location open to trade with Europe is a Dutch trading post at Dejima, a man-made island off the coast of Nagasaki.

**1853**
Japan is compelled to open two of its ports to U.S. trade through the Kanagawa Treaty, after the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrates Tokyo harbor with four warships. The Kanagawa Treaty effectively ends Japan’s centuries-long foreign policy of seclusion and border closure.

**1858**
Giacomo Puccini is born on December 22 in Lucca, Tuscany, to a family of church musicians.

**1874**
Puccini begins training in music at the local music institute, studying with his uncle, Fortunato Magi. He soon begins learning the scores of Verdi’s operas.

**1880**
Puccini’s exemplary musical gifts earn him entry to the Milan Conservatory, the most prestigious musical academy in Italy. In addition to his formal studies, he comes into contact with the bohemian and anti-conformist group of artists known as the Scapigliati (literally “the disheveled ones”). There, he meets many of the leading writers and intellectuals of the day.

**1883**
Puccini composes his first opera, *Le Villi*, which is first performed in a private recital at the home of a member of the Scapigliati. Among those present are the composer Pietro Mascagni, who plays double bass in the orchestra, and Arrigo Boito, who had just become Verdi’s collaborator and was working on the libretto to *Otello*. Impressed with Puccini’s talent, the music publisher Giulio Ricordi enters an exclusive contract with the composer and provides him with a monthly stipend to concentrate on composition. For the rest of his life, Ricordi acts as mentor and friend to Puccini.

**1887**
The French naval officer and travel writer Pierre Loti publishes *Madame Chrysanthème*, a semi-autobiographical account of his brief relationship with a geisha while stationed in Nagasaki. Loti’s work colors the popular Western understanding of Japan for years to come.

**1893**
Puccini achieves his first major success with the premiere of *Manon Lescaut* on February 1 at the Teatro Regio in Turin.

**1897**
John Luther Long publishes the short story *Madame Butterfly*, which is adapted from *Madame Chrysanthème*, in the periodical *Century Magazine*. It similarly depicts a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who takes a temporary “wife” in Nagasaki.

**1900**
Puccini visits London for the Covent Garden premiere of *Tosca* on July 12. While there, he attends a performance at the Duke of York’s theater of the play *Madame Butterfly*, written by the American impresario David Belasco and based on Long’s story. Immediately upon returning home to Milan, Puccini asks his publisher to obtain the rights to Belasco’s play.

**1901**
Puccini officially acquires the rights to *Madame Butterfly* from Belasco in September and begins developing a scenario with his frequent collaborators Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa.

**1903**
Puccini’s work on *Madama Butterfly* is interrupted when he is seriously injured in a car accident. (A lifelong technology enthusiast, he was among the first Italians to own a car.) The long duration of his convalescence with a broken leg is due, as he would learn later, to an undiagnosed case of diabetes.

**1904**
*Madama Butterfly* premieres at La Scala in Milan on February 17. Despite a starry cast, the performance is a disaster, with critics accusing Puccini of plagiarism. He immediately withdraws the score. After a series of revisions, *Madama Butterfly* finds great success elsewhere in Italy and abroad, although it is never again seen at La Scala during Puccini’s lifetime.

**1906**
Puccini’s fourth revision of *Madama Butterfly* is performed at the Opéra Comique in Paris on December 28. This is the version commonly performed today.

**1924**
While in Brussels for treatment of throat cancer, Puccini dies on November 29. His funeral at Milan’s cathedral is attended by fellow musicians, dignitaries, and ambassadors from around the globe.

---

**Madama Butterfly History**

**1893** Puccini achieves his first major success with the premiere of *Manon Lescaut* on February 1 at the Teatro Regio in Turin.

**1897** John Luther Long publishes the short story *Madame Butterfly*, which is adapted from *Madame Chrysanthème*, in the periodical *Century Magazine*. It similarly depicts a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who takes a temporary “wife” in Nagasaki.

**1900** Puccini visits London for the Covent Garden premiere of *Tosca* on July 12. While there, he attends a performance at the Duke of York’s theater of the play *Madame Butterfly*, written by the American impresario David Belasco and based on Long’s story. Immediately upon returning home to Milan, Puccini asks his publisher to obtain the rights to Belasco’s play.

---

**Rosetta Fangasini sang the title role at La Scala in 1925.**
Japan establishes the policy of sakoku, which closes the country to immigration and emigration and strictly limits foreign trade to a small number of designated locations. The only location open to trade with Europe is a Dutch trading post at Dejima, a man-made island off the coast of Nagasaki.

Japan is compelled to open two of its ports to U.S. trade through the Kanagawa Treaty, after the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrates Tokyo harbor with four warships. The Kanagawa Treaty effectively ends Japan’s centuries-long foreign policy of seclusion and border closure.

Giacomo Puccini is born on December 22 in Lucca, Tuscany, to a family of church musicians.

Puccini begins training in music at the local music institute, studying with his uncle, Fortunato Magi. He soon begins learning the scores of Verdi’s operas.

Puccini’s exemplary musical gifts earn him entry to the Milan Conservatory, the most prestigious musical academy in Italy. In addition to his formal studies, he comes into contact with the bohemian and anti-conformist group of artists known as the Scapigliati (literally “the disheveled ones”). There, he meets many of the leading writers and intellectuals of the day.

Puccini composes his first opera, Le Villi, which is first performed in a private recital at the home of a member of the Scapigliati. Among those present are the composer Pietro Mascagni, who plays double bass in the orchestra, and Arrigo Boito, who had just become Verdi’s collaborator and was working on the libretto to Otello. Impressed with Puccini’s talent, the music publisher Giulio Ricordi enters an exclusive contract with the composer and provides him with a monthly stipend to concentrate on composition. For the rest of his life, Ricordi acts as mentor and friend to Puccini.

The French naval officer and travel writer Pierre Loti publishes Madame Chrysanthème, a semi-autobiographical account of his brief relationship with a geisha while stationed in Nagasaki. Loti’s work colors the popular Western understanding of Japan for years to come.

Puccini achieves his first major success with the premiere of Manon Lescaut on February 1 at the Teatro Regio in Turin.

John Luther Long publishes the short story Madame Butterfly, which is adapted from Madame Chrysanthème, in the periodical Century Magazine. It similarly depicts a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy who takes a temporary “wife” in Nagasaki.

Puccini visits London for the Covent Garden premiere of Tosca on July 12. While there, he attends a performance at the Duke of York’s theater of the play Madame Butterfly, written by the American impresario David Belasco and based on Long’s story. Immediately upon returning home to Milan, Puccini asks his publisher to obtain the rights to Belasco’s play.

Puccini officially acquires the rights to Madame Butterfly from Belasco in September and begins developing a scenario with his frequent collaborators Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa.

Puccini’s work on Madame Butterfly is interrupted when he is seriously injured in a car accident. (A lifelong technology enthusiast, he was among the first Italians to own a car.) The long duration of his convalescence with a broken leg is due, as he would learn later, to an undiagnosed case of diabetes.

Madama Butterfly premieres at La Scala in Milan on February 17. Despite a starry cast, the performance is a disaster, with critics accusing Puccini of plagiarism. He immediately withdraws the score. After a series of revisions, Madama Butterfly finds great success elsewhere in Italy and abroad, although it is never again seen at La Scala during Puccini’s lifetime.

Puccini’s fourth revision of Madama Butterfly is performed at the Opéra Comique in Paris on December 28. This is the version commonly performed today.

While in Brussels for treatment of throat cancer, Puccini dies on November 29. His funeral at Milan’s cathedral is attended by fellow musicians, dignitaries, and ambassadors from around the globe.
History and Social Studies

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 Madama Butterfly available online or on the accompanying CD. Students will also need photocopies of the sidebar A Brief History of Japan.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS
History and Social Studies, Government, Ethics, Visual Arts, Music

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
• To develop an understanding of Japanese history from the mid-19th century through the early 20th century
• To interpret facts about the past based on an analysis of historical artworks
• To prompt curiosity about the interpretation of Madama Butterfly as seen in this Live in HD production

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan

The story of Madama Butterfly takes place in what was the present day when it was written—around the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. At precisely this time, Japan was undergoing massive political and social changes as it transitioned from a closed, feudal culture to a capitalist and increasingly “Westernized” world power. Puccini’s Madama Butterfly reflects the tensions of this age in Japan’s history, as the country adapted to a new era of open interaction with foreigners and struggled to maintain its independence from colonial domination. The opera presents a multi-faceted view into how these tensions are borne out on a personal level, in the relations between the young geisha Cio-Cio-San and the American naval officer Pinkerton. In this activity, students will:

• investigate a popular song from the age and discover its connection to historical events in Japan
• learn about woodblock prints, or ukiyo-e, as an example of traditional Japanese arts
• use artworks and ephemera to draw conclusions about historical events
• become acquainted with some of the music of Madama Butterfly in advance of the Met’s Live in HD transmission

STEPS
In this activity, students will take a close look at a number of artworks created around the time of Madama Butterfly’s story and at two moments in the opera, and consider them within the context of Japanese history. Through their study, students will come to a deeper understanding of the opera’s time period and its representation of Western interests in Japan.

STEP 1: Students will likely be unfamiliar with Japanese history from the time of Madama Butterfly. If possible, have them review the sidebar A Brief History of Japan before class begins, or alternatively allow for time at the start of class to complete this background reading. Begin the class with a discussion of the era. Questions you might ask include the following:

• What event took place in Japan in 1853?
• What type of government ruled Japan in the Edo period?
• What is sakoku?
• What is the Meiji Restoration?
• How did Japan change from 1853 through 1912?

The points to elicit are the following:

• Japan had long been ruled by a warrior class of samurai, organized under military commanders known as the shogun. Japanese peasants provided labor in return for protection.
• Beginning in the 1630s, the shogun in power enacted a foreign policy known as sakoku, or “closed country,” which forbade immigration and emigration and strictly limited foreign trade to a small number of designated locations.
• In 1853, Japan was compelled to open two of its ports to U.S. trade through the Kanagawa Treaty, after the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrated Tokyo harbor with four warships. The Kanagawa Treaty effectively ended Japan’s foreign policy of sakoku.
• Following the Kanagawa Treaty, a group of political reformers succeeded in displacing the shogunate and established a centralized, imperial government, in 1868. This restoration of power to the emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration, named after Emperor Meiji, who ruled until 1912.
• During the 45 years of the Meiji era, Japan experienced rapid industrialization, vastly increasing its wealth and power, and successfully avoided falling under the expansionist aspirations of the Western powers.

STEP 2: Next, distribute the reproducible handout at the back of this guide and turn students’ attention to the text provided of a Japanese popular song from around 1880, also reprinted below. Invite a volunteer to read the lyrics aloud.

In the East there is England,
In the North, Russia,
My countrymen, be careful!
Outwardly they make treaties,
But you cannot tell
What is at the bottom of their hearts.
There is a Law of Nations, it is true,
But when the moment comes, remember,
The Strong eat up the Weak.

First, give students a few moments to reflect on the poem and jot down a few interpretive notes in the space provided on the handout. Then, initiate a discussion on the meaning of these unsentimental lyrics. What might the Japanese have to fear from their neighbors? What is meant by the phrase “the strong eat up the weak”? Students should recognize that the Japanese felt that the

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY
This activity directly supports the following ELA-Literacy Common Core Strands:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1d Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

The young Meiji emperor, 1872, is a photograph by Uchida Kōichi.
Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan

The story of Madama Butterfly takes place in what was the present day when it was written—around the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. At precisely this time, Japan was undergoing massive political and social changes as it transitioned from a closed, feudal culture to a capitalist and increasingly "Westernized" world power. Puccini's Madama Butterfly reflects the tensions of this age in Japan's history, as the country adapted to a new era of open interaction with foreigners and struggled to maintain its independence from colonial domination. The opera presents a multi-faceted view into how these tensions are borne out on a personal level, in the relations between the young geisha Cio-Cio-San and the American naval officer Pinkerton. In this activity, students will:

- investigate a popular song from the age and discover its connection to historical events in Japan
- learn about woodblock prints, or ukiyo-e, as an example of traditional Japanese arts
- use artworks and ephebema to draw conclusions about historical events
- become acquainted with some of the music of Madama Butterfly in advance of the Met's Live in HD transmission

STEPS

In this activity, students will take a close look at a number of artworks created around the time of Madama Butterfly's story and at two moments in the opera, and consider them within the context of Japanese history. Through their study, students will come to a deeper understanding of the opera's time period and its representation of Western interests in Japan.

STEP 1: Students will likely be unfamiliar with Japanese history from the time of Madama Butterfly. If possible, have them review the sidebar A Brief History of Japan before class begins, or alternatively allow for time at the start of class to complete this background reading. Begin the class with a discussion of the era. Questions you might ask include the following:

- What event took place in Japan in 1853?
- What type of government ruled Japan in the Edo period?
- What is sakoku?
- What is the Meiji Restoration?
- How did Japan change from 1853 through 1912?

The points to elicit are the following:

- Japan had long been ruled by a warrior class of samurai, organized under military commanders known as the shogun. Japanese peasants provided labor in return for protection.
- Beginning in the 1630s, the shogun in power enacted a foreign policy known as sakoku, or "closed country," which forbade immigration and emigration and strictly limited foreign trade to a small number of designated locations.
- In 1853, Japan was compelled to open two of its ports to U.S. trade through the Kanagawa Treaty, after the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrated Tokyo harbor with four warships. The Kanagawa Treaty effectively ended Japan's foreign policy of sakoku.
- Following the Kanagawa Treaty, a group of political reformers succeeded in displacing the shogunate and established a centralized, imperial government, in 1868. This restoration of power to the emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration, named after Emperor Meiji, who ruled until 1912.
- During the 45 years of the Meiji era, Japan experienced rapid industrialization, vastly increasing its wealth and power, and successfully avoided falling under the expansionist aspirations of the Western powers.

STEP 2: Next, distribute the reproducible handout at the back of this guide and turn students' attention to the text provided of a Japanese popular song from around 1880, also reprinted below. Invite a volunteer to read the lyrics aloud.

In the West there is England,
In the North, Russia.
My countrymen, be careful!
Outwardly they make treaties,
But you cannot tell
What is at the bottom of their hearts.
There is a Law of Nations, it is true,
But when the moment comes, remember,
The Strong eat up the Weak.

First, give students a few moments to reflect on the poem and jot down a few interpretive notes in the space provided on the handout. Then, initiate a discussion on the meaning of these unsentimental lyrics. What might the Japanese have to fear from their neighbors? What is meant by the phrase "the strong eat up the weak"? Students should recognize that the Japanese felt that the

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of such sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1.d Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.
country needed to modernize and join the world’s imperial powers, or else risk being claimed by those same powers.

**STEP 3:** Now divide the class into groups and assign each an image from the next section in the reproducible handouts. Each of these images depicts an aspect of Japan, its inhabitants or visitors, its place among the world powers, or its new self-conception, from the time Madama Butterfly was written. The images may be drawn from the world of Japanese art (such as ukiyo-e, the traditional Japanese genre of woodblock prints), American or British periodicals, or other contemporary sources. As a group, students should discuss and analyze their artworks to determine answers to the following questions (also included on the handouts):

- What is going on in this image?
- Who is being depicted? How can you tell, and how are they dressed?
- Can you hypothesize on the attitude of the artist?
- How does this image reflect the changes that Japan was undergoing at the time?

In their groups, students should make notes in the space provided on the handout with their answers to the questions above. Following their breakout work in groups, have one representative from each group briefly discuss their interpretation of the image. For your reference, the artworks are reproduced below with a descriptive answer key. (Please note that the images are reprinted in larger format on the handouts.)

**Example 1:** Picture of a Steam Locomotive along the Yokohama Waterfront by Hiroshige III (c. 1874)

This ukiyo-e triptych by well-known artist Hiroshige III depicts a steam-fueled train approaching a bay, which is crowded with large foreign battleships (indicated by the numerous foreign flags on their masts). The white-sailed Japanese ships are considerably smaller. The work draws attention to Japan’s developing industry and compares its naval strength to that of its foreign rivals.

**Example 2:** “Japan Makes Her Debut under Columbia’s Auspices,” by Udo Keppler in Puck Magazine, August 16, 1899

The female figure of Columbia at the center of the image is the personification of the United States, indicated by her striped dress and starred sash, along with a shield decorated with the stars and stripes. She introduces the female personification of Japan to the other imperial world powers, who are identified by their national dress and also by name (Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Spain, Austria, Turkey). A lone figure outside the wall (probably meant to represent China) looks on. Japan had just emerged victorious over China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95.

**Example 3:** “It Ought to Be a Happy New Year,” by Victor Gillam in Judge Magazine, January 7, 1899

This cover illustration depicts Uncle Sam and John Bull (a representation of Great Britain), joining together to swallow the globe. The countries on the map have been

**FUN FACT:** In Italian, “madama” as a form of address is reserved for married women, similar to the English “Mrs.” The opera’s title, Madama Butterfly, can therefore be seen as a commentary on the sad plight of its heroine. Cio-Cio-San herself prefers to be called “Madama Pinkerton,” although none of the other characters ever complies with her wish. The fact that she forever remains “Madama Butterfly” reflects a reality that everyone else already understands: her married status and connection to Pinkerton are only temporary.
country needed to modernize and join the world’s imperial powers, or else risk being claimed by those same powers.

**STEP 3:** Now divide the class into groups and assign each an image from the next section in the reproducible handouts. Each of these images depicts an aspect of Japan, its inhabitants or visitors, its place among the world powers, or its new self-conception, from the time Madama Butterfly was written. The images may be drawn from the world of Japanese art (such as ukiyo-e, the traditional Japanese genre of woodblock prints), American or British periodicals, or other contemporary sources.

As a group, students should discuss and analyze their artworks to determine answers to the following questions (also included on the handouts):

- What is going on in this image?
- Who is being depicted? How can you tell, and how are they dressed?
- Can you hypothesize on the attitude of the artist?
- How does this image reflect the changes that Japan was undergoing at the time?

In their groups, students should make notes in the space provided on the handout with their answers to the questions above. Following their breakout work in groups, have one representative from each group briefly discuss their interpretation of the image.

For your reference, the artworks are reproduced below with a descriptive answer key. (Please note that the images are reprinted in larger format on the handouts.)

**Example 1:** Picture of a Steam Locomotive along the Yokohama Waterfront by Hiroshige III (c. 1874)

This ukiyo-e triptych by well-known artist Hiroshige III depicts a steam-fueled train approaching a bay, which is crowded with large foreign battleships (indicated by the numerous foreign flags on their masts). The white-sailed Japanese ships are considerably smaller. The work draws attention to Japan’s developing industry and compares its naval strength to that of its foreign rivals.

**Example 2:** “Japan Makes Her Début under Columbia’s Auspices,” by Udo Keppler in Puck Magazine, August 16, 1899

The female figure of Columbia at the center of the image is the personification of the United States, indicated by her striped dress and starred sash, along with a shield decorated with the stars and stripes. She introduces the female personification of Japan to the other imperial world powers, who are identified by their national dress and also by name (Britain, France, Russia, Italy, Spain, Austria, Turkey). A lone figure outside the wall (probably meant to represent China) looks on. Japan had just emerged victorious over China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95.

**Example 3:** “It Ought to Be a Happy New Year,” by Victor Gillam in Judge Magazine, January 7, 1899

This cover illustration depicts Uncle Sam and John Bull (a representation of Great Britain), joining together to swallow the globe. The countries on the map have been

**FUN FACT:** In Italian, “madama” as a form of address is reserved for married women, similar to the English “Mrs.” The opera’s title, *Madame Butterfly*, can therefore be seen as a commentary on the sad plight of its heroine. Cio-Cio-San herself prefers to be called “Madama Pinkerton,” although none of the other characters ever complies with her wish. The fact that she forever remains “Madama Butterfly” reflects a reality that everyone else already understands: her married status and connection to Pinkerton are only temporary.
A Brief History of Japan

The Japanese archipelago has been inhabited since the Paleolithic Age, and by the eighth century AD had become a powerful and unified state ruled by an emperor. Beginning at the end of the 12th century, a less centralized form of government emerged, with a warrior class of samurai, led by military commanders called the shogun, effectively governing the nation. In this era, Japan was a feudal society, with peasants working the land in return for protection by the samurai.

The office of the shogun was subject to competition and coups, and rather than being strictly hereditary, the shogunate passed through a variety of powerful families. Beginning in the 1650s, the shogunate led by the Tokugawa family enacted a series of foreign policy measures that effectively closed Japan’s borders, preventing immigration and emigration, strictly limiting foreign trade to a small number of designated locations, and prohibiting Christianity. This policy was known as sakoku, or “closed country,” and its effects on Japan were significant. On the one hand, the Tokugawa shogunate was able to concentrate on domestic issues and ushered in a 300-year era of peace; on the other, their foreign policy prolonged the existence of the feudal system and isolated the country from the industrial developments of the rest of the world.

The policy of sakoku ended only after intense pressure from the West, which was very keen to engage Japan in foreign trade. In 1853, the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrated Tokyo harbor with four warships. Under the implied threat of military action, Perry requested that Japan initiate relations with America. Faced with warships of a kind they had never seen, the Japanese had no alternative but to sign the Kanagawa Treaty, which immediately opened two ports to U.S. trade and ended the country’s centuries-long isolation.

Not long after the Kanagawa Treaty, the age of the shogunate also came to an end in 1868, when a group of political reformers succeeded in re-establishing a centralized, imperial government. This restoration of power to the emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration, named after Emperor Meiji, who ruled until 1912. During the 45 years of the Meiji era, Japan experienced rapid industrialization, vastly increasing its wealth and power, and successfully avoided falling under the expansionist aspirations of the Western powers. The fictional events of Madame Butterfly take place during the Meiji era, when Japan was only just adapting to the presence of foreigners, of Christian missions, of international trade, and of the notion of emigration. All of these issues are at play in Madame Butterfly.

The office of the Tokugawa shogun

New Year’s Sunrise by Yoshikazu (1790)

Sadahide’s ukiyo-e pentatych (i.e. series of five woodblock prints) depicts American, French, and British vessels in a harbor, busily unloading crates of cargo. It is a vivid depiction of the hustle and bustle of a busy trading port. Of particular interest is the bank of open gun ports all along the side of the American ship, providing a view into the military might of the vessel. It is a subtle hint of the threat of military action, should trade be disrupted.

Sadahide’s ukiyo-e pentatych (i.e. series of five woodblock prints) depicts American, French, and British vessels in a harbor, busily unloading crates of cargo. It is a vivid depiction of the hustle and bustle of a busy trading port. Of particular interest is the bank of open gun ports all along the side of the American ship, providing a view into the military might of the vessel. It is a subtle hint of the threat of military action, should trade be disrupted.

The Miyozaki Quarter was the entertainment district of Yokohama, and the Gankirō was the section reserved for foreign visitors. In this busy scene, a boisterous celebration is underway in the foreground. Foreigners sit on the floor in the Japanese manner, enjoying the company of Japanese women and drinking sake. Two geishas on the left side play the samisen, a traditional Japanese instrument. In the center, an animated (and perhaps inebriated) figure stands and performs a lively dance.

Example 4: Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise by Sadahide (1861)

Example 5: Picture of Foreigners’ Revelry at the Gankirō in the Miyozaki Quarter by Yoshikazu (1861)

The Miyozaki Quarter was the entertainment district of Yokohama, and the Gankirō was the section reserved for foreign visitors. In this busy scene, a boisterous celebration is underway in the foreground. Foreigners sit on the floor in the Japanese manner, enjoying the company of Japanese women and drinking sake. Two geishas on the left side play the samisen, a traditional Japanese instrument. In the center, an animated (and perhaps inebriated) figure stands and performs a lively dance.

Example 4: Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise by Sadahide (1861)

Example 5: Picture of Foreigners’ Revelry at the Gankirō in the Miyozaki Quarter by Yoshikazu (1861)
A Brief History of Japan

The Japanese archipelago has been inhabited since the Paleolithic Age, and by the eighth century AD had become a powerful and unified state ruled by an emperor. Beginning at the end of the twelfth century, a less centralized form of government emerged, with a warrior class of samurai led by military commanders called the shogun, effectively governing the nation. In this era, Japan was a feudal society, with peasants working the land in return for protection by the samurai.

The office of the shogun was subject to competition and coups, and rather than being strictly hereditary, the shogunate passed through a variety of powerful families. Beginning in the 1600s, the shogunate led by the Tokugawa family enacted a series of foreign policy measures that effectively closed Japan’s borders, preventing immigration and emigration, strictly limiting foreign trade to a small number of designated locations, and prohibiting Christianity. This policy was known as sakoku, or “closed country,” and its effects on Japan were significant. On the one hand, the Tokugawa shogunate was able to concentrate on domestic issues and ushered in a 300-year era of peace; on the other, their foreign policy prolonged the existence of the feudal system and isolated the country from the industrial developments of the rest of the world.

The policy of sakoku ended only after intense pressure from the West, which was very keen to engage Japan in foreign trade. In 1853, the U.S. Navy, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, infiltrated Tokyo harbor with four warships. Under the implied threat of military action, Perry requested that Japan initiate relations with America. Faced with warships of a kind they had never seen, the Japanese had no alternative but to sign the Kanagawa Treaty, which immediately opened two ports to U.S. trade and ended the country’s centuries-long isolation.

Not long after the Kanagawa Treaty, the age of the shogunate also came to an end in 1868, when a group of political reformers succeeded in re-establishing a centralized, imperial government. This restoration of power to the emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration, named after Emperor Meiji, who ruled until 1912. During the 45 years of the Meiji era, Japan experienced rapid industrialization, vastly increasing its wealth and power, and successfully avoided falling under the expansionist aspirations of the Western powers. The fictional events of Madama Butterfly take place during the Meiji era, when Japan was only just adapting to the presence of foreigners, of Christian missions, of international trade, and of the notion of emigration. All of these issues are at play in Madama Butterfly.

The policy of sakoku also lasted until 1853, when Perry requested that Japan open its ports to foreign trade. The Kanagawa Treaty, which opened two ports to U.S. trade, lasted only until 1854, when a group of political reformers succeeded in re-establishing a centralized, imperial government. This restoration of power to the emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration, named after Emperor Meiji, who ruled until 1912. During the 45 years of the Meiji era, Japan experienced rapid industrialization, vastly increasing its wealth and power, and successfully avoided falling under the expansionist aspirations of the Western powers. The fictional events of Madama Butterfly take place during the Meiji era, when Japan was only just adapting to the presence of foreigners, of Christian missions, of international trade, and of the notion of emigration. All of these issues are at play in Madama Butterfly.

The Miyozaki Quarter was the entertainment district of Yokohama, and the Gankirō was the section reserved for foreign visitors. In this busy scene, a boisterous celebration is underway in the foreground. Foreigners sit on the floor in the Japanese manner, enjoying the company of Japanese women and drinking sake. Two geishas on the left side play the samisen, a traditional Japanese instrument. In the center, an animated (and perhaps inebriated) figure stands and performs a lively dance.

Example 4: Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise by Sadahide (1861)

Sadahide’s ukiyo-e pentatych (i.e. series of five woodblock prints) depicts American, French, and British vessels in a harbor, busily unloading crates of cargo. It is a vivid depiction of the hustle and bustle of a busy trading port. Of particular interest is the bank of open gun ports all along the side of the American ship, providing a view into the military might of the vessel. It is a subtle hint of the threat of military action, should trade be disrupted.

Example 5: Picture of Foreigners’ Revelry at the Gankirō in the Miyozaki Quarter by Yoshikazu (1861)

Sadahide’s ukiyo-e pentatych (i.e. series of five woodblock prints) depicts American, French, and British vessels in a harbor, busily unloading crates of cargo. It is a vivid depiction of the hustle and bustle of a busy trading port. Of particular interest is the bank of open gun ports all along the side of the American ship, providing a view into the military might of the vessel. It is a subtle hint of the threat of military action, should trade be disrupted.

The Miyozaki Quarter was the entertainment district of Yokohama, and the Gankirō was the section reserved for foreign visitors. In this busy scene, a boisterous celebration is underway in the foreground. Foreigners sit on the floor in the Japanese manner, enjoying the company of Japanese women and drinking sake. Two geishas on the left side play the samisen, a traditional Japanese instrument. In the center, an animated (and perhaps inebriated) figure stands and performs a lively dance.
STEP 4: Now it’s time to turn to the text and music of Madama Butterfly. If students are not already familiar with the plot, it will suffice for them to know only its basic points: it is the story of a young Japanese girl in Nagasaki who enters into a relationship with a visiting American naval officer. While he views their arrangement as temporary, she considers it a binding and permanent marriage. The opera follows her from the time of her engagement through her abandonment by the American, to her eventual suicide. Have students turn to the libretto text beginning at “Dovunque al mondo,” Pinkerton’s aria from early in Act I. This piece and the following dialogue encapsulate Pinkerton’s attitude toward Japan. Play the first portion of the excerpt in Track 1 entitled “Pinkerton’s Philosophy” as students follow along to the text. In a free discussion, encourage students to summarize Pinkerton’s worldview. What is the American way of life when it comes to foreign lands? How does he treat those he meets? Does he think of the effect his actions might have on others? Or does he treat everyone and everything as an expendable resource, to be used up and discarded?

Continue by playing Track 2 entitled “Pinkerton Continues” as students follow along to the text. Here, Pinkerton makes it clear that he considers his marriage to be a temporary arrangement despite Sharpless’s objections, and that he thinks nothing of abandoning his Japanese bride on a whim. He does not consider her to be a “real” wife. Can students draw parallels between Pinkerton’s view of his Japanese wife and the behavior of Westerners that students observed in the artworks in Step 3?

STEP 5: Through the character of Pinkerton, we can witness the competing forces at play in Japan in this time period: the West viewed Japan as a land up for grabs in terms of colonization and free trade, while Japan understood that its ability to maintain an independent identity must lie in its adoption of Western-style industry and its development of a military strong enough to dominate its neighbors. Pinkerton treats the people of his temporary home as both expendable and subject to his own whims. In a way, his character reveals the challenges facing Japan as it moved into the modern age.

In Madama Butterfly, another character can be understood as representing Japan’s past: the Bonze, Cio-Cio-San’s uncle. To investigate this aspect of the opera, have students turn to the excerpt on the reproducible handouts under Track 3, entitled “The Bonze.” They should follow along to the text while you play the recording of the excerpt. Based on their understanding of the text alone, encourage students to discuss the conflict in this scene. What has Butterfly done to upset her uncle? How does he respond?

It may interest students to learn that one of the goals of the policy of sakoku had been the removal of foreign religious influence, and accordingly Christian worship was forbidden and those who practiced it were punished. This prohibition was relaxed in the Meiji Restoration, which also adopted a negative stance towards Buddhism, in favor of the Shinto religion. As a Buddhist priest, a bonze was the representative of the previous era, in which the shoguns had cultivated a close connection to Buddhism.

STEP 6: Conclude the activity by asking students to reflect on the popular song, the artworks they studied, and the excerpts from Madama Butterfly. Knowing what they know now, why do they think Cio-Cio-San came to such a tragic end? Do they think Japan’s uniquely brisk transformation into a modern world power and related cultural tensions played a role in her alienation? How might her story have been different if it had occurred before the end of sakoku? Or would it even have been possible?

FOLLOW-UP: As homework, have students imagine that they are an illustrator for a historical newspaper or periodical. They are tasked with creating a cover illustration depicting the story of Madama Butterfly. It may be critical of Pinkerton, of Cio-Cio-San, or take any other editorial position of their choice. Their illustration may include a tag line, as do several of the examples in Step 3 above. Students should also compose a one-paragraph description of their illustration and the interpretive position it espouses. The goal of this exercise is to encourage students to view artworks as documents that are rooted in their age and that elicit strong critical responses in the viewer.

FUN FACT: David Belasco, author and director of the play on which Puccini’s opera is based, was known for his innovations to stage technology. In Madama Butterfly, he won particular praise for creating a new and striking lighting effect in Cio-Cio-San’s vigil scene, which replicated the transition from dusk to dawn, including the simulation of starlight. Puccini was very impressed by this episode, set entirely without dialogue, and devised an equally unconventional musical effect for the corresponding moment in his opera, with a chorus of women’s voices humming behind the scene.
14

**STEP 4:** Now it’s time to turn to the text and music of Madame Butterfly. If students are not already familiar with the plot, it will suffice for them to know only its basic points: it is the story of a young Japanese girl in Nagasaki who enters into a relationship with a visiting American naval officer. While he views their arrangement as temporary, she considers it a binding and permanent marriage. The opera follows her from the time of her engagement through her abandonment by the American, to her eventual suicide. Have students turn to the libretto text beginning at “Dovunque al mondo,” Pinkerton’s aria from early in Act I. This piece and the following dialogue encapsulate Pinkerton’s attitude toward Japan. Play the first portion of the excerpt in Track 1 entitled “Pinkerton’s Philosophy” as students follow along to the text. In a free discussion, encourage students to summarize Pinkerton’s worldview. What is the American way of life when it comes to foreign lands? How does he treat those he meets? Does he think of the effect his actions might have on others? Or does he treat everyone and everything as an expendable resource, to be used up and discarded?

Continue by playing Track 2, entitled “Pinkerton Continues” as students follow along to the text. Here, Pinkerton makes it clear that he considers his marriage to be a temporary arrangement despite Sharpless’s objections, and that he thinks nothing of abandoning his Japanese bride on a whim. He does not consider her to be a “real” wife. Can students draw parallels between Pinkerton’s view of his Japanese wife and the behavior of Westerners that students observed in the artworks in Step 3?

**STEP 5:** Through the character of Pinkerton, we can witness the competing forces at play in Japan in this time period: the West viewed Japan as a land up for grabs in terms of colonization and free trade, while Japan understood that its ability to maintain an independent identity must lie in its adoption of Western-style industry and its development of a military strong enough to dominate its neighbors. Pinkerton treats the people of his temporary home as both expendable and subject to his own whims. In a way, his character reveals the challenges facing Japan as it moved into the modern age.

In Madame Butterfly, another character can be understood as representing Japan’s past: the Bonze, Cio-Cio-San’s uncle. To investigate this aspect of the opera, have students turn to the excerpt on the reproducible handouts under Track 3, entitled “The Bonze.” They should follow along to the text while you play the recording of the excerpt. Based on their understanding of the text alone, encourage students to discuss the conflict in this scene. What has Butterfly done to upset her uncle? How does he respond?

It may interest students to learn that one of the goals of the policy of sakoku had been the removal of foreign religious influence, and accordingly Christian worship was forbidden and those who practiced it were punished. This prohibition was relaxed in the Meiji Restoration, which also adopted a negative stance towards Buddhism, in favor of the Shinto religion. As a Buddhist priest, a bonze was the representative of the previous era, in which the shoguns had cultivated a close connection to Buddhism.

**STEP 6:** Conclude the activity by asking students to reflect on the popular song, the artworks they studied, and the excerpts from Madame Butterfly. Knowing what they know now, why do they think Cio-Cio-San came to such a tragic end? Do they think it had occurred before the end of sakoku? Or would it even have been possible?

**FOLLOW-UP:** As homework, have students imagine that they are an illustrator for a historical newspaper or periodical. They are tasked with creating a cover illustration depicting the story of Madame Butterfly. It may be critical of Pinkerton, of Cio-Cio-San, or take any other editorial position of their choice. Their illustration may include a tag depicting the story of Madame Butterfly, another character can be understood as representing Japan’s past: the Bonze, Cio-Cio-San’s uncle. To investigate this aspect of the opera, have students turn to the excerpt on the reproducible handouts under Track 3, entitled “The Bonze.” They should follow along to the text while you play the recording of the excerpt. Based on their understanding of the text alone, encourage students to discuss the conflict in this scene. What has Butterfly done to upset her uncle? How does he respond?

It may interest students to learn that one of the goals of the policy of sakoku had been the removal of foreign religious influence, and accordingly Christian worship was forbidden and those who practiced it were punished. This prohibition was relaxed in the Meiji Restoration, which also adopted a negative stance towards Buddhism, in favor of the Shinto religion. As a Buddhist priest, a bonze was the representative of the previous era, in which the shoguns had cultivated a close connection to Buddhism.

**FUN FACT:** David Belasco, author and director of the play on which Puccini’s opera is based, was known for his innovations to stage technology. In Madame Butterfly, he won particular praise for creating a new and striking lighting effect in Cio-Cio-San’s vigil scene, which replicated the transition from dusk to dawn, including the simulation of starlight. Puccini was very impressed by this episode, set entirely without dialogue, and devised an equally unconventional musical effect for the corresponding moment in his opera, with a chorus of women’s voices humming behind the scene.
A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

When beginning to work on a new opera, Puccini was often most inspired by settings that included a strong local flavor or ambience. Whether a bohemian garret in the Parisian Quartier Latin in La Bohème or a mythisc version of ancient China in Turandot, these locales stimulated Puccini to evoke the setting in his musical representation and to compose music that inhabits the same world as the opera’s characters.

In Madama Butterfly, the composer was very deliberate in crafting a sound world that would transport listeners to Japan—an aural setting that further juxtaposes Cio-Cio-San’s world with that of Pinkerton. Puccini incorporated Japanese and Chinese folksongs into the musical fabric of the score and quoted the Japanese national anthem. He also utilized Japanese gongs in the percussion parts and approximated the sound of Japanese music through the use of pentatonic scales. For Pinkerton, in contrast, he developed a prototypically “American” sound. For audiences both past and present, the musical representation of the cultures that collide in the opera’s story increases the dramatic tension and embodies the dueling desires within the person of Cio-Cio-San herself.

In this activity, students will:

- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.
- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.
- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.
- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.
- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.

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 Madama Butterfly available online or on the accompanying CD.

Curricular Connections
Music, History and Social Studies, Humanities, and Arts

Learning Objectives
• To introduce and/or reinforce knowledge of musical terminology
• To listen to musical examples critically and to recognize their harmonic influences
• To explore the notion of “exoticism” in music
• To use new musical vocabulary to create and describe a personal musical style

Steps
Students will listen to and analyze a selection of musical passages in order to discern Puccini’s compositional process in developing “Japanese” and “American” musical styles. They will use new musical vocabulary to describe the attributes of each passage and will apply their knowledge in the creation of an independent musical representation of their own identity and culture.

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. Where applicable, you may want to demonstrate the terms on the piano or on another instrument. Several of the terms in particular will help students to develop an ear for the ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.

Step 2: Using the chart provided in the reproducible handouts for this activity, invite students to listen to a selection of excerpts. Each of the examples includes a musical element that Puccini uses to illustrate a kind of “local color,” either American or Japanese. Have students make notes in the right-hand column on how that musical element is presented musically, any associations they feel the element possesses, and any opinions on what its meaning might be. It may be necessary to play each excerpt through a few times.

A completed chart with further details on how Puccini uses the musical element throughout the opera is provided on the following page for your reference.

Common Core Standards and Madama Butterfly
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.
A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

When beginning to work on a new opera, Puccini was often most inspired by settings that included a strong local flavor or ambience. Whether a bohemian garret in the Parisian Quartier Latin in La Bohème or a mythic version of ancient China in Turandot, these locales stimulated Puccini to evoke the setting in his musical representation and to compose music that inhabits the same world as the opera’s characters.

In Madama Butterfly, the composer was very deliberate in crafting a sound world that would transport listeners to Japan—an aural setting that further juxtaposes Cio-Cio-San’s world with that of Pinkerton. Puccini incorporated Japanese and Chinese folk songs into the musical fabric of the score and quoted the Japanese national anthem. He also utilized Japanese gongs in the percussion parts and approximated the sound of Japanese music through the use of pentatonic scales. For Pinkerton, in contrast, he developed a prototypically “American” sound. For audiences both past and present, the musical representation of the cultures that collide in the opera’s story increases the dramatic tension and embodies the dueling desires within the person of Cio-Cio-San herself.

In this activity, students will:
- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.
- become familiar with some of the musical ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.
- use new musical vocabulary to create and describe a personal musical style
- listen to and analyze a selection of musical excerpts
- relate some of Puccini’s musical choices to character, plot, and the emotional arc of the opera
- critically and to recognize their musical style

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
- To explore the notion of “exoticism” in music
- To introduce and/or reinforce knowledge of musical terminology
- To use musical examples critically and to recognize their harmonic influences
- To present, the musical representation of the cultures that collide in the opera’s story
- To listen to and analyze a selection of musical excerpts
- To listen to and analyze a selection of musical excerpts
- To relate some of Puccini’s musical choices to character, plot, and the emotional arc of the opera
- To relate some of Puccini’s musical choices to character, plot, and the emotional arc of the opera

STEPS

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. Where applicable, you may want to demonstrate the terms on the piano or on another instrument. Several of the terms in particular will help students to develop an ear for the ways that Western composers have evoked Asian culture, namely the concepts of pentatonic and whole-tone scales.

STEP 2: Using the chart provided in the reproducible handouts for this activity, invite students to listen to a selection of excerpts. Each of the examples includes a musical element that Puccini uses to illustrate a kind of “local color,” either American or Japanese. Have students make notes in the right-hand column on how that musical element is presented musically, any associations they feel the element possesses, and any opinions on what its meaning might be. It may be necessary to play each excerpt through a few times.

A completed chart with further details on how Puccini uses the musical element throughout the opera is provided on the following page for your reference.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY
This activity directly supports the following ELA-Literacy Common Core Standards:
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.11-12.3 Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin and 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.

"UN BEL DI" Cio-Cio-San’s big Act II solo, “Un bel di,” is the most famous aria in Madama Butterfly (and one of the best known in the entire operatic repertoire). It comes at an important moment emotionally and dramatically, as she faces the dwindling of her fortunes and must decide whether to remain steadfast in awaiting Pinkerton’s return or to relinquish her hopes. The aria is also very demanding from a vocal standpoint. It begins dreamily, as if Cio-Cio-San can see herself in the future, happily reunited with her beloved. The singer must traverse intense expressions of love, longing, and hope, as Cio-Cio-San demonstrates her unshaken faith in and rapturous desire for Pinkerton’s return.

The aria may be heard in its entirety on Track 14, and the text and translation are available on page 41.
Before moving on to the next excerpt, discuss the passage as a class and have students provide details on the musical sounds Puccini uses to paint a colorful picture of traditional Japanese instruments. Working through the excerpts one at a time, have students follow along to the music. As they listen, they may wish to highlight or underline passages in the text where they feel that Puccini is using one of his operas to fill the effect of traditional Japanese instruments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRACK</th>
<th>MUSICAL ELEMENT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION &amp; MEANING/ASSOCIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Star-Spangled Banner</td>
<td>Puccini quotes the American national anthem in the opera’s first scene to represent the character of Pinkerton and his personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments</td>
<td>The music includes delicate combinations of harp, piccolo, flute, bells, and tremolo strings, which Puccini uses to recreate the effect of traditional Japanese instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japanese national anthem</td>
<td>This brief moment quotes the second phrase of “Kimigayo,” the Japanese national anthem. It corresponds to Butterfly’s text at “La legge giapponese,” or “The Japanese law.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chinese folksong (two examples)</td>
<td>By quoting this excerpt from a Chinese folksong, Puccini is emulating a generic “eastern” sound that audiences would have recognized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Japanese chant melody (based on the pentatonic scale)</td>
<td>This moment quotes a Japanese chant melody and is based on the pentatonic scale. It is another example of Puccini creating an “eastern” sound in a more general sense. The melody has a minor pentatonic sound to it, above a repetitive, static harmony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pentatonic harmonies (two examples)</td>
<td>Puccini utilizes the pentatonic scale both melodically (creating melodies out of the notes of the pentatonic scale) and harmonically (playing two or more notes from the scale simultaneously). Using the pentatonic scale often creates open-sounding intervals, such as the perfect 4th and perfect 5th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Japanese percussion</td>
<td>Puccini accentuates the cry of the Bonze with the crash of the tam-tam.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP 3: Now, have students turn to the texts and translations found on the next page of the reproducible handouts, corresponding to Tracks 12 through 15. These excerpts are longer and involve connecting the meaning of the words with the sound of the music. Working through the excerpts one at a time, have students follow along to the translation while listening to the corresponding music. As they listen, they may wish to highlight or underline passages in the text where they feel that Puccini is using one of the musical elements explored in the previous step. Play each excerpt two or three times to allow students enough time to make notes below the text with details on Puccini’s musical techniques and how they correspond to the meaning of the words.

Before moving on to the next excerpt, discuss the passage as a class and have students provide details on the musical sounds Puccini uses to paint a colorful picture and create meaning. Encourage students to use their new musical vocabulary and put his operas on stage. When the premiere of Madama Butterfly was delayed due to the injuries Puccini suffered in an automobile accident and his subsequent slow recovery, Sonzogno managed to put forward one of the operas from his own roster to fill the resulting void: the now-forgotten Siberia by Umberto Giordano. Sonzogno, who was known for his unscrupulous business tactics, would have been keen to ensure that the success of his opera was not eclipsed by Puccini’s new work, which immediately followed it on stage. It would not have been the first or the last time that a discreet bribe before a premiere produced a disruptive clique that carried the rest of the public along with it. Importuned as he was to bring out the work this season, sick as he was, he failed to find original inspiration and had recourse to melodies from his previous operas and even helped himself to melodies by other composers. His opera is dead.”

It is worth mentioning that the owner of Il Secolo, Edoardo Sonzogno, was none other than the Milanese, who do not relish being made fun of. The opera… shows that Maestro Puccini was in a hurry.
Answer Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRACK</th>
<th>MUSICAL ELEMENT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION &amp; MEANING/ASSOCIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Star-Spangled Banner</td>
<td>Puccini quotes the American national anthem in the opera’s first scene to represent the character of Pinkerton and his personality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments</td>
<td>The music includes subtle combinations of harp, piccolo, flute, bells, and tremolo strings, which Puccini uses to recreate the effect of traditional Japanese instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Japanese national anthem</td>
<td>This brief moment quotes the second phrase of “Kimigayo,” the Japanese national anthem. It corresponds to Butterfly’s text at “La fior giapponese,” or “The Japanese law.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chinese folksong</td>
<td>By quoting this excerpt from a Chinese folksong Puccini is emulating a generic “eastern” sound that audiences would have recognized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Japanese chant melody (based on the pentatonic scale)</td>
<td>This moment quotes a Japanese chant melody and is based on the pentatonic scale. It is another example of Puccini creating an “eastern” sound in a more general sense. The melody has a minor pentatonic sound to it, above a repetitive, static harmony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9, 10</td>
<td>Pentatonic harmonies (two examples)</td>
<td>Puccini utilizes the pentatonic scale both melodically (creating melodies out of the notes of the pentatonic scale) and harmonically (playing two or more notes from the scale simultaneously). Using the pentatonic scale often creates open-sounding intervals, such as the perfect 4th and perfect 5th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Japanese percussion</td>
<td>Puccini accentuates the cry of the Bonze with the crash of the tam-tam.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP 3: Now, have students turn to the texts and translations found on the next page of the reproducible handouts, corresponding to Tracks 12 through 15. These excerpts are longer and involve connecting the meaning of the words with the sound of the music. Working through the excerpts one at a time, have students follow along to the translation while listening to the corresponding music. As they listen, they may wish to highlight or underline passages in the text where they feel that Puccini is using one of the musical elements explored in the previous step. Play each excerpt two or three times to allow students enough time to make notes below the text with details on Puccini’s musical techniques and how they correspond to the meaning of the words.

Before moving on to the next excerpt, discuss the passage as a class and have students provide details on the musical sounds Puccini uses to paint a colorful picture and create meaning. Encourage students to use their new musical vocabulary and put his operas on stage. When the premiere of Madama Butterfly was delayed due to the injuries Puccini suffered in an automobile accident and his subsequent slow recovery, Sonzogno managed to put forward one of the operas from his own roster to fill the resulting void: the now-forgotten Siberia by Umberto Giordano. Sonzogno, who was known for his unscrupulous business tactics, would have been keen to ensure that the success of his opera was not eclipsed by Puccini’s new work, which immediately followed it on stage. It would not have been the first or the last time that a discreet bribe before a premiere produced a disruptive claque that carried the rest of the public along with it.

After the disaster of the opening night and Madama Butterfly was withdrawn from the stage, an article appeared in the newspaper Il Secolo. It reflected, “A second performance would have provoked a scandal among the Milanese, who do not relish being made fun of. The opera… shows that Maestro Puccini was in a hurry.”
to give concrete examples as they are able. A completed chart is provided below for your reference.

**Answer Key**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRACK</th>
<th>EXCERPT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION: CONNECTING MUSIC AND MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Act I, Pinkerton’s aria “Dovunque al mondo”</td>
<td>Pinkerton reflects on the benefits he enjoys as a member of the U.S. Navy, taking pleasure where he finds it. The Star-Spangled Banner is quoted, creating a strong association between his character and America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Act I, from Pinkerton and Butterfly’s first conversation, “Gran ventura”</td>
<td>The delicate melody in the solo violin is a quotation of a Chinese folksong. Puccini also emphasizes Pinkerton’s question about Nagasaki by underscoring his vocal line with harmonies based on the pentatonic scale, creating a generic “Eastern” sound. When Butterfly reflects on her family history, Puccini quotes another folk song, now with a more minor inflection, as she tells of the hard life she has led.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Act II, “Un bel dì”</td>
<td>The aria includes frequent pentatonic inflections, both harmonically and melodically. Several melodic motives are drawn from different folk songs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Act II Finale</td>
<td>The final scene is rife with pentatonic and folk-like melodies. The opera ends with a dramatic, quotation of a Japanese folk song, played in unison, based on the pentatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FOLLOW UP:** As homework, have students use the final page in the reproducible handouts, “The Songs and Sounds of My World” to brainstorm musical and other sound elements that they associate with their own cultures and everyday life. Using these elements, students should compose a brief essay, incorporating as many musical terms as they are able, in answer to the following questions:

*If Puccini had written an opera with you as the title character, how would he have created local flavor to represent your world? What are some of the songs, instruments, and sounds he would have incorporated into the score to capture the world and culture you live in?*
to give concrete examples as they are able. A completed chart is provided below for your reference.

**Answer Key**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRACK</th>
<th>EXCERPT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION: CONNECTING MUSIC AND MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Act I, Pinkerton’s aria “Dovunque al mondo”</td>
<td>Pinkerton reflects on the benefits he enjoys as a member of the U.S. Navy, taking pleasure where he finds it. The Star-Spangled Banner is quoted, creating a strong association between his character and America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Act I, from Pinkerton and Butterfly’s first conversation, “Vogna ventura”</td>
<td>The delicate melody in the solo violin is a quotation of a Chinese folksong. Puccini also emphasizes Pinkerton’s question about Nagasaki by underscoring his vocal line with harmonies based on the pentatonic scale, creating a generic “Eastern” sound. When Butterfly reflects on her family history, Puccini quotes another folk song, now with a more minor inflection, as she tells of the hard life she has led.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Act II, “Un bel di”</td>
<td>The aria includes frequent pentatonic inflections, both harmonically and melodically. Several melodic motives are drawn from different folk songs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Act II Finale</td>
<td>The final scene is rife with pentatonic and folk-like melodies. The opera ends with a dramatic, quotation of a Japanese folk song, played in unison, based on the pentatonic scale.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FOLLOW UP:** As homework, have students use the final page in the reproducible handouts, “The Songs and Sounds of My World” to brainstorm musical and other sound elements that they associate with their own cultures and everyday life. Using these elements, students should compose a brief essay, incorporating as many musical terms as they are able, in answer to the following questions:

*If Puccini had written an opera with you as the title character, how would he have created local flavor to represent your world? What are some of the songs, instruments, and sounds he would have incorporated into the score to capture the world and culture you live in?*
Ten Essential Musical Terms

Aria A self-contained piece for solo voice, typically with orchestral accompaniment. Arias form a major part of larger works such as operas and oratorios.

Exoticism The inclusion or imitation of foreign musical styles in Western music. Composers have long drawn on the exotic sounds of other cultures to enrich their own works. In the 19th century, musicians were inspired by influences as varied as Turkish Janissary bands and Spanish dance rhythms, among many other examples, to provide local color for their creations. In Madama Butterfly, Puccini’s use of pentatonic scales and Japanese and Chinese folk songs represents a type of exoticism.

Folk Music and Folksong Music derived from an oral tradition, usually in a simple style and understood to represent the history or “essence” of a nation or cultural group. The term implies a separation between this kind of music and the “high art” form of art music developed by trained composers. Interest in folksong grew steadily throughout the 19th century, parallel and related to the growth of cultural and political nationalism. Folksong formed a rich resource for many 19th-century composers as they sought to broaden the classical idiom and evoke rustic settings, traditional cultures, and the distant past.

Fugue A musical form based on a brief theme, or “subject,” and its imitation throughout multiple voices of a composition. The term derives from two Latin words meaning “to flee” and “to chase,” reflecting the way that fugal subjects (i.e., repeated musical ideas) figuratively chase one another in fugal subjects (i.e., repeated musical ideas). The art of fugal composition entails the borrowing of the melodic line of its source, although it can include borrowed harmony as well. Often, a composer’s use of musical quotation increases the web of meanings of a given passage, as it inspires the listener to make associations with the source’s text, composer, culture, or musical tradition. An example from Madama Butterfly is Puccini’s quotation of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

Pentatonic Scale A scale made up of five pitches (from the Greek pente, five). The most common pentatonic scale includes the pitches C-D-E-G-A, although other combinations of intervals are possible, including some that have a more “minor” inflection to Western ears. The black keys of the piano keyboard form another pentatonic scale. Pentatonic scales have been used in music from many cultures around the world and throughout history, from China, Japan, and Java to European folk music and American popular music, especially the African-American spiritual and jazz. In Madama Butterfly, Puccini used pentatonic melodies and harmonies to represent Cio-Cio-San and her Japanese heritage.

Gong A percussion instrument, usually flat and round in shape, made out of resonating metal such as bronze or brass. Typically hung from a frame and played by hitting them with a mallet, gongs have a very specific timbre. Puccini uses two different kinds in Madama Butterfly to evoke the sounds of the Far East: tuned gongs, which create a pitch when they are hit, and the tam-tam, which creates an unpitched crashing sound.

Through-Composed A style of seamless musical composition without obvious repetitions or breaks. This concept may be applied to works as a whole, as in entire operas, or to individual pieces. In an aria, for example, it is understood in contrast to the various types of strophic song, all of which include some variety of internal repetition (such as the da capo aria and rondeau form). Through-composed songs, even when they are based on strophic texts, include new music for each stanza. The technique of through-composition allows a composer greater invention and flexibility, as the music may change to reflect the dramatic situation and develop organically, rather than being restricted by repetition or other formal limitations.

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 operatic stage, the poor, the lower-class, the outcast, and the criminal. Characters in verismo operas are often driven to defy reason, morality, and occasionally the law. In order to reflect these emotional extremes, composers developed a musical style that communicates raw and unfiltered passions. Before its exploration on the operatic stage, the verismo aesthetic developed in the realm of literature.

Whole-Tone Scale A six-note scale (seven including the upper octave) consisting exclusively of whole steps or “tones”). There are only two possible whole tone scales: C-D-E-F-G-A (major whole-tone scale) and Bb-B-C-D-E-F-G (minor whole-tone scale). Whole-tone scales and chords are harmonically unstable as they lack the pitches used in chord resolutions typical of the tonal era. In Madama Butterfly, Puccini often uses whole-tone inflections to lend his music an otherworldly or exotic feeling.

Japonisme One of many wide-ranging effects of the opening of Japan to foreign trade in 1853 was the surge of interest on the part of Western artists in the decorative arts, aesthetics, costumes, and crafts of Japan. The London Exposition of 1862 and the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867 showcased Japan’s arts to Europeans for the first time, but even before this many visual artists were already collectors of Japanese fans, kimonos, bronzes, and examples of the rich Japanese tradition of woodblock prints known as ukiyo-e. Artists such as Édouard Manet, Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, Mary Cassatt, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and Vincent Van Gogh, among many others, began incorporating Japanese motifs and props into their own artworks, and many developed a visual style influenced by Japanese art in its use of asymmetrical composition, lack of perspective, bold colors, and clarity of line. As a stylistic movement, this interest in Japan and its arts is usually referenced using the French term “Japonisme,” given its prevalence particularly among French artists.

Japonisme influenced the most important French writers of the day, such as Stéphane Mallarmé and Marcel Proust, and popular interest in Japan also helped make the works of Pierre Loti wildly successful—including the novel Madame Chrysantheme (1887), one of the sources for Madama Butterfly. In music, examples of Japonisme can be found in the opera La Princesse Jaune (“The Yellow Princess,” 1872) by Camille Saint-Saëns, Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Mikado (1885), and the operettas The Geisha (1896) and San Toy (1899) by Sydney Jones.

Through-Composed A style of seamless musical composition without obvious repetitions or breaks. This concept may be applied to works as a whole, as in entire operas, or to individual pieces. In an aria, for example, it is understood in contrast to the various types of strophic song, all of which include some variety of internal repetition (such as the da capo aria and rondeau form). Through-composed songs, even when they are based on strophic texts, include new music for each stanza. The technique of through-composition allows a composer greater invention and flexibility, as the music may change to reflect the dramatic situation and develop organically, rather than being restricted by repetition or other formal limitations.

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 operatic stage, the poor, the lower-class, the outcast, and the criminal. Characters in verismo operas are often driven to defy reason, morality, and occasionally the law. In order to reflect these emotional extremes, composers developed a musical style that communicates raw and unfiltered passions. Before its exploration on the operatic stage, the verismo aesthetic developed in the realm of literature.

Whole-Tone Scale A six-note scale (seven including the upper octave) consisting exclusively of whole steps or “tones”). There are only two possible whole tone scales: C-D-E-F-G-A (major whole-tone scale) and Bb-B-C-D-E-F-G (minor whole-tone scale). Whole-tone scales and chords are harmonically unstable as they lack the pitches used in chord resolutions typical of the tonal era. In Madama Butterfly, Puccini often uses whole-tone inflections to lend his music an otherworldly or exotic feeling.

Japonisme One of many wide-ranging effects of the opening of Japan to foreign trade in 1853 was the surge of interest on the part of Western artists in the decorative arts, aesthetics, costumes, and crafts of Japan. The London Exposition of 1862 and the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867 showcased Japan’s arts to Europeans for the first time, but even before this many visual artists were already collectors of Japanese fans, kimonos, bronzes, and examples of the rich Japanese tradition of woodblock prints known as ukiyo-e. Artists such as Édouard Manet, Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, Mary Cassatt, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and Vincent Van Gogh, among many others, began incorporating Japanese motifs and props into their own artworks, and many developed a visual style influenced by Japanese art in its use of asymmetrical composition, lack of perspective, bold colors, and clarity of line. As a stylistic movement, this interest in Japan and its arts is usually referenced using the French term “Japonisme,” given its prevalence particularly among French artists.

Japonisme influenced the most important French writers of the day, such as Stéphane Mallarmé and Marcel Proust, and popular interest in Japan also helped make the works of Pierre Loti wildly successful—including the novel Madame Chrysantheme (1887), one of the sources for Madama Butterfly. In music, examples of Japonisme can be found in the opera La Princesse Jaune (“The Yellow Princess,” 1872) by Camille Saint-Saëns, Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Mikado (1885), and the operettas The Geisha (1896) and San Toy (1899) by Sydney Jones.
Ten Essential Musical Terms

Aria A self-contained piece for solo voice, typically with orchestral accompaniment. Aria form a major part of larger works such as operas and oratorios.

Exoticism The inclusion or imitation of foreign musical styles in Western music. Composers have long drawn on the exotic sounds of other cultures to enrich their own works. In the 19th century, musicians were inspired by influences as varied as Turkish janissary bands and Spanish dance rhythms, among many other examples, to provide local color for their creations. In Madama Butterfly, Puccini’s use of pentatonic scales and Japanese and Chinese folk songs represents a type of exoticism.

Folk Music and Folksong Music derived from an oral tradition, usually in a simple style and understood to represent the history or “essence” of a nation or cultural group. The term implies a separation between this kind of music and the “higher” form of art music developed by trained composers. Interest in folksong grew steadily throughout the 19th century, parallel and related to the growth of cultural and political nationalism. Folksong formed a rich resource for many 19th-century composers as they sought to broaden the classical idiom and evoke rustic settings, traditional cultures, and the distant past.

Fugue A musical form based on a brief theme, or “subject,” and its imitation throughout multiple voices of a composition. The term derives from two Latin words meaning “to flee” and “to chase,” reflecting the way that fugal subjects (i.e. repeated musical ideas) figuratively chase one another in repetition. The art of fugal composition reached its pinnacle in the works of Johann Sebastian Bach in the 18th century, but fugues can be found in the works of many later composers, both in orchestral music and in opera. The fugal theme from Butterfly’s prelude recurs throughout the opera, evoking the hustle and bustle of Cio-Cio-San’s wedding day.

Gong A percussion instrument, usually flat and round in shape, made out of resonating metal such as bronze or brass. Typically hung from a frame and played by hitting them with a mallet, gongs have a very specific timbre. Puccini uses two different kinds in Madama Butterfly to evoke the sounds of the Far East: tuned gongs, which create a pitch when they are hit, and the tam-tam, which creates an unpitched crashing sound.

Musical Quotation As in the corresponding concept in speech or literature, a composer’s use of a brief passage of pre-existent musical material. The principle is similar to the contemporary notion of sampling, where sounds are taken from a recorded medium and inserted into a new musical work. Musical quotation most frequently entails the borrowing of the melodic line of its source, although it can include borrowed harmony as well. Often, a composer’s use of musical quotation increases the web of meanings of a given passage, as it inspires the listener to make associations with the source’s text, composer, culture, or musical tradition. An example from Madama Butterfly is Puccini’s quotation of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

Pentatonic Scale A scale made up of five pitches (from the Greek pente, five). The most common pentatonic scale includes the pitches C-D-E-G-A, although other combinations of intervals are possible, including some that have a more “minor” inflection to Western ears. The black keys of the piano keyboard form another pentatonic scale. Pentatonic scales have been used in music from many cultures around the world and throughout history, from China, Japan, and Java to European folk music and American popular music, especially the African-American spiritual and jazz. In Madama Butterfly, Puccini used pentatonic melodies and harmonies to represent Cio-Cio-San and her Japanese heritage.

Through-Composed A style of seamless musical composition without obvious repetitions or breaks. The concept may be applied to works as a whole, as in entire operas, or to individual pieces. In an aria, for example, it is understood in contrast to the various types of strophic song, all of which include some variety of internal repetition (such as the da capo aria and rondeau form). Through-composed songs, even when they are based on strophic texts, include new music for each stanza. The technique of through-composition allows a composer greater invention and flexibility, as the music may change to reflect the dramatic situation and develop organically, rather than being restricted by repetition or other formal limitations.

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, the outcast, and the criminal. Characters in verismo operas are often driven to defy reason, morality, and occasionally the law. In order to reflect these emotional extremes, composers developed a musical style that communicates raw and unfiltered passions. Before its exploration on the operatic stage, the verismo aesthetic developed in the realm of literature.

Whole-Tone Scale A six-note scale (seven including the upper octave) consisting exclusively of whole steps (or “tones”). There are only two possible whole tone scales: C-D-E-F-G-A-Bb. Spelled enharmonically, and C-D-E-F-G-A-B. Whole-tone scales and chords are harmonically unstable as they lack the pitches used in chord resolutions typical of the tonal era. In Madama Butterfly, Puccini often uses whole-tone inflections to lend his music an otherworldly or exotic feeling.

JAPONISME One of many wide-ranging effects of the opening of Japan to foreign trade in 1853 was the surge of interest on the part of Western artists in the decorative arts, aesthetics, costumes, and crafts of Japan. The London Exposition of 1862 and the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867 showcased Japan’s arts to Europeans for the first time, but even before this many visual artists were already collectors of Japanese fans, kimonos, bronzes, and examples of the rich Japanese tradition of woodblock prints known as ukiyo-e. Artists such as Édouard Manet, Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, Mary Cassatt, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and Vincent Van Gogh, among many others, began incorporating Japanese motifs and props into their own artworks, and many developed a visual style influenced by Japanese art in its use of asymmetrical composition, lack of perspective, bold colors, and clarity of line. As a stylistic movement, this interest in Japan and its arts is usually referenced using the French term “Japonisme,” given its prevalence particularly among French artists.

Japonisme influenced the most important French writers of the day, such as Stéphane Mallarmé and Marcel Proust, and popular interest in Japan also helped make the works of Pierre Loti wildly successful—including the novel Madame Chrysantheme (1887), one of the sources for Madama Butterfly. In music, examples of Japonisme can be found in the opera La Princesse Yone (“The Yellow Princess,” 1872) by Camille Saint-Saëns, Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Mikado (1885), and the operettas The Geisha (1896) and San Toy (1899) by Sydney Jones.
IN PREPARATION
For this activity, students will need the Performance Activity reproducible handouts found in the back of this guide.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS
AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY

C.CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

C.CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3
Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

C.CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6
Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, advance the plot or develop the theme.

C.CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3
Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, advance the plot or develop the theme.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
• To review students’ understanding of Puccini’s Madama Butterfly
• To examine the opera’s characters and discuss their motivations
• To discuss students’ overall experience in watching Madama Butterfly
• To think about how artistic choices are made

IN PREPARATION
This activity requires no preparation other than attendance at the Live in HD transmission of Madama Butterfly.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
• To review students’ understanding of Puccini’s Madama Butterfly
• To examine the opera’s characters and discuss their motivations
• To discuss students’ overall experience in watching Madama Butterfly
• To think about how artistic choices are made

COMMON CORE STANDARDS
AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY

C.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.

C.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.

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

Watching and listening to a performance is a unique experience that takes students beyond the printed page to an immersion in images, sound, interpretation, 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.

For Madama Butterfly, the first activity sheet, The Art of the Director, encourages students to tease out the interpretive decisions of the director from the visual clues on stage. Students will consider how added props and various staging decisions affect their perception of the opera’s meaning and its overall style.

The second, basic activity sheet is called My Highs & 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 to help them articulate their own 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 Performance Activity reproducible handouts can be found in the back of this guide. On the next page, you’ll find an activity created specifically for follow-up after the Live in HD transmission.

Asking for Help: Could Cio-Cio-San’s Crisis Have Been Averted?

Students will enjoy starting the class with an open discussion of the Met performance. What did they like? What didn’t they? 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 & Lows sheet, as well as their thoughts about the visual design of the Met production—in short, to see themselves as Madama Butterfly experts.

Students may feel the need to discuss the opera’s shocking ending and to voice their emotional responses to viewing Cio-Cio-San’s suicide. Over the course of the opera, viewers are drawn more and more closely into Cio-Cio-San’s world, as her hopes gradually narrow and her future disappears. Her sweet optimism and grace under tragedy render her tragic end all the more affecting, a fact acknowledged by director Anthony Minghella, who said of his approach to bringing the opera to the stage that “it’s no good unless it breaks your heart.”

It may be helpful for students to consider the various causes, both personal and cultural, that contributed to Cio-Cio-San’s suicide, and how her circumstances might have been improved by different kinds of help and support.

Some of the questions your students might want to consider are:

• What would Cio-Cio-San’s life have been like if she had not been disowned by her family? How might they have helped her?
• Would it have been different or better if Pinkerton had not waited three years to return to Nagasaki?

Students will enjoy starting the class with an open discussion of the Met performance. What did they like? What didn’t they? 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 & Lows sheet, as well as their thoughts about the visual design of the Met production—in short, to see themselves as Madama Butterfly experts.

Students may feel the need to discuss the opera’s shocking ending and to voice their emotional responses to viewing Cio-Cio-San’s suicide. Over the course of the opera, viewers are drawn more and more closely into Cio-Cio-San’s world, as her hopes gradually narrow and her future disappears. Her sweet optimism and grace under tragedy render her tragic end all the more affecting, a fact acknowledged by director Anthony Minghella, who said of his approach to bringing the opera to the stage that “it’s no good unless it breaks your heart.”

It may be helpful for students to consider the various causes, both personal and cultural, that contributed to Cio-Cio-San’s suicide, and how her circumstances might have been improved by different kinds of help and support.

Some of the questions your students might want to consider are:

• What would Cio-Cio-San’s life have been like if she had not been disowned by her family? How might they have helped her?
• Would it have been different or better if Pinkerton had not waited three years to return to Nagasaki?
**IN PREPARATION**

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

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY**

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1**
Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3**
Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3**
Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

---

**PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY**

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

Watching and listening to a performance is a unique experience that takes students beyond the printed page to an immersion in images, sound, interpretation, 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.

For Madama Butterfly, the first activity sheet, *The Art of the Director*, encourages students to tease out the interpretive decisions of the director from the visual clues on stage. Students will consider how added props and various staging decisions affect their perception of the opera’s meaning and its overall style.

The second, basic activity sheet is called *My Highs & 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 to help them articulate their own 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 Performance Activity reproducible handouts can be found in the back of this guide. On the next page, you’ll find an activity created specifically for follow-up after the Live in HD transmission.

---

**POST-SHOW DISCUSSION**

**Asking for Help: Could Cio-Cio-San’s Crisis Have Been Averted?**

Students will enjoy starting the class with an open discussion of the Met performance. What did they like? What didn’t they? 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 & Lows* sheet, as well as their thoughts about the visual design of the Met production—in short, to see themselves as Madama Butterfly experts.

Students may feel the need to discuss the opera’s shocking ending and to voice their emotional responses to viewing Cio-Cio-San’s suicide. Over the course of the opera, viewers are drawn more and more closely into Cio-Cio-San’s world, as her hopes gradually narrow and her future disappears. Her sweet optimism and grace under tragedy render her tragic end all the more affecting, a fact acknowledged by director Anthony Minghella, who said of his approach to bringing the opera to the stage that “it’s no good unless it breaks your heart.” It may be helpful for students to consider the various causes, both personal and cultural, that contributed to Cio-Cio-San’s suicide, and how her circumstances might have been improved by different kinds of help and support.

Some of the questions your students might want to consider are:

- What would Cio-Cio-San’s life have been like if she had not been disowned by her family? How might they have helped her?
- Would it have been different or better if Pinkerton had not waited three years to return to Nagasaki?

**IN PREPARATION**

This activity requires no preparation other than attendance at the Live in HD transmission of *Madama Butterfly*.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- To review students’ understanding of Puccini’s Madama Butterfly
- To examine the opera’s characters and discuss their motivations
- To discuss students’ overall experience in watching Madama Butterfly
- To think about how artistic choices are made

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND MADAMA BUTTERFLY**

**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.
• Is there anything that Sharpless could have done to help Cio-Cio-San?
• Was giving up her son to Pinkerton and his American wife the right decision? Do you think his life in America will be better than his life with a loving mother?
• Could Suzuki have done anything differently to help Cio-Cio-San?
• Do you think that Cio-Cio-San’s young age played a role in her response both to Pinkerton and to her reaction at losing him?

As a culminating activity, students can apply their observations about Cio-Cio-San and her plight in an interactive game incorporating modern-day resources. Divide the class into pairs of students and have them imagine that Cio-Cio-San is telephoning a crisis hotline. (Students may imagine that Cio-Cio-San is calling just prior to the final moments of the opera, or alternatively pick an earlier moment from the opera when she is facing a crucial decision.) One student will play the role of Cio-Cio-San, explaining her desires and emotions, and the other student will work with Cio-Cio-San, attempting to talk her down from her crisis and bring about a more positive outcome. After interacting in this vein for several minutes, students should switch roles.

By discussing Cio-Cio-San’s plight and its causes, students can engage with Madama Butterfly and the issues it raises, practice flexible, critical thinking, sharpen their skills of persuasion and logical argument, and practice empathy and positive emotional modeling.

Bunraku Theater  For most Western audiences, puppet theater is identified either with provocative comedy, à la Punch and Judy or Charlie McCarthy ventriloquism, or with educational entertainment for children, as in The Muppets or Sesame Street. But the puppets featured in the Met’s Madama Butterfly were inspired by Japanese Bunraku theater, a serious and sophisticated art form established in the late 17th century in the city of Osaka. The art of puppet plays accompanied by musical narration had a long history in Japan, appearing as early as the 11th century. Like the stylized theatrical genre of kabuki, which dates from close to the same time and shares many of the same stories, Bunraku from its inception was an entertainment created for ordinary people, unlike other dramatic forms of the time that were performed exclusively for the nobility and samurai classes.

Bunraku puppeteers go through lengthy apprenticeships to master the form, which may account for the gradual waning of its popularity in the 19th century. But there are still a number of practitioners today in Japan, and interest has revived in recent years, including in the West. Mark Down and Nick Barnes, the founders of Blind Summit Theatre, take inspiration from this tradition for their puppet-theater presentations. For Anthony Minghella’s production of Madama Butterfly, they created Bunraku-style puppets to represent Cio-Cio-San’s child, her servants, and, in a dream sequence, Cio-Cio-San herself. Generally one-half to two-thirds life size, a Bunraku puppet has no strings and is operated by three puppeteers, dressed in black and discreetly visible to the audience, each responsible for a different body part.
- Is there anything that Sharpless could have done to help Cio-Cio-San?
- Was giving up her son to Pinkerton and his American wife the right decision? Do you think his life in America will be better than his life with a loving mother?
- Could Suzuki have done anything differently to help Cio-Cio-San?
- Do you think that Cio-Cio-San’s young age played a role in her response both to Pinkerton and to her reaction at losing him?

As a culminating activity, students can apply their observations about Cio-Cio-San and her plight in an interactive game incorporating modern-day resources. Divide the class into pairs of students and have them imagine that Cio-Cio-San is telephoning a crisis hotline. (Students may imagine that Cio-Cio-San is calling just prior to the final moments of the opera, or alternatively pick an earlier moment from the opera when she is facing a crucial decision.) One student will play the role of Cio-Cio-San, explaining her desires and emotions, and the other student will work with Cio-Cio-San, attempting to talk her down from her crisis and bring about a more positive outcome. After interacting in this vein for several minutes, students should switch roles.

By discussing Cio-Cio-San’s plight and its causes, students can engage with Madama Butterfly and the issues it raises, practice flexible, critical thinking, sharpen their skills of persuasion and logical argument, and practice empathy and positive emotional modeling.

Bunraku Theater For most Western audiences, puppet theater is identified either with provocative comedy, à la Punch and Judy or Charlie McCarthy ventriloquism, or with educational entertainment for children, as in The Muppets or Sesame Street. But the puppets featured in the Met’s Madama Butterfly were inspired by Japanese Bunraku theater, a serious and sophisticated art form established in the late 17th century in the city of Osaka. The art of puppet plays accompanied by musical narration had a long history in Japan, appearing as early as the 11th century. Like the stylized theatrical genre of kabuki, which dates from close to the same time and shares many of the same stories, Bunraku from its inception was an entertainment created for ordinary people, unlike other dramatic forms of the time that were performed exclusively for the nobility and samurai classes.

Bunraku puppeteers go through lengthy apprentice-ships to master the form, which may account for the gradual waning of its popularity in the 19th century. But there are still a number of practitioners today in Japan, and interest has revived in recent years, including in the West. Mark Down and Nick Barnes, the founders of Blind Summit Theatre, take inspiration from this tradition for their puppet-theater presentations. For Anthony Minghella’s production of Madama Butterfly, they created Bunraku-style puppets to represent Cio-Cio-San’s child, her servants, and, in a dream sequence, Cio-Cio-San herself. Generally one-half to two-thirds life size, a Bunraku puppet has no strings and is operated by three puppeteers, dressed in black and discreetly visible to the audience, each responsible for a different body part.
GUIDE TO AUDIO TRACKS

Excerpts taken from the
Metropolitan Opera broadcast of
December 17, 2011

CIO-CIO-SAN
Liping Zhang

PINKERTON
Robert Dean Smith

SUZUKI
Maria Zifchak

SHARPLESS
Luca Salsi

GORO
Joel Sorensen

Conducted by
Plácido Domingo

Metropolitan Opera Orchestra
and Chorus

1 Pinkerton’s Philosophy in “Dovunque al mondo”
2 Pinkerton Continues
3 The Bonze
4 Star Spangled Banner
5 Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments
6 Japanese National Anthem
7 Chinese Folksong
8 Japanese chant melody
9 Pentatonic Harmonies
10 Pentatonic Harmonies (example 2)
11 Japanese Percussion
12 Pinkerton’s aria “Dovunque al mondo”
13 Pinkerton and Cio-Cio-San’s interaction at “Gran ventura”
14 Cio-Cio-San’s aria “Un bel di”
15 The final scene

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan

In the West there is England,
In the North, Russia.
My countrymen, be careful!
Outwardly they make treaties,
But you cannot tell
What is at the bottom of their hearts.
There is a Law of Nations, it is true,
But when the moment comes, remember,
The Strong eat up the Weak.

Interpretation:
GUIDE TO AUDIO TRACKS

Excerpts taken from the Metropolitan Opera broadcast of December 17, 2011

PINKERTON
Robert Dean Smith

SUZUKI
Maria Zifchak

SHARPLESS
Luca Salsi

GORO
Joel Sorensen

Conducted by Plácido Domingo
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus

1. Pinkerton’s Philosophy in “Dovunque al mondo”
2. Pinkerton Continues
3. The Bonze
4. Star Spangled Banner
5. Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments
6. Japanese National Anthem
7. Chinese Folksong
8. Japanese chant melody
9. Pentatonic Harmonies
10. Pentatonic Harmonies (example 2)
11. Japanese Percussion
12. Pinkerton’s aria “Dovunque al mondo”
13. Pinkerton and Cio-Cio-San’s interaction at “Gran ventura”
14. Cio-Cio-San’s aria “Un bel di”
15. The final scene

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan

In the West there is England,
In the North, Russia.
My countrymen, be careful!
Outwardly they make treaties,
But you cannot tell
What is at the bottom of their hearts.
There is a Law of Nations, it is true,
But when the moment comes, remember,
The Strong eat up the Weak.

Interpretation:
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)

Example 1: Picture of a Steam Locomotive along the Yokohama Waterfront by Hiroshige III (c. 1874)

Interpretation:

Example 2: “Japan Makes Her Début under Columbia’s Auspices,” by Udo Keppler in Puck Magazine, August 16, 1899

Interpretation:
Example 1: Picture of a Steam Locomotive along the Yokohama Waterfront by Hiroshige II (c. 1874)

Interpretation:

Example 2: “Japan Makes Her Début under Columbia’s Auspices,” by Udo Keppler in Puck Magazine, August 16, 1899

Interpretation:
Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)

Example 3: “It Ought to Be a Happy New Year,” by Victor Gillam in Judge Magazine, January 7, 1899

Interpretation:

Example 4: Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise by Sadahide (1847)

Interpretation:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Example 3: “It Ought to Be a Happy New Year,” by Victor Gillam in Judge Magazine, January 7, 1899

Interpretation:

Example 4: Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise by Sadahide (1841)

Interpretation:

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT’D)
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT’D)

Interpretation:

Example 5: Picture of Foreigners’ Revelry at the Gankiro in the Miyozaki Quarter by Yoshiiku (1861)

Pinkerton’s Philosophy

TRACK 1

PINKERTON: Dovunque al mondo
lo Yankee vagabondo
si gode e traffica
spregiando i rischi.
Affonda l’àncora alla ventura.
(interrupts himself to offer Sharpless a drink)
Milk-Punch, o Whisky?
(painting again) ...finché una raffica
scompigi nave e ormeggi, alberatura.
La vita ei non appaga
se non fa suo tesor
i fiori d’ogni plagia,
d’ogni bella gli amor.
SHARPLESS: È un facile vangelo
che fa la vita vaga
ma che intristisce il cuor.
PINKERTON: (continuing) Vinto si tuffa e la sorte riacciuffa.
Il suo talento fa in ogni dove.
Così mi sposo all’uso giapponese
per novecento novantanove anni.
Salvo a prosciogliermi ogni mese.
“america forever!”
SHARPLESS: “America forever.”

Pinkerton Continues

TRACK 2

SHARPLESS: Ed è bella la sposa?
Goro: (Goro, who has been listening in, comes forward
attentively and suggestively) Una ghirlanda di fior freschi.
Una stella dai raggi d’oro.
E per nulla: sol cento yen.
(to the Consul) Se Vostra Grazia mi comanda
ci n’ho un assortimento.
(the Consul, laughing, thanks him)
PINKERTON: (very impatiently) Va, conducila Goro.
(Goro runs to the rear and disappears down the hill; the two
servants go back in the house. Pinkerton and Sharpless sit down.)
SHARPLESS: Quale amaria vi prende?
Saresti addirittura cotto?

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

Milk punch or whisky?
...until a storm wind blows and rocks
his boat; then he raises sail and casts off again.
Life isn’t worth living
unless he can make
all the flowers in the fields
his own special treasures.
That’s an easy philosophy,
which makes life pleasant
but leaves you with an empty heart.

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

And is the bride a beauty?

She is a garland of fresh flowers,
like a star with golden rays.
And cheap: only one hundred yen.
If Your Honor would like to see,
I have a nice collection.

Go and get her, Goro.

What has come over you!
Are you so deeply in love?
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT’D)

Example 5: Picture of Foreigners’ Revelry at the Gankiro in the Miyozaki Quarter by Yoshikazu (1861)

Interpretation:

Pinkerton’s Philosophy

TRACK 1

PINKERTON: Dovunque al mondo
lo Yankee vagabondo
si gode e traffica
sprezzando i rischi.
Affonda l’ancora alla ventura.
(interrupts himself to offer Sharpless a drink)
Milk-Punch, o Whiskey?
(polythong again) ...finché una raffica
scompiglii nave e ormeggi, alberatura.
La vita ei non appaga
se non fa suo tesor
i fiori d’ogni plaga,
d’ogni bella gli amor.
SHARPLESS: È un facile vangelo
che fa la vita vaga
ma che intristisce il cuor.
PINKERTON: (continuing) Vinto si tuffa e la sorte riacciuffa.
Il suo talento fa in ogni dove.
Così mi sposo all’uso giapponese
per novecento novantanove anni.
Salvo a prosciogliermi ogni mese.
“america forever!”
SHARPLESS: “America forever.”

Pinkerton Continues

TRACK 2

SHARPLESS: Ed è bella la sposa?
Goro: (Goro, who has been listening in, comes forward
attentively and suggestively) Una ghirlanda di fior freschi.
Una stella dai raggi d’oro.
E per nulla: sol cento yen.
(to the Consul) Se Vostra Grazia mi comanda
e n’ho un assortimento.
(the Consul, laughing, thanks him)
PINKERTON: (very impatiently) Va, conducila Goro.
(Goro runs to the rear and disappears down the hill; the two
servants go back in the house. Pinkerton and Sharpless sit down.)
SHARPLESS: Quale smarria vi prende!
Sareste addirittura cotto?

Pinkerton:]
THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT'D)

PINKERTON: Non so! Dipende dal grado di cattura!
Amore o giro, donna o gugliolo,
dir non sapere! Certo costi!
m'ha tolte ingenuo arti invascate.
Lieve qual tenue vetro soffiato
all'esterno e la coscienza
sembra figura da paravento.
Ma dal suo lucido fondo di lacca
come con subito legge si stacca
quell'affettatudine svizzera e posa
con tal grazia silenziosa
che di ricordarla furore m'assale
se pure infrangerne dovesse l'ale.

SHARPLESS: (serious and affably)
Ehi! Basta, ehi! Ehi! Ci ha rinnegato tutti!
Che ci hai fatto alla Missione?
PINKERTON: Che mi stella quel mattato?
non so! Dipende dal grado di cottura!

THE BONZE: (annoyed)
Che hai tu fatto a quella zia?!

PINKERTON: Eh, dico: basta, basta!
(sighing)
A woman or a doll. I don't know
that she has enticed me with her innocent charms.
As delicate and fragile as blown glass
in her appearance and her behavior,
she's like a maiden painted on a silk screen.
But that little butterfly breaks
free from her shiny lacquered background,
tales wing and then comes to rest:
with such quiet grace that
I am overcome by the desire to catch her,
even if it means breaking her lovely wings.

Who knows! It depends on how you measure depth.
I don't know if it's love or just a crush
for a woman or a doll. I do know
that she has enticed me with her innocent charms.

THE BONZE: Ehi, dico: basta, basta!
(at the sound of Pinkerton's voice, the Bonze stops short in
amazement, then with a sudden resolve he invites family and
friends to a toast to your family far away).

THE BONZE: (to Butterfly, who stands isolated from the rest)
What did you do at the mission?

The Bonze

TRACK 3


GORDO: (annoyed by the arrival of the Bonze)
He has betrayed us all!

THE BONZE: (to Butterfly, who stands isolated from the rest)
What's this, you're not even crying?
Is this how you treat us? She has betrayed us all!

THE BONZE: (yelling at Butterfly)
Cio-Cio-San! Cio-Cio-San! What an abomination!

THE BONZE: (to Butterfly)
What's this you're not even crying?
Is this how you treat us? She has betrayed us all!

THE BONZE: (annoyed by the arrival of the Bonze)
Who knows! It depends on how you measure depth.
I don't know if it's love or just a crush
for a woman or a doll. I do know
that she has enticed me with her innocent charms.
As delicate and fragile as blown glass
in her appearance and her behavior,
she's like a maiden painted on a silk screen.
But that little butterfly breaks
free from her shiny lacquered background,
tales wing and then comes to rest:
with such quiet grace that
I am overcome by the desire to catch her,
even if it means breaking her lovely wings.

Who knows! It depends on how you measure depth.
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Madama Butterfly at the Intersection of Traditional and Modern Japan (CONT’D)

PINKERTON: Non so! Dipende dal grado di cattura!
Amore o grido, donna o gonghio, dir non sapere! Certo costei m’ha colto ingenuo arti invioltato.
Lieve qual tenue vetro soffiato alla statura al portamento sembra figura da paravento.
Ma dal suo lucido fondo di lacca come con subito moto si stacca quel farfallina svelza e posa con tal grazietta silenziosa che di ricongiunzer furor m’assale se pure infrangeder doveissi l’ale.
SHARPLESS: (che mi strilla quel mattato?) Ti rinneghiamo!
Ci hai rinnegato e noi…
Goro: (annoyed by the arrival of the Bonze)
Chi ci leva d’intorno le persone moleste?!
All: Oh! Cio-Cio-San! Cio-Cio-San! abbominazione!
Ci ha rinnegato tutti!
All: Rinnegato, vi dico, il culto antico.
All: Rinnegato, vi dico, la vostra età è di flebile umor.
The Bonze: Come, quel tizio ha il fisico di un grillo, la voce di una donna.
Bo: (angrily)
Oh! Cio-Cio-San! Cio-Cio-San! What an abomination!
Che mi strilla quel matto?
What is that lunatic yelling at me?
What is this, you’re not even crying?
What’s this you’re not even crying?
What a bore!
Who will get rid of this intruder?
It’s our uncle, the Bonze!
What did you do at the mission?
What is that lunatic yelling at me?
Is this how you treat us? She has betrayed us all!
OH Cio-Cio-San!
I tell you, she has renounced the old religion of our ancestors.
OH Cio-Cio-San!
Kami Sarundasico!
A soul as rotten as yours will be tormented in eternity.

The Bonze

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Track 3

Goro: (annoyed by the arrival of the Bonze)
Un corno al guastafeste!
Chi ci leva d’intorno le persone moleste?!
(Shouting to servants to take away the tables, stools and cushions; and then prudently retires, grumbling furiously)
All: (terrified, they crowd stamping into a corner) Lo zio Bonzo!
THE BONZE: (to Butterfly, who stands isolated from the rest)
Che hai tu fatto alla Missione?
PINKERTON: Che mi strilla quel mattato?
THE BONZE: Rispondi, che hai tu fatto?
All: Rispondi Cio-Cio-San!
THE BONZE: Come, hai tu gli occhi asciutti?
Son dunque questi i frutti? (shouting) Ci ha rinnegato tutti!
All: Hou! Cio-Cio-San!
THE BONZE: Rinnegato, vi dico, il culto antico.
All: Hou! Cio-Cio-San! (Butterfly hides her face in her hands)
THE BONZE: (yelling at Butterfly) Kami Sarundasico!
Affirmavi tua guasta qual supplizio sovrasta? (Butterfly’s mother comes forward to protect her, but the Bonze)
It’s our uncle, the Bonze!
What did you do at the mission?
What is that lunatic yelling at me?
Who will get rid of this intruder?
It’s our uncle, the Bonze!
What did you do at the mission?
What is that lunatic yelling at me?
Who will get rid of this intruder?

The Bonze (yelling at Butterfly) Kami Sarundasico!
Affirmavi tua guasta qual supplizio sovrasta? (Butterfly’s mother comes forward to protect her, but the Bonze)
It’s our uncle, the Bonze!
What did you do at the mission?
What is that lunatic yelling at me?
Who will get rid of this intruder?
It’s our uncle, the Bonze!
What did you do at the mission?
What is that lunatic yelling at me?
Who will get rid of this intruder?

THE BONZE: Venite tutti. Andiamol! (to Butterfly) Ci hai rinnegato e noi…
All: Ti rinneghiamo!
PINKERTON: (ardently) Sbarazzate all’istante. In casa mia mi mente baccano e miente bonzeria.
(Everyone—relatives, friends, the Bonze—all depart hastily down the hill, continuing to curse Butterfly. Butterfly, who had remained invisible and silent with her face in her hands, finally breaks down and cries like a baby.)
### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

**A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MUSICAL ELEMENT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION &amp; MEANING/ASSOCIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Star-Spangled Banner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese national anthem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese folksong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese chant melody (based on the pentatonic scale)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentatonic harmonies (two examples)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese percussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**“Dovunque al mondo” TRACK 12**

**PINCKERTON** Dovunque al mondo

Io Yankee vagabondo
soglie e traffica
sprenzando i rischi.
Affonda l’ancora alla ventura.
(Interrupts himself to offer Sharpless a drink)
Milk-Punch, o Whiskey?
(starting again)…tinté una raffica
scompignò nave e ormeggi, alberatura.
La vita ei non appaga
se non fa suo tesor
i fiori d’ogni plaga,
d’ogni bella gli amor.

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

**PINCKERTON** (continuing)

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

“America forever!”

**SHARPLESS** “America forever.”

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

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

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

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

“America forever.”
### A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

#### MUSICAL ELEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MUSICAL ELEMENT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION &amp; MEANING/ASSOCIATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Star-Spangled Banner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation of the sound of traditional Japanese instruments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese national anthem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese folksong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese chant melody (based on the pentatonic scale)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentatonic harmonies (two examples)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese percussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**“Dovunque al mondo”**

**SMITHSONIAN:** Dovunque al mondo

Lo Yankee vagabondo
si gode e traffica
sprenzando i rischi.
Affonda l’ancora alla ventura.

(Interprete lieta di offrire Sharpless a drink)
Milk-Punch, o Whiskey?

(Interprete raggiungendo) ...finché una raffica
scompiglia nave e ormeggi, alberatura.
La vita ei non appaga
se non fa suo tesor
i fiori d’ogni plaga,
d’ogni bella gli amor.

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

**SMITHSONIAN:** (continuando)

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

**SHARPLESS:** “America forever!”

“America forever!”

---

**“Wherever the Yankee vagabond roams, he throws caution to the wind and seeks his fortune and pleasure. He drops his anchor where and when he wants… Milk punch or whisky? … until a storm wind blows and rocks his boat; then he raises sail and casts off again. Life isn’t worth living unless he can make all the flowers in the fields his own special treasures. That’s an easy philosophy, which makes life pleasant but leaves you with an empty heart. Always undaunted, his luck will never run out. He works his magic in every place he goes. And so I’m marrying in the Japanese manner, for nine hundred and ninety-nine years, with the option to renew each month. “America forever!” “America forever.”**
A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(Cont’d)
“Gran ventura”

**TRACK 13**

**BUtTERFLY:** Gran ventura.

**BUtTERFLY’S FRIENDS:** Riverenza.

**PINkERTON:** (smiling) Un po’ dura la scalata?

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

**PINkERTON:** (unreasonably) Molto raro complimento.

**BUtTERFLY:** (naively) Dei più belli ancor ne so.

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

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

**PINkERTON:** (solemnly) Grazie, no.

**SHARPLESS:** (Having already observed curiously the group of girls, he draws near Butterfly, who listens to him attentively.) Miss Butterfly. Bell name, it suits you so well.

**GorO:** (to Suzuki) Non lo nascondo nè m’adonto.

**BUtTERFLY:** (agreeing eagerly) Verismo! Isn’t that true?

**SHARPLESS:** Yes, sir. and my family was at one time rather wealthy.

**BUtTERFLY:** It’s true!

**SHARPLESS:** You are from Nagasaki?

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

**PINkERTON:** E ci avete sorelle?

**SHARPLESS:** (also interested in Butterfly’s chatter, he continues to question her) E i avete sorelle?

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

**PINkERTON:** (to her friends) Verità?

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

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

**PINkERTON:** (smiling) A una sposa costumata più penosa è l’impazienza.

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

**PINkERTON:** (sotto voce) Vero.

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

**PINkERTON:** (sotto voce) Vero.

**BUtTERFLY:** Non lo nascondo nè m’adonto.

**SHARPLESS:** And do you have any sisters?

**BUtTERFLY:** No sir. I just have my mother.

**PINkERTON:** A gracious lady.

**SHARPLESS:** But to speak the truth, she’s just as poor as I am.

**BUtTERFLY:** And your father?

**PINkERTON:** He’s dead.

“A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITY**

**A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(Cont’d)

**“Un bel di”**

**TRACK 14**

**BUtTERFLY:** Un bel di, vedremo levarsi un fil di fumo sull’estremo confin del mare.

**PINkERTON:** (having listened with interest turns to Sharpless) (Con quel fara di bambola quando parla m’infiama.)

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

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

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

**SHARPLESS:** E vostro padre?

**BUtTERFLY:** (to Suzuki) E ci avete sorelle?

**PINkERTON:** No, signore. ho la mamma.

**SHARPLESS:** A gracious lady.

**BUtTERFLY:** But to speak the truth, she’s just as poor as I am.

**PINkERTON:** And your father?

**SHARPLESS:** He’s dead.

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

**PINkERTON:** (sotto voce) Vero.

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

**PINkERTON:** (sotto voce) Vero.

**BUtTERFLY:** Non lo nascondo nè m’adonto.

**SHARPLESS:** And do you have any sisters?

**BUtTERFLY:** No sir. I just have my mother.

**PINkERTON:** A gracious lady.

**SHARPLESS:** But to speak the truth, she’s just as poor as I am.

**BUtTERFLY:** And your father?

**PINkERTON:** He’s dead.

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

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

TRACK 15

Butterfly: “Let him die with honor
who can no longer live with honor.”

Tu, tu, piccolo Iddio!
Amore, amore mio,
flor di giglio e di rosa.
Non saperlo mai
per te, per i tuoi puri occhi,
muor Butterfly
perché tu possa andare
di là dal mare
senza che ti rimorda ai dì maturi
il materno abbandono.
O a me, sceso dal trono
dell’ alto Paradiso,
guarda ben fisco, fisco
di tua madre la faccia…
ché te’n resti una traccia,
guarda ben!
Amore addio!
(facing her child at length and giving him another kiss)
Addio! piccolo amor!
Va! Gioia, gioia.

Butterfly takes the child and places him on a mat with
his head turned away, she places an American flag and a
doll in his hands and tells him to play while she delicately
blindfolds him. Then she seizes the knife and, with her gaze
fixed on the child, she goes behind the screen. The knife falls
to the floor, and Butterfly appears from behind the screen
and waveringly moves toward the child.

\header{CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures}

\header{THE SONGS AND SOUNDS OF MY WORLD

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

TRACK 15
BUtterfly: “Let him die with honor
who can no longer live with honor.”

You, you! Little idol of my heart,
my love, my love,
flower of the lily and the rose.
You must never know
that for you, for your innocent eyes,
Butterfly dies,
so that you may go
across the sea
and never know when you are older
that your mother abandoned you.
Oh, you who came to me
from Paradise,
look well, look well
on your mother’s face
so that you might remember it!
One more glance!
Farewell, my love!
Farewell, little love!
Go and play.

Tu, tu! piccolo Iddio!
Amore, amore mio,
for’ di giglio e di rosa.
Non saperlo mai
per te, per i puri occhi,
muore Butterfly
perché tu possa andare
di là dal mare
senza che ti rimordia il dì maturi
il materno abbandono.
O a me, acceso dal trono
dell’alto Paradiso;
guarda ben fiso, fiso
di tua madre la faccia…
che te’n resti una traccia,
guarda ben!
Amore addio!
(looking at her child at length and giving him another kiss)
Addio! piccolo amor!
Va, Gioia, gioia.

(Butterfly takes the child and places him on a mat with
his head turned away; she places an American flag and a
doll in his hands and tells him to play while she delicately
blindfolds him. Then she seizes the knife and, with her gaze
fixed on the child, she goes behind the screen. The knife falls
to the floor, and Butterfly appears from behind the screen
and waveringly moves toward the child.)

PINKERTON: Butterfly! Butterfly!

BRAINSTORMING CATEGORIES:

Folks songs and instruments
from my cultural background
(Example: the songs “Danny
Boy” or “Santa Lucia,” and
instruments like the Ud, conga
drums, flamenco guitar, etc…)

Favorite songs I listen to on a
regular basis
(Example: your favorite song
from your favorite band)

Sounds that I encounter on a
daily basis
(Example: car horns, subway
door closing chimes, alarm clock,
etc…)

Sounds that I associate with my
favorite memories
(Example: bird calls in the
summer, my father playing guitar,
my mother singing, etc…)

Instruments that I think capture
my personality
(Example: violin, harp, trumpet,
guitar, etc…)

THE SONGS AND SOUNDS OF MY WORLD

MY IDEAS:
A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

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

At the Met: The Art of the Director

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

The opening dance: Cio-Cio-San wears a cross around her neck: 
Puppet household servants: Falling flower petals during the love duet: 
Cio-Cio-San’s vision of Pinkerton at the beginning of Act II: Pinkerton’s representation as an empty armchair: 
Cio-Cio-San prays while Suzuki sings her own prayers: Flower petals hang frozen in the air during Act II: Depiction of the child as a puppet: 
Falling flower petals during the love duet: Representation of Cio-Cio-San’s dream: 
Cio-Cio-San’s vision of Pinkerton at the beginning of Act II: Puppet birds: 
Pinkerton’s representation as an empty armchair: Depiction of Cio-Cio-San’s death at the opera’s close: 

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(CONT’D)
At the Met: The Art of the Director

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

The opening dance:

Cio-Cio-San wears a cross around her neck:

Puppet household servants:

Falling flower petals during the love duet:

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

Pinkerton’s representation as an empty armchair:

Cio-Cio-San prays while Suzuki sings her own prayers:

Flower petals hang frozen in the air during Act II:

Depiction of the child as a puppet:

Representation of Cio-Cio-San’s dream:

Puppet birds:

Depiction of Cio-Cio-San’s death at the opera’s close:

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
A Musical Collision Course: Puccini’s Representation of Conflicting Cultures

(Continued)

THE SONGS AND SOUNDS OF MY WORLD

Written Response:

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

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
MADAMA BUTTERFLY
**Madama Butterfly: My Highs & Lows**

**APRIL 2, 2016**

**CONDUCTED BY KAREL MARK CHICHON**

**REVIEWED BY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE STARS</th>
<th>STAR POWER</th>
<th>MY COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KRISTINE OPOLAIAS AS CIO-CIO-SAN</td>
<td>*****</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBERTO ALAGNA AS PINKERTON</td>
<td>*****</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DWAYNE CROFT AS SHARPLESS</td>
<td>*****</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CHILD (PUPPET)</td>
<td>*****</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>MUSIC</th>
<th>SET DESIGN/STAGING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPENING DANCE</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PINKERTON EXPLORES THE HOUSE</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PINKERTON DESCRIBES A SAILOR’S LIFE</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE WEDDING</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE WEDDING NIGHT</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIO-CIO-SAN IMAGINES PINKERTON’S RETURN</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GORO BRINGS YAMADORI TO MEET CIO-CIO-SAN</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHARPLESS READS THE LETTER</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PINKERTON’S SHIP ARRIVES</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIO-CIO-SAN’S VIGIL</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIO-CIO-SAN MEETS MRS. PINKERTON</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIO-CIO-SAN’S TRAGIC END</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>